

event highlights

36th Annual International Freedom Conference

Wednesday, June 8 - 11, 2011

Ridgecrest Conference Center

Asheville, NC

Contact Info: 888-264-0877

conference@exodusinternational.org

Register Now!

exodusfreedom.org

Family Freedom Intensive

Thursday, June 23 - 26, 2011 | Love In Action

Bartlett, TN

Contact Info: 877-320-5217

www.loveinaction.org

Called to be Free:

Restoring Hope for Sexual Healing Conference

Saturday, July 23, 2011

Living Hope Community Church

San Fernando, CA

Contact Info: www.livingstonesministry.org

Equipping Event

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Sugar Creek Baptist Church

Sugar Land, TX (Houston)

Contact Info: 888-264-0877

conference@exodusinternational.org

Love Won Out

Saturday, September 10, 2011

Sugar Creek Baptist Church

Sugar Land, TX (Houston)

Contact Info: 888-264-0877

lovewonout@exodusinternational.org

giving opportunity

We have just returned from a Love Won Out event in the Cincinnati area of Ohio. We were amazed to see almost 450 men, women, students, parents and ministry leaders travel from 14 different states and Canada. This is a typical response to our training and equipping events, but somehow it is always humbling to bring the message of hope and freedom to those so eager to receive, those so desperate for answers.

At this event we were encouraged to see several campus and student leaders attending - wanting to be equipped to minister to fellow students and friends struggling with sexual identity issues. What a blessing to see young adults committed to reaching out with the compassion and truth of Christ.

As you know, events are one of the primary ways we seek to equip and minister to people. But to be frank, putting a quality event together is expensive. We continue to commit to keeping registration prices as low as we can to make them accessible to all those in need. So, basically we need your support.

Would you help us to continue providing these events in communities across North America?

You can give by returning the attached card or simply give online on our new and improved website www.exodusinternational.org. As our friends and partners in ministry, we so appreciate your sacrificial gifts.

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



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

Dear Friends,

My kids started school this year and are in pre-K and Kindergarten respectively. One of the ways I get to participate in their schooling is that I do all of their Bible homework with them. I eagerly agreed to this because I knew I would learn with them, seeing it through their eyes. I have loved the new things God has taught me through the scriptures that relate to the journey I am on today.

For instance, we have been reading about the Israelites "Exodus" from Egypt. Most recently we arrived in the book of Joshua where the Israelites were crossing the Jordan River under Joshua's leadership after the death of Moses. About the time we got to this passage my pastor spoke on that historic event and added some insight that I had never heard or considered. It's remarkable how often I am guilty of simply reading scripture rather than studying and meditating on it! So, I have been camped out in Joshua re-reading the story, studying commentaries and researching it online. It's fascinating especially as I think about how specifically it applies to our modern day struggles to persevere in Christ in the midst of sin and suffering.

If you are unfamiliar with the story, Joshua 3:14-17 (NAS):

So when the people set out from their tents to cross the Jordan with the priests carrying the ark of the covenant before the people, and when those who carried the ark came into the Jordan, and the feet of the priests carrying the ark were dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks all the days of harvest), the waters which were flowing down from above stood and rose up in one heap, a great distance away at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan; and those which were flowing down toward the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. So the people crossed opposite Jericho. And the priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all Israel crossed on dry ground, until all the nation had finished crossing the Jordan.

As it says in the passage above, the Jordan was in flood stage. The priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant (the actual presence of God) were to walk with the Ark into the Jordan and upon touching it the water was to stop. **I am sure the raging waters frightened them, but they trusted that God would see them through. From where they were crossing they couldn't see that the water had stopped. They got knee-deep, chest-deep, neck-deep.** All of a sudden the waters began to subside and before they got to the middle of the river they were walking on completely dry ground. Wow! They stood firm while the remaining people walked across.

According to what I have heard and now read, God indeed stopped the waters when the feet of the priests touched the Jordan waters. However, it stopped 16-17 miles upstream. I do not know how fast the waters were traveling or how long it took for the water to dissipate, but for the priests each step was a tremendous step of faith. Parallel that to where you may be at on your journey. You have decided to follow Christ and trust Him with your struggles. According to scripture you have a promise that He will come through for you. Are you trusting God, but waiting for the negative circumstances surrounding you to dry up? Take heart and take courage! **Keep your eyes on Jesus just like the people kept their eyes on the Ark of the Covenant. He goes before you and asks you to follow Him.** In this world you will have trouble, it says in John 16:33, but take heart; I have overcome the world so that in Me you can have peace! Hallelujah!

I think one of the worst tools the enemy has used is convincing us that this thing called life is all there is to our existence. While so many of us know that we are eternal beings and will live forever we get near-sighted and tend to spend all of our time and energy focusing on life on planet earth. The truth of the matter is, this life, in the grand scheme of things, lasts a few minutes and is then over. In light of eternity our temporary trials and sufferings are nothing. In light of what Christ endured even here on earth our trials fail to compare.

Where are you on your journey? About to give up and give in? Please don't. 20 years ago this year I chose to trust the Lord. 5 years into that journey I was felt like I was neck deep in water and ready to quit. **Just when I thought my next breath was going to be liquid God's promises were revealed and I learned that He had been faithful before I ever saw evidence of it.** Don't rely on your feelings or your circumstances, hope in Christ alone! He will see you through.

All for the Kingdom,

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real stories by paula warkentin

CHRIST, My Hiding Place

Prior to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, I described myself as a Black, Radical, Lesbian, Feminist to state my identity, so that others could not define me.

As a first generation Canadian (born to immigrant parents) I grew up feeling displaced. This, coupled with exposure to sexual sin in my childhood, and experience of racism, imprinted a deep sense of worthlessness for my racial identity and my gender. While appearing to be confident and smiling outwardly, inwardly I HATED being black AND female. Faced with the irony of constantly being asked, "where I was from" (when I was in the city, province and country of my birth) and often reminded that I was not a "true" West Indian, (because I had not been born in the country of my parents) I never felt I belonged. Failing to develop a sound sense of who I was, I felt overtly visible and exposed. Desperate for cover and a place to hide, I walked with walls (living in exile) because I was affirmed, neither here nor there when all I wanted was to be accepted and have a place to call home.

I enrolled in a Women's Studies class when I found the belonging I so desperately longed for. Hearing words like marginalized, oppressed and silenced were terms that echoed my reality and offered the validation and community I had been seeking. Before long, I was a publicly outspoken, militant, activist in the Feminist Movement who sought confirmation and security in what would become a long-term lesbian relationship.

Seven years into that 14-year same-sex relationship, I accepted Christ. Catapulted by His love, years of suppressed anger, panic attacks and depression were lifted. I had a genuine hunger for God's word and a zeal for the Lord. Yet, there was much ground to be gained, and I was still very much at war with myself. Convinced that it was okay for me to continue living with my x-partner, (because we were both "sisters-in Christ" and no longer physical), I did not realize that I was emotionally enmeshed and codependent.

I remained active in ministry for years and never shared my history of same-sex attraction with my pastors. Pride and my fear of being found out and rejected propelled me to hide behind pretense and deception. When the stress of continuous running (without rest) and the weight of duplicity became unbearable, I hit a breaking point. **I finally realized that in order to be truly free in Christ, the secret I had kept while walking in darkness could not remain hidden, while walking in the light. It became evident, that I needed to come out of hiding from myself, from God and His Body.**

After a series of events completely orchestrated by God, I left the house I shared with my former partner and moved into my own apartment. I found a church where my history could be known and enrolled in the Living Waters course. A pivotal aspect of my healing BEGAN when God's people (who I long feared) taught, listened, and prayed with me. As I openly shared my experience and wounds became unveiled, and my secrets and I along with them were finally known, I WAS accepted and loved. It was then I realized that God never intended my healing to occur apart from the love and grace offered in and through His Body. In acknowledging my need of The Body, I also discovered their need of me and my story as part of who they are called - The Church.

Living as known and unafraid requires me to hide myself in Christ, and continually surrender my will and desire for control to Jesus. As a daughter, woman, wife and mother, increasingly free, ...I wouldn't want it any other way, but His.



real answers by kenny warkentin

"When do you know you are ready to pursue a serious relationship with the opposite sex?"

So often within the Christian community the expectation is you just "get married". If you don't there has to be something wrong with you. Whispers begin to get louder and people begin to get bolder in their comments. With all the 'other' voices aside, when do you know you are ready to pursue a serious relationship with the opposite sex?

First, let's be bold enough to say that marriage in and of itself is hard work. It isn't for the faint of heart. We have idealized what it is supposed to be like and especially for someone who is or has struggled with same gender attraction we may have false notions of what attraction is supposed to be like. Solidifying who you are as a male or female is crucial before stepping out into the unknown of the 'other'. This comes from an intimate relationship with Father God, who is the only one who can call us out into the fullness of who we were created to be.

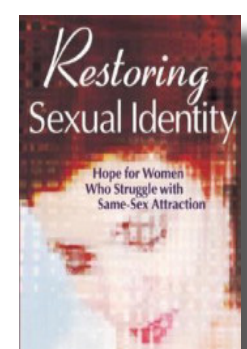
In my struggle with same gender attraction, I often felt like one of the girls and out of that relating I emotionally abused them. Leading them on with my sympathetic ear, going right to their hearts. God wanted me to be grounded in who I was as a male with solidarity with other men, knowing my heart to initiate and not draw away. He wanted me to come to know the uniqueness of woman, her intrigue and desire to pursue her.

So often we think in our journey of healing that to be healed enough means our object of attraction switches from same gender attraction to full blown lust for the opposite gender. That is a cultural view of sexuality not a Biblical view. A

good friend once told me that God might just give you enough love and attraction for one woman period. That it isn't about lusting after every woman that is a sign that you are ready to be in relationship with the opposite sex. Rather God desires you to seek holiness first and seek His kingdom and all things will be given unto you in that seeking. You are still called to be holy just as Jesus is holy in your singleness and in your pursuit of a relationship.

No one can give you the ultimate answer to when you may be ready to enter into serious relationships with the opposite sex. But, with the help of Godly counsel and a heart that is submitted, trust that God, your Father, has the best for you and will give you wisdom and understanding in your healing journey.

Kenny is the Canadian Regional Coordinator for Exodus International and the Resource Programs Coordinator for Living Waters Central Region. He has been in full-time ministry since July 2006 and has been married to Paula since August 2007.



featured resource

Restoring Sexual Identity

by Anne Paulk

Restoring Sexual Identity offers answers to the most commonly asked questions from both homosexuals desiring change and friends and relatives of women struggling with same-sex attraction. Important questions are answered as the author draws from her own experience and that of many other former lesbians who participated in an extensive survey on same-sex attraction.

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