

event highlights

Exodus Equipping Event

Friday, January 21, 2011
Church of the Nations | Phoenix, AZ
Contact Info: 888-264-0877
jbuchanan@exodusinternational.org

Love Won Out

Saturday, February 19, 2011
Church of the Nations | Phoenix, AZ
Contact Info: 888-264-0877
lovewonout@exodusinternational.org
REGISTER NOW for this informative and inspirational one-day conference.

36th Annual International Freedom Conference

Wednesday, June 8 - 11, 2011
Ridgecrest Conference Center
Asheville, NC
Contact Info: 888-264-0877
conferences@exodusinternational.org



Exodus is a member in good standing with the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA), a Christian financial monitoring organization.



exodus international

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MOBILIZING THE BODY OF CHRIST TO MINISTER GRACE AND TRUTH TO A WORLD IMPACTED BY HOMOSEXUALITY

Dear Friends,

How many of you have a resolution for the New Year? Without going crazy, I usually try to pinpoint one or two areas where I hope to make improvements each year. This year I have decided to work on keeping life simple. You may remember that our mission at Exodus for 2011 is Simplify, Amplify, Intensify. I began sensing the Lord's encouragement in August to simplify things at Exodus and realized that He was saying the same thing to me personally. Life has gotten so busy and chaotic - there is always something vying for my time. Being overcommitted in 2010 robbed me of time, energy and joy. So, 2011 is going to be far more intentional and simple.

This year at Exodus we are excited about getting back to the basics. Exodus was founded in 1976 as a membership organization. As of today, we have over 250 ministries in North America (churches, member ministries and counselors), serving under the Exodus umbrella. With that many ministries there are over 1,000 people serving in either part-time or full-time capacities. **Our goal this year is to make sure that we are all well connected. We can then provide ample support and encouragement to one another and be utilized to the fullest for God's glory.** That connection will start this month when our North American leaders get together for the Annual Leadership Conference here in Orlando. I can't wait! **Together Everyone Accomplishes More (TEAM)** and God has certainly assembled an incredible team within the Exodus network!

"Being overcommitted in 2010 robbed me of time, energy and joy. So, 2011 is going to be far more intentional and simple."

Another area that is basic to us is that of reaching out to students. Not only to those struggling in the area of their sexuality, but also to all young people who simply need to hear a message about healthy and biblical sexuality. Sadly, young people are getting trapped early in the web of sexual and emotional addiction. With hardcore porn abounding in nearly every place imaginable, including Twitter and Facebook, there is a real need to help young people understand the dangers in giving in. And, there is a need to educate parents on just what is out there; how undetectable it can be and how to help prevent exposure or respond to the problem when it arises. We received a grant this year that will help us focus more in the area of youth. If you would like to contribute to this critical area of ministry we would be grateful.

For Exodus the message we share is simple: **there is a God who created us to be in relationship with Him and with one another in a deep and intimate way that goes far beyond the area of sensuality and sexuality.** Since the fall every human being has struggled with the deep void within us that only God can fill. We try to fill it with anything and everything that promises satisfaction...even momentary satisfaction. For those of us who minister with Exodus we have "been there" and understand that even the best relationship or material item cannot compare to the one, true, living God who deeply desires to be connected to us.

Let me encourage you today as you think about your goals for 2011. Keep them healthy and realistic and set goals that will also challenge you. In other words, don't set them too high, but don't set them too low, either. Case in point, I go through seasons of trying to stay healthy physically. I hate working out. When I start out with a goal to work out every day and to never succumb to the temptation to eat a bowl of ice cream I know that inevitably I will fail miserably. It's just a matter of time. Why? Because working out 6-7 days a week and only eating lean meat and veggies isn't realistic. I have two 5-year olds and a wife who puts any one of the chefs on the Food Network to shame. However, when I decide that I am going to work out 1-3 times a week, eat well daily and not freak out if I choose to indulge once a week on a sweet treat then I know that lifestyle is realistic for me.

Related to struggling with sexual temptation, it might not be realistic to make your goals so strict that the smallest of failures sends you into a shame spiral. Please don't take that to mean that excusing sin is okay. It's not. However, there are people I meet who think they will never have another inappropriate thought or battle the urge to give into a physical temptation. For those of you who have a compulsive addiction you will need time to make better choices, help making better choices and a lot of grace. **Freedom is possible. Overcoming emotional, relational and sexual sin is realistic.**

I would love to hear your resolutions and my team and I would love to pray for and with you regarding them. Send them in on the enclosed card. Thank you for your friendship and support.

Happy New Year!

Alan Chambers

[facebook.com/AlanManningChambers](https://www.facebook.com/AlanManningChambers)
twitter.com/AlanMChambers

YES! I want to help Exodus continue offering hope and healing to those seeking freedom from homosexuality.

- Please charge my credit card (please use form on back).
- I have made changes to my mailing address below.
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My email address is : _____
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real stories by rochelle

When I was growing up, I was always searching for something - something to learn, to fill, to numb, to distract me from myself. From a young age, I was certain there was something wrong with me and I needed to fix it in order for people to like and accept me. I was convinced I was unlovable, but believed if I just tried hard enough, I could correct my flaws and finally be loved. I knew about God, but I didn't know God. I didn't know anyone could have a personal relationship with God, let alone me.

Around twelve years of age, I began to experience same-sex attractions and with those feelings came an incredible sense of guilt, shame and dread. I felt if anyone ever found out, I'd never be accepted. I was sure God didn't love me and He never could, because He was God and knew everything. Around that time, my parents separated and later divorced. My mom, brother, and I moved to another city. I was lonely, vulnerable, empty, and searching for something, anything to soothe the growing anxiety and depression gripping me. I tried everything - alcohol, video games, pornography, drugs, self-injury, antidepressants, tobacco, homosexual and heterosexual relationships - to find fulfillment and quiet the screaming in my soul. Hopelessness and despair sucked me down like quicksand, and there seemed to be no way out.

My refusal to trust God to meet my deepest needs left me with an incredible void that no one and nothing could fill, no matter how desperately I tried.

During my teens and early twenties, I embraced a lesbian lifestyle because I felt accepted and free to "be myself." Every relationship initially seemed to be the answer to all my prayers and wishes, but quickly the mirage melted away and left that familiar, sickening feeling of guilt, shame, and dread. My refusal to trust God to meet my deepest needs left me with an incredible void that no one and nothing could fill, no matter how desperately I tried.

With every failed effort to meet my own needs and self-protect, the rage and frustration in my heart toward God and people grew.

In my last relationship, I lied awake many nights, listening to the howling of the trains nearby. Even with my girlfriend beside me, I still felt utterly alone and knew I couldn't take much more. When the relationship ended and I moved home, I began to pursue God again. I had tried several times to surrender my life to Him, but was never willing to give up the lesbian lifestyle because I believed that's who I was. God could have whatever else He wanted, but not that part of me. However, I realized God must have us completely, or else we cannot experience the true satisfaction, joy, and peace that come from knowing Him.

When I was finally broken enough, I prayed and surrendered all of myself to God, including same-sex attractions. I didn't actually think He would accept me, and if He did, He surely wouldn't love me. I didn't think I could ever be redeemed or useful to Him. Amazingly, He did accept me, and He does love me, and He is redeeming and restoring my life.

During the years I tried to fix myself, I was miserable; I didn't care if I lived or died because my life didn't matter to me. As I continue walking in relationship with Christ, He has healed me of addictions, depression, self-harm, and unforgiveness. I'm learning to trust God to meet the deep longings of my heart. The process has not been quick or easy, but it is worth it. I have purpose and a sure hope in Christ. I no longer live in isolation and loneliness, but in life-giving community with other believers. After so many futile attempts, I found the acceptance and fulfillment I'd been searching for all my life. I found it in Christ alone.

giving opportunity monthly giving

We want to take a moment to thank each and every person who supported Exodus with financial gifts, fervent prayers and abundant encouragement during 2010. We pray that as we move forward together in 2011, these steadfast relationships will continue to grow and our united resolve to see the Lord's work accomplished will be strengthened.

An area we like to highlight at the beginning of the year is the important role of monthly givers. While Exodus certainly receives generous one-time gifts, the majority of our giving comes from faithful partners who give \$5, \$25 or \$50 a month. This consistent giving helps us to maintain a firm financial foundation throughout the year.

If you would like to take advantage of this option, please see the tear-off response card attached to this newsletter.

When completing the credit card information, you can select the check box that says, "Please make this a monthly gift." Your credit card will then be charged for the donation dollar amount you indicate each month. We sincerely appreciate gifts of any size - please don't think your gift is too small or insignificant.

Again, thanks for all the ways you support the ministry of Exodus. May God bless you with abundant joy, love and peace in 2011.

real answers by terri brown

It is quite common for gay-identified individuals to "come out" to their family during the Christmas holidays. Many parents may now be left with a plethora of emotions and questions.

"How do you pick up the pieces, face the New Year and return to some kind of normalcy while reeling from what is perhaps shocking news?"

First, understand that while this may have taken you by surprise, it did not surprise God. He has been preparing you for this day and is present to help you now. Run to Him and not from Him, even with your anger, which is a natural emotion to feel at this time. He really is our Comforter. (2 Corinthians 1:4)

Your child has likely carried this internally for a long time and is probably feeling a huge sense of relief, while you may be wondering who replaced him with this imposter! Remember that your child is still the same person he was before Christmas. You just know more about him now. Acknowledge and appreciate his willingness to share this very personal part of himself with you. Try not to panic and react in a way that would be detrimental to your future relationship.

Don't let his same-sex attraction be the only filter you see him through. You can still rejoice in and support the good things in his life while not approving of his homosexuality. While it is the responsibility of parents to share truth with their children, it is the role of the Holy Spirit to convict and change the hearts of those who are willing. So use discernment, wisdom and care in speaking to your child, but also pray and trust that God is doing His part to make a difference in your child's life. You can then be free to release your child to God and prevent yourself from being consumed by the situation. Show them and tell them you love them and do as much as you can to keep the communication open and the relationship intact.

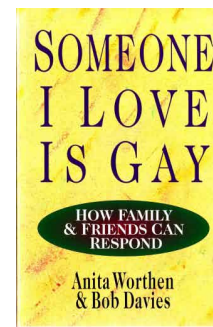
Consider also that your other children may be hurting through this situation and need you to be sensitive and available to their needs.

Allow yourself time to grieve and to heal. This grief process can be much like a death. Some of your dreams and expectations have been shattered. Get help for yourself. Paul spoke in Galatians 6 about carrying our own load (picture a 5 lb. weight) but he also spoke about carrying each others burdens (now picture a 300 lb. dumbbell set). Having a gay-identified child is a burden too big to carry alone! Let a few of your trusted close friends know what you are experiencing. Check the Exodus website for one of our agencies near you.

When you are ready, begin to educate yourself about this sensitive and controversial issue. Exodus has many resources available for parents at www.exodusbooks.org. Attend one of our Love Won Out conferences www.lovewonout.com to hear testimonies of former homosexuals and meet other parents experiencing this.

Finally, be open to what God wants to do for you and through you with this new life experience. This is not just about your child. God can turn tragedies into triumphs!

featured resource



Someone I Love Is Gay
by Anita Worthen and Bob Davies

Finding out that a child, spouse, relative or friend is homosexual can be an unwelcome surprise. You're hit with a complex combination of emotions--grief, shame, fear, and guilt. You are flooded with questions ranging from why to what's next. You wonder what a biblical response would be. At the same time, someone you care about deeply may be awaiting your response.

What should you say? Someone I Love Is Gay was created out of Bob Davies's personal and professional experience and out of Anita Worthen's struggle with her son over these issues. Also drawing on experiences of others, the authors will help you handle your feelings while responding appropriately to your loved one.

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Dear Exodus, Please pray for:
