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NEWSLETTER – June 2013



An Exodus International Member Ministry

Referral Ministry of ROCK-Reclaim Our Culture Kentuckiana

THIS MONTH'S MEDITATION SCRIPTURE: *There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven—a time to give birth, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build up. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to throw stones, and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace, and a time to shun embracing. A time to search, and a time to give up as lost; a time to keep, and a time to throw away. A time to tear apart, and a time to sew together; a time to be silent, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace. Ecc. 3:1-8*

[The Closing of an Institution](#)

Today is Sunday, June 23, 2013; it's the day after the 38th annual Exodus International Freedom Conference ended. And it was their final conference. It was announced by Exodus International President, Alan Chambers, last week that Exodus International is closing its doors for good. The Christian ministry, which had become a worldwide institution over its nearly forty year history, has been embroiled in controversy the last year-and-a-half, as Alan has made public doctrinal statements and taken unpopular and non-traditional positions regarding subjects such as eternal security and what changes in the life of born again believers with same-gender issues look like in reality, as opposed to the hopes of what those changes would look like. These controversies, and maybe others, led many of the Exodus member ministries to make their own exodus from the organization over the last year-and-a-half.

The announcement of Exodus' shut-down was timed with the conference and with an interview that aired on Lisa Ling's Our America television show this past week, on OWN (Oprah Winfrey Network), during which Alan apologized to the gay community in general for the offenses done and mistakes relating to Reparative Therapy made by Exodus and some of its member ministries over the last 37 years. Ms Ling had invited a small group of individuals to hear the apology and to share some of their stories of how they were hurt, rather than helped, by Exodus affiliated ministries over the years. As of this writing, I have only seen the trailer for the show. In it, much anger is expressed, some of which relates to "promises" and claims made

by Exodus and its ministries that the change that would be possible would include no further attraction to the same gender. Alan had sensed the Lord's leading and need to apologize, with the backing of the Exodus Board of Directors.

Over the last year-and-a-half, there was a change in ministry direction for Exodus: the belief and statement made by Alan at the GCN (Gay Christian Network) conference in 2011 that 99% of those who have struggled with same-sex attractions still have those attractions (to varying degrees) many years later and may never go away completely. Also stated was that he expected to see in heaven same-sex attracted born-again Christians who were comfortable with their gay identity, which ties in to what is being called a "hyper-grace" message. These statements brought confusion to many ministry participants, and dissention among Exodus ministry leaders. Those attending the GCN conference were glad to hear Alan's positional change, as it seemed to validate them in a way they may not been validated before. But it also brought on the flood of controversy regarding eternal security. Can a person who is gay-identified be considered a Christian? How can a born again believer who is actively engaged in homosexual activity be saved? And what about the new believer who is gay and has "prayed the sinner's prayer," but knows nothing of what the Bible states about homosexuality, then dies before he hears the truth of the Word? What would be his/her fate? Or the new believer who does have some familiarity with Biblical teaching on homosexual behavior, but has not been convicted by the Holy Spirit to cease those behaviors (why should this sin be any different than the one who lets his anger fly, or mistreats his wife and children, or cheats on his income taxes, yet has not responded to the Holy Spirit's conviction? Does this mean they're not saved either?) Many other questions with varying scenarios can be raised as well, that may not have clear answers. It's not always so black and white for everyone, especially when not every Christian takes the Bible literally, or for those who believe the Lord has led them to a different conclusion than others regarding the same passages related to homosexual sin. Doesn't the personal faith level or understanding of the individual believer have to be taken into account on such things? I mean, can a born again believer who may not be mature in his understanding of spiritual matters be expected just to "take someone's word for it" that this is a behavior you have to give up, so you'd just better obey? Not everyone has the same level of commitment right out of the gate; not everyone has the same understanding of spiritual matters from day one; not everyone has someone to teach them the Truth of Scripture, and may be fending for himself/herself. **Maybe more important to Father** than any of the behaviors, is the individual's heart, which only He can judge, rather than a ledger accounting to see if His son or daughter gets it right every time? In any case, though I found arguments on both sides plausible, for Abba's Delight, I had chosen to retain our affiliation with Exodus.

I have known Alan Chambers for several years, but have worked closer with him and Exodus over the last six years. I know Alan to be a man of great faith, passion, vision, and one

who has a heart to see the Lord's healing in each individual he meets. He is a faithful and devoted husband to his wife, Leslie, and a loving father to his son and daughter. What Alan does, and how he leads, is out of the conviction of his heart, which he trusts is Spirit led. Does everyone get that right every single time? Do you? I certainly know I don't! Many accusations have been leveled against Alan's character, his motives, and his methods, and I have watched him remain steadfast in his pursuit of what he believes the Lord has called him to do. I have several times seen FaceBook posts written to or about Alan that seemed mean-spirited, unkind, and sometimes downright rude and ungodly, nearly almost all of them by Christians and/or ministry leaders who have disagreed with him and the direction Exodus has taken. Others, who are closer to Alan than I, have shared with me instances of outright lies that others have told, spread, or that the media has reported. These types of posts, reports, and comments are unquestionably not in keeping with God's charge to us to be kind to one another, even, and especially, in the midst of controversy with those in leadership and positions of authority. Instead of entering into eventual hurtful criticism, backbiting, and character maligning, there should be continued gentle appeals, kindness, and brotherly love. It just goes to show that all of us continually need the presence of the Holy Spirit's conviction in our lives to keep us on His path.

I have heard from some of you already regarding the controversy and closure of Exodus, wondering how that will affect Abba's Delight going forward. I want to thank you for your concern and support; it means a great deal to me. Up until the announcement of the closure, which, by the way, was presented to the Exodus ministry leaders only a few days before it was released to the general public through the press, the public controversy had not had much effect at all on our local ministry. I say not much effect, because I did not see those ministry focus shifts as deal-breakers for me to back out Abba's Delight from its affiliation with Exodus. As I am told, Exodus in its early years recognized and welcomed many different denominations and varied groups with diverse doctrinal beliefs. It seemed to have changed over the years. I never saw the conflict as one about which I had to choose sides; to me, it was not an either/or situation, but rather a both/and. I have been able to see valid points on both sides. So, I remained put. The Lord told me to join Exodus and if He wanted me to leave, He was certainly able to speak that word, to which I would have obeyed.

Many of the ministries who have left Exodus over the controversy have joined together to form an organization called Restored Hope Network (RHN). These members declare themselves to be in direct opposition to Alan and the direction he had taken Exodus. Some of the current Exodus ministries were contacted by some of the RHN leaders in an effort to convince them of the error of their (and Alan's) ways, and to jump ship. I had chosen not to join them, but for other reasons than theology. There are other possible affiliation

opportunities for Abba's Delight that I am exploring, and looking to hear clearly from the Lord, so I can make a recommendation to my Board of Directors when we meet in several weeks.

One of the perceptions that a few of us leaders kicked around in conversation the other day was that "the other side" either of the gay community and/or Alan's/Exodus' detractors, or even the media, would begin to declare the closure of Exodus as a victory, and a defeat for Exodus, Alan, the Exodus staff, the ministries, the ministry participants, etc. There is no win vs loss here! God is in control. Father was not surprised by this turn of events. God is not shaken; He's not wringing His hands wondering what happened. He has a plan(s), and will execute it/them in His timing to His listening servants. In truth, we've all lost some because Exodus is gone; and we've all won because Father is moving us on to do greater things for His Kingdom.

The conference itself was wonderfully anointed. As expected, numbers were down, so instead of its usual 700-800, there were a mighty and expectant 300. But even in the midst of the announcement and the controversy, God did not forget we were assembled, nor did He turn His back. Still, the Holy Spirit presented Himself in power, healing hearts, touching lives, restoring relationships, speaking words of affirmation, encouragement and love, and that was just during the prayer times over those who came down in the prayer lines. The speakers brought amazing messages! They included: Alan Chambers, Jeanette Howard ("Out of Egypt" and "Into the Promised Land"), Lisa Bevere, Julie Rodgers, Dr. Kathy Koch (Celebrate Kids, Inc), and our own Nate Collins with his father Chip. Worship again this year was led by Holland Davis ("Let it Rise"), whose sensitivity to the Holy Spirit brought us into the Lord's presence time and again to experience the sweetness and closeness of our Father. Powerful messages were delivered in the various workshops; I was fortunate enough to present again this year on Pursuing Sexual Purity. If anyone is interested in obtaining DVD's or CD's of the messages or testimonies, please contact me, and I hook you up.

Well, I've talked about the business end of Exodus' closing. How do I feel about it, personally? Even though I believe it was the correct decision to make based on the Lord leading Alan and the Board, I am saddened to see it go, and am mourning its death. It feels like I've lost a good friend. Some of the most important ministry relationships forged over the last ten years have been strained due to the conflict; some of those have been dear to my heart, bringing me along, training me when I was the new kid on the block, showing me the ropes. Even with this, though, I am not in despair; rather I am hopeful in Father's continued provision. Abba's Delight ministry continues, day in and day out, and we will continue to disciple those who seek our help. There is work to be done, ministry to experience, lives to be touched, ground to be taken for the Kingdom! Please continue to pray, and I will continue to keep you posted on the Lord's further leading and developments. Thank you for your continued support!

[Responses From You](#)

Thank you for your responses to last month's Newsletter...Ask, and you shall receive.....

From a ministry leader in MI: Hi Daniel, Good to hear from you. I just thought I'd let you know that I appreciate your newsletter and loved your Judah stories.

From a brother soon to be in OK: Daniel, Thanks so much for your newsletter, I enjoyed it very much. Loved the story about Judah and how you all had grown to love him. And how the Lord enjoys it when we stretch out in peaceful, settled trust in Him. Praise the Lord.

From a brother I met in Lexington recently: Hey Daniel, thanks. I enjoyed your letter keep them coming brother. I'm praying also for your request. God bless and thanks.

From a brother in Malaysia: Dear Daniel, Thank you for the newsletter. As you said, hearing our Master's voice is so important, but along the way Satan and our sinful nature will tempt us and fall away from hearing our Master's voice. Truly knowing and understanding our Master also help us to cling on Him. We are children of God, we encourage each other in the Lord, although we did not meet but we met through the Son of God.

From a brother here in Louisville: Hi Daniel, First of all I want to thank you for the continued steadfast work that you do for so many that are hurting and in need of this ministry. I also want to thank you for keeping me on the Abba's Delight mailing list. Although I may not always reply to the newsletter, please know that I read every one of them and they are always a blessing to me. As I go through this life as a bachelor, I thank God daily for His creation of the dog. Our sovereign God knew what He was doing when He created those furry footed friends. There are times that loneliness and abandonment seem overwhelming as I strive to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord. It's in those times that I find great comfort in the companionship of my dog. Throughout my life, I have been taught great lessons from the dogs I have had. Lessons of faithfulness, patience, honesty, friendship and most of all...unconditional love. I too believe that our heavenly Father uses many different avenues to communicate with us. Sometimes I miss the point of what He is trying to show me by just reading His Word or time spent in prayer with Him. My feeble mind needs to make the human connections such as the lessons learned from Wrigley(my dog). Again, thank you for a great post. You had me at dog! Peace.

From a dear sister in ministry: Daniel, Your story about Judah really ministered to me. I can identify because in all my years I have never wanted a pet until this past January I got a Shih-poo and named him Patches. Patches, a coat of many colors. His ways teach me so much about Abba's love and care for us. Thank you for continuing to write and share. Your newsletter is a blessing!

Thank you all! Keep those responses coming!

[Upcoming Ministry Meetings](#)

Family & Friends Support Group: Tuesday, June 25, 2013; Tuesday, July 9, 2013; Tuesday, July 23, 2013

Overcomers Group: Thursday, July 4, 2013 CANCELLED; Thursday, July 18, 2013

[Upcoming Ministry Conferences](#)

Hope Gathering 2013: July 13, 2013 Gateway Fellowship Church in Hockley, TX Contact 814-598-4952 or help4families2004@yahoo.com. Download your registration form at www.help4families.com

Thank you for your prayers and financial support!!!

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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