

March 2006

*"I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained." ~ Philippians 3:14-16*



**NEWS**  
**Regeneration**  
[www.RegenerationMinistries.org](http://www.RegenerationMinistries.org)

## Is Anyone Ever Totally Healed?

By Alan Medinger

Many, many times I have heard this question, "Is anyone ever totally healed from homosexuality?" Generally it comes from friendly sources, not from those who oppose what we do. Typically, it comes from someone who himself or herself is struggling with homosexuality, and has not achieved the level of healing or growth that he or she had hoped for.

Is anyone ever totally healed from homosexuality? My answer is, it depends. Don't you hate this kind of answer? It sounds like the classic fudging from someone who is afraid to state a clear "yes" or "no".

But, in fact, it does depend. It depends on your definition of total healing. I want to address this subject here, particularly as it concerns someone who in their own view is not "totally healed".

### What would total healing look like?

We make the point often in our ministry that it is not God's plan to replace our homosexuality with "normal" heterosexuality, one which we believe is always in some way or other, a broken sexuality. This perhaps universal brokenness in human sexuality can become clear to us if we try to picture sexuality as we believe God originally designed it. Because even our imaginations are tainted by the Fall, no one could picture this perfectly, but here's my imperfect image of sexuality as God originally meant it to be:

For every man there would be a woman, and for every woman, a man. (God said it was not good for us to be alone.) If a young person had sexual desires before he or she married, these would bring great joy and excitement for what lies ahead, rather than frustration for what he or she could not yet have.

Once married, a man and woman's sexual desire would always flow out of their love for one another,

and the experience of the marriage bed would be glorious. The exquisite pleasure a husband would experience during sexual intercourse would be matched by the joy in his heart that came from knowing that he was bringing a like pleasure to his wife. And of course, the same would be the case for a wife.

Both husband and wife would take pleasure in observing the beauty in other men and women, and they would delight in the glory of the true masculine and feminine in others, but their sexual desire would be only for the one with whom God had made them one flesh.

I think you will agree, if some-thing like this is the original plan, then it is unlikely that anyone is ever totally healed from their sexual brokenness.

### What is the healing that we can expect?

If it is unrealistic to assume that we will attain the purity of sexuality just described, then what is a reasonable expectation for healing from same-sex attraction (SSA)? Some years ago I wrote this definition for healing from homosexuality:

Healing from homosexuality occurs when an adult, whose primary or exclusive sexual and/or romantic attractions have been towards persons of the same sex, experiences a significant decrease in same-sex attractions and an increase in opposite-sex attractions to the extent that a heterosexual life that is emotionally, sexually and psychologically fulfilling is made possible. Accompanying these erotic and emotional changes is a change in self-perception in which the individual no longer identifies him or herself as homosexual.

This definition has stood the test of time, so I still stand by it. Of course we minister to people who are not there

*continued on page 3*

## Book Ministry Transitioning into the Hands of Exodus International

On or about March 31<sup>st</sup>, Regeneration will be taking a new turn, one that is exciting, but one that comes with some pain. The exciting part first:

### A New Day for the Book Ministry

The book ministry we have conducted for the past 16 years (Regeneration Books) will be moving to Florida to become a part of the work and ministry of **Exodus International**.

In 1989, when Christian books dealing with homosexuality were rare and almost impossible to find, we started Regeneration Books to provide one place where all the best books and materials dealing with homosexuality from a traditional Christian perspective could be found by those seeking to find personal freedom from same-sex behaviors, as well as books for family members, churches and ministries. Regeneration Books has always been a ministry not a business, a service to the Body of Christ not a money-maker. And it has been a service we've done willingly.

The decision to hand over this vital ministry, even into competent hands, did not come quickly or easily. Even as half the Christian bookstores in the country have closed down or changed hands in the past several years (due in large part to the emergence of companies like Amazon.com), we were committed to making sure these resources could get into the hands of those who needed them. We believe the Lord has revealed a potentially better way for this to happen and we are so excited to hand the book ministry into the capable hands of Exodus.

Exodus International is the umbrella organization for ex-gay ministries like Regeneration all across the country, so a book ministry with this focus is a natural fit for the work they do. In addition, with their larger staff, larger financial base, and increasing national exposure, the book ministry in Exodus' hands has the potential to reach a much broader audience with the truths expressed in these resources that freedom from homosexuality is possible.

The complexity of Regeneration Books and the financial burden of supporting it had made the book ministry a source of primary focus for our staff, often at a cost to other parts of the ministry.

This change will enable us to significantly strengthen the other parts of Regeneration, pouring our energy and resources into our other ministries in more focused and concerted ways. We believe God is very much in this move.

### Regeneration Staff Cuts

At the same time, we as a staff make this announcement with mixed feelings because with this change we are also letting go of Lani Bersch and Karen Woollen, two very faithful and committed staff members.

**Lani Bersch** joined Regeneration as a full-time staff member in January, 1998 as Office Manager and Director of Regeneration Books. As the ministry grew in size and complexity, Lani became Operations Director and has always shown a willingness to take on any kind of duty. She is well known and much loved in Exodus circles, and we will miss her.

**Karen Woollen** was a part of Regeneration in its earliest years as one of the first women in our support groups in the late 1970's. In 1999, she came back to Regeneration as a volunteer co-leader of a women's support group and since joining the staff in 2001, she has served in the roles of Office Manager, Director of Women's Ministry, and Director of Regeneration Books. Her passion for this area of ministry has been a blessing to many.

Please pray for Regeneration, and please be in prayer for Lani and Karen as they move forward as God leads and cares for them is this transition.

### Ordering Books

Until you hear otherwise, when ordering books by mail, phone or internet, continue to order your books from Regeneration in Baltimore. When the changeover is made, phone and internet orders will be re-directed and mail orders will be forwarded immediately to Florida. We prayerfully anticipate a nearly seamless transition, so those seeking resources when the transfer takes place will not be greatly impacted. ■

### Financial News

Regeneration's transfer of its book ministry to Exodus International (see above) will, in the long run, significantly strengthen the ministry financially. Starting in our next fiscal year, we believe that our financial focus will shift from a struggle to pay overdue salaries to a focus on how we can best be good stewards and grow the ministry. But the current fiscal year may be difficult. This year, we had budgeted \$150,000 sales revenue and a net loss of \$35,000 for the book ministry. Complete transfer of the book ministry will mean a loss of the revenue, but not an immediate halt to expenses, due to severance packages the ministry is providing for the next four months. As we look to a financially tight time through mid-summer, your continued prayers and support are much needed. Thank you and God bless you.

## Totally Healed?

*continued from page 1*

yet, to those who have arrived at this place, and to those who have gone beyond it. Although I can't prove it, after more than 25 years of ministry, I have come to believe that this is a realistic goal for any man or woman who really desires change, and who lives the "normal Christian life" of trying every day to become more Christ-like.

### But, is this enough?

Many men and women who have experienced this level of healing—or have even gone beyond it—still long for more. They have a deep sense of not yet being where they believe they should be. If you look at this definition and reflect on what it does *not* say, you might see why they feel this way. It doesn't say that:

1. They no longer have any same-sex attractions, either emotional or sexual. A remnant of the old life might be experienced if one's eyes, more often than one would like, go to a person of the same sex rather than to a person of the opposite sex.
2. Their level of sexual desire for their spouse or their spouse-to-be meets what they believe is the norm for people who had never experienced SSA. I did a study some time ago of the marital sexual experiences of married ex-gay men, and although 62% of the men described their sexual relationships with their wives as "terrific" or "pretty good", 73% wished they had more desire for sex with their wives.
3. The man or woman is totally content with his or her own manhood or womanhood.

One other missing ingredient is often present in former SSA men, but in their hearts they know it shouldn't be there; they don't lust after women like other men do. Of course, God is not in the business of dealing out lust.

Are you, regardless of how far along you are in your healing, bothered by the sense that you are still stuck some place where you should not be, that your healing should be closer to "total" by this time? That's where many of our people are.

### Living not totally healed

If you live with a nagging discontentment because you are not where you believe you should be, you are not that abnormal. I say this, because I believe that this is properly the state of all Christian believers. The Holy Spirit in each of us forms a vision of what the truly good and righteous and perfect should be. We long to manifest

that vision, but none of us fully do. This is one of the things that keeps us conscious of how much we need God. So in one way, what you experience is common to all Christian men and women.

However, there are these special longings for *more* and *better* in many people overcoming SSA. I have just described some of them. If you are experiencing dissatisfaction at how far your healing has come, here are some truths that it might help you to ponder:

1. **Healing is a lifetime process.** Your healing has not stopped. It seems that God, more often than not, moves more slowly than we would like Him to. But remember, He's always right. A few years ago, in response to my experience that after many, many years of being a Christian and having reached a ripe old age, it seemed that God hadn't let up one bit on trying to make me the man He created me to be. My article "When Will God Let Up?" drew a large response from fellow senior Christians. No matter what your age, He isn't through with you yet.
2. **The process of healing can be a joy.** Change is difficult. It often brings pain. But at the same time, our breakthroughs, our little steps of growth when we recognize them, can be a great source of joy in our lives. God is with us! His power working in us is real! Every little step toward wholeness can bless our hearts. Healing and growth can be an adventure!
3. **We can develop a grateful heart.** We can form the habit of regularly reminding ourselves that the cup is three quarters full, not one quarter empty. Think of where you might have been had you stayed on your former course of life.
4. **Reject perfectionism and accept reality.** Look around you. We all live in the midst of broken people, yes even in our churches. Most people struggle with something and most carry some burdens through all or most of their lives. You are not unique.
5. **Think of yourself in relation to your Father.** He delights in every little step you have taken. I am a very imperfect father, but I took great joy as each of my children grew bit by bit, day by day, even though I knew that they were far from where they should one day be. God loves you where you are, and He delights in the slightest move you make towards healing and wholeness. Meditate on this.

In this area of healing, it is so important that we be realistic. We must take hold of the hope that is truly ours in Jesus Christ. But at the same time, we must not set ourselves up for debilitating

*concluded on page 4*

## Ministry News

### Exodus Mid-Atlantic Regional May 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

Join us for the Exodus Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, returning to Massanetta Springs this year on May 5th - 7th. The conference, “**Healing Sexual Brokenness: A Wedding of Grace & Truth**” will feature Gordon Dalbey, author of *Healing the Masculine Soul* and other books.

Cost of the conference is \$225 and workshops will be held for men and women. Topics will include:

- What Is Sexual Desire?
- How Is Sexual Desire Distorted?
- Specific Wounding in Men and Women
- How God Restores Sexual Desire to His Good Purpose

At the printing of this newsletter, brochures and registration material are not yet ready, but mark your calendars now! If you'd like to receive conference information when it become available, email [RegenBalto@RegenerationMinistries.org](mailto:RegenBalto@RegenerationMinistries.org).

### Please Pray With Us . . .

**Thanksgiving**—This month, we thank God for the opportunity to work alongside Karen Woollen and Lani Bersch and for the years they have served on the staff of the ministry (see page 2). God’s image is in them and we wish them nothing but abundant blessings as they move on to all God has in store for them. Also, please join us in thanking God for the full repair of the downstairs of our Baltimore office.

**Petitions**—Please join us in praying for Karen and Lani as they transition off the Regeneration staff. Change is never easy and this change is no exception. Pray for direction, opportunities and God’s full provision. Also, please be in prayer for Regeneration as we move forward with a more streamlined staff and ministry focus. Pray for God’s continued guidance and clear vision for the months and years of ministry ahead.

For more information or in-depth monthly prayer requests,  
E-mail [josh@RegenerationMinistries.org](mailto:josh@RegenerationMinistries.org).

### Totally Healed?

*continued from page 3*

disappointment. St. Augustine put it very well in addressing the risks of erring on either side:

*There are two things that kill the soul--  
despair and false hope.*

“Total healing” may be an unlikely thing for anyone who has dealt with any form of sexual brokenness, and God may take us down a different road than the one we expected, but let our lives be led in the light of His word, and let Him be glorified in our lives.

*Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen (Ephesians 3:20-21). ■*

## Regeneration Is...

### Baltimore Office

**Alan Medinger**  
Executive Director

**Lani Bersch**  
Director of Operations

**Karen Woollen**  
Director of Regeneration  
Books

**Joshua Glaser**  
Baltimore Director

**Laura Suffecool**  
Accounting Manager

**Marcia Schuett**  
Office Assistant

### Northern Virginia Office

**Bob Ragan**  
Northern Virginia  
Director

**Melissa Coffey**  
Ministry Associate

### 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](http://www.regenbooks.org).

### Group Meetings

#### Baltimore, MD

- Living Waters
- New Beginnings (Sexual Addiction Group)
- New Directions
- Growth Into Manhood
- Wives' 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