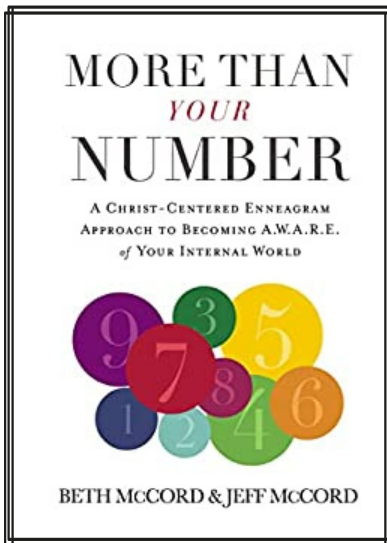


# Q&A with Beth and Jeff McCord

Authors of *More Than Your Number*



**Q** Jeff, you mention that the Bible references the fact that we always live out of one of these two divergent places in our interior world—the Wounded Child or the Beloved Child. Can you explain these references?

**A** Try not to get hung up on the semantics of these terms. The concepts they represent can be named in multiple ways in both biblical and psychological expressions. Some may struggle with what they call a “fear of man” (Proverbs 29:25), while others struggle with the same thing, though they call it codependency. We will lean more into the biblical terms, but this doesn’t mean that you should be limited by them—feel free to add terms that help you grasp the concepts.

To that end, a few terms of noteworthiness that we will use are the words adoption and wounded. For our purposes, adoption is a biblical term (Romans 8:15) that helps us more deeply identify with our true state of existence and value in the eyes of our Father. When we talk about the Wounded Child and the Beloved Child, this is the context of these terms; as adopted children, we are wrestling to know and believe our place in the heart and the household of the One who has brought us into His family. When we say “wounded,” do we mean that everyone should approach this process from the mindset of victimization? Not at all, though each of us certainly has our own respective stories about which we should be sensitive and respectful.

The concepts of the Beloved Child and the Wounded Child are not novel or worldly ideas. Scripture expounds on these over and over. Remember that Scripture is mainly written to those who believe, which is why they are willing to read and accept it. In other words, God is clearly speaking encouragement and challenge to believers, but to modern ears, some of these encouragements and challenges can sound more like something nonbelievers would need to hear.

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**Q** Jeff, is self-discovery the ultimate goal of the Enneagram?

**A** Actually, self-discovery is only part of the benefit of using the Enneagram for personal, spiritual, and relational growth. I have heard it said in recovery circles, “Discovery is not Recovery.” Simply because we discover something new about ourselves, which the Enneagram does an excellent job, our process does not stop there. With our new model, the Enneagram Internal Profile, we take the next step from self-discovery to self-leadership. We learn how to relate to unhealthy parts of our personalities, apply the truth of all that God is for us in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and engage God, others and ourselves in healthier ways.

## **Q Beth, how is our unawareness or misaligned ways of approaching our needs the bigger problem?**

**A** We tend not to recognize that each of our parts is a gift from God, and that when all our parts are aligned, they reveal strength, creativity, security, beauty—and a million shades in the kaleidoscope of wonder and peace that the Father desires for us. When I live unaware of these things, it can keep me from navigating the effects of the internal fog that each of us faces within.

Our densely clouded internal worlds disenfranchise our souls from the healthy, authentic versions of ourselves that we know we were divinely created to be. For me, there are times I want to avoid dealing with my issues because they seem too big or too overwhelming. I often don't know where to begin—that is, how to take the first step without being swallowed whole by my emotions or distress.

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## **Q Beth, what happens when we learn to become aware of and lead our internal parts?**

**A** Through His [Christ's] work in us, we can understand and welcome our conflicting internal emotions instead of experiencing shame or anger over them, which leads us to either reject them or react negatively to their overwhelming influence. By grace, we can instead accept, listen to, and lead the parts that make up our own internal worlds, reminding each of them of what is most true in the gospel.

Christ is actively redeeming all things from humankind's fallenness, and we are invited to be included in this ongoing process of redemption. This means that though we will never fully arrive on this side of the fall—that is, have complete clarity on and self-control over every internal part in every situation—we can develop patterns for welcoming and re-welcoming the ongoing work of Christ in these fallen places, even when we fall yet again.

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## **Q What does it mean to be aligned with the gospel?**

**A** Living as God's Beloved Child is being aligned with the gospel. This describes Christ-followers who are believing, trusting, and resting in who they are in Christ. Especially in moments of stress or patterns of unhealth, we each employ internal tactics to attempt to falsely soothe or fix our inner selves, attempting to come to our own rescue. This is a part of fallen human nature.

But when we are healthy, we no longer insist on using our personality strategies to meet our own desires. Instead, we go to our heavenly Father because we truly trust that He loves us and will provide for us. We recognize emotionally and spiritually what we may already believe intellectually, but can become fuzzy in the fog: that Christ has already accomplished everything we need. As we keep our focus on Him, we again realize what brings fullness in life and choose it over that which only promises fullness, but ultimately leaves us feeling empty. When we stay aligned, Christ perfectly renews us every time.

## Q What are wings and why are they so important?

A Wings are the two numbers directly next to each main type on the Enneagram diagram. No other numbers can make up your wings but these two, so all Type Fives have the same two wings: a Four and a Six. For Type Nines, their wings are Eight and One. You can determine your wings in much the same way— and even though you may lean more heavily into one of your wings, you use and are affected by both of them in some way, depending on the differing circumstances.

We access the characteristics of our wings in our reactions and behaviors. Even so, we always remain our main type, complete with its core motivations. This means that even though our wings influence us in ways we need to be mindful of, they never actually replace our main type's core longing, core desire, core fear, and core weakness. Even if we begin to behave differently to accommodate the needs of a wing, we are still motivated by the same things from our main type's perspective. For some people who are struggling to determine their main type, they face confusion because they recognize behaviors of one of their wings. It is helpful to observe not just the behavior, but the motivation behind it— in the motivation lies the truth of the main type.

## Q Most of the book focuses on the concept of AWARE which begins with awakening. Can you summarize what you mean by awakening?

A Awakening is a complex thing because it is something you should do daily, but it is also something that you must do over and over again based on your circumstances. It is hard to recognize that you're asleep while you're asleep. By definition, you are unconscious. This is why we have offered you the rumble strip of the Enneagram to help you realize you may be not completely awake to your current state of thinking, reaction, or feeling.

Even in the midst of an argument, if you know what to look for, you can awaken to feelings, thoughts, and inclinations. The goal is to observe what's actually happening inside us— sadness, anger, a certain thought or process, or the like. Then we can begin to ask ourselves why we are feeling so upset, frustrated, or hurt by another person or a certain circumstance.

### *More Than Your Number: A Christ-Centered Enneagram Approach to Becoming AWARE of Your Internal World* By Beth and Jeff McCord

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