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An Exodus International Member Ministry

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A Referral Ministry of ROCK

THIS MONTH'S MEDITATION SCRIPTURE: *Jesus: Everyone therefore who shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. Matthew 10:32-33*

Hello again, everyone! As I promised you last month, we have a special guest writer for August. His name is Brandon, and he is a participant in Abba's Delight. This is his anniversary month of leaving behind homosexuality and coming to our ministry for help. He has chosen our meditation scripture verses and is sharing his testimony below. I hope you are blessed reading this account of the Lord's victory and triumph in Brandon's life. Your responses and encouragement are welcomed.

"If You Love Me..."

Many of us know the rest of this verse, yet how many of us do it? John 14:15 ends, "you will obey Me."

Being a man 48 years of age and dealing with same-sex attraction (SSA), it's a challenge at times to carry out Jesus' command. I've been blessed to be a part of Daniel Mingo's group in an Exodus ministry for the past 8 years now. In that time, I've experienced highs and lows, joy and pain, laughter and tears.

From a child, I always knew I was "different." It didn't go away as I grew older; in fact, it got stronger. Coming from a broken home didn't help matters. No strong male role model from the ages of 8 until 15 played a major part in my turning what should have been my years of male affirmation into a mess. Once I was reunited with my Dad at 15 the damage was already done. My Dad and I were more or less strangers. About the only two things we had in common were our last name and the way we looked. We couldn't be more opposite. Trying to make a father-son connection wasn't easy when years of separation had taken place. Dad was out-going, brash, and loud. Not me. I isolated myself, hiding in books and school work. As time went by, little progress was made.

On my 20th birthday, I announced I was gay. Talk about a surprise! My parents were devastated. In 1984, when I made this announcement, HIV/AIDS was still a relatively new and scary proposition. They feared the worst for me. Those fears were realized the next year. For the past 28 years, I have endured injections, hospital stays and

drugs daily because of stupid choices I made regarding my sexual experiences. BUT GOD...

Since that time, I've been born again. My partner's mother led me to the Lord in 1991 in Atlanta. I've been baptized, filled with the Holy Spirit, and enjoy going to He, too, wanted to return to his Baptist roots that he'd strayed from years earlier. We knew it was for the best.

He went back to North Carolina, I to Wisconsin. Unfortunately, when I got there, the church was not equipped to deal with the issue of SSA and wanting to overcome it. "Pray, pray, pray," is what I was told. Don't think I didn't! I begged, pleaded, everything I could, to ask God to take this from me—some supernatural miracle to free me from this. If God was a loving God, surely He would do this for someone who was destined to die. No such luck. I waited for it to happen but it never came. I ended up becoming so disillusioned, I fell back to the "old me." I went back to what was comfortable and familiar: pornography, sexual acting out, gay bars, etc....It wasn't pretty!

In 1993, because of a job relocation, I ended up in Louisville again, and returned to the same old stuff. In January 1995, my ex-partner succumbed to AIDS at age 31. I knew he wasn't suffering anymore. He didn't turn his back on Jesus; he saw it through and fought the good fight. PRAISE GOD!

It wasn't until January 2001 that I finally had my PRODIGAL moment. The Holy Spirit got ahold of me and let me see the pigpen I was in and said, "Enough is enough!" I got back to church, got involved, and made friends. In 2003, I got the courage to stand up to the congregation and told them about my SSA. A gentleman who was familiar with Exodus International recommended that I get in touch with a ministry that dealt with it. I was scared, I kept putting it off. At last, in August 2004, I called and got the number for Daniel.

For the first time in my life, I had , a decision to make: either go through and get to the finish line, or quit and give up, just like a always did. As you can tell, I'm still in the race. I've seen guys come and go over the years. Some, one visit; fortunately, others who have been faithful like myself.

Believe me, Daniel cracks the whip. Books, CD's, DVD's became good friends. Oh, that one word---PROCESS. Hated it. Still do. Miracles do happen, but overcoming SSA and related issues are a long process that Jesus has to be a part of.

The pain of falling back, the hurt of acting out while being in the group; man, I thought it would be simple. Nothing hurts more than openly admitting you screwed up after committing yourself to doing what's right. Daniel said it could happen. He didn't condemn or judge. Just like Jesus.

The turning point came when I realized that God loved me and who I was in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says I am the righteousness of God in Christ. God sees me in

Christ, not as I am. He loves me as I am, but the cleansing blood of Christ makes me that new creature the Bible talks about.

If God could love me in the midst of the disaster I made of my life, how could I love myself? It wasn't easy. It still isn't. There are days I have to shake my head that Jesus dies that death for me. I learned that if He could do that FOR ME, what should I do for HIM! "Could you do it for Me?" I heard Him say. I got it in my head that I was to do it for Jesus.

Romans 12:1-2 were pivotal verses. Both my body being a living sacrifice for Him and the renewal—total renewal of my mind. I didn't have to live that way anymore. God truly had something better for me!

It's been quite a journey. I'm grateful to everyone who's been a part of it along the way.

I don't know how long I have, none of us do. But I can say that I'm so glad that Jesus helped bring healing to my wounds. We're all in this together and we all need each other; after all, WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST.

Upcoming Ministry Meetings

Family & Friends Support Group: Tuesday, August 28, 2012; Tuesday, September 11, 2012; Tuesday, September 25, 2012

Overcomers Support Group: Thursday, September 6, 2012; Thursday, September 20, 2012

Responses From You

From a brother in SC: Daniel, this is a very good article on Disclosure. Bless you.

From a brother in IN: This is spot-on!

From a sister here in Louisville: I did want you to know that I enjoyed reading the latest Abba's Delight newsletter. So insightful and full of good Word. I pray all is going well with the ministry, and that God blesses and opens many doors for you. You are such a blessing to many, but especially to the family of 88.5 WJIE.

Ongoing Prayer Requests

Our Overcomers Group has grown over the last few months, even though we have lost a couple of members as well. Our growth is answered prayer. Please continue to pray that those who Father would bring us will hear His voice to contact the ministry.

As well, our Family & Friends Group has experienced growth, which is more answered prayer. There is still room for continued expansion, so please continue to pray.

Another report of answered prayer is in our desire to add to our Board of Directors. I would like to have 10 members, and we have filled one of those spots. Currently, we have 7. If you would like to serve on our Board, or know of someone who has a heart for seeing God's people set free, please contact me.

Our website is still in flux. Between my day job, ministry meetings and family, I can't seem to find the time to write the pieces I need to have placed on the site. Please pray for time, wisdom and speed to write those pieces. Thank you.

As most of you know, the Lord spoke over a year ago to begin moving toward taking Abba's Delight to full time status. We continue to thank God for the support that is coming in, but still pray for Him to move on others to contribute to the cause. We still need about \$2625 per month to reach the goal. Please continue to pray. There are so many who could be set free from their bondage to homosexuality, and we desire to be a part of their release process, as we have been in Brandon's life.

If you do not wish to receive the Abba's Delight Ministry Newsletter any longer, please let me know. If you do wish to continue to receive it, please be certain to put our email address in your address book, so that this mailing does not go to your spam, and report to your carrier. Thank you.

Now unto Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. Jude 24, 25