

25th Anniversary Edition

September/October 2004

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.
~ Isaiah 60:1, 2



A Newsletter from the Future

By Alan Medinger

October 29, 2004 will mark Regeneration's 25th Anniversary. In honor of this event, founder Alan Medinger has been reminiscing about the first twenty-five years of the ministry. But lest this article read like a drab piece of history, Alan has also taken the liberty of imagining what the next twenty-five years may bring. What follows is not meant to be prophetic, but we hope you are both encouraged and challenged by Alan's version of the first 50 years of Regeneration.

The year is 2029. I'm 93 years old. And Regeneration is still expecting me to write articles for the newsletter. Won't these youngsters ever let up?

Well, where should I start? As far as I know, for more than 1,950 years there were no Christian ministries that existed primarily to help people overcome homosexuality. Then all of a sudden little ministries started springing up all over the world (for the most part not knowing the others existed), and people started finding freedom from homosexuality through Jesus Christ. My healing came in 1974, and the beginning of Regeneration in 1979 was a part of this emergence of ministries . . . 50 years ago.

Our ministries were born in the social revolution of the late 1960's and early 1970's. That generation produced some terrible things—the drug and sexual revolutions to name a couple—but it also produced some wonderful Christians who were truly radical for Christ. Many of our first leaders were the “Jesus freaks” who had come out of the hippie culture. I've jibed for years that our early ministries were so counter-cultural that when I came four years after Exodus had started and they found out that I owned a coat and tie, they elected me President.

In good times and bad times, you have been with us. And when the truly hard times came in the year 2010, you never failed us.

Those early years were exciting. Opposed by the gay community, by the broader culture, and by the leaders of some of our own denominations, we developed the zeal that comes with being a crusader for a just cause. Of blessed necessity, we were drawn together with a strong loyalty to one another, and even more important, we were reminded daily of our total dependence on Jesus. And as Regeneration got going, we found that we were not alone.

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters, many of you and those who came before you were with us right from the beginning. When we had little but a vision, you were with us in prayer and with words of encouragement. When volunteers were needed, willing souls showed up.

When I left my secular job in 1984 to serve Regeneration full-time, you were there for us financially. In good and bad times, you have been with us. And when the truly hard times came around 2010, you never failed us.

I have a sense that in those first twenty-five years God was forming a little army, comrades in arms who were fighting for truth, fighting for the souls—yes, even the lives—of men and women bound in homosexuality, fighting for the church and for the very

foundations of the culture. Because we were united in cause, and because we were all one in our desire to serve Jesus, we developed a wonderful affection for each other. Even after all this time, my heart warms as I recall some of those who blessed us so much over the years.

It was good that God was forming this army, because, although the first twenty-five years were challenging, they would be nothing like the second twenty-five.

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The Second 25 Years

In 2008, when politicians on the extreme left took control of the White House and both houses of Congress, and shortly thereafter stacked the Supreme Court with like-minded extremists, the culture war that had been going on since the late 20th century took on a new and more virulent form. In 2010, the Supreme Court mandated homosexual marriage, nullifying all of the state laws and constitutional provisions that marriage be only between a man and a woman. A year later Congress passed a federal hate crime law, worded so broadly that a pastor quoting Leviticus 18:22 in his sermon could land in jail.

Homosexuality continued to be a prime battlefield in the culture war, and so our ministries came under special attack. As one of the largest Exodus ministries, Regeneration felt the brunt of the attack early on. In 2012, we lost our tax exempt status. Later that year, our Executive Director, Jeff Johnston, was convicted and served 6 months in prison on a trumped up charge of practicing psychotherapy without a license, even though none of us have ever presented ourselves as professional counselors. By the end of that year, most of staff and Board of Exodus had been charged and convicted under the hate crime law. Some received heavy fines and others prison terms

In spite of all this, you stayed committed to us. When we notified our contributors that their contributions would no longer be tax deductible, you our comrades came through—contributions *increased* by 25%! Your prayers,

letters and visits encouraged those in prison. They all kept praising God through the ordeal, and Jeff and others found wonderful opportunities to minister Christ's healing to homosexual and sexually addicted prisoners while incarcerated.

Though tumultuous, those were great days for Regeneration and our fellow Exodus ministries. We were energized as we had not been since the days of our founding. It seemed a day wouldn't go by without being reminded how much we needed to cling to God. It was about this same time that a flood of Christians began to realize their own complicity in the sexual and relational depravity of our culture. No news teams covered it, but confession, repentance and fasting seemed to spread like fire within congregations around the country. Believers rallied around us, and far more people came seeking our help than ever before. We learned new ways of partnering with churches in those days, coming alongside them and supporting them as they became the hospitals they wanted to be, bringing Christ's healing to those in bondage to sexual sin both inside and outside their walls.

Meanwhile, something else was happening in the culture. The foundations of the revolution of the 1960's were starting to crumble. Little cracks of light started to penetrate the world of political correctness and thought crimes—the new dark ages—that had come upon our land. A counter revolution was brewing.

The Counter Revolution

True liberals started to feel suffocated as their every public utterance had to pass the review of what amounted to thought police. The absurd contradictions of post-modernism became harder and harder for intelligent people to deny. Society was falling apart as families ceased to be the basic building block of civilized life. It became more and more clear that feminism and homosexuality (both anti-manhood philosophies) were not just changing the face of the family, but undermining it. Fatherless boys had become the norm and were creating social chaos everywhere. Women were coming to see how the sexual revolution had brought them exploitation, disease and single motherhood.

At the same time, Christians realized more and more that they were not "of this world" and subsequently drew closer and closer to one another. Christian families were growing stronger. And secular society could not help but see this. Godless modernists looked at how Christians were living, and then looked at what they had wrought,

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— Please Pray With Us . . . —

Thanksgiving—We thank the Lord for the Johnston's much-needed vacation with family and friends in San Diego this summer. Also, we thank God for the Exodus conference in July. Lani and Karen report that although preparing the conference bookstore was harder than ever this year, it went very well and many helpful resources got into the hands of men and women who need them. Finally, we thank God for bringing Bob Ragan through two surgeries in August.

Petitions*—Please pray for us as we work and plan for the upcoming fiscal year (Financial News, p. 4), as new programs and groups begin (Ministry News, p. 4), and as we continue to prepare for our 25th Anniversary conference and banquet (Ministry News, p. 4). Come to think of it, if you'd take page 4 of this newsletter and put it up somewhere to prompt you to pray for the various areas of ministry described there in the next two months, we'd greatly appreciate it!

* For more in-depth prayer requests, E-mail regenjosh@juno.com.

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and they started to lose their certainty that they were the wave of the future. Confidence in their system seemed to drain out of them. They no longer had the heart to sustain beliefs that seemed to have nothing to back them up but their own wishful thinking.

But I believe that the factor that most triggered the counter-revolution of the early 2020's was the total discrediting of Darwinism. For thirty years the evidence against the Darwinian theory that new species could arise by natural causes and sheer chance had been mounting. In one field of scientific study after another (logic, microbiology, mathematics, statistics, the fossil record itself) everything seemed to be pointing to intelligent design—and therefore a designer. There had to be a creator—or a Creator.

Of course this impacted hugely on the area of sexuality. Man was more than a higher form of animal with a sex drive that existed simply to propagate the species, and for the individual, sexual expression was more than just achieving orgasm. How and with whom did matter. People

started to see the deeper meaning of sex, the beauty of it when experienced in the context of love and commitment, and how this could be truly manifested only in the glorious complementarity of one man and one woman in marriage.

Yes, homosexuality continued to exist and many continued to embrace it, but society's general view changed dramatically over time. Most people started to see homosexuality for what it is—an unfortunate condition in which a person has to deal with same-sex attractions, a condition that most any rational person would want to overcome if he or she could. The gay rights movement all but died, as people pursuing a homosexual life gave up hope of ever having their lifestyle affirmed by the general public.

Walking Further On

Dearly beloved, we trust that you will continue to walk alongside us as you did in the difficult years. Ministry to men and women overcoming homosexuality will always be a war against the world, the flesh and the devil. The enemy is still prowling around seeking whom he can devour, even in this peaceful valley we're experiencing in 2029. Our job will not be done until Jesus comes again.

When you get to be my age, and you have seen as much ministry as I have, people are always asking, what works? What were your keys to success? I don't know. The main thing I did was show up. Sometimes I would pour myself into helping someone for years, and he or she would end up going back into the gay life, and then someone would hear just a snippet of my testimony, and their life would be changed forever. This repeatedly served to remind me that God is always the healer, and He has given every person the freedom to choose the path he or

she will take. I just kept trying to point to Jesus and help those precious souls remove any obstacles that stood between them and their ability to experience the full grace and mercy of our beloved Savior.

Yes, I did persevere in the discouraging times, and I always tried to speak the truth and to love. The truth part was always pretty easy for me, but I still haven't gotten that love part down just right. Fortunately, my dear Willa is just the opposite, so we

do try to help each other out. I figure that in another ten or twelve years we'll have it all down right.

As for Willa and me, our lives have been blessed beyond anything we could have ever imagined—or deserved. We don't minister much any more, I can't remember what it was like to have homosexual attractions, and Willa can't remember what it was like to have to recover from a husband's unfaithfulness.

Let me close with just one final story. Last week our granddaughter, Paige, came by to show us her brand new baby, her first. Paige's father, our son Steve, was born 18 months after I had come out of homosexuality—a life that would not have existed had God not so mercifully intervened in my life. I still remember holding Paige, Steve's daughter, just after she was born, and weeping when I realized that here was another life that would not have been except for God's grace to me. And now, Paige's daughter, a third generation that would not have been if God had not touched me that night more than fifty years ago. I wept again. God is so good, so very good. ■

Raising an Army of Volunteers

Music. Food. Sports. Art. Reading. Home repairs. What are *you* passionate about? What are *your* gifts and strengths? Have you ever considered utilizing things like these for the furthering of God's ministry through Regeneration?

If you believe in the work of Regeneration, we would love to talk with you about how *who you are* and *what you love to do* could further Christ's work to the sexually broken. Sound outlandish? Call our Baltimore Director, Josh Glaser, and together, let's see what God may do! 410-661-0284 (ext. 4) or josh@RegenerationMinistries.org.

Ministry News

**Regeneration 25th Anniversary Conference
November 6, 2004**

*The Church - God's Army, God's Hospital
Regeneration's 25th Anniversary
Conference & Banquet, November 6th, 2004
College of Notre Dame in Baltimore, Maryland
Featuring national speaker & author Joe Dallas*

Please see the enclosed flyer for more details!

*We're drawing a line in the sand. On one side is where
we've been. On the other is where we're going.
The waves are rising.
Stand with us.*

NEW PROGRAMS BEGINNINGS NOW:

Living Waters in Northern Virginia

The NoVA Living Waters program for those struggling with sexual or relational brokenness begins Thursday, September 30th. If you want to participate in this dynamic, life-changing program, space may still be available, but call now! 703-591-HOPE (4673)

Living Waters in Baltimore

The Baltimore Living Waters program for those struggling with homosexuality or sexual addiction will be a little smaller and more personalized this year. Beginning on Thursday, September 23rd, call 410-661-0284 (ext. 4) right away for more information or to register.

New Beginnings in Baltimore

Baltimore's New Beginnings program for men dealing with lust, pornography, or other forms of sexually compulsive sin begins Tuesday, September 7th. For over ten years, Christian men caught in the addictive cycles of sexual sin have been finding Christ's freedom in this program. Call 410-661-0284 (ext. 4).

Regeneration Books 2005 Catalog Now Available!

Our newest catalog of resources dealing with homosexuality, sexual addiction and related issues is now available! A free catalog will be included with your November/December newsletter, but if you just can't wait, please call us at 410-661-0284 and we'll send you one right away. Internet users, catalogs can also be downloaded online at www.RegenerationMinistries.org.

Financial News

Fiscal year 2005 (beginning October 1st) is just around the corner and we are all working hard to develop a budget that is both financially responsible and deliberately faith-filled, trusting the provision and lavishness of the King we serve. This balance between faith and fiscal responsibility is not always an easy one to strike for Christian ministries, but it keeps us on our knees before our Lord. And in a way, it is exciting as we dream and look ahead to what's in store!

He has given us so much, and we want to trust Him for big things at Regeneration in fiscal year 2005—all for the sake of furthering His Kingdom in the lives of men and women wrestling with sexual sin. In the next couple of months, we'll be sending you our 2005 budget. We invite you to look it over and to join us in believing God for big things in the year ahead.

Regeneration Is...

Baltimore Office

Jeff Johnston
Executive Director

Alan Medinger
Board President

Lani Bersch
Director of
Regeneration Books

Karen Woollen
Baltimore Women's
Ministry Director &
Office Manager

Joshua Glaser
Baltimore Director

Laura Suffecool
Accountant

Marcia Schuett
Office Assistant

Northern Virginia Office

Bob Ragan
Northern Virginia
Director

Melissa Coffey
Ministry Associate

Rose Marshall
NoVA Office Manager

Group Meetings

Baltimore, MD

- Living Waters
- New Beginnings
- Women's Group
- Wives' Group
- Monday Noon Group

Northern, VA

- Living Waters
- Women's Group
- Wives' Group
- Men's Group
- Parents' Group
- s.a.l.t. (Sexual Addiction Group)

Washington, D.C.

- Men's Drop-In Group

Regeneration Books

Regeneration Books is the major distributor of books addressing homosexuality and related subjects from a Christian perspective. To receive a free catalog call us at (410) 661-0284 or visit us online at www.regenbooks.org.