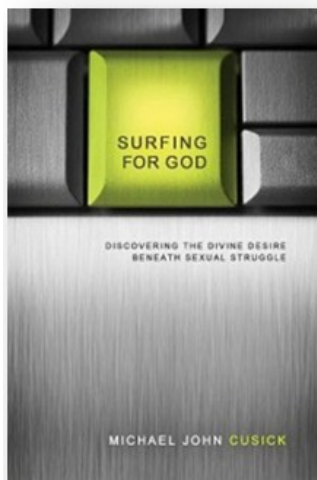




A Measure of Grace

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New Resources *By Roger Jones*

Periodically, I come across a new resource that I believe many of our readers might like to know about. This month, I would like to briefly highlight a couple of them that have recently come to my attention.

***Surfing for God* by Michael John Cusick**

Surfing for God is a book recently released by Michael John Cusick, a Denver area counselor and professor who works primarily with sexual addiction, including pornography. While practical, the message of the book is not the typical “10 easy steps to accountability and change” message. Rather, it addresses the deeper issues which drive people to pornography and sin - a mistrust of God and a lack of belief that God is good. See more info below.

Book Description: You know lust and porn are not God's best, so why can't you stop? Common wisdom says if you just had more willpower, more accountability, or more faith, the struggle would be over. Is the answer really that simple? According to

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counselor and ministry leader Michael John Cusick, the answer is no, but the truth may be much more freeing.

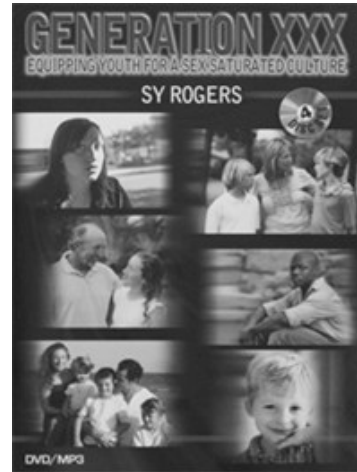
Backed by Scripture, Cusick uses examples from his own life and from his twenty years of counseling experience to show us how the pursuit of empty pleasure is really a search for our heart's deepest desire, and the real key to resistance is discovering an even deeper passion.

About the Author: Michael John Cusick is a Licensed Professional Counselor, speaker, ordained minister, and spiritual director, who serves as President of Restoring the Soul, a ministry that equips and cares for Christian leaders worldwide, and equips the organizations where leaders serve. Having experienced the devastation of sexual addiction and the restoring touch of God's love in his life and marriage, Michael currently serves as adjunct professor at Denver Seminary where he teaches on addictions, human sexuality, spiritual formation, soul care, and mentoring.

For more information visit
www.SurfingForGodBook.com.

***Generation XXX: Equipping Youth for a Sex-Saturated Culture* by Sy Rogers**

This is a new resource by Sy Rogers, a long-time friend to WGA. Sy is entertaining as ever, while offering valuable tools to help parents raise and equip their children for life in a sex-obsessed culture. This is a set of DVDs with 8 teachings which would be an awesome discussion starter for a small group or Sunday



School Class. See more info, including how to order, below.

DVD Set Description: Many factors have conspired to mark the end of innocence for today's youth. With the widespread use of electronic media, what can be done to better prepare them in today's sexually aggressive culture? Sy draws from his own journey of sexual healing, parenting, and three decades as a pastoral care specialist to deliver this powerful 8-part series.

Topics include:

Introduction & Overview

- Defining Expectations About Your Child's Sexuality
- God's Intention for Sexuality: Maturity & Security
- A Model for Healthy Growth & Development
- Factors Affecting Sexual Development - Part 1

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Mary Many Hats *by Mary Heathman*

Mary Many Hats is the Native American name given to me during a conversation with friends at one of our visits to the Arizona Navajo Nation Friends churches a few months ago. I was told that many at the table had been given Native names and I should think about taking one on as well. Before I could come up with an idea, a friend sitting across from me said, “I know! Mary has so many different responsibilities and does so many different things, [wears a lot of hats, so to speak]; we should call her Mary Many Hats.”

So that’s the background. It is widely known among my friends and colleagues in ministry that the Lord has me well-diversified in the ministry investment department! It usually isn’t so obvious; there’s almost always a bit of transition time between shifting focus from one responsibility to another. But this week is an exception to that norm:

- Tuesday Roger and I met with a WGA group member for a discipleship counseling session, and I prepared for sessions I would be teaching or leading later in the week.
- Wednesday I attended the keynote address and a breakout session at the annual conference of the Colorado Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB) in Breckenridge. Alongside parole and probation officers and treatment providers, I learned about sensitivity to victim issues in work with people who have committed sexual offenses, and how multi-agency collaborative

teams could work more effectively together.

- Thursday morning at 7:00 AM found me on my way from Breckenridge over Hoosier Pass and through the valley then east toward Quaker Ridge Camp just north of Woodland Park. I led two workshops on self-esteem (defined by God, not us, that is). There were a total of 58 middle schoolers in 2 sessions. It is always a personal pleasure to share with young people how priceless they are to God and how even when they mess up, God always has another plan A for them. Then the drive back to Breckenridge—what a bonus—a total of four hours driving in our beautiful Colorado countryside!
- Thursday afternoon I skated a half hour late into the SOMB conference to attend another general session and learned about the latest research on normative sexual behavior. There were lots of charts and talk of variables and statistical probability and such. I have handouts if anyone wants to see them.
- Friday 8:00 AM (that is tomorrow for me, a few days ago for the rest of you), I will attend a breakout session in the morning on “why clients’ denial should not be a reason to terminate their treatment.” I want to learn how SO treatment differs from other counseling. Why is this topic so controversial for instance?
- Friday at 10:15 AM, I change hats
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Absolutely Fabulous? ...not so much.

By Scott Kingry

"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

--2nd Corinthians 12:9

It's laundry day. That must mean I'm at my mother's house. Every Sunday evening like clock-work I come by for a much anticipated home-cooked meal, some television and to get a couple loads of laundry done. This sounds more like a college kid visiting over the weekend, than a 49 year old man, sad to say. But I am grateful to her; for even though my condo building boasts 6 washers and dryers, I'm just plain weary of doing this never ending weekly chore with the 90 other tenants in my building. It's frustrating never knowing if a machine will be available, and I'm tired of cleaning out lazy people's lint traps. I just can't stomach encountering 90 other people's hair in the washing machine anymore; I know, TMI.

Pushing away this lovely visual and with a very furrowed brow, right now I'm pulling my whites (mostly T-shirts) out of the dryer. I'm perplexed that after using super power Oxy Clean, along with Arm & Hammer Detergent (that also has super power Oxy Clean in it), my whites just aren't



"white enough" and that stubborn grease stain hasn't completely come out. This is the 3rd week in a row I've tried some new combo of the two or added a fresh scrubbing technique to the regime. Some might call this a bit obsessive-compulsive; I just tell everyone I'm "being thorough". Yet with T-shirt still in hand and a new plan forming in my mind for how to attack my whiteness problem next week, I come to my senses mid-fold. This is not mere thoroughness, but full-blown OCD and I wonder, "Why am I suddenly possessed by the crazy making spirit of Martha Stewart?"

Well no doubt, the problem in this little teaching moment has been plaguing humans since the dawn of time; it is the temptation to be "too fabulous." As a man growing up in the gay community in the 80's, I felt a lot of pressure to be utterly amazing. Like Mary Poppins we needed to be practically perfect in every way. Homes should be flawlessly

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(Fabulous continued from page 4)

decorated with furniture and accessories in the latest style and fastidiously clean, which goes without saying. And not just homes, but yards should be landscaped equally triumphantly, with flowers blooming every season, creating the perfect get away for outdoor entertaining. Did someone say entertaining? Of course we were obliged to be the impeccable hosts, set the most beautifully themed and creative tables, prepare the most exotic dishes faultlessly, and select exactly the right wine to pair with each course. As to personal grooming—with such beatific surroundings, we should likewise be as stunning. Since 30 year olds are referred to as “Grampa,” we had better keep those bodies buff, tan and dressed in clothing that isn’t just on the precarious edge of fashion, but even a step ahead if we are really savvy. This description may seem humorously exaggerated and over-the-top, but it’s not far off.

Obviously, such behaviors aren’t attributed simply to some gay men. When I returned to the church in the early 90s, there was pressure to manage one’s image, but in regard to “spiritual things”: having no visible sin or problems, no negative emotions; living the victorious Christian life by constant Bible reading, never ending service and making sure everyone thought you were “nice.” In a word, it was “exhausting!”

The obvious next question is, “What exactly is so horrible about wanting to do things well?” Is there something wrong with being a smart dresser,

cooking extravagant meals, enjoying entertaining or reading the Bible and being nice? Of course not, I believe it when scripture says we should pursue excellence and “do all things as though we are doing them for the Lord.” The problem with all this grueling “fabulousness,” comes when it’s rooted in over compensation that takes the forms of performance, perfectionism and image management. But what am I over compensating for?” Why have I created a new and improved false self, what am I hiding from or don’t want people to see? Simply put, the answer is shame.

Just like our first parents who hid and covered themselves with leaves because they were ashamed, we too have been “exposed” in some violating ways. Perhaps some flaw or personal defect was mercilessly highlighted or something we did wrong was constantly shoved in our faces. Maybe it was having a dream that was important discounted and ridiculed. So, in the end the cost of that vulnerability became too high to pay and, if you are like me, you made a vow to not let those weaknesses show if it could be helped. Thus the crazy-making-Martha-Stewart-more-fabulous version of me was born (who unfortunately fooled no one but myself). Behind this veneer, I would remain safe from shame and embarrassment. Only one problem persisted. I wanted to be safe and well protected, but I also wanted to be known and loved. These are mutually exclusive desires. I couldn’t be deeply known or loved authentically, because I wasn’t being authentic.

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I've heard of Alan Downs's great phrase to describe the cure for this draining coping mechanism, "Deconstructing Fabulous." I love it and have been trying to put it into practice these days. Having tried it out for a while, I do have to say it's a scary endeavor. If I let my weaknesses and flaws be seen more, walk each day more honestly and genuinely (appropriately of course), that old shame and fear of rejection are not far behind. I am tempted to revert to my old pharisaical security. A life time of shame is hard to tackle, so the Lord and I chip away at it bit by bit. On any given day, when there's a giant zit on my face, or I become aware that I'm getting a little belly that simply won't go away by skipping a meal, or someone just can't choke down the meal I've made them—my new

mantra is, "This is SO not fabulous." I keep telling myself that it's a good thing. Rather than to scramble to find any leaf to cover over a day of imperfections, I've been attempting to be alright with just letting them be painfully seen (which can be equally rewarding or horrifying depending on the day). These moments of humility and "smallness" aren't very glamorous, but they are peaceful. It's nice to feel really loved in spite of such glaring failings. These days my definition of God's healing in my life is that I feel more and more comfortable being me in my own skin—hallelujah!

And perhaps I can even live without my whites being brilliantly bleached, I think to myself as I say bye to Mom and lug my very full basket out to the car. I then laugh, for isn't it only the Lord who can "wash us white as snow"?

(New Resources continued from page 2)

- Factors Affecting Sexual Development - Part 2
- Four Basic Indicators of Teen Sexuality
- Establishing Plan B: What to Do When Things Go Wrong

Most parents haven't been adequately prepared to help their children navigate the risks awaiting this generation. This series will inspire conversation and provide insight and instruction to guide today's youth through the minefield of our sex saturated culture.

About Sy Rogers: Sy's unique life and 3 decades of ministry have inspired and encouraged audiences from London's

Royal Albert Hall to many of the world's most influential pulpits such as Hillsong Sydney, City Harvest Singapore & Calvary Chapel Ft Lauderdale. Regarded as a gifted communicator, award winning talk show host, recording artist, and pastoral care specialist, Sy is a leading voice regarding sexuality, cultural themes & God's character. Married since 1982, Sy and his family have lived for more than a decade in Singapore and New Zealand. Though currently based in the USA, much of Sy's ministry continues outside of North America.

For more information, please visit <http://syrogers.com/Resources.html#genxxx>.

(Mary Many Hats *continued from page 3*)

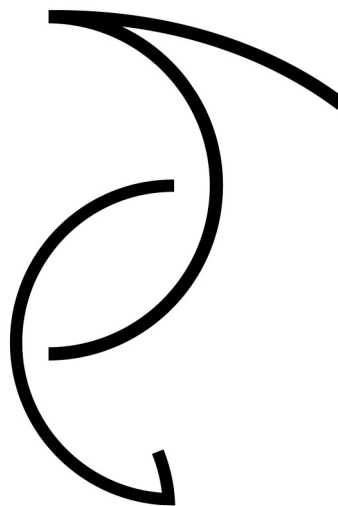
from learner to teacher and will co-present, with two others, a session on “Implementation of Circles of Support and Accountability in Colorado.” This is a report on the work of a multi-disciplinary task force that has been meeting about a year and working toward implementing Circles into Colorado Sex Offender management and treatment. Circles have been used effectively in Canada and the UK and a few US sites. The steering committee has decided to form a new non-profit in Colorado to implement this program. This session will cast vision for how the various stakeholders are working together to make this happen. My current role in the steering committee is as the facilitator of monthly meetings.

- Friday night several of us are hosting the Families and Friends meeting at the WGA offices. I will be facilitating the discussion after the speaker and small group sharing time as well. A new family has contacted us, and we are privileged to draw alongside them as they wrestle with some difficult and painful issues.
- Saturday morning I will be facilitating the monthly conference call for Rocky Mountain Yearly Meeting Executive Council. We are gearing up for our annual meeting in August and have a lot on our agenda for that call. My role with my denomination currently is as the presiding clerk for the Yearly Meeting. I will be “clerking” the annual meeting in August.

There were a few other activities interspersed between all this—for one, I am writing this newsletter article. I also talked on the phone and traded text mes-

sages with a couple of people who needed to touch base.

So, I wear many hats. And I love them all. I am humbled by the support of Friends and friends alike, and all the supporters who give financially and pray for my role in the ministry at WGA. It is multi-faceted, and your support is enabling me to take what we have learned at WGA and go into so much of the world around us and share God’s provision for broken sexuality: forgiveness, restoration, redemption, education, and a place (alongside of the rest of us sinners saved by His grace) in the Body and fellowship of Christ.





June In Review

June 7th: WGA Night in the Park

June 14th: Scavenger Hunt

June 21st: Group Meeting, 28 people attended



July And Beyond

June - August: We have a modified schedule for our Thursday night group over the summer. Call ahead for more info

August 4th: Intercessory Prayer. Join us from 8:00—9:00 AM at the WGA offices

August 16th: Orientation Meeting - this is a great introduction to the ministry and a requirement to participate in WGA's groups

Financial Update

Thanks so much to everyone who has joined us in prayer and to those who have given. We are not out of the woods yet, as they say, but in June and July we have seen an increase in donations. Will you please continue to pray with us? On average, we need \$20,000 of income each month. Thanks again to everyone who has joined us in this prayer effort!

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A Measure of Grace
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Where Grace Abounds
exists to guide and support
men and women who seek to
understand sexuality and
relationship, and to inspire
all people to know and
personally appropriate
God's plan for their
sexuality and relationships.

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