

## Journeying to Freedom – in Malaysia

Finding freedom from sexual brokenness, especially for those struggling with homosexuality, often involves a long and challenging journey. However, the power of God offers an opportunity for lasting change to take place.

Jesus said in Matthew 19:26, “with God all things are possible.”

No one knows this better than Rev. Tryphena Law, an overcomer and Director of Pursuing Liberty Under Christ (PLUC) in Malaysia. As a child growing up, Tryphena had struggled with her femininity due to poor self-image and unkind labeling by others. Her search for affirmation of gender led her to find security in some women friends, and a closet lesbian lifestyle ensued. A Christian at that time, she was convinced she was living in sin, but did not know the way out. In desperation she sought help from a trusted Christian counselor at a ministry affiliated with Exodus. As difficult as it was to expose her dark secret to the scrutiny of others and worse, to hurt the people who loved her, she knew it was even harder to go on living a lie. What began then was an amazing journey with God towards healing and restoration.

A year and half after that, Pastor Tryphena was connected to a newly-formed ministry to the sexually broken called Pursuing Liberty Under Christ (PLUC) and she joined their prayer group. After being a consistent member of their

prayer group, Tryphena was invited to become a board member for the ministry. It was around this time that PLUC was officially recognized as a member ministry of Exodus Global Alliance.

In 2004, the leadership of PLUC was handed over to Pastor Tryphena who together with Rev. Martha Hor (board member and strong supporter), has led PLUC into its 10th official year of ministry this year.

Today, PLUC is known in Malaysia and the surrounding regions as a Christian ministry which assists those who desire to overcome homosexuality and provides support to their family and friends. Its primary aim is to reach out to those who experience same-sex attraction, bringing them to the Lord and restoring their sexual identities to His original intention. Both believers and seekers are ministered to within a Christian setting, and their restoration happens under the healing power of Jesus. Pastor Tryphena explains, “The key thing to note is that PLUC does not change a person from homosexual to heterosexual. PLUC encourages people to pursue something better and that is pursuing Christ, pursuing holiness. God says, ‘Be holy for I am holy.’ We are to pursue liberty under Christ. I like the scripture 1 John 2:3, “... if we truly desire the Lord, we will obey...” I may have a sexual tendency, or an attraction, but I’m choosing to obey the Lord. Cultivating the spiritual disciplines enables us to say ‘no’ to the desires.”

For some, obedience to the Lord means no longer living the homosexual life even though they may still have some attraction to it. And for others, obedience to the Lord includes openness to a heterosexual relationship and

the possibility of marriage.

Those seeking ministry arrive at PLUC’s centre in a variety of ways. Some are referred, both by churches and Christian/secular counseling centres, while others discover PLUC through receiving their brochures, or when doing an online Google search. People also find them by word of mouth, or from attending an awareness talk PLUC has given. The counseling is carried out in English or Mandarin, as required. There are also three types of support groups running; for strugglers, parents, and spouses.

In addition to this, PLUC is available by invitation to speak to churches, often bringing awareness of the homosexual issue during a Sunday morning service. PLUC has also had opportunities to speak at Christian Fellowship groups in universities. PLUC also serves in Bible seminaries, teaching on pastoral counseling for ministering to homosexuals and how to journey with them.



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One of PLUC's main objectives is to see many more Christians journeying with strugglers. Because of this, one of their crucial roles involves training up people to do the work of journeying, especially in key cities across the nation. When a person is referred for counseling, churches can partner with PLUC by sending along a leader willing to journey with that person. Pastor Tryphena also dreams of seeing more men involve themselves in journeying with strugglers, as recovering men need to have good masculine examples to model. Another vision for the future is to see Christian professional counselors with a burden to journey with homosexuals working in close partnership with

pastoral counselors. This would bring together the best of both approaches - a combination of professional and pastoral counseling to aid the struggler.

PLUC and Pastor Tryphena envision a day when their centre in Malaysia becomes a training base for Asian countries. She says, "The door has opened to Cambodia this year and there's already a work in Thailand, not to mention the huge unmet need in neighbouring Vietnam and Laos. Malaysia is in the ideal location to be a resource centre or training base for the region."

As big as her dreams for the future of PLUC are, Pastor Tryphena doesn't lose sight

of immediate issues to be worked through. "Society sees the church as being intolerant and victimizing homosexuals. That's why I see that the pressing need today is to educate people on the balance between grace and truth. A lot of times we don't know how to handle ourselves when confronted with an accusation, and we play right into the hands of the media. The church needs to have wisdom to respond. We need to face the issue and address it with our members. How should our response be? Gracious, yet holding on to the truth. PLUC is going to be very busy in this way. We need a bigger platform to create awareness and to convey truth - but most of all, to communicate grace."

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## Pursuing Liberty Under Christ - 10th Anniversary Conference

Pursuing Liberty Under Christ (PLUC) celebrated ten years of God's faithfulness with a conference on September 9-12, 2012. The theme of the conference was "God's truth & sex." More than 200 participants from churches, organizations, etc. attended the conference which was held at the Full Gospel Assembly in Kuala Lumpur as well as at the Tabernacle of Praise in Penang. Many more people came for the thanksgiving and testimony night.

Dr. Melvin Wong, an EGA board member, spoke on psychological areas of gender issues as well as on sexual abuse. We are thankful

that Dr. Lim Kar Yong and Dr. Tan So-Inn spoke so well on the biblical perspective on sexuality.

PLUC strongly believes that we are not here to transform people from homosexuality to heterosexuality. We seek to do is be a fellow-journeyer with those who are seeking for their God-intended identity. We encourage them to pursue holiness and to be more like Jesus. In the past 10 years, we are privileged to see believers and disciples of Jesus pursuing holiness and becoming more like Him. All glory belongs to God as He is the Leader and Head of PLUC.

# Exodus Asia Pacific

In 1786, Robert Burns wrote that “the best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men often go awry.” Fast-forward 225 years to 2012 and that looked to be true about the Exodus Asia Pacific conferences held in Melbourne, Australia, and in Auckland, New Zealand this fall. For two years, the Asia Pacific team planned and worked toward these two conferences.

In the weeks leading up to the conferences, many of the local speakers that were preparing to speak at the conference came under attack in the form of sickness and other attacks against their ministries. Just two weeks before the conference in Melbourne, Shirley Baskett, the organizer of the conferences and director of Exodus Asia Pacific, ended up in the hospital facing what looked like certain surgery. During this same time, the keynote speaker, Ricky Chelette from Living Hope Ministries in Texas, asked for prayer for his wife Merlinda. She had been suffering from a sore back and was concerned about the long flight from Los Angeles to Melbourne – about twenty hours in total.

Miraculously, after spending a week in the hospital, Shirley was told that she no longer required surgery. It looked like things were back on track despite the attacks of the enemy. However, five days before the first conference was to commence, Ricky wrote with the devastating news that his wife had been diagnosed with terminal cancer and would not be able to speak at the conferences. This horrible news threw the team at Exodus Asia Pacific into confusion. Did God want them to proceed with the conferences? Five minutes after reading the news from Ricky Chelette, Shirley received notice that a fairly large donation had been sent to Exodus Asia Pacific! This was surely God’s encouragement for the conference to go ahead.

The team was keen to press on. Hadyn Sennitt from Liberty Ministries in Sydney and Rob Robertson from Setting Captives Free were called upon to speak at the main sessions of the conference in Melbourne. In New Zealand, Dr. Neil Whitehead and Warner Davies agreed to cover the main

sessions for the Auckland conference. All the sessions went extremely well, and were appreciated by those who attended.

During both conferences, Exodus Asia Pacific hosted a leader’s dinner for like-minded ministry leaders in Melbourne and Auckland. In Auckland, the dinner was to be prepared by the hosting pastor. He is originally from Hyderabad, India, and had planned on serving an Indian banquet. However, illness struck again and he began suffering with kidney stones. Thankfully June, another person in New Zealand, rallied the troops and hosted an amazing dinner of curries and Chinese food. No one was disappointed with the food or the fellowship.

Forty-eight people attended the one day conference in Melbourne. It’s great to know that God can do big things with small numbers. Two of the churches that were represented at the conference are among the biggest in the city, and they both expressed a keen interest in starting similar ministries within their congregations. It was so heartening to make a great connection with both of these churches. Another person came from Adelaide, and is also excited to be in this line of ministry.

The conference in New Zealand was attended by just over 40 people, and there was also a good response with several people wanting to be part of Exodus Asia Pacific. One of the people in attendance was a pastor who had never talked about his own same-sex attraction struggles up until the conference. He now realizes that God is calling him into this ministry as well. This was such a huge encouragement to the Exodus Asia Pacific ministry team.

Ricky Chelette had been scheduled to close the weekend off by speaking at a very large church on Sunday evening. In his absence, the church decided to run his DVD “Why.” This was a risky move for this church, but it bore much fruit. Around 500 people attended and Shirley Baskett was able to talk to many people after the service. As a result of this evening, the

church is starting to form a parent support group. The parents group will be connected to Exodus Asia Pacific as well.

Shirley Baskett sums up the conferences this way: “It was astounding that despite the resistance of the enemy, and despite small conference days, God was doing so much. We have been praying for open doors in our region and they appear to be opening all at once!”



Shirley Baskett

# Made for Something More

Bob Ragan

All too often our focus is earth bound. We can be so sin conscience that we fail to be God aware. Early in my process I pursued all the resources I could find in overcoming my unwanted same-sex attractions (SSA). I became the focus, in restless activism searching for what I felt would bring me to the goal I desired. My goal of overcoming unwanted SSA was far too small. God had so much more for me.

In John Eldredge's Journey of Desire, he writes, "This is the great lost truth of Christian faith. That correction of Judaism made by Jesus and passed on to us: the goal of morality is not morality – it is ecstasy. You are intended for pleasure." You can imagine the reaction I get from the men in our sex-addiction support group when I read this quote! These men are so focused on stopping their wrong desires that they end up shutting down all desires. In so doing they kill their hearts. They thwart what they were made to be, made to become.

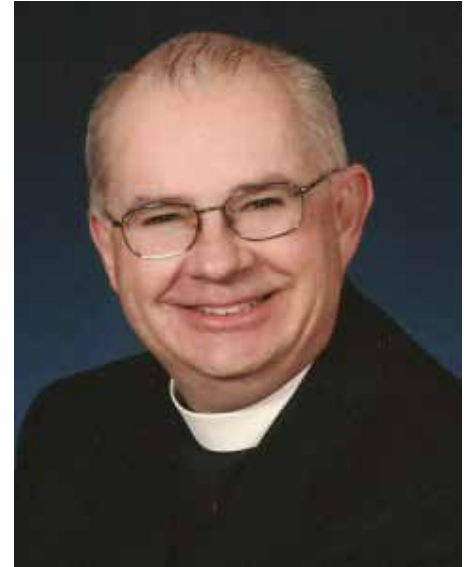
C.S. Lewis states it wonderfully that we settle for making mud pies when we could be having a day at the beach! There is a much bigger picture at stake here. We so easily get caught

in diseased introspection, analyzing ourselves to death. I'm not indicating analysis is wrong. However, if we think we can achieve freedom through mere understanding we have missed the mark. Tim Keller states God is not after a morally restrained heart, but supernaturally changed heart. We must invite God in to change our hearts, giving us His vision and purpose for our lives.

I had to finally release my process into God's hands. I had to submit my goals to Him. The Holy Spirit began to realign my heart, my passions, and in so doing realigned my goals. I had to learn to rest in what He was doing. I had to release my expectations, hopes, and dreams into the hands of Him who knows me best. In so doing He began to center me in who He created me to be, one who bears His Image uniquely.

The virtue of magnanimity, aspiring to great and noble things, is a worthwhile pursuit. The challenge is do we have the courage to make the sacrifices necessary to walk in this virtue? We can become so much more than we could ever imagine possible. Why is this possible? Because the very Creator of the universe

lives within us! It's changing our focus off of what is limiting us and realizing what we can become. We know we were meant for something vastly different than what we see around us. We were created to experience so much more in our lives.



Bob Ragan is director of Regeneration Ministries Northern Virginia. And he is chairman of Exodus Global Alliance's International Board

## What Can You Do?

**Pray.** Exodus leaders and ministry staff work in a ministry that involves spiritual battle. Pray for each Exodus worker. Pray to that God will raise further workers to get involved in this needy world. Pray for increased financial support and for resources to enter the doors that God has opened.

**Give.** Exodus' missions and ministry development depends on your financial support. Our support comes from individual donors, not institutions, company sponsors or government grants. We need you to give so that Exodus can strengthen and extend its missions and ministry development.

**Join in Ministry.** If you feel called to 'go', apply to the Exodus Missions Program. If you feel called to 'stay', ask us how we can use your gifts and talents.

## Exodus Global Alliance

A world-wide interdenominational, non-profit Christian organization that serves to:

- Educate and equip Christians and churches regarding the issue of homosexuality and the church's response.
- Proclaim the truth, both scriptural and clinical, in church and society that change from homosexuality is possible.
- Provide opportunities for people to serve as missionaries with Exodus' local ministries around the world or develop new ministries to homosexual people around the world that have no one to help them.
- Refer people to a network of qualified member ministries throughout the world providing counseling and support groups.

Exodus Global Alliance is a charitable organization made possible by your prayers and financial support. All contributions are tax-deductible; gifts are acknowledged and receipted with an annual official income tax receipt. Spending of funds is confined to board-approved programs and purchases. Gifts designated toward an approved program will be used as designated with the understanding that when any need has been met, designated gifts will be used where most needed.