



CALL OF THE WILD

Summer / Fall 2008
Volume 2
Edition 1

A Publication of Wilderness International™ Inc., a non-profit conservation group with a biblical worldview

COMING THIS FALL
A NEW & IMPROVED WEBSITE

www.wildernessintl.com

Check it out this fall for new features and information



WHO WE ARE

We are Christians that love the outdoors. Each of us has our own favorite way to enjoy it. We may choose kayaking, fishing, hiking, photography, skiing, rafting, hunting or one of any number of outdoor activities. The bottom line is we love to experience this great place God has created for us. Now we are taking it to another level and getting involved in taking care of what we have. Some of our goals are to:

1. Operate a professional, cutting-edge, conservation organization with a biblical worldview.
2. Engage the Christian community in the conservation and environmental movements.
3. Provide outdoor adventures and conservation projects to enable people to experience and care for God's creation.
4. Proclaim that **nature** is the "Art of God" and that it declares His majesty to all people.
5. In every activity we do, gently expose those we work with to God the creator and assist them in making an intimate connection with Him.

"A world in which God the Creator uses the material stuff of the universe to communicate who He is, is one that demands reverence from human beings." *Bartholomew I, Eastern Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch – Time Magazine May 12, 2008*

Become a Member!

We are opening Wilderness International up for membership. As a member you will be joining with us in our efforts to enable and encourage as many people as possible to enjoy the wonder of nature, observe God's majesty as it is displayed through His creation, and as a result, enhance their lives through this knowledge and experience.

- We are helping people connect intimately with the Creator through conservation projects and outdoor adventures.
- We are giving Christians opportunities to work alongside nonbelievers and build relationships with them.
- We are infiltrating the conservation and environmental movements with a biblical worldview.

We have unlimited opportunities for additional conservation projects and outdoor adventures. The only thing that limits us are resources. We are prayerfully asking and believing God to bring 1000 founding members into our organization. For a small annual donation of \$25 you can become a member and join forces with us in this exciting, unique ministry.

Will you join with us today? Just fill out the form on the last page and send it in with your \$25 donation.

Contact: info@wildernessintl.com website: www.wildernessintl.com

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Why Wilderness Adventure?

By Dr. Ashley Denton



Young people are longing for a meaningful vision for their future. The world of video games and reality TV has only deepened their need for experiences that cause true transformation and cast compelling vision for their future. This has been true throughout the generations. Take for example, first century Palestine. It was absent of *Grand Theft Auto IV* and *Boom Blox*, but it did not lack distractions and burdens that were equally concerning. There were distractions of wealth, poverty, and religion along with weighty burdens of Pharisaical laws and bitter Roman occupation. As Jesus looked into the

culture of His day, He settled on a surprising strategy to reach people. He chose a group of *young men* to turn the world upside down. He used the wilderness as His primary classroom, and He employed *adventure* to produce radical commitment toward His mission.

Young people need time away from distractions so they can rest their soul and learn to think clearly. Experiential learning accomplishes this through natural decision-making scenarios, and it teaches them how to avoid trivial emotional distractions while alone or within a group. Wilderness journeys draw out the best in people by confronting their fears and exposing their entitlement. Young people want to pursue a radical mission, and the wilderness can sever the entanglements that strangle away God's epoch vision for their lives.

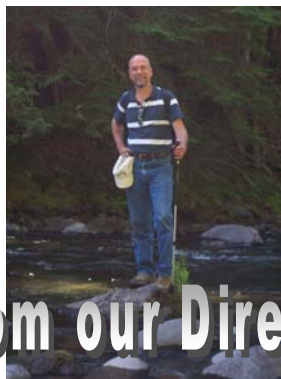
Jesus preferred to illustrate Kingdom truth in the context of Creation. He taught along roads, atop mountains, in fields, in boats, while resting in gardens. He used adventure to produce faith. As in Mark 4:37-41, after a long and tiring

day of ministry, Jesus instructed His disciples to go over to the other side of the lake for some rest. Their strength was tested by the treachery of a furious squall to the point that they thought they were going to die. After waking up, Jesus talked to the wind commanding it to halt its fury, and the waves calmed. What an experience that must have been to witness a *conversation between Christ and His Creation!* Jesus crafted this wilderness experience to show them that *although they had every reason to trust Him, they still lacked faith.* Could they have learned the same lesson from a lecture hall in the Temple? Or in this case, were the *classroom* of the sea and the *timing* of a raging storm necessary to transform their hearts? The Scriptures seem to indicate the latter to be true.

Why Wilderness Adventure? Jesus shows us that the wilderness is a place where God gets our attention. If this was the way Jesus apprenticed young people in His context, then we may conclude that it is equally critical today for young people in our growing *urban* world to radically encounter Him in the same way through wilderness adventure.

Dr. Denton is the director of *Wilderness Ministry Institute* (www.wildernessministry.org) and *Outdoor Leadership International* (www.outdoorleaders.org). He has a D.Min. in Missions and Cross Cultural Studies from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and specializes in developing indigenous youth workers overseas in the heart and skills to effectively introduce young people to Jesus Christ through outdoor adventure. He currently resides with his wife Becky and their five children in Fort Collins, Colorado.

In the directors article for this edition of our newsletter I would like to address the reaction I get from so many people when I tell them that Wilderness International is a conservation group with a biblical worldview. When I make this statement I see the confusion and curiosity peak in their faces. Then they ask me things like, "What does that mean?" or "How does a biblical worldview apply to conservation?" One way of explaining it is to say that a biblical worldview is seeing the world the way God sees it. It is thinking God's thoughts after Him in all areas of life. A biblical worldview stands on the fact that the Bible speaks to every area of life including the environment and conservation. As Christians this gives us the responsibility of engaging in the conservation and environmental movements. Each conservation project



From our Director

and outdoor adventure that we plan is intended to give Christians an opportunity to get involved. We plan joint projects with secular conservation organizations so as Christians we can dig in and work alongside nonbelievers. Our outdoor adventures provide unique oppor-

tunities for Christians to speak into the lives of unbelieving family members and friends that normally don't occur in every day life. As we are involved in these opportunities we build credibility and the right to be heard. We get the opportunity to bring our worldview into the area of conservation where we have traditionally been silent. So, if you love the outdoors and desire a new creative way to bring His kingdom into peoples lives, I invite you to climb on board. Volunteer for one of our projects, bring a friend along on one of our outdoor adventures, and please consider becoming a founding member of Wilderness Intl. There is a form on the back page to make it easy for you to join with us. God's blessings to you mv friends.

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MISSING FROM ACTION

For 100 years the effects of the industrial revolution and mans insatiable hunger for more comfort, space and power took their toll. This process was not driven by intent to destroy the environment but by misplaced priorities, greed and fundamental misunderstandings about the environments ability to recover and restore itself.

Smog, acid rain and rivers that caught fire finally got the attention of concerned men and women. Much was revealed and much was done to change the situation and we are now a cleaner and more responsible nation.

Sadly, a large and influential segment of our society remains wrongfully silent in the struggle to save and conserve the environment. That segment is - Biblically centered Christians. We failed to lead in an area that we should have set the standard for - conservation and environmental stewardship. There are several reasons that Christians have stayed out of the battle.



One reason is the fear of embracing some sort of Pantheism regarding the 'relationship' we might be encouraging with nature and the environment - a fear that we might be drawn in to some sort of worship of the creation rather than the Creator. True, pantheism, if it recognizes God at all, teaches that 'creation is an extension of His essence'. But this is not a sufficient reason to ignore what's happening, in fact it is all the more reason to get involved and look for opportunities to speak the truth about God and creation.

By Bob Bailey

Another reason we stay out of the battle for environmental stewardship is because of a lack of understanding regarding Gods view of creation, the earth and our role as stewards. Remember, Gods response when He completed creation was that it was really good. Not the "Wow, I did a great job at that one" type of good - but the idea that creation itself was a good thing. It's real, it fits, it has a role in the story God is writing.

In Genesis 9 Gods covenant was with 'every living created thing' and it tells us that it is something to be recognized, honored (not worshiped) and cared for by true believers.

It seems unwise, inconsistent and unbiblical to treat the earth and all creation with anything but deep respect and care. Especially by Christians who have a relationship with the One who created it and asked us to care for it.

Bob Bailey currently lives in the Portland OR area with his wife. He is the founder and President of LifeChart Coaching "Outdoor Adventures" www.lifechartcoaching.com, which incorporates personal and group life coaching with outdoor experiences. He has led wilderness adventure canoe trips in Alaska, California and Oregon. He has also taught classes on Outdoor Recreation, Stress Camping and Survival at Biola University and Judson College. At Multnomah University he taught a class on the History and Philosophy of Science, which among other things, dealt with the Christians role in the stewardship of the environment.

Membership Enrollment Form

Please complete this form and mail it along with a donation for \$25 to:
Wilderness International Inc. PO Box 491 Canby OR 97013

Name _____

Address _____

City ST Zip _____

Email _____

We can always use a donation above the \$25 membership donation to further our mission.

Please indicate any additional amount here: _____ . Wilderness International is an IRS approved 501c3 tax exempt organization so your donations are tax deductible.

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