



---

---

## Looking Back & Looking Forward

by Bob Davies,  
*Exodus Director, Emeritus*

I recently celebrated my 55th birthday, and now I'm officially qualified to join *Second Wind*, the seniors' ministry at my church. I find it fascinating to look back and see how life looks from this vantage point. What lessons have I learned?

---

---

### Life has unanswered questions.

I'll never really understand why I grew up to struggle with same-sex attractions. I grew up in an intact Christian family. My family attended church every Sunday. My parents' marriage was stable and loving. I have many happy memories of my childhood.

I always felt terribly insecure in the company of other boys. I wasn't good at sports—but I excelled in music and scholastics. As I entered my teens, I made two life-changing discoveries:

I accepted Christ into my life and discovered God's personal love for me. I heard the word "homosexuality" and realized that it described the feelings I'd been hiding for several years. Both of these discoveries would deeply impact the rest of my life.

Through my teens, my insecurities only seemed to worsen. I was extremely shy, and kept mostly to myself—even at church. I was afraid to let people get close, fearful that they might discover my secret same-sex attractions.

### God's Word is powerful.

The Bible has guided me in major life decisions. After my second year of college, I felt adrift. I had loved science classes in high school, but studying zoology in college left me confused. How could I reconcile all my evolution classes with my childhood faith?

Then I heard a musical group from Prairie Bible College—one of the largest Christian schools in Canada. They had a fabulous music program, and I was already serving as pianist at my church—but I longed for more training in church music.

Should I quit university and go to Bible college to study music? I was thrilled at the idea—but I felt afraid to make such a major decision. One evening, I spread out the two applications on my dining room table—one for secular university, one for Bible college—and prayed for God's guidance. I opened the Bible and read these words: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in your weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). I had an overwhelming assurance that God wanted me to quit secular university.

Soon I was accepted to Prairie Bible College. For the next three years, I "soaked" in God's Word every day. It was a solid spiritual foundation that is still serving me well. And—for the first time in my life—I experienced close, godly friendships with other men. I lived with hundreds of other male students in the dorm and had more friends than I knew

what to do with.

My years at Bible college were extremely happy and fulfilling. God knew exactly what I needed for that season of my life, and He gave me clear guidance through His Word.

### The truth does set us free.

During my teens and twenties, my struggle with homosexuality was the best-kept secret of my life. Then I moved to California to join Love In Action, an Exodus ministry located at that time in the San Francisco Bay Area. Suddenly I was part of a church where everyone knew about my "big secret." But I discovered the tremendous power

*For the first time in my life,  
I experienced close, godly  
friendships with other men.*

of "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7).

For the first time, I had genuine accountability with other men. I had struggled for years with a secret addiction to pornography. Now, at last, I could confess that struggle and find encouragement from others who had similar struggles. "Confess your sins to one another, and pray for each other, that you may be healed" (James 5:16) became a living reality in my life.

I think the most growth that I experienced came as a result of my involvement at Church of the Open Door, the church closely connected with Love In Action. I'll never forget my first Sunday. One of the Love In Action members stood up and shared his testimony of seeking freedom from homosexuality. Afterward, the congregation clapped and cheered. Wow, I thought, I've never seen anything like this!

I knew that I had walked into a special church where everyone was accepted—no matter what their background. Even the "straight" men were warm and affirming. For those of

- Continued on Page 2 -

us who had struggled for years with feeling alienated from other men, the acceptance was a powerful healing balm.

God had other magnificent surprises for me. After five years at Love In Action, I began telling others that I wanted to be married some day. Soon afterward, God led me to begin dating Pam, a woman I had met through our mutual involvement in the worship team at church. It quickly became apparent that God was leading us into marriage. In the months leading up to our wedding in August, 1985, I had total peace and confidence that this was God's leading. After years of homosexual struggles, I was amazed at how natural it felt to be getting married!

### **God rewards our obedience.**

I was involved in Exodus for the next 22 years--some of the most satisfying and thrilling times of my life. As I look back, I am amazed at how God used me. During my years as director, Exodus grew from a handful of ministries to a powerful worldwide coalition ministering to untold thousands of people. I'm convinced that it was not my natural ability that God blessed, but my availability. I simply said "yes" to God's leading, and He did the rest.

God also gave me some wonderful mentors. For example, Frank Worthen, one of the "founding fathers" of Exodus, was my boss at Love In Action. When I'd been there for just three months, Frank saw my writing abilities and asked me to write the next newsletter. Later, when InterVarsity Press approached him about writing a book and he didn't have time, he gave the book contract to me. Frank's example of genuine humility was life-impacting for me.

**There is life after Exodus!** I'll never forget a special evening during the Exodus conference at Wheaton College in 1999. The Exodus board surprised me with a special presentation commemorating my 20 years' involvement in Exodus—and they flew my wife, Pam, to the conference to witness the occasion! But, ironically, over the next two years, I had a growing sense

## *Following God is a lifelong adventure. As we look back, we see His faithfulness*

that my "season" at Exodus was coming to an end.

I became convinced that, as a leader, I had taken Exodus as far as I could. I was in my late 40s, and we were ministering to clients as young as 11 years old. I began praying for my successor, somebody younger than myself who could take Exodus "to the next level."

Submitting my resignation to the board in April 2001 was one of the hardest decisions of my life. I gave six months' notice—long before I had another job. But God was incredibly good. About the same time I resigned, I heard about a future job which would be opening up in the music department at my church, one of the largest Presbyterian churches in the country. I had spent years in my youth preparing for a career in church music—I knew the job would be a perfect fit.



*Bob & Pam Davies at the 1999 conference, receiving his award.*

Several months later, I got the job. But leaving Exodus was anything but easy. I desperately missed the day-to-day interaction with longtime Exodus leaders around the world. I loved my new job—but still felt "homesick" for what I had left behind.

I also had many questions. Would I continue to "live in victory" over my homosexual past, even without all the

daily support around me? Would I be able to make a successful transition into a new career at the age of 50? And, perhaps most important to me, would all the wisdom and knowledge about "ex-gay ministry" that I'd gained over the past two decades now be forgotten in my new job?

None of my fears came to pass. I feel just as "victorious" over my past today as I did while involved in Exodus. My new job has proven to be a wonderful fit for my skills and interests. And, because of my years at Exodus and the books that I have written, people still seek me out for counsel and support, so I'm still using the insights that God gave me while I was involved in Exodus ministry.

My latest "adventure" has been returning to school. In January, I began a masters program in worship studies through the Institute of Worship Studies, a long-distance learning program based in Jacksonville, Florida.

When I arrived on campus in January for a week of classes, I felt as excited and nervous as attending my first Exodus conference! I had a fabulous time. Now, working via computer from home, I am in touch regularly with my fellow students and professor, as we complete online assignments and dialogue together about our reading assignments. I'm excited about the new insights that I will gain to be more effective in my job as coordinator of morning worship services at my church.

Yes, there IS life after Exodus! I'm convinced that following God is a lifelong adventure. And the further down the path we walk, the more we can look back and see His faithfulness over the long years of life. In the months before I left Exodus, God impressed two words on my heart: "FINISH WELL." I've decided it's a great motto for the rest of my life. One day, when I am gone, I hope people can look back and say of me, "He loved God...and finished well." ☺

Bob Davies is the respected and beloved former Director of Exodus. We appreciate the many years he served Exodus, and are excited to share his story in this commemorative set of "Real Life Stories" to encourage men and women that change IS possible; that restoration and new life truly are a possibility for God's children. Bob and his wife Pam currently reside in Washington state.