

A Holy Limp

I got polio at eight months old. Every step of my life, I have walked with a limp. It was a source of great shame to me growing up because of people's stares. And my limp was probably the biggest reason I hated polio and hated how I saw myself, as the "ugly crippled girl."

One day, as I studied the scriptures, God gave me a divine "lightbulb moment." As I read in Genesis 32 about Jacob wrestling all night with God, the same Lord who touched his hip, asked me, "Do you see the souvenir I gave Jacob from his night with Me?" Jacob walked the rest of his life with a limp. He had been touched by God and it changed the way he walked.

It was a holy limp.

In that moment, I saw that there was nothing inherently shameful about a limp if God gave one to His beloved Jacob.

Certainly, this doesn't magically transform a limp into something beautiful and good—after all, it means something is wrong. But God can, and does, bring something beautiful and good out of the limps of our lives.

Over the past few years of walking with hurting people, I have come to see how God uses my limp to connect with those whose hearts are still scarred and limited by the wounds they've received. As I wrote to a dear friend who left behind decades of life as a gay activist when she trusted Christ, and who still has to submit her feelings to Jesus every day of her life:

"You know, it's entirely possible your attractions to women won't change and you will walk with an emotional limp the rest of your life. . . just as I will continue to walk with a physical limp the rest of my earthly life. But both of us can glorify God in our limping by honoring Him with our choices,

as we look to Him to restore us to a perfect future that includes running and jumping and leaping and loving perfectly, on the other side.

“I know that may sound weird, ‘glorifying God in our limping,’ but I think He receives more glory through limping people who are dependent on Him, than healthy people who breeze through life independent of Him.”

Connecting the dots between my physical limp and my friend’s emotional limp encouraged her greatly. Just as I was deeply encouraged by the godly response of my pastor, [Todd Wagner](#) of Watermark Community Church in Dallas, to the news that he has cancer in his foot. He wrote to his church family:

”So grateful for the prayers so many of you have offered on my behalf. I covet them for both wisdom in dealing with sarcoma (the cancer affecting my body) but especially sin (the cancer constantly waging war with my soul). There is no greater kindness than your earnest prayer for me. . . . In the coming weeks I will be watching, monitoring, imaging, praying, continually consulting with caring docs, and trusting in a good and sovereign God Who is never asleep. Having to trust my perfect Father with one more thing is no burden—it is a blessing. Anything that reminds me of His goodness and my futility is a gift. Thank you for praying with me... may my every decision honor my King and may my every step—whether with two feet or one, with cancer or without – find me running hard in His way. Pray for my health... but double down on the health of my walk with Him over my ability to walk physically. If He will allow me both I rejoice. ***If the days ahead allow for only one, I would gladly choose to limp in this life over anything that would compromise my running toward His presence in faithfulness.*** (Habakkuk 3:17-19)” (Emphasis mine)

Can you imagine how Todd’s last sentence made my heart soar?

But it doesn’t end there. Watermark’s worship pastor, [Jon](#)

[Abel](#), “plays with a limp.” Several years ago, when mowing his lawn, his lawnmower blade sliced off his finger—his wedding ring finger, which he uses every day as a guitar player. The trauma of losing his finger, with the attendant threat of losing his livelihood, forced him to come face to face with the question of whether a good and loving God was in control. Jon’s godly response to this trial, which is documented in this short YouTube video, is one reason he is one of my favorite worship leaders of all time.

I recently learned from my sister—on Facebook, of all places!—that the doctors told my mother I would never walk. Mom decided they were wrong, and worked patiently with me every day, exercising my once-paralyzed leg in the bathtub as she taught me the ABCs and who knows what else.

I don’t know why my mother didn’t tell me this fact, but I do know this: *limping means I can walk!*

I am grateful for the gift of perspective. Whether it’s my polio-caused limp, or Todd’s possibility of limping from losing a foot, or Jon’s limited ability to play guitar from a once-severed finger, I just know that if God can be more glorified from our limps than from physical perfection, we’ll take the holy limp every time.

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Recalibrating Our Phones, Our

Minds

November 5, 2013

At 2:00 a.m. Sunday morning, most of us in the U.S. reverted back to standard time. Something almost magical happened to our smartphones, tablets, computers and TV cable boxes: the time automatically jumped back an hour.

When we travel across time zones, our smartphones automatically recalibrate to the correct time because they are informed by the cell phone system, which is always aware of what time it is in every location.

I recently landed in Germany, and when I turned my phone back on and watched the numbers flip from 2:10 a.m. to 9:10 a.m., it occurred to me that regular time in God's word has the same effect on our minds. If we approach God's word with a submissive, teachable spirit, it recalibrates our wrong thinking, bringing it into alignment with reality and truth.

One of my dear friends lived 25 years of her life as a gay activist before she met Christ. She told God that she was going to spend a year gathering the information she needed to prove to Him and everyone else that He had made her gay and there was nothing wrong with it. As she started reading His word daily, she found herself slowly changing her view of gender, sexuality, and her identity. It took less than a year for her to come to the point of saying, "OK, I was wrong. I choose to reconcile my faith and my sexuality by submitting to God's intention and design."

Another dear friend recently asked me about gambling, since she had allowed nearby casinos to consume large chunks of her income. It had never occurred to her to investigate what God says about it, and when I offered her a link to an [article](#) on

that topic on the Probe.org website, she was astonished. She now sees all money as God's money, of which He entrusts some into her hands to steward wisely.

At Probe Ministries, we regularly receive emails from people who fear they have committed [the unforgivable sin](#), begging for reassurance. It is a joy to provide biblical wisdom and urge them to let go of their fears. (Bottom line: people who have hardened their hearts to the point of taking themselves beyond receiving forgiveness, don't ask questions about it!)

I know a number of people whose lives are being wrecked by unremitting anger toward others. Once they submit to God's commands to [forgive](#) those who have sinned against us, they find they don't have to be angry anymore.

I will never forget how the truth of God's word crashed into my college-age wrongheaded thinking about sexuality when I trusted Christ as a sophomore. I had *so much* wrong! A wise friend handed me a cassette tape by Josh McDowell called "[Maximum Sex](#)" that changed everything for me, because it was full of God's truth.

Romans 12:2 urges us to "be transformed by the renewing of your minds." Marinating ourselves in God's word is the key to that transformation. You just might find the numbers flipping in your own mind!

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/recalibrating_our_phones_our_minds

Under God

Oct. 25, 2013

Every year there are lawsuits attempting to remove the phrase “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance or to remove “One Nation Under God” from our coins. But where did the phrase originate? Anyone who was supposed to memorize Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address could probably answer that question.

When Lincoln traveled to that Pennsylvania town in November 1863 to dedicate a national cemetery, he used the opportunity to define (we might even say, to redefine) the nature and purpose of this “great Civil War.” He concluded his speech by saying “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

There is some indication that Lincoln added the words “under God” while sitting on the stage since they are not found in the copy of the speech he carried to the ceremony. All who heard the speech agree that he used the words “under God” and it is found in subsequent copies of the speech that he wrote out in longhand.

It is possible that Lincoln adopted those words from George Washington (either indirectly or directly). One of Lincoln’s favorite books as a child was Parson Ween’s biography *The Life of George Washington*. The phrase is used in a description of Washington’s death.

It is also possible that Lincoln also knew of George Washington’s orders to the Continental Army. Washington’s written orders said “The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army.” On July 9, 1776 he directed that Declaration of Independence be read aloud to the troops so that they would know “that now

the peace and safety of the Country depends, under God, solely on the success of our arms.”

Today we often use the phrase “under God” and it worth knowing about its rich history. Let us pray that the anti-God forces never remove it from our country. I’m Kerby Anderson and that’s my point of view.

The 3 As: Attention, Affection and Affirmation

Wise people have observed that we all have legitimate, God-given needs for “the 3 As”: attention, affection and affirmation. God intends for children to receive them from their parents first, laying a foundation of a healthy sense of self, then from their peers.

The Attention need is met by being there, listening, watching, engaging and interacting. Ever hear the famous line, “Daddy, watch me!”? One wise father told another whose daughter kept clamoring for him to look at her as she played in the back yard, “If you don’t watch her now, soon she’ll look for another guy to give her the attention she wants from YOU.”

The Affection need is met both physically and verbally. We all need hugs and safe touch. And most boys need the rough-housing kind of physical affection from their dads that says, “You belong in the world of males.” We need to hear the verbal affection of “I love you,” terms of endearment, and other forms of communicating love.

The Affirmation need is met by validating people’s feelings, efforts, skills and gifting. Noticing and commenting when they

do things right—or even try. It communicates, “I am for you” and “I believe in you.”

Jesus received the Three As at His baptism. His Father and the Spirit showed up [attention], and the Father pronounced, “This is My beloved Son [affection] in whom I am well pleased [affirmation]” (Matthew 3:17).

Much unhealthy, dysfunctional behavior is driven by trying to get these three needs met, usually without realizing what is driving us. Unfortunately, it’s getting harder than ever to get these needs met because of two things proliferating in our culture.

First, families seem to be growing more fractured and more dysfunctional than ever before. Fatherlessness is at epidemic stage. The National Fatherhood Initiative cites the U.S. Census Bureau’s statistic that one out of three American children live in homes without their biological father.^{1} Parents in the home are often stressed, overwhelmed, and so self-focused, whether on selfishness or mere survival, that many children feel like they are on their own. Plus, the people God intends to fill their children’s emotional tanks with attention, affection and affirmation—parents—are often scrambling to try to get their OWN tanks filled. So there is a sense of disconnection at home.

Second, smartphone technology has moved into the hands—and heads—of the majority of Americans. Over half of adults own smartphones, and a recent report from the Pew Research Center revealed that 78% of young people ages 12-17 now have cell phones, and nearly half of those are smartphones.^{2} That means continual connection to the internet. That means billions of text messages daily, which have virtually replaced phone calls for many people, especially youth.^{3} The camera on most people’s cell phone means that many people view life’s experiences, from wedding processions to grade school concerts to street fights, through a 3-to-4-inch screen held away from

the body.

In short, we're doing life through a screen.

And that screen is an additional layer of disconnection between people. Technology has created a superficial degree of counterfeit connection, and relationships are suffering. People think they're connected to other people through their phones, but in reality they're connected to their phones and a counterfeit kind of "life."

God knew what He was doing when He stressed the importance of staying in connection, continually engaging with each other: I count 41 "one anothers" in scripture.^{4} He knew what He was doing when He instructed believers to make sure and keep meeting together to encourage one another (Heb. 10:24).

God put needs for the Three A's inside us, and He intends for us to meet them through connection to other people. Please, hug somebody. Tell them they're important and valuable. Be there for them.

And you might want to put down your phone.

Notes

1.

www.fatherhood.org/media/consequences-of-father-absence-statistics Accessed 09/10/13.

2.

www.pewinternet.org/Media-Mentions/2013/More-youth-use-smartphones-as-route-to-Web.aspx Accessed 09/10/13.

3.

www.businessinsider.com/chart-of-the-day-number-of-texts-sent-2013-3 Accessed 09/10/13.

4. www.mecf.net/one_anothers.html Accessed 09/10/13.

This blog post originally appeared at

blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/the_3_as_attention_affecti_on_and_affirmation on Sept. 10, 2013.

Darwinism and Religion

[Yesterday](#) I talked about the charge that intelligent design is not science but religion. Today I would like to look at the other part of the debate. Does Darwinian evolution function as a sort of secular religion?

Nancy Pearcey writes in her book *Total Truth* that “Darwinism functions as the scientific support for an overarching naturalistic worldview.” Today scientists usually assume that scientific investigation requires naturalism. But that was not always the case.

When the scientific revolution began (and for the next three hundred years), science and Christianity were considered to be compatible with one another. In fact, most scientists had some form of Christian faith, and they perceived the world of diversity and complexity through a theistic framework. Nancy Pearcey points out that Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Newton, and others sought to understand the world and use their gifts to honor God and serve humanity.

By the nineteenth century, secular trends began to change their perspective. This culminated with the publication of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin. His theory of evolution provided the needed foundation for naturalism to explain the world without God. From that point on, social commentators began to talk about the “war between science and religion.”

By the twentieth century, G.K. Chesterton was warning that Darwinian evolution and naturalism was becoming the dominant

“creed” in education and the other public arenas of Western culture. He said it “began with Evolution and has ended in Eugenics.” Ultimately, it “is really our established Church.”

Secular evolutionists may not have church services, but it is easy to see that naturalism and Darwinism have become the main pillars of a secular view of the world. That may explain why most debates about origins quickly become so intense. Expect more and more controversy as scientists and commentators challenge the theory of evolution.

Science or Religion?

October 3, 2013

The latest debate about science textbooks has surfaced a typical complaint about the scientific basis of intelligent design. Critics of intelligent design say that it is not science because it cannot be falsified. But nearly every critic then goes on to argue that intelligent design has been falsified. Obviously it can't be both falsifiable and non-falsifiable at the same time. Such is the level of argumentation against intelligent design.

✘ But there is another argument I find even more fascinating. It is that intelligent design cannot be considered science because it has religious implications. As I point out in my book, *A Biblical Point of View on Intelligent Design*, just because an idea has religious (or philosophical implications) shouldn't necessarily disqualify it from scientific consideration. There are significant religious and philosophical implications for Darwinian evolution. Consider just a few of these.

Oxford biologist Richard Dawkins believes that Darwinian evolution provides the foundation for his atheism and claims that “Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist.”

Daniel Dennett says: “In the beginning, there were no reasons; there were only causes. Nothing had a purpose, nothing has so much as a function; there was no teleology in the world at all.”

Princeton bioethicist Peter Singer argues that we must “face the fact that we are evolved animals and that we bear the evidence of our inheritance, not only in our anatomy and our DNA, but in our behavior too.”

Each of these men draws religious or philosophical inferences from the theory of evolution. Does that disqualify evolutionary theory? Is evolution unscientific because there are religious and philosophical implications? No. Likewise, intelligent design’s possible implications should not render it unscientific.

Think You Can Get Away With It?

Aug. 27, 2013

Several years ago I began to notice how many people buy into a disturbing fantasy.

First, I watched a dear friend jump into a sinful and dangerous relationship. She tried to numb her guilt through drugs, alcohol and self-injury, in escalating amounts of each. She ended up losing her job and her freedom—first in a

hospital, then a psych ward, and then months in a rehab facility that consumed every penny of her considerable savings. Later she confessed to me, "I thought I could get away with it."

This summer I served over a month on a jury for a drug conspiracy trial. (I blogged about that [here](#).) After we found all four defendants guilty, the judge came to talk to us and answer our questions. We learned that a large number of co-conspirators indicted along with these defendants had all pled guilty. The judge confirmed to us that these four had "rolled the dice," hoping to persuade a jury that they were unjustly charged. Why didn't these men plead guilty? They thought they could get away with it.

Thinking we can get away with it happens a lot, from speeding to not declaring everything on our tax returns to the U.S. government monitoring its citizens' phone conversations.

And this fantasy—this LIE—goes back a long way. All the way to the Garden of Eden, when the serpent scoffed at God's rule about not eating from the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. "Surely you will not die!" (Gen. 3:4) In today's language: "C'mon, you can get away with it!"

But, being sneaky, the enemy of our souls (and his minions who are the spirits who actually tempt us with lies) uses first person to make us think his thoughts are actually our own, so we are not aware of the source of our temptation: "I can get away with this."

God has something to say about this lie. One of my favorite Bible verses, particularly when my sons were small, is Numbers 32:23: "Be sure your sin will find you out."

There were three four-year-olds on our street including my son. One of them, a heartbreakingly sexually precocious little girl, said to Kevin one day, "Let's go behind this bush next to my house, take off our clothes and kiss." When he said no,

she insisted, "It's okay. Jordan (the other four-year-old) and I did it yesterday, and no one will know." Kevin said, "But God will see us, and He'll tell my mommy!"

Back to God's opinion. Jesus said in Mark 4:22, "Everything that is hidden will eventually be brought into the open, and every secret will be brought to light." In Luke 12:3, He said, "Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms will be proclaimed from the housetops."

Paul wrote in Galatians 6:7, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap."

No, we *can't* get away with it. That's a truth that can keep us out of a lot of trouble!

This blog post originally appeared at blogs.bible.org/think-you-can-get-away-with-it/

Mad at God

I knelt down next to my bed, ten years old, and once more poured out my heart to God. "God, *please heal me!* You know how much I hate having polio, I hate limping, I hate going to physical therapy every week, I hate the surgeries, I hate the way people stare at me because of how I walk. I hate that no one could love me with polio. I hate this, God! I know You can take it away—please let me wake up tomorrow morning all healed and restored!" Once again, I fell asleep, hopeful that God had heard me and He was able to snap His fingers or wiggle His nose or however He did miracles. And in the morning, once again, I discovered that during the night *God had done absolutely nothing.*

And I was FURIOUS!

“You’re *God!* This is an easy one for You! What’s wrong with You that You won’t do something so easy as healing me???” Then, my little ten-year-old heart gasped, “I’m mad at God! People aren’t supposed to get mad at God!” And I gathered up my explosive anger and stuffed it into the emotional basement of my heart, along with all the other times I had begged God to heal me . . . and His silent inactivity kept saying no.

Once I trusted Christ as a college student, a wise woman saw my heart full of anger, bitterness and resentment, and prayed that God would show me my heart, knowing that my anger at God was a far bigger problem than legs that don’t work right. Remembering this ten-year-old memory, and the awareness there were a lot more just like it, was an answer to her prayer.

So I prayed, “God, I don’t have a clue what to do. My heart is full of anger, bitterness and resentment. I am angry at You, Lord, because You won’t give me what I want. I’ve never heard a message on ‘What to do when you’re so mad at God you want to spit in His face.’ Please show me what to do about it.”

God understands why we get angry at Him, just as a parent, possessing adult perspective, understands why a child gets angry at her. That adult understanding allows the parent to experience—and to show—grace toward a child tormented by angry confusion and a juvenile sense of entitlement to what he or she wants. Just as a child can’t possibly see the big picture, much less a parent’s motive and intention, that’s why we get mad at God.

It’s about what we can’t see. And God understands.

He knows we cannot see anything but the pain and frustration of the moment. We can’t see the reason(s) God is allowing us to suffer. We can’t see the greater evil that a loving heavenly Father is preventing us from experiencing through the lesser evil of pain in that moment. Or season. We can’t know

what's going on the spirit realm, just as Balaam's donkey (Numbers 23) saw the angel of the Lord blocking their path with a sword but Balaam didn't, and he unrighteously punished the donkey.

We can't see the eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. 4:17) and beauty that God is creating in our souls through our pain and suffering, and He usually doesn't tell us. But He did tell my friend Ann. In prayer one day she had a body memory of being sexually assaulted by a man who had paid her father for the right to have access to his little girl. She asked Jesus about what felt like a heavy blanket over her during the abuse. He gave her a mental picture of Himself lying protectively on top of her, taking into Himself much of the violence of the assault. Ann saw that before the man could even touch her, he had to go through Jesus as her shield, protecting her from the worst of the assault. In answer to her heart's cry of "Why?", the Lord told her, "You are My precious gem. My Father's hand is on the chisel, creating unimaginable beauty in you. He has used every assault on you to create yet another facet of a brilliant jewel. I promise, when you see yourself in heaven, you will say, 'It was totally worth it.'"



Now, I do realize that many people would gladly choose a less highly polished gem over the pain of abuse and suffering, but this was deeply encouraging to my wise and mature friend. I have watched God use her in mighty ways to minister hope and comfort to others in pain because of her willingness to relinquish her anger at what happened to her and trust God to bring good out of evil, to work all things together for good in her life (Rom. 8:28).

When I prayed, "God please show me what to do about my anger," He answered by teaching me about His sovereignty. I learned that a good and loving God is always in control, and nothing can touch me without His express permission. His perfect love

and purpose for me—and His kingdom—is a shield around me (Ps. 28:7). By the time anything reaches me, whether it is a polio virus that crippled me for life or the disappointment of living in a fallen world, it has His fingerprints all over it. He taught me that all the available facts are not all the facts. He taught me that I can only see a tiny sliver of the whole picture that He sees, and I need to trust His goodness with what I don't see.

There's more to the story, but you can read that [here](#).

What do we do when we're so mad at God we want to spit in His face? Repent of the wrong belief that we see the whole picture, and choose to trust the God who sees everything and has a purpose in it.

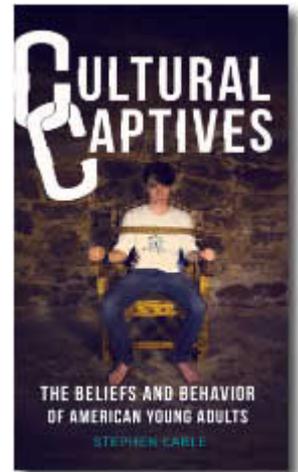
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Cultural Captives

June 14, 2013

Despite what you have heard, Christian young people are not doing fine. That is the conclusion of Stephen Cable in his new book, *Cultural Captives: The Beliefs and Behavior of American Young Adults*. [Stephen Cable](#) serves as Senior Vice-President of Probe Ministries.

As I have mentioned in previous commentaries, the percentage of people generally who check “none of the above” for religious preference is increasing. That is especially true of young people. In fact, the percentage of emerging adults who do not claim any affiliation with Christianity rose from 20% in 1990 to over 37% of the population today.



Stephen Cable found that only 14 percent of born-again, emerging adults combine a biblical worldview with biblical practices, such as reading the Bible or attending church. He also found that less than 2 percent of born-again, emerging adults apply a biblical worldview to life choices. In other words, only this small percentage has biblical beliefs on topics ranging from abortion to sex outside marriage to science and faith.

This is a major reason why Probe Ministries has developed an integrated strategy aimed at reversing these trends. The learning experience involves an entire church congregation over a seven-week period and includes sermons, videos, original music, and additional material for individuals and small groups.

Stephen Cable’s book is a wake up call to the church. We need to reverse these ominous trends and do it quickly before the trends become even worse.

Exodus is Shutting Down, But

Jesus Isn't

July 17, 2013

Recently, Exodus International announced that it was shutting down. For decades, Exodus was the oldest and largest Christian ministry dealing with faith and homosexuality. But in the past few years, it had become a lightning rod for controversy, and the name had accumulated a lot of baggage. They hoped that by shutting down the ministry, the church would step up and do its job of loving and leading people well. They realized that many churches and pastors are still under-educated about those who deal with same-sex attractions, and some are unsafe. But by having a separate ministry to send people to, they haven't needed to change, and it was easy for the unbiblical "us/them" dichotomy to flourish.

This made the news because on the one hand, there is a lot of contempt and hatred for Exodus by gay activists who insist there's nothing wrong with homosexuality, and many considered it a victory. On the other hand, Exodus was the go-to place for people seeking help with this issue, and as the umbrella organization for scores of local ministries, they were able to refer people to places where they could find support. As a longtime board member for [Living Hope Ministries](#), the Exodus referral ministry for Dallas/Ft. Worth, I know how valuable the Exodus referrals have been.

How did this happen?

Over the past several years, Exodus got off track when some people promoted "gay to straight" change efforts, including the controversial reparative therapy technique. Both of these are nothing but "flesh management," using natural, human-only tools and methods. They lost their focus on the founding values, which until recently was still found on their "About Us" page:

*While we have never met anyone who “chose” to feel same-sex attracted, people do have to eventually make a decision to either act on those feelings or not to act on them. **Since 1976, Exodus has served as an organization helping men and women surrender their sexual struggles to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.** We do not believe that same-sex attractions are sinful in and of themselves but rather one type of struggle and temptation among the millions that impact each and every human being.*

We do believe that any sexual expression outside of a monogamous marriage between one man and one woman falls outside of God’s creative intent for human sexual expression and is sinful. Homosexuality is no greater or less a sin than any other and is not the determining factor for a relationship with Jesus Christ. (emphasis mine)

What I see here is a statement pointing to God’s standards, God’s intent for human sexuality. It conforms to the limits of what the Bible actually says, which is a prohibition against acting on one’s sinful desires regardless of what those desires are. It acknowledges that all of us are messed-up sinners who can’t stop being sinners and can’t stop our temptations, but we do have control over what we choose to do with our feelings and temptations.

Ricky Chelette, the Executive Director of Living Hope, says, “I have been to every Exodus Conference for the past 15 years and every Leader’s Conference except this past year, and have always felt that we were centering on Christ, upholding God’s truth, and encouraging people not so much to be “straight” but to be rightly and intimately related to Christ, which then transforms our lives, actions, hearts and thinking. Living Hope will continue to do what we have always done: ‘Proclaim God’s Truth to those who are seeking sexual and relational wholeness through a more intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.’ Nothing has changed for us.”

Since Living Hope is one of the largest, if not THE largest ministry of its kind in the world, I am encouraged that Kingdom values are still unshaken despite what's going on at Exodus headquarters.

I've had a lot of emails and messages asking "What does all this mean?" Well, I can tell you what it *doesn't* mean:

- It doesn't mean that Jesus is not enough for sexual struggles.
- It doesn't mean that He has left His throne and is no longer in control.
- It doesn't mean that there isn't any help for those dealing with this issue, either for themselves or a loved one.
- It doesn't mean that it's pointless to fight against unwanted same-sex attraction (or any other temptation). By developing intimacy with Christ so that we are continually transformed into His image from one glory into another (2 Cor. 3:18), He changes and decreases the power of those temptations.
- It doesn't mean change isn't possible. Exodus coined the phrase "change is possible" and then backed off the hope of change. But people's personal filters about what kind of change led to unrealistic expectations about what they could expect.

Of course change is possible—it's an intrinsic part of being alive! Whether one is a believer or not, we change over time. The Christ-follower should expect change because we are transformed into what we worship. As we focus on Jesus, we become more like Him. That means greater holiness, more self-control, rightly relating to our own gender and to the opposite sex. As John the Baptist indicated, He increases and we decrease. That is change. Our attractions are also our temptations, and as my pastor says, "Jesus never promises to

take away our temptations. He hasn't taken away mine either."

I recently said to my friend, a former lesbian activist, "You know, it's entirely possible your attractions to women won't change and you will walk with an emotional limp the rest of your life. . . just as I will continue to walk with a physical limp the rest of *my* earthly life. But both of us can glorify God in our limping by honoring Him with our choices, as we look to Him to restore us to a perfect future that includes running and jumping and leaping and loving perfectly, on the other side."

I know that may sound weird, "glorifying God in our limping," but I think He receives more glory through limping people who are dependent on Him, than healthy people who breeze through life independent of Him.

Even though Exodus International is shutting down, Jesus Christ is still very much loving and changing those who turn to Him in trust and obedience. And I am grateful to be a part of it.

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