

Exodus' Alan Chambers Offers Shocking Apology to Gay Community

Exodus International, the oldest and largest Christian ministry dealing with faith and homosexuality, issued a shocking apology to the gay community for years of undue suffering and judgment at the hands of the organization and the church as a whole.

The apology dovetails with the ministry's 38th annual conference in Irvine, Calif. and the Thursday airing of the television broadcast "God & Gays" on *Our America with Lisa Ling*. On Ling's program, Exodus President Alan Chambers, sits down with gay and lesbian people hurt by the church with the goal of reconciliation.

"It is strange to be someone who has both been hurt by the Church's treatment of the LGBTQ community, and also to be someone who must apologize for being part of the very system of ignorance that perpetuated that hurt," said Chambers. "Today it is as if I've just woken up to a greater sense of how painful it is to be a sinner in the hands of an angry church."

Chambers also said:

"I am sorry for the pain and hurt that many of you have experienced. I am sorry some of you spent years working through the shame and guilt when your attractions didn't change. I am sorry we promoted sexual orientation change efforts and reparative theories about sexual orientation that stigmatized parents.

"I am sorry I didn't stand up to people publicly 'on my side' who called you names like sodomite—or worse. I am sorry that

I, knowing some of you so well, failed to share publicly that the gay and lesbian people I know were every bit as capable of being amazing parents as the straight people that I know. I am sorry that when I celebrated a person coming to Christ and surrendering their sexuality to Him, I callously celebrated the end of relationships that broke your heart. I am sorry I have communicated that you and your families are less than me and mine.

“More than anything, I am sorry that so many have interpreted this religious rejection by Christians as God’s rejection. I am profoundly sorry that many have walked away from their faith and that some have chosen to end their lives.

“You have never been my enemy. I am very sorry that I have been yours. I hope changes in my own life, as well as the ones we announce tonight regarding Exodus International, will bring resolution, and show I am serious in both my regret and offer of friendship. I pledge that future endeavors will be focused on peace and common good.”