



Beloved Aliens

BY ANDREW COMISKEY



Newsweek recently featured Obama on its cover as the 'first gay president' for topping his list of accomplishments for homosexuals by advocating 'gay marriage.'

Tempted by the fear and despair that comes when yet another brilliant leader comes under delusion, I remember our status in the world as Christians. We are beloved aliens.

An alien does not legally belong where (s)he lives, and is often suspect because of it. (S)he may be deprived of certain rights for not having worldly citizenship.

The good news? We are His beloved. The Creator of the very world that rejected Him called a people to Himself in Jesus Christ. Those who welcome Jesus become God's children, His chosen people. He pours Himself out upon us constantly through His Spirit; He liberates us from the alienating power of the world as we cry out 'Father!' (Rom 8:15, 16)

We who know we are homeless on earth can actually boast that our home is in God. That was precisely Jesus' promise to those who believe in Him and follow His teaching. 'Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.' (Jn 14:23) Our homes are mobile; as we go, so go the Trinity.

For every eviction notice the world serves us, God reminds us that He envelops us. We belong to Him, not the world. Such belonging frees us to endure the world's delusion and even to shine through the darkness. The Father speaks to us, and His children hear His voice. (Jn 10:4)

One day, troubled by the idola-

try of the world and destabilized by church woes and the still unfamiliar Midwest, God gently reassured me: 'You don't belong here; this isn't your home.' I knew right away what He meant. Today my home is in Him and tomorrow will be in Heaven.

In the meantime, I live in this world as a beloved alien.

Beloved aliens like me know the danger of worldliness. We have bowed down and brought others down in sexual sin and perversion. We worshipped the creature rather than the Creator (Rom 1:25). We confused sensuality with spirituality and became slaves to our own need for love. John the Apostle describes this worldliness

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JOHN 14:23



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as 'the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and boasting of what he has and does' (1Jn 2:16)

We who know the compulsion of such things should respect sin's power. Even more, we should respect the God who made us and redeemed us from such worldliness.

Peter nails it: 'Live your life as a stranger/alien here in reverent fear of God. For you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you by your forefathers by the precious blood of the Lamb.' (1P1:17)

Amid the delusion of the age, we must recognize how vulnerable we can still be to the 'empty way of life'. The world is good at advocating the very thing that we have turned from. What we have crucified, the world resurrects as our 'right'.

Here we need our home to be only Christ and for our individual homes to be joined as one

community in Christ. We need the body of believing Christians if we are to shine amid the delusion. Together with fellow pilgrims, we can say: 'We belong to Merciful Jesus and His people.'

'Once you were not a people but now you have become a people; once you had not received mercy but now you have received mercy. As aliens and strangers in the world, abstain from sinful desires...' (1P1: 10, 11)

Mercy unites us as a people, and mercy alienates us from our worldliness. Belonging to God, we will experience 'the world' as a source of alienation from God. Peter is thus warning us to not look to the world as a source of validation but one that alienates us from our true source of belonging.

As Obama has demonstrated clearly, the spirit against Christ and His human creation is intensifying in our world today. I will use the irrational power driving homosexual rights today to illustrate my point.

Homosexuality represents a disintegration of God's will for human sexuality. He intends wholeness for His children—the freedom to realize our true selves as men and women who honor each other and who equally honor marriage as the sole context for life-giving sexual expression.

To crave union with one's own gender represents a kind of disorder; for many these desires stem from a profound and frustrated need for love that appears to be sexual but in truth is emotional, indicating a need for personal healing. Bring it on! All of us need healing to be relationally whole, including same-sex strugglers.

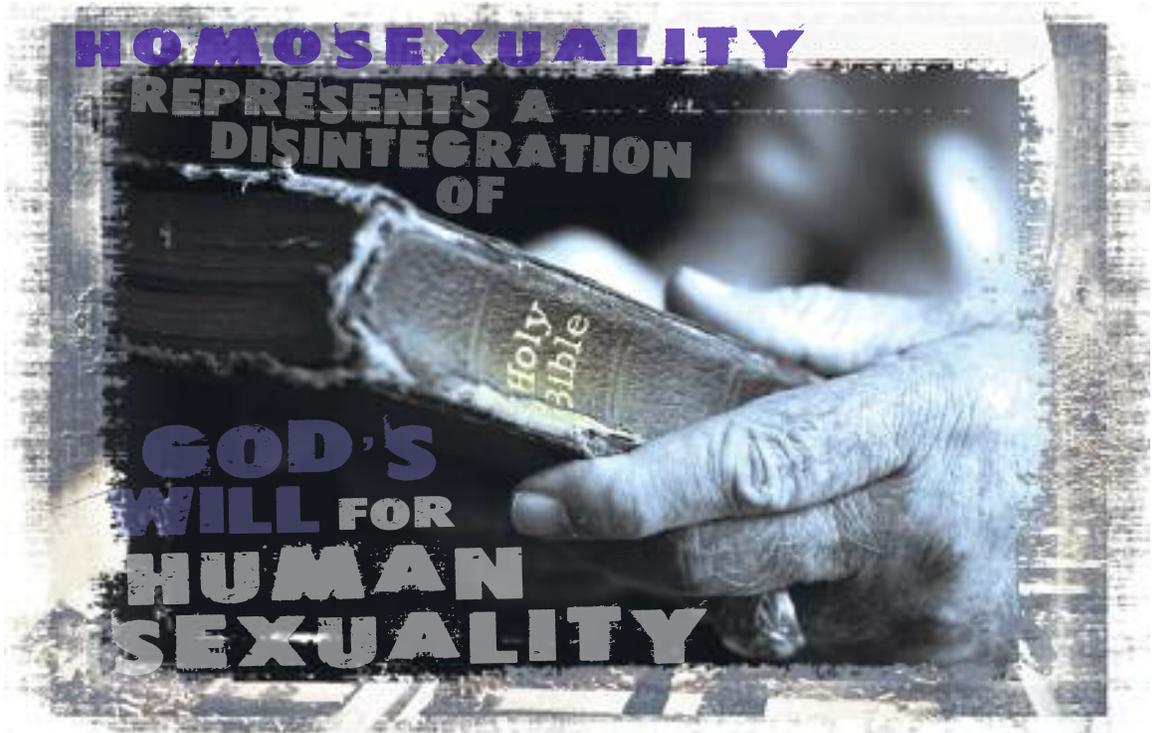
Activists refuse to admit brokenness. Instead they turn their brokenness into a 'human right' and insist that gender disintegration be recognized as normal, utterly on par with heterosexual marriage and family, and perhaps better.

Thinking themselves wise, Obama and kin act foolishly by honoring these ones in the

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1 P E T . 1 : 1 7

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name of justice. In truth, there is nothing just about blessing human disorder. Worldly, false justice leaches the light of God's truth and mercy for the broken. False justice then decries any who disagree with it as 'haters' and 'bigots'.

The clinical world now demonizes healers who assist same-sex strugglers aspiring to wholeness. California is currently trying to outlaw therapists who offer such help, one of many expressions of discrimination for healers who don't tow the party-line.

And the Church has become nearly as worldly. Rather than stand as the bearer of truth regarding what God made us for and how Christ redeems that truth in us, the body of Christ mirrors the political and clinical world. She does so in the name of 'love', a love so removed from Jesus Christ that we may as well remove the cross from our steeples.

The cross is offensive to the world, as is the truth of how Jesus redeems homosexuals. The worldly Church today preaches neither. It's all love, love, and more love, the broad way of inclusion and tolerance, with no understanding of the authentic dignity Christ died to reclaim in us. Through the blood and water. Through the narrow way of repentance. Through the life He surrendered to reclaim ours.

Beloved aliens, I urge you to surrender all to Jesus Christ in these days. He is all we have. We can no longer count on 'Christian' civic leaders, on the mental health community, even in some cases on church leaders. Many have been corrupted by the world, and now operate under the deceiving spirit of the age.

Take heart; this is our shining hour. United with Christ as His beloved children, remember to:

1. Flinch like an alien.

Do not ever become accustomed to the embrace of perversion as normal and good. It is neither and has power to destroy body and soul in hell.

2. See like an alien.

We must retain God's sight the broken, claiming these ones according to God's beautiful vision for their lives. Like Paul, we summon the prospect of a new creation, and 'see no-one from a worldly point-of view.' (2Cor 5: 16)

3. Endure hatred like an alien.

Jesus said it best to His disciples: 'If the world hates you, keep in mind it hated me first. You don't belong to the world. That's why it hates you.' (Jn 15: 18, 19)

4. Love the Church like an alien.

Bless her beauty and rebuke her worldliness, those who 'live as enemies of the cross' (Phil.

3:18). Stand your ground and honor the cross in Church through your commitment to grace and truth.

5. Weep and pray like an alien.

The foundations are being destroyed, but God endures forever. We can thus endure all things. "Hear my prayer, O God, listen to my cry for help, for I dwell with you like an alien.' (Ps 39: 12)

6. Dwell in peace like an alien.

'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. In the world you will have trouble. Take heart! I have overcome the world. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (Jn 14: 27; 16:33)

7. Shine like an alien.

If you surrender daily to His all-surpassing grace, 'you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like lights in the universe as you hold out the word of life.' (Phil. 2: 15, 16) 

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Do You Pray?

BY BETHANNE SCHOLL



"Do you pray?" asked the priest at the reception for my sister-in-law's wedding nearly 16 years ago. "You look like you pray," he added. I think I mumbled something about not praying as much as I should and he answered, "Keep it up. It will get you where you want to go."

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I found I could pray. God hears my prayers for others.

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1 Thes. 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Without a doubt, it was prayer that brought me to the vocation of marriage. The fruit of that calling has brought me seven children, one yet to be fully on the scene. Prayer brought me to become Catholic. Being a Presbyterian left me longing for a deeper relationship with Jesus, a desire only the intimacy of the Eucharist could fulfill.

But since the encounter at the wedding reception, I've learned prayer is not just a kind of "GPS." Prayer gives me my purpose, no matter where I go.

All little ones want to be useful. My three-year-old, Nellie, asks, "Mama, can I have a special job?" When I find her a job, she is so happy because I am using her. I don't *need* her help to unload the dishwasher; but I want it because I love her and I love her gift, and I *want* her to learn the joy of service.

In my desire to be useful to Jesus, I found I could pray. In a very real way, I see myself as Nellie when God hears my prayers for others or when I am convinced through the Holy Spirit that I should pray for someone. I know He is using me—He wants what I have to offer. He wants me to participate in His plan in a way that only I can do, and He wants me to learn to serve.

We are called to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17). The great beauty of prayer is that it can be done during the laundry or the dishes. It can be done in the silence of the chapel in front of the Blessed Sacrament. One can pray for the world—both the lost and the found. Prayer can even be done while drifting off to sleep, and I cling to this: it can be done by a busy mother of seven and it *matters*.

Like Nellie, so much of what I do seems little, inconsequential and invisible to the world; but He always sees my sacrifices and offerings for others, and He always hears me. In a world of go-getters and non-stop

ministries and vast mission fields, my desire to contribute in a tiny way to His kingdom is cherished.

Just like my little one, I have a special job: I'm supposed to talk to Him and listen to Him on behalf of myself and others. And just like my daughter, being used by Jesus in this life gives me great joy. Practicing hope, being used by Jesus, will get me where I need to be now and ultimately where I want to go in the next life. 🙏

Bethanne is one of a trusted group of intercessors who pray on behalf of Desert Stream. Her husband Bill is on the Desert Stream Board of Directors. They live in Mission, Kansas.



The Small Way



BY ANN ARMSTRONG

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow

the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.” Matthew 5:13,14

Since I said yes to Jesus in my late 20's, I have been drawn to prayer. Through intercession, listening and healing prayer, and contemplation, I have found ways into deeper relationship with the Lord. Prayer has truly become for me the narrow way that leads to the greatest life.

My favorite way to connect with God's heart is when I first wake up. I need uninterrupted time before Him, to receive for myself; and in turn know how best to pray. I may look up Bible verses I hear, or write down something I am sensing. Often as I write or type, more understanding of how to pray comes.

In the quiet of my room, I enter a place that is closer to the Lord. As I am able to focus and *really pray*, the 'things of earth truly do grow strangely [and wonderfully] dim'. One man put it this way, “When are you happiest? Hasn't it been when you have been close with God and caught a glimpse of heavenly glory? If this is true for you, it is certain you have a notion of what spiritual joy can be. If David is right when he says that the light of God's countenance cheers the heart more than wine, then surely those who are most aware of God are the happiest.”

In spite of such times, I still feel the pull of the broader easier path; many other things

demand my time and attention. Though not necessarily bad or sinful (recently I found myself thinking about some new shoes!), the distractions draw me away from the 'good part'(Luke 9:41, 42).

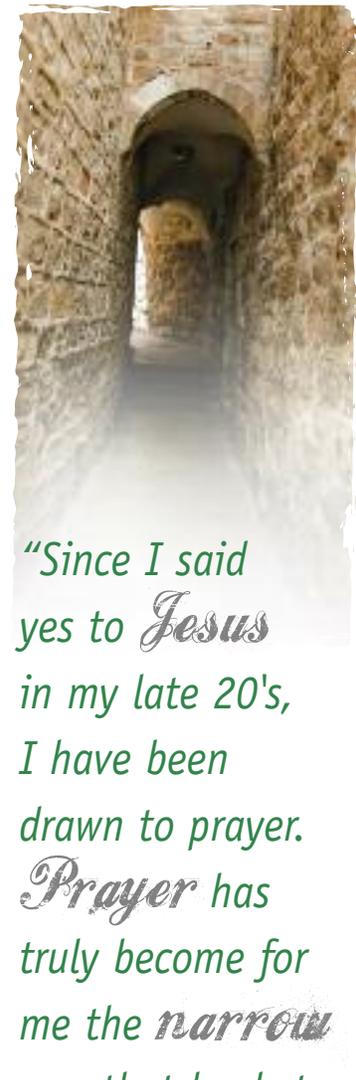
In my struggle to keep prayer my first priority, God has been changing the way I pray. I now find myself spending more time throughout the day in a prayerful exchange with Him: being with Him, listening and interceding while walking, driving, knitting, or cleaning and cooking.

As a single person with no children, I have more time in my life and schedule, places I try to leave open and available for God and what He might ask. Getting older has helped too, as I find I have less desire (and energy!) to run around and busy myself.

Honestly, some days the solitary nature of my call and desire to pray can be costly. Then I am thankful for friends and family members who bear this burden and join with me in intercession. I equally need and value the times when we gather to talk, laugh and enjoy life.

Therese of Lisieux spoke of the 'little way of love', living one's life in service and love of others. Prayer is part of my 'little way'. In return for all I have been given, I can pray for friends, family, and many of you who support Desert Stream. No-one benefits if I gain more from the world yet lose my prayerful focus. 

Ann Armstrong is Director of Intercession at Desert Stream Ministries. Active in her local church, Ann lives in Kansas City, MO.



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LUKE 9:41, 42

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A Journey Towards Wholeness



BY DEB WILSON

A journey often leads to unexpected places, as did my time attending Living Waters. One evening a man shared his story; while I listened I grew increasingly uncomfortable, fidgeting and becoming agitated. The violation he experienced seemed rather small to me, and I didn't quite get how his reaction corresponded to his experience. "At least he was fully clothed," I thought. "What happened to me was worse than that."

As he concluded his story and the team called people forward for prayer, I felt like I couldn't breathe. I don't even know what I said to the team member, except that I justified and excused the actions of my offender. The team member listened and prayed that I would feel the pain and the anger.

God answered those prayers. Light had dawned on a deeply buried lie, and within a matter of hours a whole web of beliefs about myself, the perpetrator, and my family's response crumbled.

As a very young child, I had been molested by my brother's best friend. As soon as he was gone, I had immediately broken the promise of secrecy he demanded and told my parents. My sibs remember me crying, and were grilled by my parents.

But nothing happened. I don't remember being comforted. I do remember bringing it up the next morning to my mom and sister; there was no response from my mom—an emotional flat line. The mix of my personality (I was very compliant and eager to please), combined with her emotional cues: the abuse became a non-event that was boxed up and swept away.

Now I had to face not only the decades old buried pain of the incident and grieve, but I had to face the pain of my parents', especially my mother's, betrayal. As understanding dawned and my perspective changed, I felt like a stranger inside my own skin.

On the flip side, the lens for viewing my life had suddenly come into focus. I understood why I had so often felt less than—inferior and damaged. I had internalized the shame and hushed my voice. For the first time, I really understood

why I had wandered into an unhealthy same-sex relationship in my twenties. I had ached for feminine comfort, searching for someone to comfort, care for, and vindicate my responses.

In the midst of turmoil, the Lord's presence with me was palpable. I knew this was no surprise to Him, for He knew me better than I know myself. He began to guide me, step by step, to a more whole self. First, He asked me if I wanted to release the pain, to open my hands and let it go. My yes was not immediate. My identity and



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"As a very young child, I had been molested"



story was changing. Did I want to exchange it? The answer was not immediate.

One evening, I read the following passages from *Strength in Weakness*:

“As in the healing of all our wounds, the beginning of that healing occurs with the naming of one’s wound and the placing of it into Christ’s wounds.” (p. 171), and “Our sufferings are bound up into the wounds of Christ when we entrust our perpetrators to him.” (p. 136)

The invitation for healing I read in these words was so sweet I could not resist. After so long, I had a name for my wound, and I was ready to place it into His hands. I felt a gut-level urgency to pray and release this wound to Him. I called to my husband, asking if he could join me.

As we prayed, I saw the wounded hands of Jesus before me, open and waiting: to receive my wounds, my sinful responses to them, and to receive the person who had violated me. The very roots of the whole event came up as we prayed; as it surfaced, I physically pressed each part—the sin, the boy, the betrayal, my responses—into His hands.

That evening, Isaiah 53:5 became reality for me: “By His wounds we are healed.” I had never understood the power of those wounded Hands to heal the deepest places of my heart.

I remembered one of the first things I had heard at the start of this journey—would I open my hands? Now God had brought it full circle; I had discovered His open hands, waiting and ready to receive, as I opened mine.

I don’t know why the timing of my story happened as it did. I had participated in healing courses before; I don’t know why things remain locked up.

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I believe, however, that the time commitment of the Living Waters team members served as a significant catalyst in my journey. The weekly time offering helped my heart feel safe and loved, and the lock was sprung.

After my experience in Living Waters, I was able to discuss this incident with my siblings for the first time in 40-some years. I discovered some wonderful things. My brother and sister, ages 10 & 11, had confronted my parents and begged them to talk to the boy’s parents. My brother

never let me be alone with him again; after confronting the boy, he was unable to continue the friendship.

The beauty of this Divine Exchange awes me. He receives the darkness and pain and releases peace and forgiveness. I have accepted His magnificent invitation and continue on this journey of healing. As I walk on this path, restoration and transformation continues. 

Deb lives with her husband Tom and their daughters in Kansas City, Missouri.

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www.desertstream.org

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IF YOU DO NOT STAND FIRM IN FAITH, YOU WILL NOT STAND AT ALL. Isaiah 7:9b

Join Desert Stream Ministries as we prayerfully repent of our shameful nakedness and ask God to clothe us with His mercy and truth.

Sept. 27–Nov. 6, 2012

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Corporate Corner



BY ANNETTE COMISKEY

This past week, as I was driving to work, I went past a neighbor's yard. Both husband and wife were diligently working a small garden patch. When I returned home several hours later, they were still working the garden. That evening when I looked at their work, it seemed like they had put forth a lot of effort for a relatively small patch of earth. In truth, their small garden did nothing but make that one corner of their yard a little more attractive.

I woke up the next morning and by 7am was fully immersed in my work for the day. By 8am I was feeling very overwhelmed with all that lay before me. I immediately thought of my neighbor's garden. Why wasn't my life, at the age of 56, just a small, nicely contained garden? Andy and I have given our adult lives to the hard work of putting "our hand to the plow". The Lord has multiplied our efforts. 'Isn't that enough Lord?' I thought.

Yet this past year the Lord has shown us new fields to invest in and I often feel I no longer have the stamina for plowing! I've been asking God for a small, contained life...

Perhaps my desire for a small contained garden comes from my expectations, assuming I know what is best for me. I excel at telling the Lord what I want rather than ask Him what He has for me.

So, at an age I assumed would be 'golden,' the Lord has called Andy and I to cultivate some new earth! And, if I look beyond what I think I want, I am truly excited about the future. Excited, not because it will be easy or free of challenges, but I have found deep

joy and satisfaction by following His leading!

What are those new fields?

- *Standing for purity amid 'gay marriage' and other immoralities. Our greatest tool in this battle is repentance, intercession and fasting. We will be calling others to join us in a 40-day fast from Sept 27–November 6. We will have a prayer guide for the 40 days as well as daily devotions available on Andy's blog (andrewcomiskey.com) or Andy's Facebook page ("like" Andrew Comiskey)*
- *Upholding the call to proclaim God's healing for homosexual. We recently disaffiliated with an organization we had stood with for over 30 years. We felt that their leadership had been "watering down" the deep healing the Lord can bring those who struggle with same-sex attractions. We know that*

a change in orientation is a reasonable goal for those who are willing to surrender wholly to God and to do the hard work such change requires.

- *Ecumenical Living Waters: Our offering has been overwhelmingly to Protestant churches. We want to see Living Waters available in the Catholic Church. Andy is revising the Living Waters Guidebook (available in 2014). Part of the revision will be to bring in aspects of Catholicism (while keeping the foundations of Living Waters intact) that will make the Living Waters program compatible with the teachings of all Christian churches.*

Though it seems easier to grow my own garden, I realize the Lord has more for me. I am grateful to be a part of His deepening call upon Desert Stream to the relationally and sexually broken. 



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MID-YEAR REPORT

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 Newsletter (Spring and Fall)
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 Year-End Report (Winter)

Mission Statement

Based on the biblical foundations of compassion, integrity, and dependence on God, Desert Stream Ministries proclaims to the world the transforming power of Jesus Christ. We equip the body of Christ to minister healing to the sexually and relationally broken, through healing groups and leadership training for the local church.

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