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An Exodus International Member Ministry

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A Referral Ministry of ROCK

THIS MONTH'S MEDITATION SCRIPTURE: *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness".....And God created man in His own image, in the image of God, He created him; male and female, He created them. Genesis 1:26a,27*

Hello Everyone! Being so close to the end of the month, and knowing that I am leaving this coming Wednesday for the annual Exodus International Freedom Conference in St. Paul, MN, I decided to let myself off the hook this month from writing a new piece, and instead re-present my article from August 2010. Many of you who are now on the mailing list were not here then, so this will be new for you. For those of you who were here then, please forgive my taking the easy way out. I encourage you to re-read *Reclaiming My Masculinity*, asking Father for a fresh revelation.

Reclaiming My Masculinity

For everyone who deals with same sex attractions, whether they are unwanted or not, it is a reality that the devil has stolen a part of our lives from us that Father never intended for us to have lacking. That part is a healthy gender identity.

Father created me a male. I was born a male. I look like a male. But somewhere along my developmental years as a youngster, I never quite caught on to the whole masculine thing. I sure didn't fit the stereotype. I wasn't interested in, or good at, sports; I was not your average rough and tumble boy. I was more interested in singing, acting and the performing arts. But most importantly, I never developed that sense of belonging to the male gender. I never felt like I fit in. When I would try doing "guy" things, I was so bad at them that I would be ridiculed by my peers for performing so poorly. So, the rejection I felt from other males caused me to want to withdraw, which kept me from bonding with them, which kept my homo-emotional (legitimate same sex) needs from being met. I needed to feel accepted, I needed to be included, and I needed to know a sense of belonging to the same kinds of things that other boys realized. But it just wasn't there for me.

By the time puberty initiated its invasion (and overtook me), my messed up gender identity allowed me to begin sexualizing those longings and desires to fit in and be a part of the whole masculine identity, and I found myself sexually attracted to other males. It also didn't help that I was molested at thirteen, and was ridiculed for my lack of "maleness" by a set of neighborhood parents as well. Meanwhile, I had always carried

this inner sense that I was supposed to grow up to be a husband and father, making my adolescence quite the confusing time. My dating in high school may have been partly me attempting to fulfill that inner sense, but also it may have been me trying to prove to myself, and anyone else who may have been wondering, that I really was a guy—that my existence as a male was not an “oops” moment for God .

There has been so much controversy in recent years over what causes a homosexual orientation in a male. There has been a big push by the gay community, Hollywood, and the liberal media to make us believe that having same sex attractions is the result of “the gay gene,” the “fact” that we are born this way. In reality though, it is **not** a fact. There has never been a confirmed genetic link to homosexuality, but the fallacy continues to be perpetuated. I believe what I have described above, the failure to bond in healthy relationships with members of the same sex, is the major contributing factor that caused my homosexual attractions.

My belief is that the thing that caused my same sex attractions is the key to experiencing what would correct them.

I had never immersed myself into the gay culture or took on a gay identity, and I was striving to live out my commitment to the Lord as much as I knew how given my situation. I certainly never thought or believed for a moment that my homosexual encounters were OK. Then, seventeen years ago, under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, I turned my back on the sin I’d given myself to for nearly 30 years. During that time, Father was orchestrating my life in such a way that I began developing healthy relationships with men who would come to model godly masculinity to me. Prior to this I was fearful and felt intimidated at the thought of letting healthy and godly heterosexual males into my world. I was so insecure in my masculinity and myself. Would they reject me too if they knew the real me, I thought? But as Father worked His own plan in me as I pursued my relationship with Him, and with the help of these healthy men He put into my life over the years (and later realizing there were even some He had sent me while I was still in my sin), I began to see my male gender identity become more solidified. My self-perception began to shift to a more satisfying masculine point of view as I learned to become the **man** Father created me to be. Believe it or not, I slowly became more interested in sports. As I became more secure in myself as a man, I found I was no longer intimidated by the idea of participating in a volleyball, softball, or touch football game.

Men who struggle with unwanted same-sex attractions also need to be able to relate to other men facing like challenges for encouragement and support, because of their common personal experiences and feelings. Both types of relationships, those who struggle with their sexual identity and those who are what we call “ever-straight,” are essential, I believe, for my coming into the full purposes of God for my life. I was at a church meeting the other night, and the thought occurred to me, as I was in a conversation with two other men, that I was no longer intimidated in this type of

situation. I no longer feel lonely/alone/isolated/inferior/out-of-place as I used to in a group of men. Father has been seeing that my legitimate same-sex needs are being met these days, as they had not been previously in life. Father is restoring what the enemy had stolen from me.

My part has been to reclaim my masculinity, take back again my maleness that Father chose for me in the beginning. There have been many components to this process, the most important being my choice to pursue godliness, holiness and purity as Jesus demonstrated beyond anything else in life. There has been much prayer, healing, deliverance, and commitment to making righteous daily, even moment-by-moment, choices that will align my life with my Father's kind intentions towards me.

In my Father's good humor, He blessed me, a man who had a seriously messed-up sexual identity, with three sons to teach how to be men. All of it has been a challenging, yet rewarding journey, for which I am truly grateful. No one would ever choose these life-challenges beforehand, but Father continues to be faithful to light the path He's laid out for me. Abba's Delight is one of the highlights of this journey. What a trip I'm on!!! For those of you who are strugglers and/or overcomers of same-sex attractions, and for those of you who have friends, family members or loved ones either who struggle or are entrenched in the gay lifestyle, there is a book I just finished reading that I picked up at the Exodus Conference in June that I want to strongly recommend to you. I know, it's two months since the conference concluded, but if you know anything at all about my reading habits, you should know that for me to finish a book in only two months, that's like warp speed. Anyway, the book is by Jeff Konrad and it's called "You Don't Have To Be Gay." It is one of the clearest descriptions of why someone takes on a gay identity, and how to leave the lifestyle. Mr. Konrad writes it in letterform to a younger brother in Christ, Mike, who is battling his own sexual identity issues. For anyone who wants to understand homosexuality and its root causes, this book is a must read. Check it out at www.exodusbooks.org.

Upcoming Ministry Meetings

Overcomers Support Group: Thursday, June 28, 2012 (CANCELLED due to Exodus International Freedom Conf.) Thursday, July 12, 2012; Thursday, July 26, 2012

Family & Friends Support Group: Tuesday, July 3, 2012; Tuesday, July 17, 2012; Tuesday, July 31, 2012

Responses From You

From a brother in SC: A really good word, Daniel.

From an Exodus ministry leader in IN: Very good news letter. I look forward to seeing you next month.

From an Abba's Delight ministry supporter: Excellent article on Killing the Lone Ranger. Larry Crabb states in his book Connecting, "We have made a terrible mistake! We have wrongly defined soul wounds as psychological disorders and delegated their treatment to trained specialists. Damaged psyches aren't the problem. The problem is disconnected souls. What we need is connection! What we need is a healing community! I agree wholeheartedly with this assessment for when I found connection at a deep soul level with another brother in Christ, is when my soul began to heal and I found freedom from my besetting sins. Press on!

Ongoing Prayer Requests

Please pray for our Overcomers Support Group, that each one of them will pursue his relationship with Jesus as fiercely as he knows how, that each will continue to become more perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus as he learns obedience to the King, and that lasting changes from the inside out will bear fruit in his life, leading other men to Him.

Please ask the Lord to bring new participants to the Overcomers Support Group, who will be searching for the Lord to bring them wholeness and purity.

Please pray for our Family & Friends Support Group members to receive wisdom from Father in learning how to share His love with their loved ones whose lives have been impacted by homosexuality. **Please pray for those who would benefit from attending this support group, but who are letting themselves be kept out by pride, shame, and the feeling that their situation is hopeless. These are obstacles that can be overcome with the help of the Lord and others in the group who are receiving their healing from Him.**

Please pray for our search to add new Board Members to Abba's Delight. If you, or anyone you know, would be willing to serve on our Board, please contact me to inquire about serving. Meetings are scheduled once every quarter.

Please pray for the ongoing work of developing our website. Some of it is complete, but we still have a long way to go. Ask the Lord to give me the time, wisdom and speed to write the pieces that still need to be added.

Upcoming Conferences

Exodus International Freedom Conference *I will be presenting a workshop on
June 27-June 30, 2012 sexual purity on Saturday, 6/30
Northwestern College (Minneapolis, MN)
Contact Info: 888-264-0877
Email: conference@exodusinternational.org

Hope Gathering 2012 is a one-day seminar designed to give truthful, grace-filled insight on Gender Identity Disorder. Speakers are: Dr. Marc Dillworth who is a licensed Psychotherapist who specializes in the treatment of GID in children and adolescents; Denise Shick, founder of Help 4 Families, and author of *My Daddy's Secret* and *When Hope Seems Lost*; Walt Heyer, author of *Trading My Sorrows*, *Perfected With Love*, and his newest release *Paper Genders*. This event will include workshops and testimonies. The conference will be held on July 28, 2012 in Marietta, GA. For more details, go to www.help4families.com.

Financial Support Update

If you have been following our progress on raising support for me to be able to take Abba's Delight to full-time status so that I can leave my day job and devote my days to ministry matters such as meeting with pastors and church leaders, public speaking opportunities, ministerial associations, etc., then you've noticed that our monthly goal has continued to remain at \$2750 for several months. So, I ask that you please seek the Lord to see if He would be leading you to become a monthly donor. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

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