



PORTLAND  
fellowship

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update august 2012

*The purpose of my letter this month is to give you my perspective on where Exodus International is heading and contrast that where Portland Fellowship will remain.*

In the past few months I have spent a great amount of time in conversation and prayer over changes happening within the Exodus network and in particular the leadership of Exodus International based in Orlando, Florida. For those who do not know, Exodus was formed in 1976 for the purpose of connecting like-minded ministries, addressing the issues of same-sex attractions, together under one name. Portland Fellowship has been a member since 1988. Although each ministry in the Exodus network remained autonomous, the common goal has been to glorify Jesus Christ as men and women seek freedom from their unwanted homosexuality.

That last sentence comes with a cart load of questions, concerns, and disagreements, as some within our network are asking; "Can a person truly experience a change in their desires and to what degree? Are there genuine common root issues and are they important to deal with? Is this a relational issue that indeed, has relational solutions?"

In the past years and more in the recent months, Alan Chambers, president of Exodus International has made public and private statements that have created confusion and uncertainty about what the work of Exodus is really about. Please know, I do not write these things to disparage Alan or the work of Exodus but rather to address what is being communicated publicly and to inform our friends of Portland Fellowship's unchanging position.

In brief, Alan spoke, in January 2012, at the annual Gay Christian Network Conference where he shared that those who are identified as 'Gay Christian' will be in Heaven with him. His assurance is based on his belief that identity and behavior do not determine salvation or even a factor of it, but only the grace and love of Christ. It is true that salvation is by faith alone. Not works. However, as we know our works are the evidence of our faith. And as a point of clarification, the problem at hand is not an issue of either Calvinism or Armenianism, but rather the affirmation of 'believers' living an un-confessed, un-surrendered life.

Furthermore, Alan shared to those at this conference, "The majority of people that I have met, and I would say the majority meaning 99.9% of them, have not experienced a change in their orientation...or have gotten to a place where they could say that they could never be tempted or are not tempted in some way or experience some level of same-sex attraction." Although the second part of this statement includes a quantifier that is legitimate, the first part of the quote went viral as declaring that Exodus ministries have no success and now even the President of the organization admits it. Alan continues to emphasize the lack of transformation in a person's life and highlights ongoing struggle, effectively neutering the power of Christ in people's lives.

Not only did Alan say that he has not seen change take place, he continued to distance himself from the idea that change is even possible. Alan shared, "We're not using change as a slogan anymore, I'm very, very clear to say, we used 'Change is possible' for so many years, and it was used on me, and we used it, and the people who used it wanted it to mean something more than it did...but we don't use that phrase anymore."

The problem for many Exodus ministries, including Portland Fellowship, is the two-fold message; 1) there is no eternal reason to seek repentance for the self-identified and practicing 'Gay Christian'; and 2) that change simply isn't a goal or a strong reality for the majority. So what is the point of Exodus? At the recent annual Exodus conference, Alan opens the conference by answering the question with, "the answer that came to mind was the thing I was looking for was I didn't want to be alone anymore."

This significant shift in the historical work of Exodus, along with several other statements, theological disagreements (specifically regarding the issue of sanctification), and problems in leadership resulted in



EXODUS

*Portland Fellowship has been connected with Exodus since 1988. It has been a difficult process of separation.*

"He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners."

ISAIAH 61 : 1

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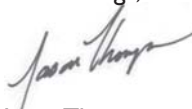
most of the strongest, longest-lasting Exodus Member ministries breaking their affiliation with Exodus International, and begin working to create a new network.

Theologian, Robert Gagnon, author of *The Bible and Homosexual Practice*, has written a 34 page critique of Alan Chambers. Although my letter only reports the basics, I would encourage you to read Dr. Gagnon's critique found online at: <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/homosexAlanChambersAtlanticInterview.pdf>

As stated above, Portland Fellowship, as a ministry, has not changed its message. Jesus Christ came to set the captive free. And God is most certainly able to change the hearts and minds of anyone with any life-dominating sin or struggle. We are not going to be complacent in the struggle, but seek wholeness and healing through intentional work spiritually, psychologically, relationally, and emotionally. We will continue to proactively look at the relational roots that contribute to struggle, not to find blame, but to restore and heal for the glory of God. We will never promote the 'goal of heterosexuality' as though that is the sign of healing, as we know there are countless 'heterosexuals' who are deeply broken, but we will promote sexual healing and wholeness, healthy relating, healthy marriage, healthy singleness, and healthy identity. Yes, we will all struggle with our humanity and dependence on the Lord until we meet Him face to face; but until that day, we will continue to trust in and partner with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. We will run the race with endurance and we will daily surrender our desires to Him.

Portland Fellowship has removed its affiliation with Exodus until changes in leadership take place and the mission is restored. Please know that Drew and I are available for deeper conversation and clarification. Please be in prayer for the Exodus leadership, the Exodus Network, and for Portland Fellowship as we navigate through these times and listen to the leading of God.

Blessings,



Jason Thompson  
Executive Director

### taking back ground

The 2012-2013 *Taking Back Ground* program starts again in October. If you or someone you know would like to join us, we are taking applications now. Enrollment is growing quickly, so submit your application soon.

apply online:  
[www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)

### counseling available

PF will again have an intern counselor available for personal counseling.

Portland Fellowship is blessed to have a good relationship with Multnomah University and Biblical Seminary. We are an internship site for students completing a Masters Degree in Counseling. This fall, we have at least one student offering her services to PF.

We desire to still keep counseling extremely affordable by offering a sliding scale. To learn more: visit [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com) and click "resources".

### prayer requests

Pray for our staff and ministry team as they prepare to minister to those in need through the *Taking Back Ground* program this fall.

Pray for all those needing to attend *Taking Back Ground*, new and returning, who are seeking to either begin, or continue to work through their struggles and make Christ lord of their relationships and sexuality.

Pray for the Upper Room participants that God has brought together this fall. Pray for unity of heart, a singleness of mind and a willingness to allow God to have his way with each of them.

Pray for continued support and provision of the ministries of Portland Fellowship. That we would see an increase in overall giving and a continued trust in God's ability to sustain the work that we are entrusting to Him.

**portland fellowship** is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 non-denominational organization. We are exclusively supported through private donations, support services, and offerings. Thank you for your gifts.

### events calendar

**tuesday nights**  
**aug 7, 14, 21, 28**

*Summer Series*  
Teacher: Phil Hobizal  
PF Founder

**aug 17**

*Family and Friends Group*  
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and personal support 6:30 p.m.

**aug 26**  
**drew speaking- faith**  
**evangelical free church:**  
**Dallas OR**

Drew will be speaking on balancing grace and truth in confronting homosexuality.

**additional updates:**  
[www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)  
Occasionally we have events that are scheduled in between newsletter printings. For a current, up-to-date calendar, please visit our website.

**speakers and counseling:** can be arranged through the office.