

September 2010

"[He chose] rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to his reward."

-Hebrews 11:25,26



A Life Well-Lived: The Legacy of Alan Medinger

by Josh Glaser, Executive Director

There have been few occasions that have forced me to stop and consider—really consider—the brief life I’m living. *Am I living my life well? Of all that I spend my time doing, how much is really making a difference for good in others’ lives? How much of what I’ve done is weighty enough to last through this age and into the age to come? Do I love like Jesus loves?*

The glory of Alan’s life is not that he was a great and holy man. Rather, the glory of his life is that he was an ordinary man who submitted to an extraordinary Savior. He had one life. And through faithfully following Jesus, his one life made a profound difference.

The death of Regeneration’s founder, Alan Medinger, in June has been one of those occasions for me, prompting these kinds of questions and more. I’ll come back to this, but first, I want to say a bit more about Alan.

Remembering Alan

Alan died early in the morning on Monday, June 28th. The staff, board, family and friends worked hard to contact as many people as we could through E-mails, phone calls, and posting information on the Regeneration web site so those wanting to attend his funeral could. (For those of you who are just learning of

Alan’s death through this letter, I ask your forgiveness for not sitting down to write this much sooner.)

Although his memorial service was not a star-studded event in the worldly sense, people from Maryland, Virginia, and literally around the country drove and flew in to remember Alan and honor his legacy. I talked with a man at Alan’s viewing who had never met Alan. He’d read Alan’s book *Growth into Manhood* six months earlier and was profoundly impacted; he read it two more times in the following months. And when he’d heard Alan passed away, he said he just had to come see him.

Several leaders in the Exodus movement (of which Alan was the first president 30 years ago) came to the funeral as well, and many more sent notes and grieved from afar. Joe Dallas, author of such books as *Desires in Conflict* and more recently, *The Complete Christian Guide to Understanding Homosexuality* (co-authored with Nancy Heche), posted this note online:

[Alan’s] legacy includes a stable/stabilizing influence that was exerted throughout Exodus for decades; relevant and user friendly educational material; an organization with high credibility; a standard of excellence and a call to keep our work Christ-centered and doctrinally sound. All of this from a man who was unfailingly cordial and loving, unobtrusive but hugely influential. . . . I’ve known few people who warrant as much respect as Alan does.

Alan’s life was a life well-lived, a life given over to Christ and His Kingdom. And so as we remember Alan, we do so, as Andy Comiskey of Desert Stream Ministries put it at the memorial service, “without regret.”

The Most Important Thing

I first met Alan in 1996 as a participant in Regeneration’s *New Beginning* program (now called *Rescue*) for men seeking freedom from sexual addictions. I was learning all sorts of new and helpful information that I’d never been exposed to before. Alan wasn’t a regular part of that program, but he came and spoke to us once, and I was eager to hear what great wisdom he would bring us. When he finally came, do you know what he shared with us? In his humble way, he spoke to us about the vital importance of spending daily quiet times with the Lord.

For Alan, spending daily times with Jesus was central to his life, his walk, and his ministry. And he was so faithful to start every day that way. He called these times “the most important thing you can do,” and he believed it. He always said that his times with the Lord were when he got

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all his material for his well-known newsletter articles and his best ideas for Regeneration.

But mostly for Alan, his daily times with the Lord came out of his unquenchable love for Christ and the awe he felt at what Christ had done for him. In November 1974, while immersed in a double life, Alan attended a prayer meeting he'd been invited to by a friend from work. At that meeting, Alan prayed silently a simple prayer, giving his life to Jesus and asking for His help. Miraculously, Jesus set him free from the desire to be active homosexually. This would define Alan's life from that time forward.



Alan and Willa Medinger

Five years later, in 1979, Alan started Regeneration – with 4 people attending the first meeting, including him. Of course, after his conversion, he and Willa had to begin their own journey of restoration. Over time, they began ministering together. Most would agree Alan was better with Willa. The two of them seemed simultaneously an odd pair and a perfect fit—in many ways a model of the complementary nature of man and woman. And over the years, hundreds of men and women came to feel Alan and Willa were like a surrogate father and mother to them.

The ministry grew, but for Alan Regeneration remained an expression of wanting for others the life changing love and power of Jesus. And so whether at the office or in his home, working for Regeneration or after his retirement, he was ever about this kind of ministry, with a particular heart for men and women struggling with unwanted homosexuality. And he never wavered believing that others could experience the freedom he knew and more—whether it happened in an instant or over a lifetime—because he trusted in the power and love of Christ.

Like Christ Loved the Church

In recent years, Alan had been focusing his time and energies on writing a second book, this time for men struggling with lust. He felt it would be a tremendous help to thousands of men (and having read it, I'm sure he is right), and he desperately

wanted to complete it and get it published. (Plans to get the book published are still underway.) Alan had many health problems and more than a few hospitalizations, but he would always return to his work on this book.

In the summer of 2009, Willa suffered a massive stroke. Since then, she has required nearly 24/7 care, and he had to learn to serve her in brand new ways. His book took a back seat to serving Willa. As difficult as all of this was, he came to view caring for Willa as an opportunity from the Lord to learn to love her more selflessly. This became his main goal—to love Willa sacrificially for as long as he could, to love her like Christ loved the church. I remember talking with him last spring, when he remarked how Christ was continuing to purify his love, and as a result he felt he loved Willa more now than he ever had before.

Early this summer, Alan and Willa celebrated their 50th Anniversary with their children and grandchildren. If you ever get the chance to see the pictures of that evening's celebration, you should. What love.

Seeking a Better Kingdom

Alan lived his life for the sake of those caught in sexual sin and brokenness. He stepped up and answered when God called. He sought Christ's Kingdom over his own earthly kingdom.

- He gave his career: When Alan started sharing his testimony publically in the 80's, the Baltimore company he worked for asked him either to stop or to step down from his (successful) position. Alan gladly resigned.
- He gave his finances: When Alan decided to serve Regeneration full-time, he walked through every room of his house praying, giving everything to the Lord. When Regeneration fell behind budget, Alan went without pay, viewing it as opportunity to suffer for the gospel.
- He gave his time: Ministry wasn't 9 – 5 for Alan. The ministry started in Alan and Willa's home and they had people over regularly. And Alan viewed his retirement as simply a different phase of ministry.
- Alan gave his name and reputation: Google Alan's name and you'll find a mix of ministry-related articles and a few truly vitriolic comments by some who say they're glad he's dead because he held to the truth that homosexuality is not God's intent for men and women. For the sake of those who wanted help, Alan did not let the views of his critics keep him from speaking out for Christ.

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Much, much more could be said about Alan’s life and legacy. I’ve written only a very little. I have not and cannot do justice to his memory in one letter. But in another way, nothing more needs to be said. The fruit of his life speaks on in his wife, in his children and grandchildren, in his colleagues at Regeneration and throughout Exodus, and in literally thousands of men and women around the world. I am one of those thousands who is eternally grateful.

I mentioned earlier how Alan would faithfully wake each day to spend time with Jesus. In the Gospels, we read of Jesus waking very early in the morning for prayer, too. It has occurred to me that on Monday, June 28th, Jesus was already up, standing in the room while Alan slept. And then when the time had arrived, I wonder if Jesus simply leaned over Alan and gently whispered his name. I think I can imagine, as some of you can, the expression Alan must have had on his face when he opened his eyes, and saw now finally the face of his Lord and his best Friend.

A New Day for Regeneration

As I said, Alan’s death has prompted me to take a look at my life and ask some hard questions. I want to encourage you to do the same. Though not perfectly, Alan poured out his life for those who were caught in sexual sin and brokenness. Thousands are glad he did. Since you are reading this, you’re one, like me, who has been impacted in one way or another by Alan’s legacy. More importantly, he sought to live faithfully to all that the Father asked him to do, giving up much in the process. And now it’s our turn.

The work and mission of Christ to the sexually broken continues. There are more men, women, and kids than ever who are struggling with unwanted homosexual attractions, pornography addictions, promiscuity, the effects of past sexual abuse, and other forms of sexual and relational sins and brokenness. Who will reach out to them? Who will give up a job if necessary? Who will give sacrificially of their finances? Who pour out the time needed? Who of those who has experienced freedom will come out of hiding and share their testimony? Who will lay down his/her name and reputation for the sake of those who would otherwise be alone and without hope?

I’ve spent this letter seeking to honor Alan. But I would do his life a disservice to speak of him as though he were something remarkably different than you or me. Those close to him know without equivocation how imperfect he was. He knew it, too. The glory of Alan’s life is not that he was a great and holy man. Rather, the glory of his life is that he was an ordinary man who submitted to an extraordinary Savior. He had one life. And through faithfully following Jesus, his one life made a profound difference.

Would you give your life to Christ and follow Him wherever He leads you? Would you do so for the sake of the men and women around you struggling with sexual sin? Wherever you are in your own journey, would you follow Him? Just think what God could do!

As for me and Regeneration, we intend to follow Christ and Christ alone. We intend to bring the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ to those yet caught in sexual sin. And united with Him, we intend to keep crucifying lust so we may grow in love for every man and every woman just as He does. Even as we still grieve, we choose to arise in our sadness, emboldened by the example of Alan and the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us—men and women of faith of whom “God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them” (Hebrews 11:16).

Please join us in prayer, in giving, in serving. For our brothers and sisters, for Christ and His Kingdom! ■

PLEASE PRAY WITH US:

WE THANK GOD FOR:

- Rescuing Alan Medinger 35 years ago, Alan’s vision and courage to begin Regeneration, and God’s faithfulness in sustaining and growing the ministry for over three decades.
- The gift of Alan’s memorial service and funeral—a day without regret as many who loved Alan commemorated his life.
- For the days ahead for Regeneration in this new day and new era. Where the darkness increases, the light becomes more visible.

PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYING FOR:

- Willa Medinger and the entire Medinger family as they continue to adjust to life without Alan.
- The start of *Living Waters* in Baltimore and Northern Virginia, as well as *Rescue* in Baltimore; and continuing *Men of Valor* (sports fellowship) in Catonsville, and *Just for Wives* in Baltimore.
- *Project Rhoda* participants. We still need about 15 people to join our new *Project Rhoda* prayer initiative.
- Financial provision through the end of this year. This is the time of year when we begin most of our new ministry efforts, and we can only do as much as we can fund.

For more information or in-depth monthly prayer requests,
E-mail info@RegenerationMinistries.org.

Project Rhoda

Rhoda was a servant girl who was among the persecuted Christians praying through the night for Peter when he was miraculously freed from prison in Acts 12. This summer, the Lord gave us a vision to invite individuals to pray once a week for 24 weeks for one Regeneration participant each (anonymously). Will you be a “Rhoda” so that one man or woman may be set free? For more information, contact our Baltimore office at 410-661-0284 or E-mail Rhoda@RegenerationMinistries.org.

Living Waters

Regeneration is still accepting applications for *Living Waters*, an intensive, Christ-centered program leading men and women towards sexual and relational wholeness. This program is helpful for those struggling with issues like pornography, unwanted same-sex attractions, and adultery as well as temptations, past wounds and sexual abuse. At the heart of the program is allowing Jesus into those past wounds and deep areas of need that keep us from wholeness. If you have not participated in Living Waters, now is the time! For more information call 703-591-4673 (Fairfax, VA) or 410-661-0284 (Baltimore, MD).

RESCUE

For men seeking freedom from habitual sexual sin, whatever your area of sexual struggle, *Rescue* is for you. Join a community of men committed to fighting for purity in their own lives and in the lives of their brothers. This quarter, we address the role of the will in long-term freedom, and we develop practical and personalized plans to move us forward on the journey. Quarter starts the first Tuesday in October. For more information or to register, e-mail info@RegenerationMinistries.org or call 410-661-0284.

Staffing Changes

The summer, we said goodbye to **Cheryl Durgin** (Administrative Assistant) and **Peter Mitchell** (NoVA Men’s Ministry Coordinator). We are grateful for how the Lord brought both Cheryl and Peter to work with us and the many contributions and gifting they each brought to their respective roles with Regeneration. They will be missed!

We also said hello to **Erin Dance** (Administrative Assistant). Please pray for Erin and for Regeneration as a whole as we press forward as the Lord is leading us. The harvest is plentiful and the laborers are few!

Tribute to Alan Medinger

If you would like to make a contribution in honor of Alan Medinger, Regeneration has designated an *Alan Medinger Memorial Fund* to be used for the long-term growth of the ministry he founded and loved. Contributions can be sent to Regeneration, P.O. Box 9830, Baltimore, MD 21284-9830. (Please mark “*Medinger Memorial Fund*” in the memo line.)

We are also in need of regular monthly contributions! In addition to a typical drop in giving over the summer, requests for program scholarships are way up, particularly in Baltimore. We never let finances prohibit someone from taking our programs, but we do rely on program fees as part of our overall operating budget, so please prayerfully consider sending a special gift at this time. Thanks so much!

Regeneration Is . . .

Staff Team

Joshua Glaser
Executive Director

Rev. Bob Ragan
Northern Virginia
Director

Ann Cohrs
Ministry Associate (NoVA)

Jamie Glaser
Women’s Ministry Associate
(Baltimore)

Robert Passman
Men’s Ministry Associate
(Baltimore)

Devon Medinger
Staff Accountant

Erin Dance
Administrative Assistant

Groups and Programs

Baltimore, MD

- Living Waters
- Rescue
(Sexual Purity Group)
- New Directions
- Just for Wives

Northern, VA

- Living Waters
- Women’s Group
- Wives’ Group
- Men’s Group
- s.a.l.t.
(Sexual Addiction Group)