

## Radiant Hope

**Let the afflicted hear and rejoice...Those who look to the Lord are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.' (PS 34: 2, 5)**



Exodus International (North America), the once humble and fruitful expression of hope for persons with same-sex attraction, is no more. President Alan Chambers announced its closing last week. Why? Over the last several years, the very organization that coined the term 'change is possible' conceded the hope of change. Its salt became savorless. Exodus deteriorated and God in His mercy put her out of her misery.

Strangely, I received that morbid news amid the joyful hope of transformation. Gathering with the dozen or so ministries that make up the newly formed Restored Hope Network, I marveled at the living miracles surrounding me. These are time-tested miracles, men and women, single and married, who have emerged out of the domination of same-sex attraction. Surrendered to Christ Crucified, these wounded healers live through Him to make known His transforming power.

Many of these ministers have endured much affliction to gather and create a new network. The deceiver has worked hard to discourage and distract. And yet, here in Oklahoma City for our second annual conference, the fragrance of the Cross-centered life was evident.

No affliction, be it persecution or loss of colleagues, family members and income, has deterred us. Each stumbling block has become yet another opportunity to fall on the Rock and to break more fully. How else can He become our hope unless we are brought to the end of our own aspirations and securities?

Consider Denise who grew up under the chaotic auspice of a transgender father and who now lives to extend hope to those crying out for Jesus in their gender chaos. Or young fathers Jason and Nate (both SSA overcomers) who now lead scores of young men and women out of homosexuality. Or Jim who alongside his wife offers hope to married couples dealing honestly with one spouse's

same-sex attraction. Or Jan and Ted who lost a child to the gay lifestyle and who have now become surrogate parents to destitute ones seeking Jesus' way in their SSA.

Consider Minister Stephen Black who was among the first to recognize the deception going on in Exodus. He lost his daughter to an unexpected death on the eve of his exit from Exodus. Like a plough crushing seed in the earth, these duo tragedies broke and reduced him to Hope alone. All year he has sown in tears yet this season, as host of our RHN conference, he is beginning to reap songs of joy.

Consider RHN's director Anne Paulk who for years alongside her husband John embodied the hope of change (both came out of the gay lifestyle). John has since re-identified as a gay man, a decision that tore up a family. In the hope that has always sustained her, Anne is more committed than ever to make a way in the wilderness for sexually broken ones who seek Hope.

Hope has a name: Jesus Christ. Exodus faded out due to a desecration of this Hope. But Hope endures and insists on finding a people for Himself. I am grateful to stand with the Restored Hope Network as we together seek to embody and extend that Hope. Please check us out at [restoredhopenetwork.org](http://restoredhopenetwork.org).

***See darkness covers the earth, but the Lord rises upon you and the glory of the Lord appears over you... Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy.' (IS. 60: 2, 5)***