

## 2014, Here We Come! By McKrae Game



The Hope for Wholeness Network was created right before Exodus closed, as a prophetic action it turns out, to continue to do the work of Exodus in spreading the good news of "freedom from homosexuality through Jesus Christ." The individual ministries within Exodus have all continued. We haven't gone anywhere, and we are growing stronger by the day.

In January, we announced that Christel Novella was joining us on staff as Media Manager. Pray for her as she raises her financial support, while our budget does not currently have the funds to pay her salary. Managing all of our social media, websites, developing our video curriculum that needs to be updated and expanded, and increasing our web presence, is a full-time job.

Also last month, I told you about the in-home informational meetings that will help promote our Spartanburg banquet on March 28. We are also making those available by webcasts to anyone who is desiring such. You can do this in your home, office, or at your church.

Jacob Morgan, who was my administrative assistant in 2009-2010, has been called to work with Hope for Wholeness. In faith, while continuing his studies with Liberty University's online program, Jacob plans to come on staff the first part of February as our new Local Ministry Director. He will head up our focus on local ministry in addition to many other areas. He too will have to raise his own support until our funding can increase to pay for the much needed staff increase and other related expenses. We are grateful that God has led these qualified fiends to help us in this pivotal time of ministry.



As you can see, we are growing. We have a commitment to our local area in South Carolina and those that come to us for ministry, as well as the overall promotion of the message of Freedom from Homosexuality through Jesus Christ. We are constantly working with people to connect them with either our local ministry or ministries around the country and even the globe. We have a passion to see people set free through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

If you are local to the Upstate of South Carolina, be sure to put March 28th on your calendar. Consider inviting your friends and family to sit with you to hear **Testimonies of Change**. You can fill a table for just \$200. The banquet, we will feature men and women that have been a part of our ministry and are at different stages of discovering what change looks like. You will NOT want to miss out on this opportunity.

Regardless of where you live, be sure to put June 5-8th on your calendar for our national conference, **Hope Rising**. So far, we have Janelle Hallman, Jayson Graves, and Tom Cole confirmed as guest speakers, along with testimonies and workshop teachers from around the country. Ridgecrest is a great retreat center, located in the mountains of Asheville NC, not too far from Biltmore Estates and many other beautiful sites.

Would you consider helping? We've got our hands full and could sure use your support. Start by giving this newsletter to your pastor or someone you know. Like us on Facebook. Volunteer to help out at our office. Consider becoming a monthly supporter and asking your church to become a partner. Get on board the freedom train and see how many lives we can change along the way!

## Fresh Look for a New Year by Kim Broadhead Women's Associate Leader



At the outset of a brand new year, I take time for introspection. It's a good time to ask myself tough questions and to seek positive life change through Christ. Although a bit daunting, I want out of my ruts, and am ready for a jump-start!

Let me pitch out a word to you, one that caught my attention the other day. It's the word, "Abandon." It's not an especially pretty word, nor one that stirs up good, fuzzy feelings! In fact, it likely has your mind swirling with thoughts of desertion, no one caring, loneliness, etc. Many of us have known that feeling at some point, and many have pressed through to a healthier state emotionally or spiritually.

As children of our loving Father God, we realize that we are truly never alone! His Holy Spirit has taken up residence within us, so we have a companion who never leaves us according to Hebrews 13:5. "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you." So we who have received Christ and have been adopted into His family are not an abandoned people!

That being established, why an interest in this word 'abandon'? That led me to my trusty Webster's dictionary. It became interesting as God revealed ways we can abandon ourselves to Him. As I share these definitions, I will relate the accompanying insight.

*"to give up the possession or control of; discontinue"* It is our choice whether to allow Christ to have control of our mind, **will, and**

**Cont. pg. 2**

## Love Into Light by Peter Hubbard Reviewed by Judith Hartzell



Professor Mark A. Yarhouse wrote in *Homosexuality and the Christian* (reviewed in August) that he intended "to do nothing less than change the entire conversation" in the church about homosexuality. Apparently Pastor Peter Hubbard was listening.

His book, *Love Into Light: the Gospel, the Homosexual and the Church*, does exactly what Yarhouse said needs to be done: it sets a loving tone discussing how Christians should reach out to people with same-sex attraction (SSA) to draw them to Christ and help them live abundant lives in Him.

Hubbard goes step by step building his argument:

We church people are to replace false ideas with true ones. Not "They are not like us," but "We are all created in God's image." Not "Their sin is not like ours," but "We all have turned aside," etc.

The cause of homosexuality is more complex than nature or nurture. Evidence points to a variety of influences. Certain influences may be real, but not determinative. "We are much more than chemical sacks," Hubbard says. He cites a Swedish Twin Registry study in 2010 that shows the genetic causality of homosexuality is not at all like that of race. In the study only seven of 71 identical twin pairs were both same-sex attracted. On the other hand, with genes for race, all 71 pairs would be the same.

Real change "is found in new life in Jesus," Hubbard says. We are to seek the things above and "set your minds on [them]," which implies "a fundamental orientation of the will." Then we are to "put to death ... what is earthly in you," and clothe ourselves with a new self, "the hidden-in-Christ self." This explanation, and

**Cont. pg. 2**



emotions. This is huge! People often make important decisions based on their feelings rather than the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. It is a choice to discontinue to make emotional decisions. We must choose to seek to please God instead of ourselves or others. 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us we have been given the mind of Christ, so it is possible to think right thoughts, and forsake wrong ones. Handing Christ the reins where our mind, will, and emotions are concerned will absolutely change us!

*"to yield utterly to an impulse"* As we abandon to God, we will become sensitive to His Spirit at work in us. Our impulse will become a listening ear, and a seeing eye, living in obedience to Him, rather than that which our flesh suggests. Our desire will be to move in step with His leading, in response to His impulse!

*"relinquish, which implies being compelled to give up something one would prefer to keep"* Living by God's Spirit will compel us to lay at the foot of the cross any baggage; to be free of bondage, no matter how it is packaged. We must not allow ourselves to be tormented or tempted by people or situations from our past. We can't move forward while looking backwards! How freeing to abandon and relinquish our mess to God!

*"renounce, which implies making a voluntary decision to give something up; to yield"* Our God is a Provider. He has given us His authority through both the Name and the Blood of Jesus! We can verbally renounce anything that has been a part of our lives that disagrees with His will and plan. We can resist any stronghold and break it off of us, in Jesus Name. This is an act of our will...a yielding step. God will add His power to our use of the authority He has already granted us.

*"freedom from restraint; shameless"* As we abandon ourselves fully to our Father, we are FREE from the restraints of sin, self, the enemy, others, the past...we can shamelessly offer Him our worship from a pure heart. Our relationship with Him will soar.

There are two keys to help us unlock this freedom in our lives. First, surrender...repent, and let it go! Surrender is ongoing. Develop a heart of worship toward Him...a heart to communicate with Him, and you will experience a life of progress...the most fulfilling relationship you can ever know! Hebrews 12:1-4 states, "...let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress. And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish." Although our sin is not held against us after repentance, there are consequences. He paid the highest price to bring us freedom from our sin. Our love, obedience, and willing sacrifices are our 'thank you'.

Second, we ask God to show us 'what' and 'who' is attached to our heart...what we are pouring our lives into. We then ask ourselves "Why? Is this important? Is there good fruit being produced?" The activities, people, or things may be good, but may not be God's best for us. Perhaps, it is recognition that God is transitioning our season, and we have to let go of one thing to embrace the next. The final question is this: "Am I willing to abandon whatever is necessary in order to develop a heart abandoned fully to Him? It could be my next breakthrough in this exciting journey! What about you?"

1 John 3:21,24a " Dear friends, if our conscience is clear, we can come to God with bold confidence. Those who obey God's commandments live in fellowship with Him, and He with them." NLT

indeed much of the book, is directly from scripture.

Hubbard patiently lays out scriptures forbidding homosexual acts and gives the arguments some liberal people have made to nullify them. Then he refutes these arguments, showing how pro-gay writers substitute for the straightforward commands of Scripture "another authority ...the weight of [their] own experience."

This takes away from the Word of God "the magisterial role of critiquing and shaping the affections and decisions," which is clearly wrong.

Throughout his writing Hubbard uses poems and life accounts by SSA people and himself to help the reader understand. This and his masterful explanation of scripture give the book authenticity and power. The chapter on Celibacy/Marriage is especially good. He sees both not as blessings in themselves, but as means of discipleship. Either way, he says, we are called to suffer in this world, so that our sinful hearts can become less egotistical, vain, and sinful. He even uses stories from the early years of his own marriage to show how he suffered and became more loving over time.

We need a ministry to singles who are called to celibacy, Hubbard says. At present singles find only teachings on "true love waits" abstinence, which suggests marriage is the future for all of us. But celibacy can be a holy calling that "redirects our attention to God." A healthy church points to Jesus in singleness and in marriage, he says.

Hubbard discusses difficult issues, some in this book and more on the book's website, which has a helpful Q & A feature answering questions like, "My brother wants to bring his partner to my home for Christmas. What should I say?"

One such difficult issue is how the church should treat unrepentant homosexual people. Hubbard says some liberal churches are re-evaluating how to welcome non-celibate homosexuals, but "unrepentant sin must be confronted, whether it is abuse, embezzlement, or homosexuality."

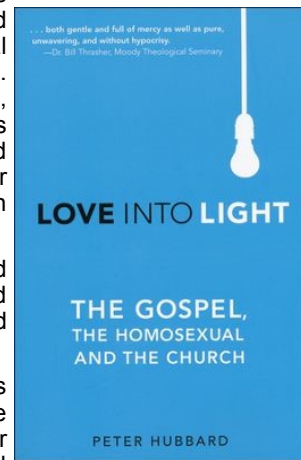
The goal is "always repentance and restoration, not humiliation or punishment." The Apostle Paul, Hubbard says, "saw sexual purity as a church family matter, not a private decision that affects only the individual."

About community, "The church needs to rethink the way we view SSA strugglers." No longer should we be silent and ignore them. Rather, we need to consider "how does my church benefit from them?" Their transparency, for instance, is a healthy example for all of us, he says. By befriending and including SSA strugglers in our lives, "Our serene picture of community is shattered; the reality is more earthy, disappointing, and fruitful."

He continues, "Ex-gays are some of the loneliest and most vulnerable people in our country. ... The gay community treats them like traitors." But it need not be so. What if the church were to consider these people part of "us" and an enriching part at that?

After reading this book I immediately ordered more copies to give to my pastor and church friends who care about SSA strugglers. I think you will want to do the same.

*Love Into Light: the Gospel, the Homosexual and the Church* by Peter Hubbard (Greenville, South Carolina, Ambassador International publisher).



**Who do you know that may need our help? Give them this newsletter or tell them about our ministry.**

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