

WILD CHILD MINISTRIES UPDATE

Summer, 2011

The Illustration of the Kite

**Dear Friends of WCM:**

In the 20-year journey of waiting for our prodigal daughter to return home to the Savior, many times I (Karilee) found myself totally spent of energy, exhausted and discouraged from the myriad challenges of Wendi's deteriorating life. "How long, oh Lord, how long?"

A glimmer of hope triggered by any small, positive action or word by Wendi would send my spirit soaring, like a kite, to the heavens—only to be cruelly dashed to the ground a short time later as the grip of sin drew her into even deeper snares.

Up . . . down . . . up . . . down . . . my emotions soared and plummeted like a grossly mismanaged kite . . . that is, until midway through this two-decade-journey the Lord reminded me that Wendi's struggle was not mine to "figure out" or manage. Her behavior sprang from a spiritual void in her soul; and until Jesus captured her heart, nothing I could do or say would change her behavior. Only the Holy Spirit had the power to reach into her hardening heart and change her life. When I truly came to understand that fact, I let go of the strings by which I was trying to manipulate Wendi's life, giving Jesus total control of this wind-buffed journey. I had to relinquish control **every single day**. Whenever I tried to take back control, I'd consciously surrender Wendi back to the Lord: "Please reach into her heart, Dear Lord . . . awaken her soul . . . bring her home," I would pray. Of course, as a mother, I'd help and guide when I could—but the burden of accomplishing her turnaround was lifted. That was God's job.

My responsibility was to **Pray, Lean, and Trust**:

PRAY - *The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working* (James 5:16 - ESV)

LEAN - *Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you* (Psalm 55:22 - ESV)

TRUST - *Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass* (Ps. 37:5 - KJV)

Guess what! I have discovered in the years since Wendi's return to the Savior, that **Prayer, Leaning, & Trusting** is just as crucial for me today as it was during that 20-year prodigal trial. I still find myself battling a propensity to fly the kite of life all by myself; yet, I'm happy to say that I now more quickly and readily turn things over to Him. I've crashed too many life-kites.

Do you have burdens? . . .

Worries . . . fears . . . pain . . . ?

Are you discouraged . . . saying, "How long, oh LORD?"

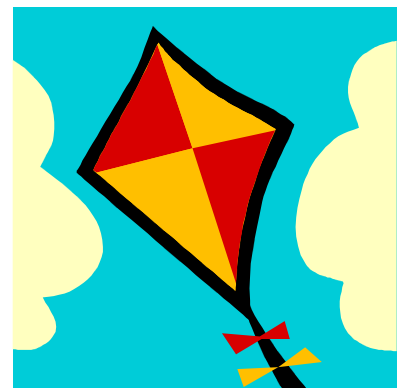
Then perhaps you can find rest in your difficulty (as I *finally* did during Wendi's rebellion). Learn to **Pray, Lean, and Trust** your heavenly Father as you hand-over that burden to Him.

LEAN HARD

By May Prentiss Smith

(Taken from *The Elizabeth Elliot Newsletter*, May/June 2003)

Child of My love, Lean Hard,
 And let Me feel the pressure of thy care;
 I know thy burden, child, I shaped it;
 Poised it in My own hand, made no proportion in its weight
 to thine unaided strength;
 For even as I laid it on, I said,
 I shall be near, and while [she] leans on Me,
 This burden shall be Mine, not [hers];
 So shall I keep My child within the circling arms of My own love.
 Here lay it down, nor fear to impose it on a shoulder which upholds
 the government of worlds.
 Yet closer come; Thou are not near enough;
 I would embrace thy care so I might feel My child reposing on My breast.
 Thou lovest me? I knew it. Doubt not then;
 But loving Me, Lean Hard.



Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you (1 Peter 5:7)



FROM WENDI:

So much has been happening from our Wild Child Ministries outreach here in Grand Haven, Michigan:

- In late June I was privileged to share a Sunday with the congregation of Faith Baptist Church in Greenville, MI, to encourage many individuals who earnestly desire for their prodigals to return.
- Almost daily, I correspond through e-mail and speak on the phone with parents struggling with their wayward children.
- Weekly, I meet with families and individuals seeking help in their struggles.
- Early July, I traveled with a single mother and her child to attend a court hearing related to bringing justice to a sexual predator toward her child.

All about us there is so much pain:

Hurt . . . anger . . . injustices . . . dysfunction in families . . . much suffering . . . yet, God is faithful—and worthy of our trust.



I now begin my 700 hour Internship (to fulfill the requirements for my Masters degree) at Webster House Youth Services in Muskegon, Michigan ([see www.websterhouseyouthservices.org](http://www.websterhouseyouthservices.org)). I'm excited and eager to bring the love of Christ to many young adults who are alone and hurting.



PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY as I finish the last year of my schooling:

- That I can accomplish what needs to be done in spite of health problems
- For the ability to continue to praise God in the midst of many difficult and complex issues surrounding me on a daily basis

My passion for prodigals grows stronger as I look toward the future. Allow me to conclude with this quote from a famous English preacher:

“When God wants to do an impossible task, He takes an impossible person and crushes him . . .”

I SURRENDER!

*Because of Grace,
Wendi*

LOOKING AHEAD:

Wild Child Parent Retreat

A weekend of encouragement for those who struggle with the heartache of a rebellious child. Here you will receive practical instruction from those who have experienced the prodigal journey firsthand, who understand how to trust the loving heart of God for the wandering child you love.

We invite you to join WC Ministries this fall:
September 9-11, 2011 – Frederic, WI



**Wendi
Hayden
English**

**Dan &
Karilee
Hayden**



For more information go to: www.oakforestcenter.org or call: 715.327.4500

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