

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update june 2013



PORTLAND
fellowship

It is with sadness and disappointment that I share a renouncement made from John Paulk, a good friend and co-minister of many years. We felt it was important to communicate John's public statement with you, as this concerns the ministry of Portland Fellowship as well as many of our lives personally.

In part, Paulk writes,

"For the better part of ten years, I was an advocate and spokesman for what's known as the 'ex-gay movement,' where we declared that sexual orientation could be changed through a close-knit relationship with God, intensive therapy and strong determination. At the time, I truly believed that it would happen. And while many things in my life did change as a Christian, my sexual orientation did not. (emphasis mine)

So in 2003, I left the public ministry and gave up my role as a spokesman for the 'ex-gay movement.' I began a new journey. In the decade since, my beliefs have changed. Today, I do not consider myself 'ex-gay' and I no longer support or promote the movement."

This decision to recant his life work did not happen overnight, and sadly he is not the only former leader who has done this. Unchecked and unconfessed sin along with doubt, leaves a person extremely vulnerable to lies and deception. The personal battle becomes overwhelming, and compromising becomes normative. In a matter of time, one finds 'friendship' with the world more suitable than 'fellowship' with the body of Christ. They begin to listen to messages that validate their fleshly desire, rather than submitting them to the Lordship of Christ. Alas, these men and women forget the truth of God and all His benefits.

In his statement, John denounces the entire work of ministry, because he did not experience a 'sexual reorientation'. Yet, many times over, ministries, like Portland Fellowship, communicate that the purpose and goal is not to change one's sexual orientation, as though being heterosexually focused is a completed and holy state. Rather the aim is to learn to submit our lives to the Lordship of Christ and allow Him to transform us into His image. For many, that will result in a significant resolution to their emotional and sexual longings for the same gender. And for some who experience a deep measure of healing, a newfound desire for a spouse and family becomes a reality for them. While for others, it will be to live a satisfying unwed life, with contentment, purpose, and lasting joy. I personally know that John Paulk, himself, taught this redemptive message many times to countless people over the course of 20 years.

I am truly fascinated by some, like John, who have left Portland Fellowship communicating a message that was never taught. This confused thinking is evidence of a powerful and great deception. Sadly, a believer can turn from all he or she has learned and experienced, and begin believing a lie that will, eventually, deeply damage their faith. Paul writes to young Timothy, *"Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith."* I Tim. 1:18-20



"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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Long before Paul's exhortation, the Lord warns His people, the Israelites, in Deut 4:9, "Be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."

It's disheartening how easily we, the children of God, can so quickly forget His goodness, favor, and blessings as well as correction, discipline and convictions. We, like sheep, are prone to wander away from the Good Shepherd who protects and feeds us. Without His leading, we get caught up in filling our own desires and appetites, to the point of relinquishing our inheritance, like Esau, for a lousy bowl of soup.

Friends, let us continue to hold strong to the Lord and His power. We, as a leadership team at Portland Fellowship, cherish your support and prayers of protection, encouragement, and perseverance. Let us not grow weary, especially in a world that is growing increasingly hostile toward the redemptive message of God. Let us also all pray for all those who are discouraged by those who have given up and also for all those who may question starting the journey because of their deception. God is still at work in amazing and mighty ways, let us remember, embrace and proclaim it!

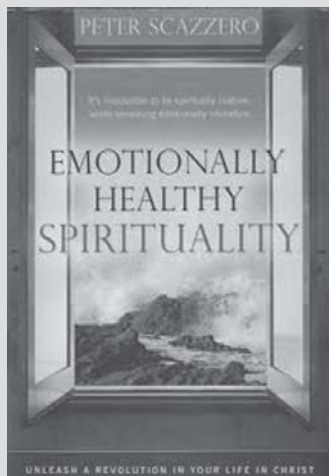
We know this news may cause confusion and concern for some of our readers. Please know we are available for questions and clarifications about our ministry work, and God's amazing transformational process.

Please be in prayer for Anne Paulk and their three boys. This is obviously a difficult and painful season in their lives. And may the Lord remind John Paulk, and all those who have forgotten, that He is our Deliverer, our Hope and our Rest.

In His Mercy,



Jason Thompson
Executive Director



pf summer series: emotionally healthy spirituality

For the months of July and August, Portland Fellowship will be offering a eight week small group study, based on the book by Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Scazzero learned the hard way that you can't be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature. God awakened him to a biblical integration of emotional health in his relationship with Jesus. Our eight week study will include topics like: 10 symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality; enlarging your soul through grief and loss; and growing into an emotionally mature adult.

The summer series is open to, and would be beneficial for, anyone who wants to join us: Taking Back Ground Alum, family members, current participants, supporters or new friends of Portland Fellowship are all invited to come. Classes start Tuesday, July 2nd at 7pm. Because we will be providing books for the study, there will be a \$10 fee for the series. Donations are always appreciated.

Please RSVP through: cynthia@portlandfellowship, or give us a call at 503.235.6364

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

events calendar

june 19-20

Restored Hope Network Leadership
Conference - Oklahoma City, OK
Networking and Training

june 21-22

Restored Hope Network Annual
Conference - Oklahoma City, OK
www.restoredhopenetwork.org

tuesday nights

july - august

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality
Our summer program.

june 14

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.

Speakers,

counseling and youth support:
can be arranged through the office.

Check website for additional updates
at www.portlandfellowship.com