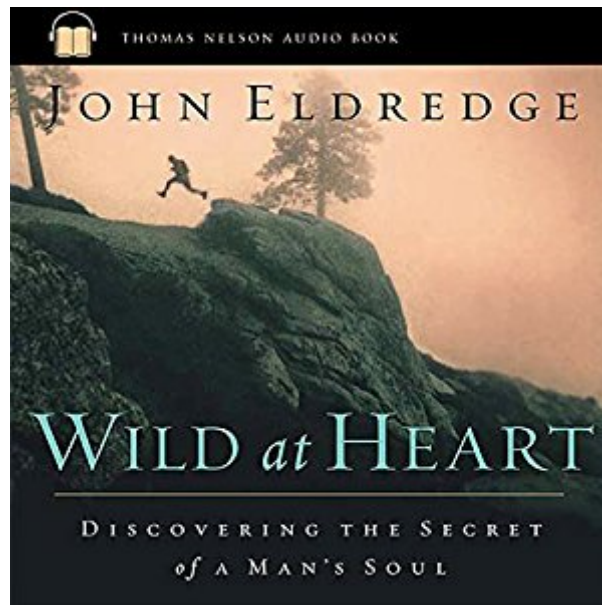


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# Wild At Heart: Discovering The Secret Of A Man's Soul



## Synopsis

Every man was once a boy. And every little has dreams, big dreams, dreams of being the hero, of beating the bad guys, of doing daring feats and rescuing the damsel in distress. Every little girl has dreams, too: of being rescued by her prince and swept up into a great adventure, knowing that she is the beauty. But what happens to those dreams when we grow up? Walk into most churches, have a look around, and ask yourself: What is a Christian man? Without listening to what is said, look at what you find there. Most Christian men are . . . bored. John Eldredge revises and updates his best-selling, renowned Christian classic, *Wild at Heart*, and in it invites men to recover their masculine heart, defined in the image of a passionate God. And he invites women to discover the secret of a man's soul and to delight in the strength and wildness men were created to offer. John Eldredge is the director of *Ransomed Heart* --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As I looked over the reviews of this book, I noted a real polarization: guys either loved or hated this book. Any book this polarizing, I thought, must at bare minimum be bold. And this is a bold book. On the positive side, the basic premise, that men need to embrace masculinity instead of apologizing for it, is great. It is true that many (unfortunately Eldredge says, "the church," which is tough to prove since he has not been in every church) churches do embrace a feminized Jesus and seem to push an agenda that feminizes men. As a pastor of 25 years, I have noted this tendency in many (perhaps most?) congregations (but I can honestly say that this has not been the case in the two

churches I have pastored). Though common, this problem is not always present. Eldredge argues that men should feel free to be "wild at heart," and that a deep relationship with God and the security that comes from realizing one is truly a man is a key to a satisfying and meaningful life for a man. He recognizes the "wound" that men have, the importance of having a battle to fight and a beauty to rescue, themes dealt with about ten or (or more) years ago (by the likes of Gordon Dalbey, Robert Hicks, etc.); but his work is a current volume, and this material needs to re-circulate for the upcoming generations. On the negative side, however, this book is reactionary. It addresses all men as though they were of the same temperament, namely that of the author. Besides watching way too many movies, the author enjoys the great outdoors. But he has forgotten that God does not only bless the Esaus, but also the Jacobs. And some of us guys don't even like movies (sorry, but there is nothing masculine about having to be entertained visually). Many men have died for their country, saved lives, reared masculine sons and feminine daughters and been bold warriors for the kingdom on God and yet did not enjoy repelling or hunting. I fear we learn a lot about John Eldredge and about men LIKE him (and there are many, perhaps even a narrow majority, although I wonder) than men in general; those of us who love the great "indoors" are virtually ignored or relegated to a category (by default) as less than masculine (although I do love the outdoors, just not hunting or repelling; I am a hiker). The author is unusually weak in Bible interpretation, but he is no heretic. He does, however, point out that Adam stood silently alongside Eve while she ate of the fruit (he gives credit to, "The Silence of Adam," by Larry Crabb); on that interpretation, he is right on. And that is a key and crucial thought. He is weak in the interpretation department elsewhere throughout the book. Unfortunately, many of his points come from popular movies, great illustrations for the men who probably need the book most (those who live life vicariously through movies and TV). But again, a segment of us (who would rather play cards or take our wives dancing rather than tube out) were left out. The first half of the book disenchanted me; the second half was much better and worth the reading. His comments about spiritual warfare need contemplation. For men who have temperaments like Eldredge (the restless, deep feeling, and aggressive kind) or who have been stifled and intimidated by a feminized version of Christianity, this book is bold and radical enough to wake you out of your stupor. But it is not an "on the mark," response, but a reactionary (and overly emotional) one. If that's what floats your boat, you'll love it. If you are a bit more laid back (like myself and many other guys), you will not enjoy this book as much. Of course, if you are a passive wimp, you NEED this book, whether you will like it or not! Some other books I would recommend (as better) in this genre include Gordon Dalbey's, "Father and Son," Robert Hicks, "The Masculine Journey" (if you can find it; this is an excellent book), and Robert Lewis', "Raising A Modern Day

Night" (on bringing up boys). To my way of thinking, these are less reactionary and right on the mark. So is this a good book or a bad one? It is certainly not a bad book. And though it is not truly Scripturally based, it is not heretical (just extra-scriptural). If you share common frustrations and experiences with John Elderege, you may find really enjoy it. For many guys, this would be good medicine; for others of us, it is at least thought provoking.

I can understand and agree with all the negative criticisms that people are writing about this author's books, but there's a catch: Their anger is misdirected. Like any advice/teaching/ whatever you want to call it, you are going to have certain people completely misunderstand or misinterpret said teachings and do what they want with it. I find the author makes some very good points for which I feel vindicated personally on several levels. I am 27 years old, a single Christian male, and have felt a lot of the ways this author talks about. And it's not wrong. I want to be loved and to love an amazing Christian woman. I want my life to be so much more than being stuck in a gray box with fluorescent lights all day and then come home to another box at night and repeat ad infinitum. Is that all life is? I'd honestly rather be dead if that's all there is....and that's what this author is trying to dig at. The author is not advocating contradictions to Jesus's teaching, but is presenting an idea that, if you are trying to walk in the Lord's path, there are certain innate desires that every man and woman has. Excitement, variety, challenge, love...these are the kinds of things that men and women naturally desire, and these desires are not wrong and should not be choked down. In several of his books, the author tries to dissect how and why men (and even women to a limited degree although his focus is on men) feel certain ways about certain things. I was so depressed after graduating college and now I finally know why. I don't want to be just some "nice guy" that everyone looks over and forgets. I am a nice guy, but I am so much more than a cog in some machine. That's what this is about! This is really about how the Christian life isn't supposed to be endless rote and repetitive duty until we drop dead. It's supposed to be joyous service to the Lord, and by extension, each other. The author is rightly asking: How many of you actually feel joy, or do you certain things "just because it's the right thing to do." Life's got to be about more than that!

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