Eugene Peterson makes a wonderful analogy at the start of this article, citing an excerpt from Winnie the Pooh.

The picture Jesus uses for life on His Way is the image of a river. This image is used 150 times in scripture and often referred to as a river flowing out of us; it is a rather bizarre image, but obviously an image important to God. There is a river in Genesis, in the Psalms, and in Revelation. It is the flow of life and grace, and it is a gift. Desert people were desperate for water. Without it they would die. We are all desperate for grace, and it is a gift.

The spiritual life is not about doing or acting more pious or conforming to a set pattern of spiritual growth principles that have been mass-produced for the general public. Disciples are handcrafted, and what works for one person is not necessarily going to work for the next. What would grow an orchid would drown a cactus. Discernment is needed to find out what allows you to be aware of and submitted to the Holy Spirit so that you don't quench his work and derail the river of life he wants to have flow through you.

The deepest longing—the deepest thirst—is one that only Jesus fulfills. The way of Jesus is the way of the Spirit. Our job is to discern what spiritual practices keep us in touch with the flow of life and grace that is God's gift to us.

(Please see page 29 for questions for this article.)
After talking with a homeless addict/prostitute, Webb asks himself what kind of church would work for this woman. A person with such a sorry history would be able to attend only a place where she could say, “I am Michelle, and I am a sinner.” What is the church, Webb asks, if it is not “Sinners Anonymous?”

The David in scripture is a far more accomplished sinner than most. After citing examples from scripture of David’s obviously fallen nature, Webb then tells us that this was not all of who David was. He was also, Scripture tells us, “a man after God’s own heart.” This is revealed in the psalms, where David acknowledges his sin, but loves God more. David is revealed as a sinner in recovery. He tells the truth about his sin and throws himself down at God’s feet, mortified, just as the prostitute threw herself at Jesus’ feet in Simon’s house. There is a raw honesty in David’s psalms that even prays for his enemies to die. He trusted God enough to tell the truth in every circumstance.

“When will our churches become places where we can tell the truth to God and to one another?” asks Webb. He then shares a story about a monk deeply respected by others, who ministers to a reprobate monk by first confessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, the other monk is also able to confess his sin. Telling the truth heals, allows us to be real before one another and fessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, his sin is revealed as a sinner more than most.

After talking with a homeless addict/prostitute, Webb asks himself what kind of church would work for this woman. A person with such a sorry history would be able to attend only a place where she could say, “I am Michelle, and I am a sinner.” What is the church, Webb asks, if it is not “Sinners Anonymous?”

The David in scripture is a far more accomplished sinner than most. After citing examples from scripture of David’s obviously fallen nature, Webb then tells us that this was not all of who David was. He was also, Scripture tells us, “a man after God’s own heart.” This is revealed in the psalms, where David acknowledges his sin, but loves God more. David is revealed as a sinner in recovery. He tells the truth about his sin and throws himself down at God’s feet, mortified, just as the prostitute threw herself at Jesus’ feet in Simon’s house. There is a raw honesty in David’s psalms that even prays for his enemies to die. He trusted God enough to tell the truth in every circumstance.

“When will our churches become places where we can tell the truth to God and to one another?” asks Webb. He then shares a story about a monk deeply respected by others, who ministers to a reprobate monk by first confessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, the other monk is also able to confess his sin. Telling the truth heals, allows us to be real before one another and fessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, his sin is revealed as a sinner more than most.

After talking with a homeless addict/prostitute, Webb asks himself what kind of church would work for this woman. A person with such a sorry history would be able to attend only a place where she could say, “I am Michelle, and I am a sinner.” What is the church, Webb asks, if it is not “Sinners Anonymous?”

The David in scripture is a far more accomplished sinner than most. After citing examples from scripture of David’s obviously fallen nature, Webb then tells us that this was not all of who David was. He was also, Scripture tells us, “a man after God’s own heart.” This is revealed in the psalms, where David acknowledges his sin, but loves God more. David is revealed as a sinner in recovery. He tells the truth about his sin and throws himself down at God’s feet, mortified, just as the prostitute threw herself at Jesus’ feet in Simon’s house. There is a raw honesty in David’s psalms that even prays for his enemies to die. He trusted God enough to tell the truth in every circumstance.

“When will our churches become places where we can tell the truth to God and to one another?” asks Webb. He then shares a story about a monk deeply respected by others, who ministers to a reprobate monk by first confessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, the other monk is also able to confess his sin. Telling the truth heals, allows us to be real before one another and fessing his own sin. When he confesses and tells the truth, his sin is revealed as a sinner more than most.