

Upcoming Events

- We're going to skip a couple of Sundays because of the Easter Holiday
- Our next meeting will be April 15
- Watch your email and the church calendar for particulars

Individual Highlights:

"The Question" 2

Next Meeting 3

Website:

www.cctc.net/~ccoan/brothers

Forum:

<http://deleonfumcbob.informe.com/>

Members of the First United Methodist Church of DeLeon's "Wild at Heart" Study Group.

Fifth Meeting

The Wild Men lived up to our billing with our meeting March 25.

Rain, falling off and on throughout the evening, failed to dampen the adventure – in fact, it added to the experience in ways we never expected.

The plan was to meet at a cabin in the Nunnely Bottom south of town, ferry ourselves over to Vampire Bridge, and hike back along the river.

Despite the rain, that's exactly what occurred – but with additions.

Just over a dozen of us loaded up in the church van, and we headed down the dirt backroad to our Insertion Point.

In case you were wondering, 15-passenger church vans (loaded with 12 backseat drivers) are not the best vehicles for mudding.

Despite Kevin's heroic efforts, one sideways slide ended with the back end lurching into the ditch and bouncing off a protruding tree root.

After a short silence, everyone disembarked the



Yep, we're stuck!

now-immobile van and assessed the damage.

Insurance adjuster Greg verified that we were, indeed, stuck.

Quick-thinking Dr. Howard triaged, and diagnosed (essentially) "There ain't no way we're getting it out of there."

Whipping out his cell phone, he called a friend who lives nearby and owns a tractor.

After a short wait, the friend arrived and with much advice from bystanders, hoisted the van back onto the road.

Since we were only about a half mile from our intended insertion point, the consensus was that the purpose would be best served by beginning our hike from where we stood.

That, and the overwhelming silent vote indicated no confidence in riding with

Kevin again.

After a short walk down the road, during which we were passed by the van and its escorting tractor, we entered the woods.

We wandered through the spring woods – green and wet from the rain, alongside the Sabanna River's twists and turns. At least once we startled a small herd of deer and watched them dash away.

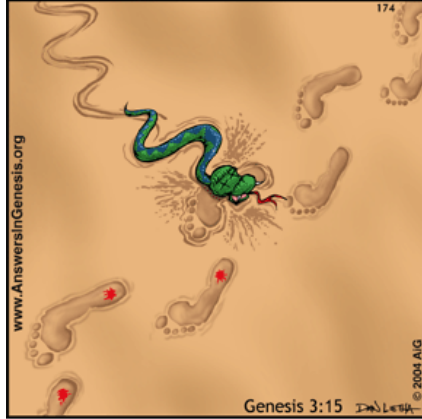
One river crossing saw Cliff accept a piggyback ride from Greg across the water – even though one moment it looked like they'd both end up in the bottom of the creek, they emerged unscathed.

Pray for healing on Greg's back (not really).

After a little over an hour and a little more than two miles, we arrived back at the cabin.

AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha



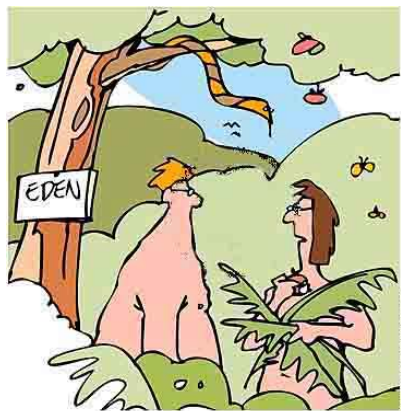
Saviour crossing



Moses (Howard, with the staff) leading some of the Israelites through the wilderness. The others were wandering elsewhere – something about a golden calf – but returned when he threatened to smite them.

“The Question That Haunts Every Man” – Chapter Three

Adam didn't know that thing with the snake and apple was going to happen that day.



“Do these plants make me look fat?”

The movie *Gladiator* ends with the champion (giving his life in the process) destroying the evil pretender to the throne, the captives set free, and the rightful heir restored. As he buries the idols, the black gladiator says, “Now we are free,” and, “We will see you again – but not yet.”

We are free through the work of Jesus Christ. But are you living like a free man? Is there a gap between the life and freedom you see described in scripture and your own life? Are you living that life of adventure, battle, and beauty that God longs and years for you to?

The reality is that life is hard. We have an enemy who is opposing every good thing in our lives. We are in a world at war – there is invasion going on,

and things are hard. God is fiercely committed to restoring us to the men he meant for us to be. We are needed -- men of strength, men who are willing to fight, men who are willing to take the risks involved in the adventures God calls them into. Men who understand beauty and find the hope that beauty brings them and are pursuing the beauties that god brings into their life as God pursues His beauty – His Church.

We are needed as men - - fully finished, restored men. I want to ask God, “Can't you do it quickly? – can't we just have a little prayer meeting or something, and it be done?” But it is a process. It takes time.

Go back to the beginning, with Adam and Eve, and that one little command.

Adam didn't know that thing with the snake and apple was going to happen that day. But how often do you know what's going to happen in your day? Do you know that today's going to be the day the layoffs happen, or your kid gets hurt, or your wife is diagnosed with a life-threatening disease?

We're not often prepared for the big events and disruptions in our lives, because God knows we have what it takes to deal with whatever confronts us.

God comes into the garden and asks, “Adam, where are you?”

And Adam says, “I hid because I was afraid.”

We've been battling with it ever since.

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The Question That Haunts Every Man

Continued

There's this sense that if you saw me for what I was, you'd flee. If you really knew me, you wouldn't have anything to do with me.

The question that every man has from his youth is "Do I have what it takes? If I'm really needed, if I'm called to respond in a critical moment, do I have it?"

Most of us have heard in some way – "No, you do not. There's something wrong with you."

So we either pretend that we do (by overcompensating), or we hide, like Adam, out of that fear of exposure. The poser is created by fear.

Every man you meet is an elaborate poser. The world is requiring him to be something he doubts very much he is.

There's something we want, yearn, or ache for, but don't feel like we have what it takes -- so what do we do?

Instead of turning to

God in a posture of hungering and thirsting for righteousness, calling out to God for help -- we fake it. We hide, we do tricks and avoid things. We check out, or give up.

Or we're driven to prove we do have what it takes.

The best thing that could happen is for us to be exposed.

If you can get by, posing with a counterfeit, you don't turn to God. Until we realize "I need you, God," we continue to fake it -- to pose -- to get through life.

God disrupts our world and exposes us -- not to shame us, but to say there's something more, something better.

It would be wonderful to have lenses to understand life from God's perspective. Some of the things we curse -- disruptions, trials, things going wrong -- they're actu-

ally the redeeming hand of God, pulling us out of something that's destructive. It's God rescuing us -- though it feels like he's opposing us.

May God disrupt us. May he expose us, so that we move away from our successful posing. May God push us into risks we would never take unless there was a God we could trust to get us through. May he call us to that place of genuine faith and risk taking - - not the safe risks, the manageable ones, the ones we talk about. The risks that God calls us to are the ones you are not competent in -- the ones he's calling you to are the ones you don't know the outcome.

Jesus came to give us a new heart and a genuine strength; and rather than going to God to get that deep healing and restoration, we too often fake it. We need to go to God and say, "I want the real deal, the real thing -- inside and out."



"Some of the things we curse -- disruptions, trials, things going wrong -- they're actually the redeeming hand of God, pulling us out of something that's destructive. It's God rescuing us -- though it feels like he's opposing us."

Coming Next:
Chapter Four of *Wild at Heart*
"The Wound"

April 15

Watch your email and the church bulletin for details