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**Teaching, Modeling, and Imparting Responsiveness to the Holy Spirit for Life and Ministry.**

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## TEACHING *God in Nature* by Mike Flynn

In his *Wisdom of the Celtic Saints*, Edward Sellner notes, "One of the primary characteristics of the early Celtic Christians was their love of and respect for the physical environment. Their daily life was lived in close proximity to nature, and their spirituality reflected a sense of wonder and awe at the divine residing in everything." The Celts sought and found God in nature. His handiwork touched their hearts, which inspired their lips to adore Him, which encouraged Him to show them more wonders.

My own recent book, *How To Be Good Without Really Trying*, talks about the 24 elders in heaven who are continually praising God for creation, redemption, and reign. In the book I say, regarding creation, "Each weekday I walk through farmlands as I pray for my list of concerns. What a God who makes crops grow! What genius is evident in their seed form, then seedling stage, then growth into mature fruits and vegetables for harvesting. It is miraculous! How marvelously different is cabbage from celery, expressed partly through the difference in their shades of green as you look across a field!"

When Brendon, an early Celtic pilgrim, ran across his first iceberg, he was entranced. "Let us inspect the wonder that God the creator has made," he said to his fellow travelers. As a pilgrim, one of his driving forces was to discover more of the wonders of God's creation and, therefore, the wonders of God Himself who had created them.

I share this compulsion to discover and adore God in His creation. And I commend it to you. Does it cost to see creation? Yes. I figure I could have

bought a small cabin somewhere if I hadn't spent the money getting to places I wanted to experience. But I wouldn't trade the experiences for anything. They tell me of God and plop me in His lap. Let me mention a few examples:

- Moorea, Tahiti. Sue and I were standing in chest-deep water with a couple dozen others. The coral reef encircling the island, over a mile away, was being bashed by high waves, but here in the lagoon the water was warm and still and clear. Sting rays were brushing up against us as we held morsels of food underwater for them to eat. We petted them, absolutely marveling at the exquisite silkiness of their skin. We couldn't help but praise God for having made such creatures, and letting us enjoy them.

- Mt. La Sal, Utah. Two hundred yards from Geyser Pass road, I was at altitude 9460' on the side of the mountain, standing on a lichen covered rock whose edge dropped 200 feet straight down into a canyon. This canyon swooped up to my left and down to my right. The entire bottom of it was a sea of yellow and gold aspens, turning in the September air. Across the canyon on the hillside were green pines flecked with aspen-gold. I could look down on the city of Moab about 15 miles away and, further to the southwest, a range of mountains about 80 miles distant. After a period of drinking in the beauty, this is what I gushed into my recorder: "It is utterly glorious. It is beyond description. The beauty is spectacular. Just spectacular. Dear God! Thank You for making this and thank You for letting me enjoy it!"

- Angelus Crest Hwy. I was on a prayer day at this site on a small hill about 30 miles from LA. While trying to pray and listen to God, I gradually became

aware of a light snapping sound that repeated over and over. Exploring, I noticed I was surrounded by acres of a plant common to that area, Scotch Broom. The plants had produced pods about 4" long with about 20 seeds in each pod. As the July heat soaked into the pods, they exploded open, twisting and flinging their seeds about. I began to realize that people were like those pods and that with enough love and warmth, they, too, would fling forth the seeds of faith to plant new Christians.

- Columbia icefield. North of Banff, Sue and I stood on a glacier, several hundred feet deep, several hundred feet wide and several hundred years old. We hadn't stood on a glacier before. As we drank in its size and characteristics and history, we were aware that God had planned and executed its existence in detail. It was a wonder. It drove us into His arms.

How's your AQ these days? AQ is amazement quotient. It may even be more important than your IQ. Being amaze-able is part of the joy of life, and it endears us to our Creator. I think it's part of what Jesus had in mind when He said that unless we are like little children we won't even see the kingdom, much less get into it. If you're not amaze-able anymore, you're in trouble.

May I offer you a little challenge? Find 10 things in nature that amaze you. In each case, what does the thing you've discovered tell you 1) about God, 2) about you, and 3) about life? ✦

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## FreshWind Ministries

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## FreshWind Scheduled Events

DATE	PLACE	EVENT	CONTACT
Jul 30-Aug 1	Santa Barbara CA	Valley Vineyard Men's Retreat	818-776-9696
Aug 6-8	Albany NY regional	Catching the Wind	518-371-6351
Aug 20-22	Order of St. Luke	St. Christopher, League City TX	281-333-2706
Aug 27-29	Dio. Of San Joaquin	Men's Conference	559-222-3721
Sep 11	Angwin CA	A Day of Renewal	707-965-2663
Sep 26-Oct 1	Larkspur CO	Preparing Pastors for the Emerging Ch.	<a href="http://www.a29.com">www.a29.com</a> Prime speaker: Bp. Ben Kwashi, of Nigeria. Also Alan Hansen, Mike Flynn, Edwina Thomas
Oct 7	Pasadena CA	Golf Tournament	805-487-9259
Oct 8-10	St. Jude's, Burbank CA	Catching the Wind	805-487-9259
Oct 15-17	St. Mark's Geneva IL	Order of St. Luke conf.	630-587-1477
Oct 28-31	Christ Ch, Denver CO	Catching the Wind	770-952-2670
Nov 12-14	San Antonio	Order of St. Luke conf	210-496-3655

## Catch the Wind Conference

The "Catch the Wind" conferences we're planning are designed to make the Book of Acts normative in your churches. The Apostles ministered with incredible power in the early church.

- Their preaching brought conversion
- They healed the sick regularly
- The demonic was exposed and cast out

They impacted the culture radically.

- In Ephesus they caused a riot because so many rejected the cult of the goddess Diana
- In Philippi they incited an uproar
- They were accused of turning the world upside down.

Do you long for a return to that day? Do you want greater power in your ministry? Would you like to see more converted? healed?

The teaching and practicum sessions will include:

- √ The Kingdom of God. Our basis for power, identity, and authority
- √ Ministering with Greater Power and Authority. Focusing on how to get more people healed.
- √ Cooperating with the Holy Spirit. Understanding and using words of knowledge.
- √ When Healing Doesn't Seem to Happen. Looking at some common barriers and what to do about them.
- √ Practicum and Healing Models That Work. Putting the ministry into action and getting the job done.

Mike Flynn and Allan Hansen of Acts 29 will jointly lead this conference.

## **Bishop Kwashi Event Sept 26-Oct 1**

Bp. Kwashi will partner with SOMA USA, ACTS 29 and FreshWind to give clergy an opportunity for deeper development as leaders, a practical and biblical worldview, a mission heart, and a clear model of dynamic evangelism. Participants can also expect the 3 sponsoring ministries to provide practical leadership training, prayer ministry for personal needs, and one-on-one mentoring. Total cost is \$399, including room and board. The site is near the aspen-lovely Colorado Rocky Mountains. If you are a clergy person, we most highly recommend this event to you. Ben is bishop of Jos in Nigeria, which has 18 million Anglicans. Muslim extremists have killed over 100 of his pastors. He has paid a price in faithfully serving the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet that price has not dampened the joy of the Lord which shines through his eyes. Nor has it impeded his fervent proclamation of the gospel of Jesus. I would like you to be exposed to Ben's quality of faith, insight, experience, and service to God. I and the other co-sponsors have chosen a time and a place which is affordable, beautiful, and promissory of life-change. For more information and to register on-line, log onto [www.a29.com](http://www.a29.com). If you are a lay person who believes your clergy would prosper from this, please mention it to them.

## **Golf Tournament for Angelenos!**

FreshWind and ACTS 29—based in Atlanta—are teaming up to sponsor a benefit golf tournament. We're looking for 72 golfers who will compete in a shotgun tournament at Brookside Golf Course near the Rose

Bowl in Pasadena, CA, Thursday October 7 at 1:00pm. In addition we need sponsors who will "buy" a hole, which will have a sign naming them as sponsors of that green.

If you're interested in participating or sponsoring, please let us know at the FreshWind office. It looks to be great fun, and it will benefit the work the Lord is doing through these two ministries. To register: log onto [www.a29.com](http://www.a29.com) and go to Men's Ministry, then to Gold Tournaments, then to Pasadena, where the brochure and registration can be downloaded. Or contact Geraldine, the FreshWind administrator, at 818-842-0113.

## **Leader's Corner**

I'd like to talk about modeling. Many believers need to see a model of faith at work before they can get serious about their own conformity to the exhortations of the Christian life. This is a prime reason why the word "modeling" is in FreshWind's mission statement. What a model does is give people an example of how something looks in the Christian life when it is put into practice.

What's more, modeling lets people know that a word in Scripture is a real exhortation. Jesus says, for example, that if someone offends you, you should go to them privately, alone, and see if you can clear it up. Well, for every 1000 believers who have read those words, there are only about 5 who have actually done it. But when you, a leader, take action on that advice, you show folk that it is a real word, that it is possible, that it has positive consequences.

Jesus gives hundreds of commands in the gospels. Every time one of them get highlighted for you and you take action on it, you are proving that it is a true word, a real word, a do-able word. This is one of the reasons that I tell stories in my

books and in sermons. Stories show people that something is really real. That's one of the greatest things leaders can do: prove that the Scriptures are true by living them out and showing in actual life that they work.

Has God underlined any exhortations for you lately?

## **New Book Feedback**

We're rather reluctant to publish much feedback of FreshWind's works in case someone thinks we're aggrandizing ourselves. "What do you have that you did not receive," St. Paul asked; "and if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?" Anything of value has been received from Him Who alone is worthy of praise. But we believe that some of what God does through us should be made known so that more can benefit from it. Here are some comments about Mike's latest book, *How To Be Good Without Really Trying*. "I have been wanting to write you sometime—actually after every time I read a chapter of your latest book. I am encouraged and blessed at every turn of the page with challenge and love that is speaking directly to my heart. You write like a friend, a father, a spiritual master, and a bud—all of which you are to me. The wisdom, penmanship, illustrations, little digs here and there—everything is soooo edifying. True meat and bread! Thank you, Mike, thank you. I am going to use it as curriculum for a class I'm doing in the fall, so will be ordering a bushel. I want all my friends and co-pilgrims to read it. Thank you for being so obedient. I am a fruit of his goodness in you." —Rev. Bill B., Texas



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**Mike's Books can be explored on [www.freshwindministries.org](http://www.freshwindministries.org),  
purchased direct from Mike at the FreshWind Office or on amazon.com**

*Holy Vulnerability, The risks and rewards of opening up to God. \$11*  
*Inner Healing, A handbook for helping yourself and others. \$14*  
*The Mustard Seed Book, Understanding and using effective faith. \$12*  
*Making Disciples, Following Jesus' Model. \$5*  
*How To Be Good Without Really Trying, Letting Jesus Live  
His Life In You. \$13*

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*All 5 books, \$49 (a 12% discount)*

*Make checks out to Mike Flynn.*

*Contact Mike at [mkfln@aol.com](mailto:mkfln@aol.com) to order.*