prayed that God would release me from the darkness in my life. Tears flowed at the thought of losing my wife and family. My prayer always ended, "Please don't let me get caught."

In April 1985, a student from 14 years previous returned to town for the sole purpose of confronting me. When he asked how many other young men I had sexually abused, I told him "none" and said that ours was a special relationship. But he sensed that I was not telling the truth, and went to the police.

Within days I was interrogated and arrested. The next morning I was allowed freedom on bail and brought home by my wife. The media aired information about my arrest. I was so ashamed that I thought of committing suicide.

Just over one year passed from the day of my arrest to my sentencing date. In that time, God's healing love became evident as individuals and then a prayer community taught me how to seek His presence. At first I sought *their* God, *their* experiences. Eventually I learned to pursue my own personal relationship with God. I desperately needed to believe that Bob Van Domelen was worth saving.

"My healing process is grounded in the knowledge that God loves me. I surrender my life to Him daily."

The hardest part of my final court appearance was having to listen to the court clerk, a complete stranger, read the detailed charges against me. A whole year had passed, a year free from pornography and behavior shrouded in dark secrecy. I wanted to scream, "I'm not the same person you are reading about!"

The judge asked me if I wanted to add anything on my own behalf. I gave a sincere apology to all those I had harmed. Then the judge sentenced me to five years prison and ten years subsequent probation.

Word spreads quickly among men in confinement, and handmade signs began appearing on my bed frame announcing that I was a "baby raper." Lewd and suggestive remarks were included, along with comments that I was not fit to live. I rarely slept for more than 15-20 minutes at a time.

While in prison, I spent hours each day reading the Bible. No matter where I was sent within Wisconsin's prison system, I attended as many Bible studies as allowed. One Tuesday morning in 1988, I found myself focusing on a single verse—Nehemiah 2:17. That evening at Bible study, the guest speaker was Bill Windel, director of a local Exodus outreach called *Broken Yoke Ministries.*

Bill gave his testimony and talked about his ministry. "Our Tuesday evening group is called the Nehemiah Fellowship," he said, "mostly because we see the truth behind the verse in Nehemiah chapter two, verse 17." I was amazed—that was the exact verse I'd been meditating on!

After the meeting, I talked to Bill and he gave me permission to call him collect whenever I felt a need. He always responded to my calls with hope, encouragement and prayers. Once out of prison, I drove to Madison each week to attend his group meetings. In 1990, I began a *Broken Yoke* support group in the Milwaukee area. Bill's witness of love gave me the courage to believe that sharing my own testimony could make a difference for others.

My healing process is grounded in the knowledge that God loves me. I surrender my life to Him on a daily basis. As I've grown spiritually, I have become more aware of my choices, rather than simply succumbing to compulsive behavior. I look at young men far differently than years ago. I no longer feed off their vulnerability or see in them some aspect of completion needed within myself.

Some things, like pornography, no longer have any attraction for me. But I am vulnerable in other areas. I avoid adult bookstores, and I say a quick prayer before entering public restrooms.

I know these temptations offer only empty promises of fulfillment. I have a freedom now that I don't want to lose, a freedom built both on the memories of what God has done for me, as well as His promises for what lies ahead.

Some years ago I spoke at a church and felt God encouraging me to confess my past sins against young men. Afterward a woman approached me and opened her arms in what was clearly an invitation for a hug. I stepped forward and was mere inches from making contact when she said, "I'm Sue, Oscar's mother." With a shock, I realized that I had been sexually involved with her son.

I accepted the hug with a plea for forgiveness. She told me that Oscar was now a minister in a large city. "Up until a few months ago, I hated you," she said. "One day I was sharing some of my hurt with my pastor's wife and she mentioned Broken Yoke." When Sue told her son about me, he responded, "I have been praying for that man ever since he was my teacher." Since then, I have written Oscar and asked for his forgiveness.

Today I share where I have been because the majority of people—even many Christians—say that there is no hope for one such as myself. But I know they are wrong. As Christ occupies more and more of my life, I am being changed into the man of God He created me to be. My prison doors have opened, and now I'm walking free. ◆

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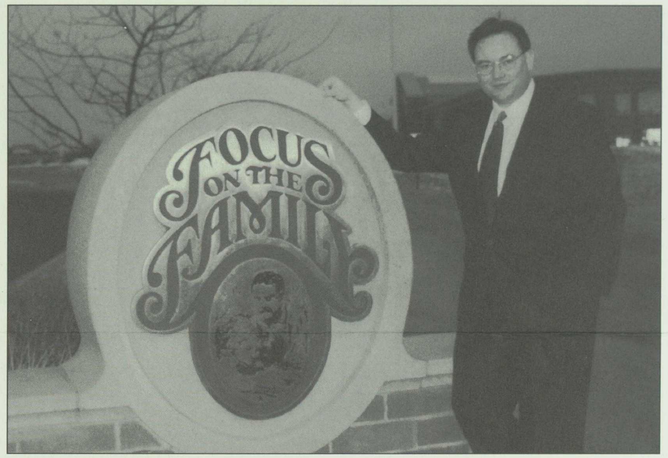
NEWS

John Paulk Joins Focus on the Family



Exodus vice-chair John Paulk stands outside Focus on the Family headquarters in Colorado Springs during a recent visit for final interviews.

COLORADO SPRINGS—Exodus board vice-chair John Paulk has been hired by Focus on the Family, one of the largest Christian ministries in the world. His new position in their Legislative and Cultural Affairs Department begins May 4.

For the past seven years, John has worked on staff with two Exodus agencies, *Love In Action* in the San Francisco Bay Area and, most recently, as head of public relations at *The Portland Fellowship* in Portland, OR.

During that time, John has gained an international reputation due to his interviews on such programs as Oprah, ABC Evening News, Jerry Springer, Hard Copy, and numerous other broadcasts and print interviews.

Back in December, Focus staff dialogued with Bob Davies, Exodus' executive director, as they developed criteria for the newly-created position. "Ironically, I called John for his input on the job description back then," Bob said. "It never crossed my mind that John would end up being hired for the position."

After John was interviewed by phone by several Focus staff members, he and his wife, Anne, flew to Colorado Springs in mid-February for further interviews. Later, there was unanimous agreement among the Focus staff members who had interviewed them to hire John.

"I am very excited about this new link between Exodus and Focus on the Family," said Bob Davies. "For years, we have been praying that major Christian ministries like Focus on the Family would help us promote the message of healing for the homosexual. John's ex-gay testimony, and his highly-visible role at Focus, will accomplish that in a wonderful way."

In his new role, John will represent Focus nationally on matters relating to homosexuality. His duties will include media response, legislative testimony, church education, analysis of current research data, and addressing gay rights and cultural mores. He will also be networking with other national Christian organizations.

"The Exodus network will be positively impacted by my new role," John said. "Countless people will hear the message of freedom from homosexual struggle." •

OFFICE NEWS

Big Changes Ahead for Claire!

SEATTLE—Our office manager, Claire Ezekiel, is delighted to announce her engagement to Ray Glenham; an August wedding is in the works. Claire and Ray met at their church, Shoreline Community Church of Seattle. And, just to make her year *really* exciting, Claire has also announced her resignation from the Exodus office, effective the end of February.

Claire made a one-year commitment to work with Exodus after our move to Seattle in September 1996. Since our move, she has overseen a huge project: the implementation of an entirely new (and custom-programmed) computer data entry system for the Exodus office. Our new system is now fully operational.

But the growing demands of the office have meant increased pressure for all staff, including substantial overtime. So Claire has decided to seek a less stressful job.

We want to thank Claire for all her hard work on behalf of Exodus over the past four years. We join her in praying for God's leading as she seeks new employment in the Seattle area, and as she plans her wedding. •

CALENDAR

- ***Apr. 16–18/Lexington, KY.*** "His Living Presence" conference, featuring Clay & Mary McLean. Sponsored by CrossOver Ministries. Info: 606/277-4941.
- ***Apr. 24-26/Harrisonburg, VA.*** "That I May Know Him," Exodus Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference. Info: 704/297-2277.
- ***Apr. 25/New Hope, MN.*** "Understanding Homosexuality" seminar, sponsored by Eagles' Wings. Info: 612/522-2782.
- ***Apr. 25–27/Waikiki, HI.*** Annual Hawaiian Islands Ministries conference, featuring Sy Rogers and others (not Exodus-sponsored). Info: 808/988-9777.
- ***Apr. 30–May 2/San Diego.*** Annual "Trauma & Sexuality Conference," featuring David Kyle Foster, Mike Newman, Donna Hopkins and others (not Exodus-sponsored). Info: 619/230-7965.
- ***May 16, Aug 15/Houston.*** "How to Minister Freedom From Homosexuality" seminar, featuring Michael Newman. Info: 713/465-7045.
- ***June 27–July 2/Seattle.*** Exodus North American conference, featuring Jeffrey Satinover, Dan Allender, Les & Leslie Parrott, & over 60 workshops. Info: 206/784-7799. (Brochures are now available from the Exodus office.)