

Alan Chambers

Source:

The information on Alan Chambers is from the Exodus International website accessed in February of 2010 and the Tell the Truth project; edited by Thomas Coy.

Born:

Family Status:

Married Leslie in 1998. Alan and Leslie have two children, a son and a daughter.



General Information as of 2010:

Alan Chambers' website: <http://www.alanchambers.org>.

Alan Chambers became president of Exodus International (<http://www.exodusinternational.org>) in 2001 and as of February 2010 he still retains that responsibility. Under Alan's leadership Exodus International launched the *Exodus Church Network*, an interdenominational coalition of nationwide churches that assist those personally impacted by homosexuality, as well as *Exodus Books*, the leading evangelical distributor of resources on the subject of homosexuality. Alan is one of the nation's leading speakers on gender issues and is an advocate for public policies that protect the family. He has been interviewed by *The New York Times*, *Time* magazine, *Newsweek*, ABC's *Good Morning America*, *Nightline*, The Fox Network and CNN.

Before Alan Chambers began his work at Exodus International he served on the pastoral team at Calvary Assembly of God — one of the largest churches in Orlando, Florida. Previously, he spent two years as a personal assistant to Major League Baseball pitcher Orel Hershiser. Alan Chambers is the author of two books: *God's Grace & the Homosexual Next Door: Reaching the Heart of the Gay Men & Women in Your World* and *Leaving Homosexuality*; and *A Practical Guide for Men and Women Looking for a Way Out*.

Personal Testimony:

This testimony is a compilation of testimonies written by Alan Chambers. The verbatim is from the Exodus International biography accessed in February 2010 and the Tell the Truth project.

"My earliest memories are of wanting to be a girl. I often dressed in my sister's clothing, my mother's high-heels and tried to pass myself off as a girl to strangers. I desperately wanted to be a girl so I could do all of the things that others called feminine without the fear of being ridiculed. I hated sports and the rejection and name-calling that went with it. I remember an older boy teasing me about the way I walked, ran, threw a ball or swung a bat. "That's just like a girl would do it," he'd say."

“No one accepted me, I thought, not even God. How could He? After all, I wasn't a typical boy. I felt flawed and didn't fit in. There were so many other people in the world that far exceeded my abilities. Who was I to the Almighty Creator?”

“I felt similarly with my family. The youngest of six children, I was sure my parents wondered why their youngest son wanted to be a girl. I had come from a long line of athletic brothers. *What's wrong with him?*, I often perceived. I longed for someone to accept me for who I was. I needed to be the *most* important the *most* loved.”

“At the age of 6, I heard and understood that Jesus loved me and gave His life for me and I came to know Him as my personal savior.”

“At age nine I was sexually violated by a teenage boy who swore me to secrecy. I remember it being a warm afternoon that I was playing in my room. The older boy I had been playing with closed the door and locked it. I had no idea that his actions would drastically alter my life. My mind raced with fear and confusion as he disrobed me and began taking advantage of me. The experience was painful and I did not understand his actions. But because he said I let it happen, I felt it was my fault and I must keep quiet.”

“Yet, even with the shame and pain I felt afterwards, I remember wanting it to happen again. *He chose me*, I thought. For the first time I felt important and desirable to someone. It never happened again, but for a long time I cherished the memory of the touch of another male. My longing for love and acceptance now had a name--sex.”

“By the time I was 10 I was battling homosexual thoughts and temptations and began to hear at church that “homosexuals could not share in God's Kingdom”; under no circumstances did I hear “such were some of you” (I Corinthians 6:9-11) which is 2000 year old evidence that homosexuals can change. I believed that there was no hope for me; because of my feelings, I was a “homosexual” first, last and always.”

“I had sexual experiences on a several occasions with two friends from my middle school, but never found the relationship I was hungering for until high school when I finally found a good friend. He became everything to me; everything I wanted to be. He possessed a masculine, charismatic personality. He was very involved in sports and extremely handsome. Best of all, he really liked me.”

“A couple of times that I spent the night at his house we wound up experimenting with sex. This was the ultimate. Not only was I just emotionally in love, the physical affection confirmed it. I thought I had found the missing piece to my life's puzzle through the sexual intimacy I experienced with this man.”

“However, my dream was shattered when he told his parents that he woke up one night to find that I had forced myself on him. I was too ashamed and too stunned to say otherwise. I alienated myself from everyone who knew. Just like being molested, I was the guilty one again. This event confirmed what I had felt for a long time, I couldn't trust anyone.”

“The church wanted nothing to do with me, I thought, so why would Jesus. Thus began a legalistic process of trying to do all I could to gain His and everyone else’s approval: attending church every time the doors were open; leading my youth group; studying my Bible; going on mission trips. Nothing made those feelings go away. I prayed night after night for years that God would take away my homosexuality only to wake up with those same longings. In conjunction with sermons on homosexuality, I heard if homosexuals “nailed their sin to the cross”, “laid it at the altar”, simply “obeyed” or “read their Bible more” that Jesus would take the burden away. I tried all of those things to no avail. Disillusioned and desperate, I remember going into my parent’s room nightly to see if they had been raptured, taken to heaven, without me. As a teenage driver, I used to close my eyes and speed through blinking railroad crossings hoping a train would hit me. I was living with a secret, feeling utterly unacceptable and thinking that I was bound for Hell. I was so angry with God for giving me a need for something that He condemned.”

“This was my daily reality until 1990 when as a high school senior I attended a youth conference where the speaker said, “There is a young man sitting in the audience who thinks he is gay. He’s been molested. He thinks the only way out is suicide. If that is you, I want to talk to you.” When I went forward, he told me what I had never heard before, “God loves you--no matter what.” Though that conflicted with what I perceived was my church’s message, I finally believed God loved me. The speaker also re-introduced me to I Corinthians 6:9-11, gave me hope for change and referred me to Exchange Ministries, Exodus’ member ministry in Orlando, for counseling.”

“Six months into counseling, I was a wreck and before I started making wiser choices, I met someone who invited me to hang out with him and his friends at a gay bar. There I felt acceptance for what had been my greatest source of shame. I savored not having to hide the fact that I was gay. I also became addicted to anonymous sexual encounters, which lacked the relationship that I was really craving—but, for 10 minutes or so at a time a portion of my need was satisfied. Later I learned Proverbs 27:7 which states, “To the hungry, even what is bitter tastes sweet.”

“Easter Sunday 1991 found me alone in a gay bar having been stood up by my friends, where God began clearly speaking to me. He said, “I love you no matter what and if you chose to continue living as a homosexual I will still love you.” He went on to say, “The life you have found might seem good, but good is the enemy of My best.” I told the Lord that I believed Him and that I wanted nothing more than to please Him, but that I was tired, could not fight alone anymore and needed help. At that moment, two friends from church walked through the doors of the bar, over to me and told me that God had prompted them to come and help me. We walked out together.”

“That night I chose to begin obeying the Lord instead of yielding to my feelings. I began trusting Him instead of holding onto ungodly ways of meeting my needs. I learned that it was okay to hurt and to desire, that the need for love and acceptance from a man was not bad, but homosexuality was an illegitimate way to meet a legitimate need. The Lord taught me that sex was not created to meet my needs--only He, my heavenly Father, could do that. He let me know that all the times

I cried out to Him He had been there with an answer. I learned the necessity of forgiveness: to accept the forgiveness that God offered me and to offer forgiveness to those who had hurt me.”

“I recommitted myself to the process I had begun a year and a half earlier, attending support groups and seeing a counselor. I discovered some of the underlying issues that contributed to my same-sex attractions. I committed to a church that truly represented His heart full of people who were willing to not only tell me the truth that homosexuality was a sin, but who exemplified God’s kindness and tolerance that led to my true repentance (Romans 2:4). I began to share my experiences with those whom I loved the most: my brother and his wife, friends, church members, and eventually my parents and the rest of my family. I found that after telling them my deepest darkest secret, when they knew that part of me and still told me that they loved me, it was as if I had never heard those words before. It was acceptance, security, love, and commitment on the deepest level.”

“Another man I met at church was one of those "macho" men I wished I could be like and with. He befriended me and let me share my experiences. When he hugged me as I wept through hours of stories, I felt like God was hugging me through this man.”

“Gradually, my will and then my desires changed. I no longer needed homosexual sex. I had pure relationships with men and women that far exceeded any encounter I had ever had. My hurt was real and a struggle-free life is not what I have found. What I have found is freedom in the hope that after this short life, God will fulfill His promise of healing to completion. I also found “the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living” (Psalm 27:13).”

“In 1998 my ultimate earthly dream came true when I married my best friend. My wife, Leslie, is the embodiment of all I consider to be godly, pure and beautiful. She is not my diploma for healing, nor is she proof that I have changed. She is, however, evidence of God’s grace in my life, a part of the ‘best’ that He promised me back in that gay bar. God uses her in my life to bring constant encouragement as I grow in my manhood. I am a better man today because of my life with her and because of God’s continuing work in me. Leslie is every way my compliment; loving and being married to her is confirmation that God intended marriage only to be between one man and one woman for one lifetime.”

Factors of Homosexual Causation:

This transcript of Alan Chamber’s journal from September of 1991 gives a good description of what Alan knew about the roots of his homosexual attractions. *“I know what is like to be a lonely boy, not to fit in, to be teased to tears, to watch the boys on the playground and feel such anxiety and insecurity about joining them that I would literally do anything to avoid it. I know what it is like to play with the girls with whom I have more in common and what it is like to feel different from the other boys my age yet have an insatiable need to be accepted and liked by them. I know the pain of molestation and what it is like to believe the lie that it is my fault, to feel shame and pain because a part of me wants it to happen again because if nothing else, he chose me and thought I was desirable, even if it was only for a moment behind a locked door, under the guise of*

secrecy, full of confusion and stolen innocence. I know what it is like to be so emotionally hungry for male love, affirmation and attention that the dirtiest of acts satisfies a portion of my hunger. I know what it feels like to believe that my longing for male love and acceptance wears the name "sex." I know what it is like to come to the realization that I am a homosexual even though I have never asked for or chosen my same-sex attractions. I know what it is like to be called "homo," "fag," and "queer" and to believe it is the truth. As a little boy, I dreamed about everything good: being loved, accepted and secure, about commitment and relationship. I dreamed of more, but lived on less."

Alan was a sensitive child that did not easily fit in with the rough and tumble boys. He needed special nurturing to establish a positive male identification, but he did not get it. Instead, as a child he generally played with the girls whom he thought he had more in common with. His longing to be accepted by his peers and men made him much more accessible to molestation by a pedophile or sexually deviant adolescents. The predictable consequence was neurological and psychological equating of male acceptance with homosexual sex. The name calling he endured ("homo," "fag," "queer") reinforced the perception of himself as different from the other boys, reinforcing the idea that he must be a homosexual.

Motivations to Change:

Alan Chambers had two strong motivations to undue his homosexual identity. His Christian religious belief condemned homosexual behavior as sin and he had become "addicted to anonymous sexual encounters" so prevalent in the male homosexual subculture. The male acceptance and relationship he craved was not met by his gay lifestyle and he saw his homosexual behavior as immoral.

Some have compared the "coming out" period of a homosexual as similar to a "honeymoon" period in heterosexuality, because of the intense sexual activity. Alan's coming out euphoria did not last long. "Soon it became apparent that even though I was having sex, I craved the relationship more. I was lonely, angry and hurting. No matter where I looked I wasn't happy. I realized I was happier the night I prayed for God to come into my life at the revival, happier than any sexual encounter had ever made me."

Process of Change:

As a adolescent Alan Chambers tried undoing his homosexuality by himself through prayer, going to church, reading his Bible, and going on mission trips, but this had no effect on his unwanted same-sex attractions. Those were years Alan lived with a secret that tormented him to the point of suicide.

In Alan Chambers senior year of high school he was given the hope that homosexual attractions could be undone and entered into an Exodus ministry in Orlando. Six months into the program

Alan was introduced into the gay bar scene by an acquaintance and another reality confronted him. He had found a world that accepted him as a homosexual, and that particularly valued his youth and attractiveness. After about a year he was tired from the conflict and he realized that he needed help.

Some will call it coincidence, others an act of providence, in that particular moment of Alan's life two members from his church walked into that same gay bar looking for him and offering to help him. Alan recommitted himself to the Exodus program and was able to discover the "underlying issues" that contributed to his same-sex attractions. He also learned that the "need for love and acceptance from a man was not bad, but homosexuality was an illegitimate way to meet a legitimate need." He was surrounded by people who not only saw homosexuality as sin, but "who exemplified God's kindness and tolerance."

Through counseling, support groups, and church fellowship Alan developed healthy relationships with both men and women that exceeded any closeness he had known before. Alan found further healing when he was able to tell his darkest secrets to his parents. Instead of being rejected Alan experienced his parents love and acceptance. As Alan submitted to obeying God and trusting God, "gradually" Alan's perspective on his life changed along with his homosexual desires.