

Manhood Process Metaphor

The culture's effect on the male gender can be viewed as a great crater lake at the top of a mountain that overflows. The culture's message, that not much is expected of the male gender because they are all aggressive, sexual, uncaring and simple, crashes down upon the males below with great force. As its negative messages come in contact with males, many simply go with the downward flow and tumble along in its wake. Other men try to stand up against how their gender is being defined and cry out "I am not like that". As they push back, they find themselves isolated as much of what is occurring around them does not fit who they are. As a result these men end up fighting against the culture's influence as if on individualized islands, compromising enough to survive in this hostile and busy world and keeping them cut off from parts of themselves, relationships, and other like-minded men.

Knights of the 21st Century believes that in order to help men change their present state, a new language must be used so that new learning takes place regarding how men can become even stronger. Each manhood word is like a large heavy rock that a man finds on his island. As he struggles with understanding its weights, he picks it up and throws it into the cultural flow. For example, when the rock, "you are a knight", hits the flow, the culture resists its message quickly because such a positive definition of a man seems impossible. Although not acceptable to the negative culture, a man's choice to recognize and utilize each manhood word cannot be taken from him. As he sweats and applies each new rock (word) to his solution and search, he gets stronger and it requires less effort. As he meets with other men in this same pursuit they begin to share life together and they become bound to each other through their mutual support to change their circumstances for the good.

At some point on this journey a man looks up from his hard labors and notices with these new words, he has built a footbridge across to the other side of the cultural definition of who he is. As a result, he can grasp the guide rope of his group and step by step take each manhood word to another place in his life. He crosses what has caused him to feel divided from much of himself in life, to go a place where he can make a difference. His potential feels developed and his relationships enhanced. His view of himself is restored as positive expectations for his future and goals emerge. He discovers a land where men team up with men on a mission, to make the world better for themselves and others. He discovers his Maker's call and loving support as he chooses spiritual commitment. As the miracle of men's growth occurs and more islands are joined, men become unified in a positive manner, the cultural flow gets slowed and even pushed back with enough men heeding their call. It is our dream that Knights of the 21st Century be used to help men become whole who feel, in so many ways, divided.