

GORDON DALBEY



HEALING THE MASCULINE SOUL

HOW GOD RESTORES MEN
TO REAL MANHOOD



INCLUDES A STUDY AND DISCUSSION GUIDE

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

HEALING THE MASCULINE SOUL

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LOST AMONG MEN: A NONPOLITICAL VIEW OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Resource List

- DESERT STREAM MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 17635, Anaheim, CA 92817
(714) 779-6899, www.desertstream.org
- TRANSFORMING CONGREGATIONS (United Methodist)
P.O. Box 7146, Pendel, PA 19047
(215) 752-9655, transcong@aol.com
- MASTERING LIFE MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 351149, Jacksonville, FL 32235,
www.MasteringLife.org

A balanced, biblically based and very helpful resource:

- A booklet, *Homosexuality: Can It Be Healed?* by Francis MacNutt, available from *Christian Healing Ministries*,
P.O. Box 9520, Jacksonville, FL 32208, www.christianhealingmin.org

For Christian parents of sons or daughters trapped in same-sex orientation:

- LIVING STONES MINISTRIES
114 N. Glendora Ave., Ste. 124, Glendora, CA 91741
(626) 963-6683, www.livingstonesministry.org



STUDY GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

CHECK-IN (Introduce yourself to the group and then tell something important that happened to you this past week.)

UPDATE (For this first session, take turns telling the group why you decided to come to this class/program, and what you hope to get out of it.)

QUESTIONS

1. We usually take God seriously only “after an encounter” with Him. Describe a time when you had an “encounter” with God. How did that teach you about what God is like?
2. A healed man is able “to enjoy . . . the wonder of contributing [his] strength for the well-being of others.” Tell about a time when you contributed your strength for the well-being of someone else. How could the men you know (at your church, workplace, etc.) contribute their strength together for the good of others?
3. As you look at and think about our society today, what is one sign that men need healing? What do you think (1) hinders, or (2) might help healing in that area?

4. Make sure that you know everyone else's name in your group. Then tell one new thing you learned today about each of the others.

PRAY TOGETHER. (Let all the men who want to, pray—for the class, the group, some other man or situation.)

CHAPTER 1

CHECK-IN/UPDATE: Tell your name and how the class/group has affected you since the last meeting (something related that you've been thinking about, have learned, or maybe noticed in others that you wouldn't have seen before).

QUESTIONS

1. Some Christian books aimed at men basically say, "In case you didn't know, here's what the Bible says—so be a man and do it." How do you think this book is different? How does Romans 7:14–8:1 suggest a different path to manhood?
2. What do you think it would mean for a man to turn away from his own courage and strength? Have you ever "run from the lion" (like the author when he played tennis)? In that situation, what do you think Jesus, the Lion of Judah, might have been wanting to do for you, if you had stopped running and let Him?
3. Do you think God "calls men out"? How do you think God might be calling you out even now, in your own life? (Calling you from what? To what?)
4. "The power to honor the truth—to speak it and be it—is at the heart of true masculinity." Do you agree? Why or why not? Have you ever had to speak the truth and been afraid? What happened?
5. Has God ever "destroyed your hiding place," i.e., taken away some false security, so you would reach for Him instead?

PRAY TOGETHER.

CHAPTER 2

CHECK-IN/UPDATE: Each session should begin with group members sharing some new insight they've gained this week through their study. Remember to do this warmup activity each week.

QUESTIONS

1. Name two positive character traits of your mother and something she did that demonstrated each.
2. For each of the following life stages, name at least one thing for which you were dependent upon your mother:
 - a. in the womb
 - b. infant
 - c. boy
 - d. teenager
3. How would you define the word *idol*? In what sense did Harry set his mother up as an idol? Jesus says, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). How did Jesus show Harry the truth, and how did that set him free?
4. In the Bible, God commands us to "honor . . . your mother" (Ex. 20:12 NIV) and also says a man must leave his mother in order to unite with his wife (Gen. 2:24). How do you reconcile these two apparently contradictory statements? How do you think God might be calling you to honor your mother today? How do you think He might be calling you to leave her?
5. In the fairy tale, "Iron Hans" seems to represent the "deep masculine," which is somehow apart from civilization. Where are you in the story, in your own personal growth?
 - a. afraid to go into the forest
 - b. tentatively going into the forest
 - c. recognizing the power of Iron Hans
 - d. back in the village telling the men to come into the forest together

- e. in the bucket brigade, going down after Iron Hans with the other men
- f. someplace else (caged in the village, going after the key, living in the woods with Iron Hans)

How is Jesus similar or different from Iron Hans?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 3

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Introduce yourselves to each other in this way: “I am (*your name*), son of (*your father’s name*), grandson of (*your father’s father’s name*), great-grandson of . . . ,” etc. How far back can you go?
2. Name two positive character traits of your father (or, if he was not present when you were growing up, your closest male relative, or some other man you admired); give an example of something he did to demonstrate each.
3. Tell about a time when your father (or, if he was not present when you were growing up, your closest male relative, or some other man) called you to come and do something special with other men.
4. Give an example of something you did as a preteen or teen to feel that you were “one of the guys.” Why do you think we Americans do not have a “rite of passage” for boys? What difference do you think that makes in our society?
5. The author has said, “This chapter was the hardest of all to write. A writer has to go back over his work again and again to polish it, and every time I reread this chapter, I found myself crying.” One man bought this book and took it to work to read on breaks. When he began reading this particular chapter, he felt tears come to his eyes, and he had to stop. What about this chapter do you think moved these men so deeply? How did it affect you?

6. What could you and the other men at your church do to begin “calling out” the older boys in the congregation?

PRAY TOGETHER.

CHAPTER 4

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Susan leave a nice guy like John? What does Robert Bly say is required of a man if he is to be life-giving in relationship with a woman? Have you ever done this yourself? What happened? Is this hard or easy for you? Why?
2. Why might a woman “test” a man? Have you ever sensed that a woman was testing you? What happened? In what sense does a man who’s willing to argue with a woman *fight for* her, instead of *withdrawing from* her?
3. In an old 1950s pop song, “Johnny, Get Angry,” the singer tells her boyfriend she’s leaving him “just to see what [he] would do”— and he just hangs his head. Why does she prefer that he get angry? What would you advise Johnny to tell her?
4. Where are you in the story of the male and female canaries?
 - a. In a corner, feeling powerless before the hen
 - b. Alone, in the healing hands of the Father
 - c. Directly expressing your own feelings and needs to the woman
 - d. Chirping beside the woman in mutual respect
5. The “macho man” is violent and alone. Jesus was neither of these, yet demonstrated ultimate strength. If a man refuses to be violent with or to withdraw from the woman, how can he still demonstrate strength with her? Give an example from your own experience (or perhaps from a book or movie).

6. “If I get strong with her, she’ll leave me.” Where does the author suggest this kind of feeling in a man comes from? Have you ever felt like this? What kind of strength do you think women are looking for in men today? What does it take for (a) the man to have it, and (b) the woman to receive it?

PRAY TOGETHER.

CHAPTER 5

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Can you remember your first date? Why did you ask her out? Where did you go? Were you nervous asking her out? What do you think you were afraid of? What do you think an adult man like Chuck Yeager feared in his wife? What do you think it would be like to talk to a woman that honestly and directly (like the young engaged man)? Try it yourself with the woman in your own life, and see.
2. In what sense is sexual attraction more than just physical? How does the Bible understand its origin? How have you experienced this in relationships with women?
3. How would your father answer this question: “What’s it like to get close to a woman?” As a man today, how has your experience been similar or different from his? Why is “leaving father and mother” so important when you marry (Gen. 2:24)? How is your idea of marriage different from your parents’? Similar to your parents’?
4. Have you ever criticized a woman or started a fight with her because you were getting “too close”? How could you have handled it differently?
5. To what “new spirit of mutuality” does the author think God is calling men and women today? Do you agree? How have you experienced what he says about earlier decades?

6. Another author has said,

The promises of marriage give us . . . the time we need to receive a stranger, to enter into the vast and unfathomable reality of another human being. There will be time for the pain that comes when I realize that I have indeed married the wrong person—that is, that I have married the person who knows me better than I know myself, not the person I thought I was marrying, who merely props up my false images of myself. Truthfulness takes time.*

Give an example of a time when a woman showed that she knew you better than you know yourself. How did you handle that?

PRAY.

* Wm. H. Willimon, “Time and Marriage: The Promises of June,” *Christian Century* (June 4–11, 1986): 546.

CHAPTER 6

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. How would you answer this man:

It’s easy to point a finger at Bill Clinton and all the other big-name guys who’ve fallen to sexual sin. But the fact is, most guys know doggone well the kind of feelings that can get you into trouble like that. I know a Christian man shouldn’t do it, but does our faith have any way to keep me from doing it? And don’t tell me, “Just read the Bible.” The big-name Christian guys all knew their Scriptures.

2. How does Juan Carlos Ortiz describe the difference between Law and Grace? Which are you most used to? Why? Where in your life do you need to let God draw you from Law into Grace?

3. “In the biblical faith, sexual fidelity is first and foremost faithfulness to God, not to the woman.” Why? In what way could God be calling you to greater faithfulness to Himself in this area of your life?

4. How was the stallion Ralph encountered in his dream like a part of himself? How did standing up to the horse affect his relationships with women? How could it help you?
5. What did your father teach you about your sexual impulses? What do you wish he'd taught you? How would you talk to a thirteen-year-old son about this?
6. What does the author say makes pornography so attractive? Do you agree? Why or why not?

CLOSE IN PRAYER.

CHAPTER 7

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. How did Carl's relationship with his father affect his own sense of manhood? How would you pray for Carl?
2. What do you think Robert Bly means by a boy's "body longing for the father"? How could you as a father honor this in your son?
3. Why does the author reject both the "liberal" and "conservative" views of homosexuality? How do such political categories keep us from seeing as God sees? Have you ever been drawn into such polarized thinking? If so, how did you get beyond it?
4. What sort of emotional and spiritual maturity would the men at your church need in order to welcome a brother struggling with homosexual impulses? What could you and other men at your church do to allow God to bring you into such maturity?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 8

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Give an example of a time when you:
 - a. disciplined yourself in order to accomplish a task
 - b. showed calmness “under fire”
 - c. demonstrated loyalty to someone else
 - d. took a calculated risk and tested yourself
 - e. took initiative to right a wrong
 - f. took action on behalf of another person in need
 - g. worked together with other men in any of the above
2. What skill would you now like to develop, or what part of yourself would you like to improve upon? What would you have to do to make that happen?
3. Think of a brother you’d like to be your “paraclete” and talk to him about it. (If this is hard for you, great! Doing something easy requires no courage, and therefore, offers no opportunity to grow as a warrior.)
4. How would you answer George Leonard’s question, “Is there some way that the warrior spirit at its best and highest can contribute to a lasting peace and to the quality of our individual lives during the time of peace?” In particular, how could a godly warrior spirit take shape among the men in your church?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 9

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. What did your grandfathers do for a living? What did they tell you about their jobs? If you never met them, did your father or mother tell you anything about their jobs?
2. What did your father do? How did he feel about his job? How have you felt about his job? Would you like to do that kind of work? Why or why not?
3. How do you feel about your own job?
 - a. Couldn't ask for a better job.
 - b. Good, but could be better.
 - c. Take it or leave it.
 - d. Bad, but I can put up with it.
 - e. Can't stand it.

Explain your answer.

4. Do you think God called you to your particular job? If so, what do you think He had in mind when He did so? Read Colossians 3:23. What would it mean for you to work at your job as if Jesus were your boss?
5. Give an example of some success you've had at your job after working hard at it. Were you rewarded there? If not, did you reward yourself? If not, how do you think your Father God would want to reward you?
6. How would you like to improve at doing your job? What would that take?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 10

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. In the exchange of letters between Peter and his father, how did Peter feel when his father answered him by saying, “I love all my children”? Why? Would your Father God answer you that way?
2. Why do you think such a great king and heroic leader of men like David had such trouble as a father?
3. How would you describe your relationship with your own father? (If he is no longer alive, when he was alive; if you never knew him, substitute your closest male relative.)
 - a. *Very close.* We talk freely together about anything, trust each other completely, and show love without hesitation.
 - b. *Close.* We talk about most things fairly openly, but there are some things I wouldn’t talk with him about.
 - c. *Civil.* We don’t fight, but we don’t embrace either. We connect mostly about surface stuff, not things that really matter.
 - d. *Distant.* We don’t communicate unless we have to.
4. How do you feel about where you are (or were) with your dad? In what way(s) do you wish things were different between you?
5. What can you do as a (1) father (if you have children) and (2) son toward God’s plan to “bring fathers and children together again” (Mal. 4:5–6)?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 11

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Describe your wife/fiancée's relationship with her father:

- a. when she was growing up as a girl
- b. now

How do you think that has affected her as a woman today? If you don't know, ask her.

2. What do you think a girl needs from her father? (If you're married, asking your wife is a great place to start. If not, ask your sister or any other woman you trust.) Could your group challenge the women of your church to meet and prepare a program to teach the men how to be good dads to their daughters?

3. Dads, if you have a daughter, think through these questions:

- a. What is the best part about having a daughter?
- b. What do you see as the greatest challenge in raising her?
- c. Is there a "growing edge" between the two of you?
- d. What do you think God is trying to teach you about how to support her and love her?
- e. What do you most want to learn about fathering your daughter?

4. What could the men of your church do to recognize and bless your daughters as they come into womanhood? What could you do to "nourish the femininity" of the women in your fellowship? If you don't know, how could you find out?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 12

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Give an example of something your father (or some other adult male relative/authority figure) did that showed love for you. How did that make you feel?
2. The author tells about a man who realizes that his father wasn't able to give him the love he needed. Why does the author rejoice at this?
3. "More often we project onto God all the character flaws of Dad—perhaps he punished you harshly, abandoned you, judged or rejected you—so we can't trust Father God's loving overture in Jesus." Ask the Holy Spirit to show you ways you might have done that yourself. Then ask God's forgiveness for your putting a "bum rap" on Him, and ask Him to reveal His true self to you.
4. Give an example of a time when you needed love from another human being, but the person either rejected you or wasn't there for you. How did that make you feel?
5. What do you think Philip meant when he said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father. That is all we need"? How do you need God to show His love to you right now?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

CHAPTER 13

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. Did your father go to church? Why or why not? How did he feel about "religion"? How are your own attitudes similar or different?

2. “The church has done much over the centuries to encourage men to pursue feminine virtues. But we have not sought and portrayed Christ-centered ways to pursue masculine virtues.” Is this true for your church? What could you and the other men there do to “pursue masculine virtues” at your church?
3. Why do you think more men don’t go to church? Do a quick, informal survey. Before this meeting, talk to three men you know who don’t go to church, and ask them why they don’t go. Report your findings to your group. From the total of responses reported, what can you generalize?
4. What do you think God meant when He told Paul, “My power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor. 12:9 NIV)? Have you ever had an experience when you were weak, but God moved in power?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER, YOUR CHURCH, AND THE MEN YOU INTERVIEWED IN QUESTION 3.

CHAPTER 14

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. How does the “cowboy” image in Willie Nelson’s song fall short of what Father God wants for His sons? What essential characteristic of the Christian faith is absent in doing other, outdoor activities on Sunday morning, instead of being in church?
2. What does Nancy Chodorow say is the difference between men and women when it comes to getting close to others? How do you see this principle at work in yourself?
3. “So the woman . . . [serves] as the maker and sustainer of relationships in behalf of the man.” Is this true for you? If so, why? If not, give three recent examples of how you have acted to sustain relationships with other people (not including your wife, children, or business associates).

4. What does the author say is the difference between “religion” and “spirituality”? Which appeals more to you? Why?
5. In what sense do you think boys (and men later) seek to be “protected by rules”? Protected from what? Robert Raines has written,

We no longer need the security of our beliefs or the security of being right when we are able to trust in God. Our search for security, our making of a golden calf, is our way of asking God and each other, “Do you love me?”*

What do you think that means? Where in your own life do you need to move from rules to trusting, loving relationship with the Father?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

*Robert Raines, *To Kiss the Joy* (Waco, TX: Word), 17.

CHAPTER 15

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. What does Jacob’s name mean? In what sense are you—and all of us—a “Jacob”? How does Genesis 31 say that part of us is overcome? That is, what was required for Jacob to become a new person? Have you ever had an experience like Jacob—a “dark night of the soul” in the river gorge? Tell the others about it.
2. As you look back over your own life struggles, what “new name” might Father God be trying to give you? That is, what character traits does He seem to be shaping, or honing, in you? How can you cooperate with Him in that?
3. “Before you can love somebody else, or be loved by someone else, you have to wrestle with that part of yourself that gets scared when love starts breaking down your defenses.” Think back to when you first began to realize you loved someone (your wife, perhaps). What

sort of defenses did you have? How did loving, and *being* loved, begin to break those defenses down? What kind of fear did you have? How have you dealt with it?

4. Why do you think “the Spirit of Father God is no magic wand that whisks us off to a new world of honeymoons and overnight success”? Is God just cruel to deny us perpetual happiness, or does He have some other purpose in mind? How do you reconcile the upsets in your own life with the idea that God loves you?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER.

EPILOGUE

CHECK-IN/UPDATE

QUESTIONS

1. In what ways is the big lion like Jesus?
2. Where do you find yourself in the story (as the little lion):
 - a. curled up warmly, close to your mother
 - b. realizing that you have been cut from your mother
 - c. wandering hungry and alone, looking for some community
 - d. “safe” among the sheep
 - e. facing the big lion in fear
 - f. letting the big lion lead you into the forest
 - g. recognizing yourself in the big lion
 - h. roaring
3. What would it mean for you to “roar”? Where is Jesus calling you to have strength right now? How is He leading you to be more like Him?
4. How has this group helped in healing your masculine soul?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER, then ask God what He might want for you at this point.