

AFAIN Note: *Several months ago, when we became aware of the changes within the Exodus organization and the realigning of the vast majority of the 260 affiliates, we began to follow them to the Restored Hope Network and promote the Restored Hope on the AFA-IN resource page.*

Alan Chambers Goes Back to Egypt

by Dr. Scott Lively

The headlines in the liberal media are gleefully trumpeting the demise of Exodus International, the leading icon of the ex-“gay” movement. “From ‘pray away the gay’ to acceptance,” chortles the LA Times. But this is not really a story about an organization, but only it’s leader Alan Chambers and his unfortunate capitulation to the world. I invite you to join me in prayer for him.

Those of us “in the know” have over the past few years watched Alan slowly transform Exodus into his own private fiefdom, while at the same time he slowly gravitated inexorably away from recovery. By recovery I mean the state of mind which focuses on freedom in Christ from bondage to sin as exemplified by 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. ***Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.***”

In anticipation of this sad day many former Exodus member organizations broke away months ago and formed a new organization, the Restored Hope Network. RHN will carry on the important work of the church in helping homosexuals to recover from same-sex attraction disorder. I applaud the courage of these men and women to remain true to Scripture in the face of intense hostility and persecution from the “gay” movement and its many powerful allies. Their ministry will not be made any easier by the triumphal gloating and attacks of their now greatly emboldened detractors.

It was this same relentless grinding hostility that undoubtedly contributed to the fall of Alan Chambers (few can bear it for long, just ask the Boy Scouts), but in addition to this “stick” there was also a “carrot” that led him astray: an insidious form of “gay” theology that misrepresents God’s grace as a license to sin, or at least a license to embrace a personal identity defined by a desire to indulge in homosexual sin.

Don’t get me wrong. I am a pastor whose theology is deeply rooted in the truth of grace, and I don’t believe that homosexual sin is any greater barrier to salvation

than any other sin. It's one thing, however, to acknowledge that some heaven-bound Christians may struggle with homosexual desires and even conduct, but an entirely different matter to condone and affirm a homosexual "orientation" as if God intended it to be one's basis for self-identification. The former is solidly Biblical, the latter is dangerous heresy. God did not create people to have no choice in a behavior He condemns as an abomination, and He wants us never to identify with our sin nature but to strive always to overcome it. These are fundamental tenets of Scripture.

The world today mocks the notion that homosexuals can change, but what is truly ridiculous, even by secular standards of logic, is the insistence that a person cannot reorient their sexual nature to comport with their heterosexual physiology. Normalcy is, after all, that which conforms to its design, and all of us, even "homosexuals," have a heterosexual design. That fact is simply self-evident to anyone with a rational mind. Yet Christians, among whom Alan Chambers still counts himself, are required to hold to an even higher standard of truth: God's Word. Under that standard, the self-evident truth just mentioned is also the perspective of our Omniscient, Omnipotent Creator God: "Such *were* some of you." And, of course, there are many ex-"gays" who know the truth of that verse living among us in victory over their former disorientation, just as there were in the early church.

For many years Exodus International was an organization true to the Bible, adopting as its theme the Hebrew exodus from bondage in Egypt to freedom in the wilderness. In that story the hero is Moses who stayed true to God while the people often grumbled and wanted to go back to Egypt where life in slavery seemed less difficult than their struggles under freedom. Ironically, in the Exodus International story, it is Moses Alan Chambers who has turned back to Egypt, while the people keep pressing on toward the Promised Land. I pray these strugglers will not be overly discouraged by Alan's failure. After all, here, just as in the Bible story, the true leader wasn't really Moses, it was and is God. And He never fails.