

# Mind Games Camp (radio transcript)



There's one thing we do here at Probe that is my favorite part of ministry. Our Student Mind Games Camp is a week-long, total immersion, give-it-all-we've-got experience for high school and college students that changes minds and hearts forever.



Beautiful Camp Copass in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area is surrounded by a lake on three sides and it feels very secluded—even though it's not far from the Dallas-Ft. Worth airport, so students can easily fly in. We teach Christian students how to think biblically on a wide range of subjects: understanding how others think as they understand their worldviews, how they can know that Christianity is true, creation and evolution, human nature, the differences between guys and girls, the problem of evil and the value of suffering, campus Christianity, and even how to watch a movie

with their brain turned on. They learn about Islam, a compassionate but biblical view of homosexuality, different views of science and Earth-history, and genetic engineering.

Returning campers get to experience what is always a highlight for our students, a special alumni track with new lectures in an intimate, personal setting. The alumni always tell the first-timers what an amazing difference it makes to come back a second or even third time, because they get so much more out of the conference than they ever thought possible.

The Probe teachers don't just give the lectures, though; we continue conversations at meals where we eat and visit with the students instead of each other. We break up into discussion groups to help the students process what they're learning in the sessions. There is free time every afternoon and evening to hike, swim, play basketball or card games, read or nap. Or of course, just hang out with new friends.



The students are delighted to meet other thinking Christians from all over the country, students eager to think and grow in their faith as they learn to love God with their minds together. They enjoy getting to know us as the instructors, too.

We're not only available the whole week; we look for opportunities to engage in conversations that will encourage and affirm what God is doing in the minds and hearts of these precious young people.

We'll be talking about Mind Games in this article, but you can go to our website, [Probe.org/mindgames](https://Probe.org/mindgames), and check out our videos, a typical week's schedule, and lots of other information. In the next sections you'll hear a little bit from several lecturers, and also from several of our Mind Games alumni.

## Sneak Peek of Probe Lectures

Here are snippets from lectures of four of our Probe Mind Games instructors, speaking on the Biology of Human Uniqueness, LGBT, Islam, and Nietzsche for Beginners:

*Dr. Ray Bohlin:*

Fire is also necessary for creating tools, particularly metal tools. You have to be able to heat metals to a really high temperature: copper, silver, gold—all their melting temperatures are over a thousand degrees centigrade. So you have to get a really hot fire to do that, and to be able to make the tools liquid, to make them malleable. So you've got not only to be able to make a fire, you have to be intentional as to how you make a really hot fire.

*Sue Bohlin:*

What I really love is my title for this, which is "Grace and Truth About Homosexuality," because I think we need both. We need to be coming from a heart of compassion and sympathy and understanding for the sexual and relational brokenness that results in homosexuality, but we also need to be absolutely camped out on the truth of the Word of God.

*Paul Rutherford:*

The third of the five pillars of Islam is the giving of alms, what they call *zakat*. It's much similar to Christian charity, to giving to a church or giving to the poor; Muslims likewise have a heart for their community, have a heart for those who are down and out. This is the giving to "the least of these," as Christians might call it. The fourth pillar of Islam is Ramadan, and Ramadan is a fast. It is a month-long fast. This is a time when they train themselves in discipline, of practicing not eating during the day, and when they train themselves in increasing their desire for God, for Allah.

*Todd Kappelman:*

Adolph Hitler, when he was coming to power after 1939, he ordered just crates and crates and crates of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and would give to his captains and his commanders and everything, and we believe by this action in some of Hitler's own words that he saw himself to be the inheritor of much of Nietzsche's philosophy and especially the aspect of the overman, the great world historical figure that Nietzsche is going to advocate for solving some of the problems that he's going to look at.

## **Comments from Alumni, Part 1**

In this article we're talking about our memorable, life-impacting, week-long summer Mind Games conference. But you don't have to take our word for it. Consider what some of our alumni have to say.

Here's three-time alumnus, Noah:

Mind Games is a fun place of fellowship, you get a lot of excitement, there's a ropes course that you go on so there's a lot of excitement there, you do a lot of team-building activities, it's a ton of fun, you get to learn a whole lot about life, about faith, about people, about relationships. You get to experience a whole new world of things that you've never experienced before in the faith. A lot of people, they just have a surface-level faith, but here at Mind Games we go a whole lot deeper into that faith, we lay it out and we explain philosophically how it works, reasonably how it works, how it works with science, how it works with other people, how it works with suffering, how it works with everything, just how the world works with faith.

Here's Esther:

My faith before Mind Games was a little crazy . . . I had

thoughts about suicide a few times, and then I started to doubt, "Is God even there?" Like, if He was there, then wouldn't I feel His presence? Then I came to Mind Games and I was like, there's no way He's not real. For someone who hasn't been here, Mind Games is a great experience. You not only gain friends and family, but you learn more about God and how to stay stronger in your faith.

Tyler had a major shift between his first and second time at Mind Games:

I'm Tyler Lord from Athens, Georgia. Last year when I came I was actually agnostic, so I didn't really know. But kinda having experiences throughout the year after Mind Games and coming back, I've become a Christian. It's lots of fun. You come and, you know, it's not really all about religion. There's a bunch of free time you get to play around. You come in, and you don't really know what to expect, When you get here and you think, oh, it's gonna be a bunch of lectures, but it's really not. You get a good bond with everybody's who's here, like the other campers. And even though there are lectures, they're really interesting. The apologetics ones are great for like if someone comes up to you and they're like, "Why are you a Christian?"

## Comments From Alumni, Part 2

Here are a few more alumni comments, starting with Arty:

Mind Games is a wonderful time of fellowship, worship and just gaining a lot of knowledge into why Christianity is reasonable, how Christianity can work with science, how your faith and science can work together and not against each other. Mind Games is fun, it's very much about the relationships that you build, it's about the people who you interact with on a daily basis for the week.

This was Anya's second time through:

After this second round of Mind Games, I feel like I've grown much more as a person, not just due to time but also how much Mind Games has affected me personally. If I had to describe Mind Games to someone who's never been here before, I would say it's something that completely blows your mind away. Not in the sense that it's all weighing over your head, but just how much they describe, how much detail and information you have on how to defend your faith. First year it was amazing, and second year it got even better.

Ben also returned:

Well it's really that the first Mind Games for me was like planting the seed, this time it's nurturing the plant. It was really so I could re-establish what they had taught me last year, cause last year was such an eye-opener I wanted to see if either I could experience that or build upon it this year, which I have.

Amy set a record of coming to Mind Games!

My name is Amy Klaschus, I'm from Orlando Florida, and I've been to Mind Games five times now! What keeps me coming back to Mind Games is the people, because I love the teachers—they're very nice and they're always willing to help and answer questions. Every year there have been at least a few people among the students who are just so welcoming and so Christian in a way I can't really find back home as much. I know that in shaping my growth in faith, Mind Games has been just completely essential, because it's given me the perspective and the ability to think biblically about all the problems I face, all the problems I faced in high school and now all the problems I've been facing this past year of college.

## Why Go to Mind Games?

We now know that three out of four high school seniors who had been part of a church youth group drop out of church within a year.<sup>[1]</sup> One reason for this is that they don't own their faith; they don't know that Christianity is true, and they don't know why it's true. They tend to equate faith with a warm fuzzy feeling that doesn't stand up to the challenges of life. Many students are afraid to express their doubts so they never learn that there are good, solid answers to their questions. They are sensitive to the disconnect that happens when those who profess to be Christ-followers act no differently from unbelievers.

For over twenty years, Probe's Mind Games conferences have been preparing young people for the challenges to their faith. In that time, we have witnessed firsthand the incredible thirst for a reliable trustworthy faith. Again and again we hear that some had despaired of ever finding something like Mind Games. The conference consistently exceeds expectations, and students often tell us they wish they had brought their friends.

Alumni from these summer conferences have gone on to become leaders on their campuses, the government and the military. This week-long immersion truly changes lives, giving them a new confidence in their God, His Word, and in their role as His ambassadors. We know this because some of them come back as alumni a second or third year, and because they contact us years later and let us know how Mind Games continues to impact them.

Mornings start with an informal devotional by Probe staff and a time of prayer. They receive twenty-five hours of lecture using video clips, role play, Q and A, and other teaching techniques. They connect with each other and process what they're learning in small groups. We as staff get to know and truly love them.

The Student Mind Games Camp is for those who have finished their junior or senior years of high school, and for college freshmen and sophomores. [Note: especially motivated students younger than that are welcome, though!] Please go to our Web site, [Probe.org/mindgames](http://Probe.org/mindgames), and check out videos. You can look at a typical schedule, and find out all the details. And then register someone you love. It will make a difference in time and eternity.

### Note

1. Steve Cable, Is This the Last Christian Generation?  
[probe.org/is-this-the-last-christian-generation/](http://probe.org/is-this-the-last-christian-generation/)

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## What's Your Superpower?

If you could choose a superpower, which one would it be? When asked this question as an icebreaker, I've heard some people say they'd love to fly; others say they would choose mindreading. Some would love to be invisible.

But for the believer in Jesus, the idea of having superpowers isn't a fantasy.

It is the *reality* of being indwelled by God Himself, the source of actual and real supernatural power. And He gives gifts, spiritual gifts, that consist of supernatural enabling. We find the spiritual gifts in four places in the New Testament: 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4.



Consider these spiritual gifts—superpowers, if you will—given by the Holy Spirit to allow His people to minister to others:

**Teaching** – The supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God.

**Pastor/Teacher** – One who is supernaturally equipped to shepherd and feed the flock of God with the result of their growth and maturity.

**Evangelism** – The supernatural capacity to present the gospel message with exceptional clarity and an overwhelming burden for those who don't know Christ.

**Word of Knowledge** – The supernatural ability to receive information and truth directly from God without natural means. To know without knowing how you know.

**Word of Wisdom** – The supernatural ability to have insight concerning God's perspective and relay this insight succinctly to others. "Deep insight with handles."

**Faith** – The supernatural ability to believe God for the impossible.

**Exhortation (Encouragement)** – The supernatural ability to come alongside and help others by comforting, encouraging, challenging, and rebuking.

**Showing Mercy** – The supernatural ability to minister compassionately and cheerfully to those who are difficult to minister to.

**Giving** – The supernatural ability to give of one's material

goods to the work of the Lord consistently, generously, sacrificially, with wisdom and cheerfulness.

**Leadership/Administration** – The supernatural ability to organize and lead projects while handling people tactfully and providing the vision to keep them at the task.

**Service** – The supernatural ability to serve faithfully and joyfully behind the scenes, in practical ways, in long-term commitments to service.

**Helps** – The supernatural ability to minister joyfully to God's people in short-term service with flexibility and sensitivity to what needs to be done.

**Discernment of Spirits** – A supernatural ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and spirit of error, between holiness and evil. Can instantly sniff out when someone's a phony or lying.

My husband and I created a list of diagnostic questions to help people find their superpowers, which you can find here: [www.probe.org/how-do-you-determine-your-spiritual-gift/](http://www.probe.org/how-do-you-determine-your-spiritual-gift/)

Flying and mind-reading aren't on our list, but you might find your superpower here!

This blog post originally appeared at [blogs.bible.org/engage/sue\\_bohlin/whats\\_your\\_superpower](http://blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/whats_your_superpower) on Apr. 4, 2017.

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# **“Am I Judging When I Recognize Sin in a Friend’s Life?”**

Dear Sue,

My question is about judging. There are several of us friends and we are all Christians but go to different churches. One of our friends was widowed several years ago. After several failed relationships where she became sexually intimate with each of the men, she is now in another relationship with what seems like a nice man. She is also very active in her church and is involved in a discipleship ministry. After she leaves the meetings to prepare for these discipleship events, she leaves town to go stay the weekend with her new friend.

I told one of the other friends that I did not think it was right that she was doing that and that may be why she had problems with her relationships, and that I felt it was wrong that she would be speaking before another group of women on this retreat. My other friend told me I was judging and that only God should do that and no one is without sin and that one sin is no greater than any other sin. I do not interpret the bible that way. I feel that if she is putting herself before others as a leader of God she should be striving to live sin free and be repenting when she does sin. Am I judging when I recognize a sin in another person’s life? I do not want to be a judgmental person and am very confused about this. Please help me to understand and how I should have responded to her.

You are right. There is a huge misunderstanding about judging both outside and inside the church, and it comes from not knowing what the Bible teaches about judging. Everybody seems to stop with “Judge not, lest ye be judged” (Matt. 7:1). That is the Lord Jesus’ call not to judge hypocritically. But in

John 7:24 He also calls us to judge rightly. And remember the passage about pulling the plank out of our own eye so we can see clearly to remove the speck from our brother's eye (Matt. 7:5)? That's about judging as well. The point there is about examining ourselves first before dealing with another's sin, *not* to ignore other people's behavior.

But then there's the "big daddy" passage of 1 Corinthians 5:9-13:

*I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.*

*What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."*

This passage clearly says that we are to judge those inside the Body of Christ. (News to your other friend, I'm sure!) Judging doesn't mean condemning, though; in the case of your immoral friend, it would be a matter of comparing her behavior with what is right, and pointing out the dangers of her choices, the way we would want to warn someone in a burning building to get out, or urge someone headed toward a cliff to turn around.

It might sound like, "This is a hard conversation but I need to talk to you because I care about you. You're making decisions that are not consistent with the Christ-follower and the woman of God I know you want to be. Sexual immorality is still sin, and sin has consequences, and I don't want you to

be hurt. But even more than that, you are dishonoring the Lord by your disobedience to His word. I am concerned that you are continuing in a leadership position while you are engaged in unrepented, continual sin. James 3:1 says that teachers will be judged more strictly, and I am concerned for what that might look like for you down the road. I just want to plead with you to choose chastity and integrity, and make choices that honor both God and yourself.”

If she gets defensive and starts pushing back, making comments like, “And you’re so perfect yourself?” I would counsel you to not get defensive yourself. Just say something like, “You know, I’m aware that I’m a sinner in need of God’s mercy and grace every single day. I would hope that if my eyes were blinded by my own feelings and sin and I were headed toward a cliff, you would love me enough to warn me and challenge me to live consistently with who God says I am.”

I’m so glad you wrote. I hope you find this helpful.

Sue

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## **“Is It Biblical for a Woman to Lead a Nation?”**

In view of John McCain’s pick for Vice President [Sarah Palin, Governor of Alaska]: Is it biblically sound for a women to be in charge of a nation? I feel very sound on the fact that the husband should lead the family and in a church structure a man should be in charge of the church. Can a woman lead on the national scale?

We are in total agreement with you that God's plan is for men to lead in both the church and the family. But the Bible does not prohibit women from exercising leadership in civil governments. Note that the references to the Queen of Sheba and Queen Esther contain not even a hint of anything negative. It does seem to be understood that men will generally be the ones in authority, but there are no restrictions for systems and hierarchies outside the church and the family. So there's nothing intrinsically wrong or evil about women ruling in civil matters.

The created order, before the fall, makes Adam and Eve co-regents and co-stewards of the earth:

*Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

*Gen 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

*Gen 1:28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*

God's plan for the future is that believers who endure, both men and women, will reign with Christ (2 Tim. 2:12). So the idea of women reigning is biblical within a certain context.

I do feel compelled, however, to note the sadness of Isaiah 3:12 where women ruling over God's people is a sign of judgment. However, the context is that of a theocracy, and that makes a difference. The United States is definitely not a theocracy, with our strong lines of demarcation between church and state!

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

*Shortly after this answer was posted, we received this email:*

**Re: Your article “Is it Biblical for a woman to lead a nation” – Why was Deborah never mentioned when she is a prominent figure all through Judges?**

I addressed the issue of Deborah in the answer to email “Should Women Be Pastors?” here:  
[www.probe.org/should-women-be-pastors/](http://www.probe.org/should-women-be-pastors/)

By the way, there are 21 chapters in Judges, and Deborah’s story is in only two of them, chapters 4 and 5. She’s a major player to be sure, but not all through Judges.

Thanks for asking.

Sue Bohlin

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## **“How Do You Determine Your Spiritual Gift?”**

**How do people determine their spiritual gift? Is it through prayer? Or does the Lord reveal it to them in some way?**

There are several ways. Praying for guidance about your spiritual gift(s) is the first step, certainly. Also important is educating yourself to find out what the gifts are and what they look like in operation. And ask the people around you what they think your gifts are, if the people around you know anything about spiritual gifts! (They are found in 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:7; and 1 Peter 4:10.)

I have discovered that when you're operating in an area of supernatural gifting, it's like getting on the moving sidewalks at airports—you can get where you're going twice as fast as the people walking next to you who *aren't* on the people mover, and there's energy and power and a spring in your step. It's FUN! When you're using your spiritual gifts, you are aware of operating in God's power and strength instead of your own. . . and the Spirit-led response is humility instead of pride.

After studying spiritual gifts, my husband Ray and I compiled a spiritual gifts inventory that some have found helpful. I hope you do too. (These are limited to the ministry gifts and do not include the foundational gifts of apostleship or prophet, nor the sign gifts of tongues, interpretation of tongues, healings or miracles.)

## **Spiritual Gifts Evaluation**

**Teaching** – *The supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God.*

- Do you love the Body of Christ and desire that others know more about Scripture and how to apply it?
- Do you love studying the Word of God?
- Do you have a passion for sharing the insights and principles you have learned from the Word?
- Do you find it a challenge to make complicated truths simple and understandable?

**Pastor/Teacher** – *One who is supernaturally equipped to shepherd and feed the flock of God with the result of their growth and maturity.*

- Do you deeply love the people of God?
- Do you feel a yearning to model the principles of Scripture and mentor others so that they can follow Christ also?



- Do you feel God's calling to shepherd His people, tenderly nurturing and nourishing them?

**Evangelism** – *The supernatural capacity to present the gospel message with exceptional clarity and an overwhelming burden for those who don't know Christ.*

- Do you find yourself in situations where the topics of Christ and salvation come up?
- Do you gravitate toward relationships with non-Christians?
- When others hear you explain the gospel, do they respond by trusting Christ?
- Do you have a passion for the lost?

**Word of Knowledge** – *The supernatural ability to receive information and truth directly from God without natural means. To know without knowing how you know.*

- Do you find yourself "knowing" something you did not learn, and unable to explain how you know it?
- If you feel that God has given you a message to give to another Christian, is it confirmed by that person's response as truly coming from God?

**Word of Wisdom** – *The supernatural ability to have insight concerning God's perspective and relay this insight succinctly to others. "Deep insight with handles."*

- Do you experience flashes of insight on spiritual things, unusual in their clarity?
- Are you able to express this wisdom in ways that minister to people?
- Do you recognize wisdom in others when you hear it?
- Do people consider you unusually wise, and trust your judgment?
- Do you find yourself being quoted, and you recognize the quote as "a God thing"?

**Faith** – *The supernatural ability to believe God for the*

*impossible.*

- When diverging roads appear before you, are you able to see God's path based on His word, in a way that others miss?
- Do you depend on God's resources and guidance to an unusual degree?
- Are you able to firmly claim God's presence in the midst of chaos?
- When God answers your prayers, is your response one of calm satisfaction rather than wonderment?

**Exhortation (Encouragement)** – *The supernatural ability to come alongside and help others by comforting, encouraging, challenging, and rebuking.*

- Are you especially sensitive to people?
- When you encourage someone, do they respond with grateful appreciation?
- Is the timing of your encouragements usually "perfect"?
- When you challenge or rebuke another believer, is it well received?

**Showing Mercy** – *The supernatural ability to minister compassionately and cheerfully to those who are difficult to minister to.*

- Do you have the ability to sense when a person is in need, even before they tell you?
- Are you drawn to people with emotional or physical pain, and to those society considers "unlovely"?
- Do you have an intuitive sense of when to be quiet and when to speak, or what to say and what not to say?
- Do people seek you out when they're hurting? Do they enjoy having you around?

**Giving** – *The supernatural ability to give of one's material goods to the work of the Lord consistently, generously, sacrificially, with wisdom and cheerfulness.*

- Are you enthusiastic when presented with an opportunity to give money to meet a need?
- Are you constantly looking for ways to give?
- Do you enjoy giving privately or anonymously?
- Do you REALLY think of money as God's, not yours?

**Leadership/Administration** – *The supernatural ability to organize and lead projects while handling people tactfully and providing the vision to keep them at the task.*

- Do you enjoy taking a disorganized situation and straightening it out?
- Are you able to motivate others to complete the project? Do people respond when you step in to give leadership?
- Do you enjoy planning and completing projects?
- Do you enjoy sorting out details, or do they frustrate you?

**Service** – *The supernatural ability to serve faithfully and joyfully behind the scenes, in practical ways, in long-term commitments to service.*

- Do you willingly volunteer to help with details?
- Do you prefer to work behind the scenes?
- Do you gain a sense of satisfaction when others succeed as a result of your behind-the-scenes work?
- Is faithfulness over the long term important to you?

**Helps** – *The supernatural ability to minister joyfully to God's people in short-term service with flexibility and sensitivity to what needs to be done.*

- Are you sensitive to specific and immediate needs?
- Are you flexible?
- Would you rather meet a one-time need than commit yourself to long-term service?

**Discernment of Spirits** – *A supernatural ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and spirit of error, between*

*holiness and evil. Can instantly sniff out when someone's a phony or lying.*

- Do you have an internal alarm that goes off when you encounter something phony or evil?
- Even when you're the only one who senses something wrong, is your "intuition" eventually validated?
- Do you (and others) consider yourself a good judge of character?

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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# Student Mind Games Conference (radio transcript)

## Conference Overview

There's one thing we do here at Probe that is our favorite part of ministry. Our [Student Mind Games Conference](#) is a week-long, total immersion, give-it-all-we've-got experience for high school and college students that changes minds and hearts forever.

We teach Christian students how to think biblically on a wide range of subjects: worldviews, basic apologetics, creation and evolution, human nature, the differences between guys and girls, the problem of evil, the value of suffering, campus Christianity, and even how to watch a movie without swallowing it whole. They learn about world religions, a compassionate



but biblical view of homosexuality, science and Earth-history, feminism, and genetic engineering. We talk about how not to lose their faith in college and give specific, practical help connecting with the campus ministries at whatever college they're headed to.

The Probe teachers don't just give the lectures, though; we continue conversations at meals where we eat and visit with the students instead of each other. We assign readings by authors who don't have a Christian worldview, and break up into discussion groups to help the students develop their discernment skills and tune up their baloney detectors. There is free time every afternoon for everybody to hike, swim, play basketball or card games, read or nap. They learn how to be discerning in watching movies, and get practice at it by watching several movies during the evenings.

The students are delighted to meet other thinking Christians from all over the country, students eager to think and grow in their faith as they learn to love God with their minds together. They enjoy getting to know us as the instructors, too. We're not only available the whole week; we look for opportunities to engage in conversations that will encourage and affirm what God is doing in the minds and hearts of these precious young people.

In what follows you'll hear a little bit from several lecturers, and also from several of our *Mind Games* alumni.

## **Sneak Peek of Probe Lectures**

Here are snippets from lectures of four of our Probe *Mind Games* instructors, speaking on Apologetics, Origins, The Value of Suffering, and Nietzsche for Beginners:

Dr. Pat Zukeran:

*When we begin apologetics, when you engage the non-Christian world, where do we begin? Worldviews. Very good. Now there*

are three major worldviews; what are they? The first one is. . . ? Theism. Theism teaches what? God made all. The second one is. . . ? Naturalism, or atheism: no God at all. And the third one is Pantheism, God is all. Remember all three of those.

Dr. Ray Bohlin:

That is why many were upset for a long time. Many rejected the Big Bang because of the philosophical implications of a beginning. Where does this particle come from? Here's the problem. See, something must be eternal. Something has to have always been here. Otherwise, something had to come from absolutely nothing.

Sue Bohlin:

Pat explained to you the philosophical aspects of suffering and pain, and now I want to get intensely practical. I want to share with you five of the things that God showed me over a five-year period about the value of suffering. God never wastes our suffering, not a scrap of it. He redeems all of it for His glory and for our benefit. We have a God who scoops us up, and holds us to His chest where we can hear His heart beating, and says, "It's okay. I love you, buddy. Dad knows the way home. It's gonna be okay." And in the midst of our suffering, that's when God is holding us the closest.

Todd Kappelman:

What Nietzsche says is, "Listen, there are smart people, there are strong people, there are the artistically gifted, there are geniuses which comprise one percent or less of the population, and then there's the ninety-nine percent." What Nietzsche as an atheist wants to do is, he wants to look at good art. He wants to make a place in our culture for good art to be produced. The problem with good art being produced

*is you need a good audience that appreciates good art in order for good art to be produced.*

## **Comments from Alumni, Part 1**

Sarah relates how she happened to come:

*I'm Sarah, I have an older sister, this is her third year, and she got me into this. She's, like, "This, is the most awesome thing ever, you gotta go." I'm like, "Whatever." I came because she would always come back saying that she had this awesome time and everything. I was just like, "Okay, I'll go, I've been to other conferences before so I don't think it'll be anything different." This was really amazing because other conferences that I've been to, it's been just lectures, lectures, lectures. But like Sue and Pat and Todd and Heather and Ray, they would talk back to you. They wanted to get to know you, they wanted to know what you thought, they let you ask questions and they would answer it in the best way that they do, and it was just really nice to have someone older and wise that could give their information to where you could understand it, and it's free to ask questions.*

Here's Kayla:

*I really enjoyed the variety of the workshops, realizing that Christianity does apply to all aspects of life, that we have a worldview that is livable, and that whether it be about homosexuality or abortion or genetic engineering, our worldview applies to that too, and knowing those answers will help me that much more in the secular university.*

Austin shares what helped him the most:

*It especially helped with the readings, the secular readings. It helped me to point out the flaws in their teachings and to*

*see, okay, he's wrong here, here, here, here; he's kinda right here; this is where he needs to change a little. It helps me interpret what I'm reading better.*

And Bekah responds to my question: *Do you feel equipped to handle the anti-Christian, the hostile influences on the college campus?*

*Yes, because we had to interact with the "devil's advocate" so much here, and I think it really just prepared us for situations we're actually going to face.*

We love and enjoy the students who come to *Mind Games*, and they know it.

## **Comments From Alumni, Part 2**

Here are a few more: Jon, Ashli, Jonathan and a returning alumnus, Daniel:

Jon:

*It was more than I expected. I thought I was going to come here and learn ways to defeat people's arguments and destroy what they believe, but that's not what I learned. I actually learned WHY people believe what they believe, and so because I can understand what they believe better, I can love them better as a person, and that's really how you witness to them: you love them first and then they'll ask you, "What's so special," and then you can do it. So Mind Games for me was about learning and understanding more of what other people believe so I could understand and love them better.*

Ashli:

*The lectures—I loved them, because my dad's always about, he wants you to gain the knowledge, he wants you to know stuff,*



*and I . . . don't. I learned so much, and I got so much out of it, and I had so many questions that I had answered. I was almost embarrassed by the questions, that I should already know the answer, but I felt comfortable enough to ask them, and they answered them clearly, and it was awesome.*

**Jonathan:**

*There's just something amazing about this place where everyone wants to be here. The lectures were really great, there's just so much emotion and information to it. They just tell sides of things you never hear in the culture, it's just so informative. Like Ashli said, you really get just a zeal for learning about this stuff and you realize how little you know about your faith, and how much you want to learn, so I'm definitely going to come back and try and learn some more.*

**Daniel:**

*I thought Mind Games was fantastic. It was a great experience, and while I did go to some of the same classes, I took more away from them than I did last year, partly because I stayed awake during different parts but mostly because I was paying better attention and you take different things away every time you go to the same lesson. So that was still valuable even though I'd been here before. And there were definitely talks that I hadn't attended last year that were really, really interesting, downright fascinating actually, which I was very glad to be a part of, some of which I felt pretty strongly about, so I was glad to be able to participate in those discussions.*

## **Why Go to Mind Games?**

We now know that three out of four high school seniors who had been part of a church youth group drop out of church within a

year.<sup>{1}</sup> One reason for this is that they don't own their faith; they don't know *that* Christianity is true, and they don't know *why* it's true. They tend to equate faith with a warm fuzzy feeling that doesn't stand up to the challenges of life. Many students are afraid to express their doubts so they never learn that there are good, solid answers to their questions. They are sensitive to the disconnect that happens when those who profess to be Christ-followers act no differently from unbelievers.

For over fifteen years, Probe's *Mind Games* conferences have been preparing young people for the challenges to their faith. In that time, we have witnessed firsthand the incredible thirst for a reliable trustworthy faith. Again and again we hear that some had despaired of ever finding something like *Mind Games*. The conference consistently exceeds expectations, and students often tell us they wish they had brought their friends.

Alumni from these summer conferences are going on to become leaders on their campuses and beyond. This weeklong immersion truly changes lives, giving them a new confidence in their God, His Word, and in their role as His ambassadors. We know this because some of them come back as alumni a second or third year, and because they contact us from college and let us know how *Mind Games* continues to impact them. Others have gone on to become leaders in ministry and heroes in the military.

Mornings start with an informal devotional by Probe staff and a time of prayer. They receive twenty-five hours of lecture using video clips, role play, Q and A, and other teaching techniques. They build their discernment muscles and sharpen their critical thinking skills by reading and analyzing articles by non-Christians, which we discuss in small groups. They worship together, they play together, and they make dear friends. We instructors share our meals and some of our free time with the students, which allows us to get to know and

truly love them.

The Student *Mind Games* Conference is for those who have finished their junior or senior years of high school, and for college freshmen and sophomores. [Note: especially motivated students younger than that are welcome, though!] Please go to our Web site, Probe.org, and check out the [reports and pictures](#) of the last few *Mind Games* conferences. You can look at a [typical schedule](#), and find out all the details. And then register someone you love. It will make a difference in time and eternity.

### Note

1. Steve Cable, Is This the Last Christian Generation?  
[www.probe.org/last-christian-generation.htm](http://www.probe.org/last-christian-generation.htm)

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# Animal House Revisited: Fraternity Fosters Faith

College fraternities don't always have the best reputations. Wild parties, hazing, elitism, substance abuse, gang rapes and more help perpetuate the Animal House image that the film of the same name portrayed. Parents – and many students – might wonder why any sane person ever would want to join.

Though the weaknesses of university Greek-letter societies are often what grab headlines, numerous national fraternities and sororities try hard to change both their image and substance. Believe it or not, many were founded to promote character development and strong cultural values and are seeking to return to their roots.

For example, my own fraternity, Lambda Chi Alpha, has a vision "...to prepare and encourage collegiate men of good character, high ethics, and noble ideals to contribute positively to the world in which they live." Lambda Chi's annual North American Food Drive has raised over 10.5 million pounds of food for the needy since 1993.

The liability crisis is one factor motivating "Greeks" to focus on character. In today's litigious society, a tragic injury or death can prompt lawsuits that could put them out of business. Moderating local behavior helps perpetuate national survival.

But there is more going on here than mere survival. Often top leaders of national Greek organizations are deeply committed citizens who seek to live by and promote the principles their groups espouse.

Many Greek organizations were founded on biblical or quasi-biblical principles. Alpha Tau Omega (ATO) is one of the more prominent fraternities with over 240 active and inactive chapters and over 6,000 undergraduate members. ATO chief executive officer Wynn Smiley told me of his group's convictions.

It seems that ATO was founded in 1865 by a 19-year-old former Confederate soldier who wanted to promote brotherly love as a means of helping to reconcile North and South after the U.S. Civil War. The organization that young Otis Allan Glazebrook founded was not religious but sought to foster reconciliation and brotherhood based on the self-sacrifice and unconditional love demonstrated by Jesus.

Smiley and his colleagues emphasize these roots in their recruitment and educational development. "Jesus made the most radical statements on love," notes Smiley. An example: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those

who persecute you....”

Allen Wilson is ATO’s Spiritual Leadership Consultant. Most chapters have chaplains and Wilson travels to help encourage spiritual development. ATO even has a devotional book with inspirational articles by alumni and others on practical themes like character, trust, humility, truth, servant leadership and persevering through disappointment.

Smiley readily admits that not every member or chapter exemplifies such values. But he points out that hidden personal hurts – from family illness to depression – plus students’ concerns for their own future, ethical dilemmas and faith raise questions that “brothers practicing brotherly love should help each other explore.” He says that “ATO is committed to talking about issues of faith” and to providing “a loving, trusting environment for brothers to explore, discuss, argue and perhaps even on occasion resolve questions.”

He is onto something significant here. Animal House, meet the competition.

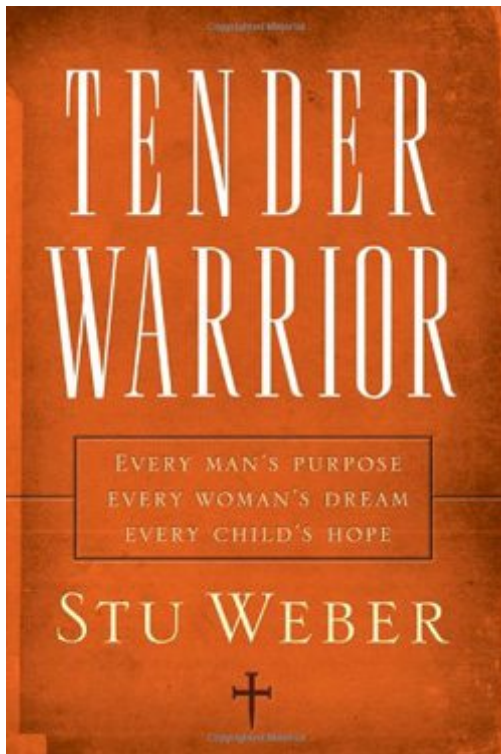
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## **Is the Tender Warrior Wild at Heart? – Characteristics of Christian Manhood**

*Dr. Bohlin looks at two attempts to define the characteristics of a godly man according to a Scriptural, biblical worldview perspective. These characteristics give a Christian man a way to evaluate his walk with God and how it communicates Christ to others.*

# The Four Pillars of a Man's Heart

Manhood continues to be in crisis. For many men today, their physical strength is rarely necessary. Technology and urban isolation have ripped up the landscape that men inhabit to such a degree that many men are wandering around wondering who they are and what they're here for. The extreme women's movement proclaims that a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.



Over the last fifteen years numerous books have been written from both secular and Christian authors to help men find their way. In this article we're going to spend some time with two of them. Stu Weber, a pastor in Oregon wrote the hugely influential *Tender Warrior* in 1993. *Tender Warrior* is full of stories and illustrations that irresistibly pull you along to Stu's appointed end: a vision of manhood mined from God's original intention for a man wrapped up in the New Testament vision of the Ultimate Tender Warrior, Jesus

Christ.

At the core of Weber's vision is what he calls the four pillars of a man's heart: the Heart of a King, the Heart of a Warrior, the Heart of a Mentor, and the Heart of a Friend. I first read *Tender Warrior* in the mid 90s, and I was immediately caught up in his four-part description. I knew I didn't exemplify all of these characteristics as Weber describes them, but I knew I wanted to.

The Heart of the King reflects a man's provisional heart. The part of a man that wants to offer order, mercy and justice to the world he inhabits. Think of some of the Old Testament

patriarchs, people like Abraham, Moses, and David. All of these men had a sense about them that drew others to them. They were leaders; they looked ahead and prepared those around them for what was coming.

The Heart of a Warrior portrays that part of a man that wants to shield, guard, defend and protect those around him. We intuitively understand this about men, but so many are inhibited from expressing this today. Movies and the entertainment industry often portray this aspect of manhood in its harsher tones. Consequently, this true aspect of manhood is more a target for suppression than for understanding.

The Heart of a Mentor reflects that part of a man that desires to model, train, and explain. Little boys particularly expect their dads to know everything. And a dad puffs up every time he can answer his son's questions. This aspect particularly is missing today in the church as young men from broken and dysfunctional families flounder, looking for an older man to help point the way.

The Heart of a Friend describes the part of a man that is truly compassionate, loving, and committed. The apostle Paul was a tough character as expressed in the list of hardships in 2 Cor. 11:23-28, yet he talked to the Thessalonians with gentle and tender words in 1 Thess. 2:7-8.

"Sourced in Scripture, observed in history, and experienced personally, these four pillars bear the weight of authentic masculinity. They coexist. They overlap. And when they come together in a man, you will know it. You will feel it. You will be touched by it. Like four strands of a steel cable, they will hold you."[\[1\]](#)

## **A Man and His Family**

These four pillars encapsulate four essential qualities in a man of God: leadership, protectiveness, teaching, and

compassion. A man with just three of the four is out of balance. A man who just emphasizes one of the four is a caricature of a real man. Nowhere is this more evident than in the biblical picture of headship and a man's role in his family.

Our culture is horribly confused on this point. Weber sums it up neatly when he says, "Men, as husbands you have been given a trust, a stewardship, a responsibility, a duty, to husband, or manage, or care for the gifts of your wife."[\[2\]](#) Part of my job as a husband is to create an environment in our home that allows my wife to be all God created her to be. She needs to be able to trust my leadership. She needs to know I will stand up for her and provide a secure environment. She needs to be comfortable in seeking my guidance and instruction. Finally, she needs to know that she is loved with a Christ-like self-sacrificing love. Weber adds, "A woman was made to be provided for, protected, and cared for. A man was made to be a provider, protector, and caregiver. Nothing is more pitiful than a man forfeiting his masculinity or a woman her femininity by transgressing the created order."[\[3\]](#)

Weber's discussion of a man and his lady provides numerous helpful insights, exercises, and illustrations on how a man is to love a woman. One commentator suggested that the chapter titled, "Does Anyone Here Speak Woman?" is worth the price of the book alone. Weber encourages men to realize that since men and women are inherently different, a man needs to learn a woman's language, to live with her in an understanding way as Peter commands (1 Pet. 3:7). We need to put our analytical minds to work to understand how she is put together. We won't ever get all the way there, but after all, a little mystery is what keeps marriage exciting, fresh, and interesting anyway.

Weber devotes three chapters to the incredible power of fathering. Our culture today is in dire need of real men willing to father their children. So many dads are absent either physically or emotionally. This alone accounts for so



many wayward kids, both male and female alike. A father has a powerful multigenerational impact on his sons and daughters whether intentional or not. It's the nature of God's design.

Like arrows in a quiver, each child needs to be constructed, aimed, and released according to the bent God has given them. Skillful parenting does not come naturally, especially in our culture today that is so confused and off course. It will require biblical and rational thinking in advance.

## **A Man and His Friends**

In his book, *Tender Warrior*, Stu Weber titles the first chapter about a man and his friends, "Real Men Stand Together." In our increasingly mobile and fragmented society, it's harder than ever for men to know each other well enough to be willing to stand together. Upon hearing that Jonathan was dead, the future King David commented that Jonathan's love was wonderful, more wonderful than that of a woman (2 Sam. 1:26).

Men who have weathered tough times together, even fought together, develop a bond that can be stronger than that between a man and a woman. But how many men have such a friendship? There are numerous forces in our culture that leave most men isolated and cut-off. We see the lonely male model in the movies all the time. Characters played by John Wayne, Bruce Willis, Sylvester Stallone, and Arnold Schwarzenegger tend to be the isolated lonely male types: able, or perhaps, forced to handle life's pressures on their own.

Neighborhoods rarely have block parties today. We live in our closed up homes (no open windows in summer or people out on the porch on summer evenings) with tall fences keeping things private. We drive our own cars to work, work long hours, and relax in front of the TV or a book isolated from those around us. A sense of community has been lost in our cities and even

small towns. Men, therefore, have no one to connect with outside of office mates or sports teammates. We think we do just fine on our own, thank you.

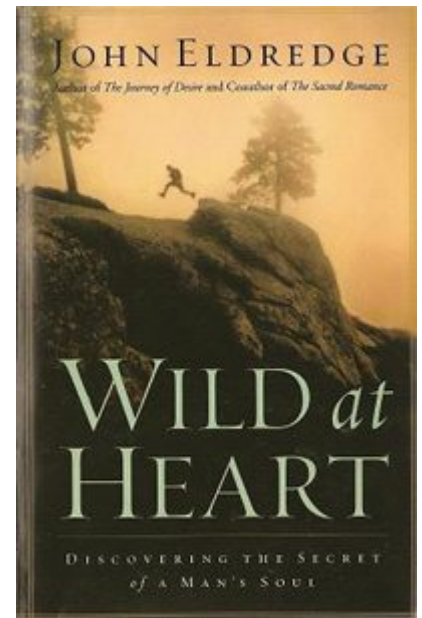
However, as we grow older, we hunger for someone of the male species to truly share what we are experiencing. But there is no Jonathan or David, someone I fought with in the trenches, someone who really knows me and my successes and struggles.

Men long for someone to lock arms with in a struggle greater than themselves. Looking again at David and Jonathan, we learn in 1 Samuel 14 that Jonathan was a warrior just like David, and when David slew Goliath (1 Samuel 18), Jonathan immediately made a connection. They had shared values. They became one in spirit. Jonathan made a covenant with David that basically said what's mine is yours. They developed an unselfish love for each other. Jonathan exhibited a deep loyalty to David when he intervened on his behalf when his father, King Saul, sought David's life.

In 1 Samuel 20, David and Jonathan expect that they may never see each other again and weep in each other's embrace. They were transparent. They weren't afraid to be emotional in the other's presence. Do you have a friend like that? I encourage you to seek a friend who shares your values, and work to develop an unselfish, loyal, and transparent relationship that the Lord will use to guide you through today's muddy waters.

**Battle to Fight, an Adventure to Live,  
and a Beauty to Rescue**

In the continuing parade of books from Christian authors for men comes a book that has taken the evangelical community by storm. Counselor and writer John Eldredge claims that men are wild at heart and desperately need to recapture this essential part of maleness. In his book, *Wild at Heart*, Eldredge claims that every man needs a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue.



Eldredge's triumvirate lines up quite well with Weber's four pillars, the Heart of the King, Warrior, Mentor, and Friend. Both Weber and Eldredge assert that a man needs a cause outside himself to fully live out the image of God in him. They just use different terminology.

However, *Wild at Heart* sometimes leaves you a little too wild. Yes, men need to be free to explore that wild side, but responsibility is not just a duty that shackles a man's God-given wildness. Eldredge can sometimes run roughshod over the state of men in the church and seems to encourage men to be little boys rather than grown men with both needs *and* responsibilities.

For instance, Eldredge uses many illustrations from physically demanding backcountry experiences to highlight his call to be wild at heart. Early in the book he retells how he and his sons faced the flooded, muddy, and debris-filled Snake River with nothing but a canoe. He says, "I have never floated the Snake in a canoe, nor any other river for that matter, but what the heck. We jumped in and headed off into the unknown, like Livingstone plunging into the interior of dark Africa." [\[4\]](#) Wild? Sure, but reckless and irresponsible, too!

But despite the occasional excess, Eldredge uncovers that same

need for a cause outside himself, and identifies it as a battle to fight, an adventure to live, and a beauty to rescue.

Eldredge proclaims that there is something fierce inside every man, whether it is slaying the dragons of business or whacking a little white ball on a golf course. Men naturally compete. If there is no winner, we quickly get bored.

The adventurous spirit is not just about having fun. Adventure requires something of a man. Deep down inside we wonder if we have what it takes, whatever the task that presents itself. Most men watch war movies wondering how they would have responded if presented with the same situation.

But there's more. Men need someone to fight for and with. A companion. A beauty. A helpmate. Adam had a great and wonderful world to explore at his creation. But God recognized that he needed something else, a helpmate suitable for him.

In summary then, at the heart of every man there is something fierce, wild, and passionate. But all this can only be properly harnessed as we seek a relationship with the Ultimate Tender Warrior, Jesus Christ. But in a fallen world, we are all walking wounded. If that is the case, does Eldredge have a recipe for healing?

## **Healing the Wound**

John Eldredge likens many men to a huge male lion in his local zoo. The lion, as powerful and ferocious as he is, is caged in a small cell where he lies around, bored except at feeding time, and is but a shadow of what he was created to be. In a fallen world, where our enemy prowls around looking for someone to devour, most if not all men have been wounded at the heart of their masculinity. It has sapped their strength and put them on the sidelines.

Most often this wound comes from someone close to us, either a parent (usually the father), sibling, relative or peer. Most

of us can remember someone telling us, either by words or actions, that we don't have what it takes to be a man. This can often be due to a series of events over an extensive period of time rather than to a single event. As a result, we go through life wondering if we have what it takes.

In today's culture, this wound can come from a school system that is telling our boys that there is something wrong with them. Boys are far more likely to be medicated than girls, and often it is only for just being boys. And with so many fatherless homes due to either physical absence or an extremely passive father who never gets involved, nobody is showing boys and young men what it means to be a man.

So men will often try to answer their question, to heal their wound, by going to some very unwise places. Some rebel, others try to earn their father's respect by becoming driven overachievers. Others retreat into passivity or are haunted by pornography or even drugs. Some search for their masculinity from women or maybe just one woman. But femininity can never bestow masculinity.

There ends up being a false self we create to distance ourselves from the question we fear, that gives others the impression we have it all figured out, when deep inside everything is mush. The answer lies in going to the One who created us for a very specific purpose and indeed knows who we are (Psalm 139). Jesus never shied away from acknowledging that He was totally dependent on the Father. Many times He said things like, "I and the Father are one." Or "I do nothing apart from the Father."

We have been created to be dependent on God, yet we as men continually try to convince ourselves we can do it on our own. In order to bring us to a point of recognizing our daily need to walk with Him, the Lord will bring us through trials that force us to depend on Him. The false self is stripped away until there is nothing left for us to do. Here and only here

can the wound be healed. The Lord will walk us through an intensely personal awakening to reveal whom He created us to be if we will only trust Him.

So when troubles arise, instead of whining or complaining, we should ask, What is it the Lord wants me to see? What is He trying to teach me? What do I need to learn? Then we will be on the road to true masculinity.[\[5\]](#)

## Notes

1. Stu Weber, *Tender Warrior* (Sisters, Ore.: Multnomah Books, 1993), p. 43.
2. Ibid., p. 92.
3. Ibid., p. 92.
4. John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), p. 5.
5. This last section summarizes chapters 3-7, which are the heart of Eldredge's book, *Wild at Heart*. When reading *Wild at Heart*, one needs to be aware that Eldredge's language is sometimes imprecise and can leave the wrong impression. I'm convinced that Eldredge sees that the real battle we all must face is with spiritual forces, and that our physical tests of strength are only rehearsals for the real thing. But his book can be misinterpreted as an excuse for men to overindulge in risky behavior and some men to take dangerous risks they are not prepared for. For some, *Wild at Heart* can only serve as an appeal to the flesh. So, is the tender warrior wild at heart? Yes, but not to the degree some choose to believe. Eldredge uses a great illustration on page 83. "Yes, a man is a dangerous thing. So is a scalpel. It can wound or it can save your life. You don't make it safe by making it dull; you

put it in the hands of someone who knows what he's doing."  
Only the Ultimate Tender Warrior, Jesus  
Christ qualifies.

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