



A PUBLICATION OF
DESERT STREAM MINISTRIES



Reflected Glory

BY ANDREW COMISKEY



When I consider those who have most revealed Jesus to me, I think of men and women who have welcomed Jesus so profoundly into their same-sex attraction that their entire beings reflect His glory.

*He first came
to them as the
Light of truth;
He revealed Himself
as prophet,
just as He did to
the blind man.*



All controversies surrounding gay rights or marriage cease. Upon these surrendered ones, and from their depths, the Light of the World shines. These are lives that know beyond doubt that His loving kindness is better than anything this life offers. (Ps 63:3) Upon Jesus, the Light of Life, they now gaze unflinchingly. They reflect Glory.

John 9 describes Jesus healing a man born blind. I will use such blindness as a metaphor for those profoundly motivated by same-sex attraction, as well as the darkness surrounding how the worldly church interprets such attraction.

Foolishly, pastors today urge those with same-sex attraction

to embrace their 'gayness' as a sexual way-of-being, rather than as a need for unfailing love. Sheer ignorance. Another member of the same gender cannot meet that need; only Jesus Christ can. Foolish representatives of Christ bar the broken from their Cure.

Blind guides lead the blind to despair. On the other hand, Jesus restores sight to those blinded by homosexuality and its worldly interpretation. Hope and fruitfulness spring forth from the restored. The Light of the World beams upon the likes of Gwen and Mike, two friends familiar with an ache for same-sex love.

Gwen recalls a yearning for 'mother-love' since the first few

years of her life when she was shuffled from one caregiver to another. She then attached to a series of female authority figures from First Grade to well into her forties. Like a lost baby bird in search of a mother feathering a nest for her, Gwen lived desperately upon the attention of new 'friends, one after another'.

Unlike Gwen, Mike grew up in a stable yet shame-filled home. To his kind yet demanding father, a pastor, Mike always felt a failure. His yearning for masculine touch, conceived in numerous gay relationships and resulting in HIV-infection, confirmed his disqualification from holy love.

continued on page 2



"Foolishly, pastors today urge those with same-sex attraction to embrace their 'gayness' as a sexual way-of-being, rather than as a need for unfailing love."

JOHN 9:2-5

'Who sinned, this son or daughter, or their parents?' 'Neither party', said Jesus.

'This happened so that the work of God might be displayed in their lives...While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World.'

Reflected Glory

continued from page 1

Jesus fielded questions from His disciples about the origins of the blindness of Gwen and Mike. 'Who sinned, this son or daughter, or their parents?' Like us, people in Jesus' day wanted to pin the problem snugly on some easy-to-identify source. 'Neither party', said Jesus. 'This happened so that the work of God might be displayed in their lives...While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World.' (Jn 9: 2-5)

I am not implying that homosexual behavior is neither sinful nor its roots sourced in the disorder of a sin-weary world. My point is: the afflicting power of sin eludes simple analysis and compels all—parents and children alike—to admit some mystery in that affliction, and most importantly, to submit to the God who promises to display His Light in healing the affliction.

In emphasizing healing, not easy answers, Jesus liberates all impacted by homosexuality. That frees parents and children to meet on the ground of many potential influences without

pointing a bony finger at any one source, as if the tendency can be reduced to one mere creature failing another. Life does not work that way. How one responds to 'the hand dealt him' is as much a factor in the development of moral blindness as are the deficits in one's caregivers.

Jesus lights the way for us; He emphasizes His desire and capacity to display His glory in our blindness. What He offered Gwen and Mike is both moral and spiritual sight. Restoring their sexuality corresponded with a growing spiritual wholeness. In truth, as each surrendered their sexuality to Jesus Christ, Jesus bonded deeply with them as the Lover and Light of their whole beings.

That bond is the basis for reflected glory. Mike and Gwen's freedom to shine resulted from exquisite, ongoing dependency on Christ, the Creator and Redeemer of their whole lives.

What distinguishes Mike and Gwen from empowered 'gays and lesbians'? Simply put, the two knew that they were blind, and they begged Jesus for sight. Like the blind beggar, these two sought Jesus in the darkness of their dead-end pursuits.

Both had come to realize that an idealized member of the same gender was not going to stop the bleeding. Instead, each sought the Light of the

World. And He was faithful to make Himself known. He first came to them as the Light of truth; He revealed Himself as prophet, just as He did to the blind man.

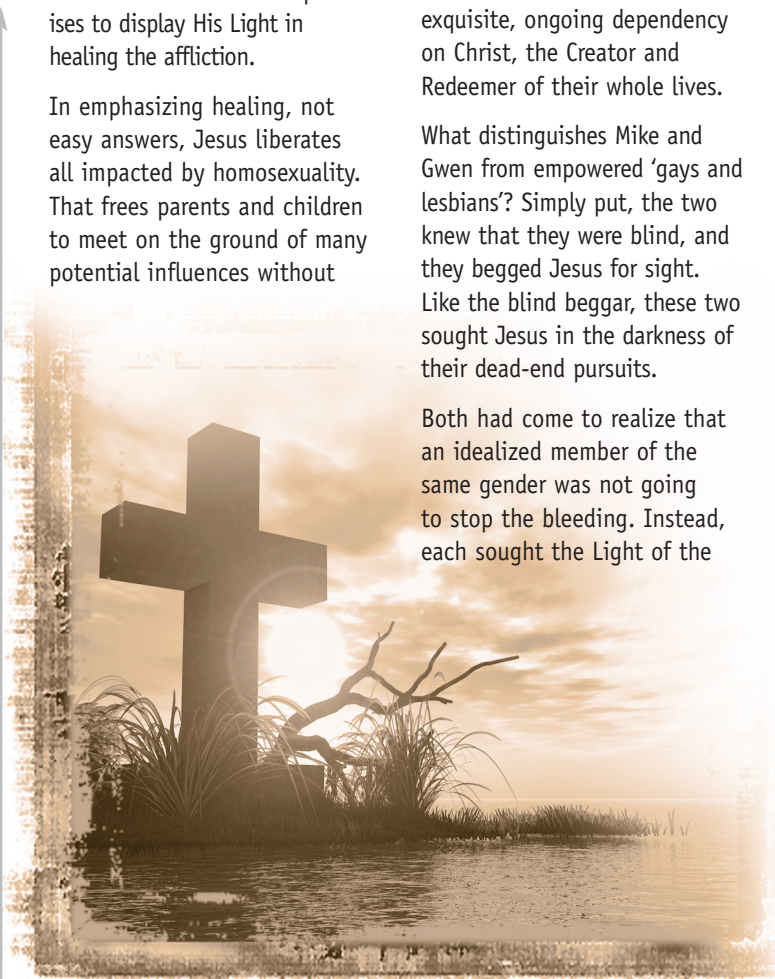
Jesus as Light of Truth: Prophet

That is no small revelation in a worldly church that so muddles the interpretation of homosexuality that its blindness becomes 'sight', its depth, a destiny. Any talk of healing is dismissed as religious tripe and trickery, even abuse. That is especially true in church systems where parents, grieved over 'gay' sons and daughters, insist that their churches become 'gay' havens as to not offend deceived parents or offspring. So the church becomes an arm of the moral blindness of its members.

Thank God Mike and Gwen sought Jesus in churches that upheld the power of the Light of the World to heal the afflicting power of homosexuality. Both Gwen and Mike went through Living Waters groups numerous times, became leaders in them, and grew mightily in their revelation of Jesus' Truth.

They discovered that they were actually created in His image, and through His loving Presence grew in awareness of the good gifts that Jesus had made them. In the healing group and in the greater fellowship, they grew to become good friends of both the same and opposite gender.

Of equal importance was discovering the cross in the afflicting power of pain in their lives, which was considerable. For Gwen the threat of abandonment, for Mike the threat of shame, could be endured at the Cross of One who had endured abandonment and shame for them.



ACTS 3:16

We are witnesses of this:

*by faith in the
Name of Jesus, this man,
this woman whom
you see and know was
made strong.*

*It is Jesus' name and
the faith that comes
through Him that has
given this complete
healing to them,
as you all can see.'*

As with the former blind man, Pharisees investigated their healing, disbelieving it. Old gay friends chided them for trying to walk in the truth, as did 'gay-affirming' churches. Some of their friends with whom they were seeking healing fell away. When asked by naysayers for their hope in Christ, they, like the man healed from blindness, referenced His truth: 'He is a prophet.' (Jn 9: 17)

Jesus as Light of Grace: Healer

But both Gwen and Mike needed more. Both needed Jesus' grace in a way that could only be described as miraculous. They needed an infusion of Light, an inspired touch to persuade them that 'His loving kindness is better than life.'

For Gwen, her healing came about after she fell back into an emotionally dependent relationship with a woman. This was not a sexual union but still destructive. And it summoned all her old yearnings as never before. She sought the Lord as never before and He met her. Over the course of several months, He poured out His

Presence upon her and she in turn poured out the ache of abandonment. In that communion, Jesus spoke to Gwen that 'He would never leave her or forsake her'.

Jesus stopped the bleeding. Since that point, over 15-years-ago, Gwen has not experienced that same ache. She walks in the assurance of His bond with her.

For Mike too, things got worse before they got better. He experienced a series of rejections from women that fired up his shame. He crossed lines with a same-sex friend that intensified his shame even more. As he was a leader, he submitted to public church discipline for his moral failure. Unrelenting shame.

Jesus manifested His presence through men in the fellowship who loved Mike at his lowest, and demonstrated a degree of confirming affection and respect that he had never known. Jesus met him in prayer with these brothers and he saw Jesus, coal in hand, burning him with a love so powerful that it actually dissolved the stronghold of shame that had defined his life. Jesus stopped the bleeding. For the last 17 years Mike has walked in the freedom of a son of God.

In response to those who question their healing, each proclaims what the seeing blind man declared: 'I was blind, now I see!' (Jn 9: 25) Each knows that Jesus is the Light of grace, the God who heals.

In Acts 3, Peter heals a crippled beggar and declares the healing; in truth, the Apostle described Gwen and Mike. 'We are witnesses of this: by faith in the Name of Jesus, this man, this woman whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes

through Him that has given this complete healing to them, as you all can see.' (Acts 3: 16)

I can see Jesus far more clearly as a result of Gwen and Mike's restored sight. Each reflects His glory; in truth, Jesus displays the Light of His life in theirs. He shines through them to light the Way for those stumbling in the blindness of homosexuality, both parents and children alike.

And He does so to reveal the blindness of 'seers' in the worldly church. Jesus said: 'For judgment I have come into the world, so that the blind will see, and those who see will become blind.' (Jn 9: 39)

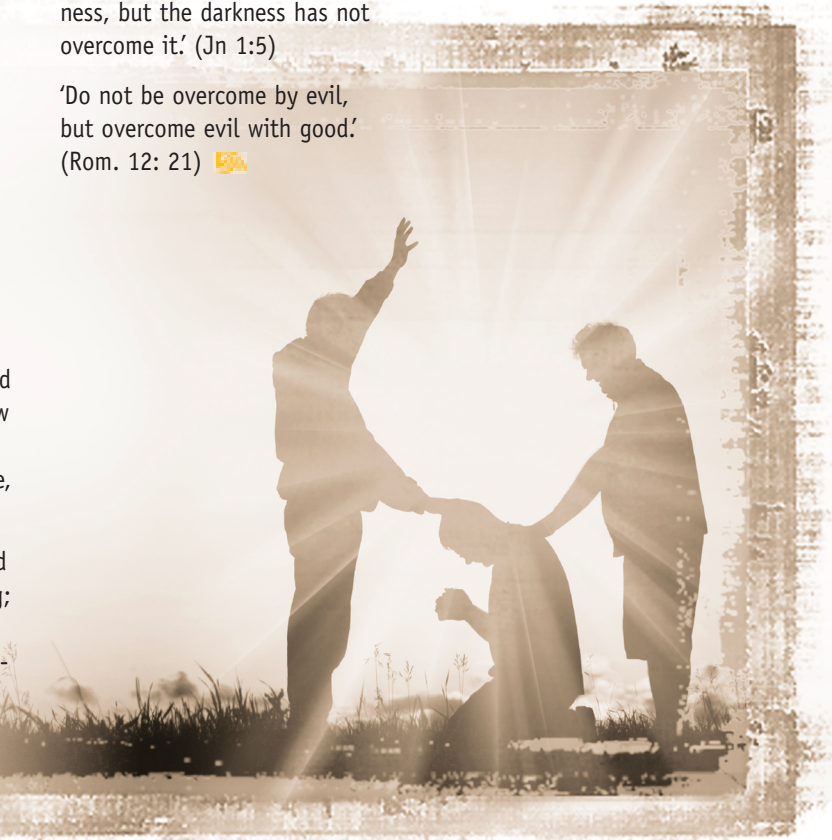
For such a time as this, He is raising up witnesses of His glorious Truth and Grace. Such radiance reveals the blindness of a Body that has lost touch with her Head and Heart, Jesus Christ. How much brighter does that Light shine from those whose sight He has restored?

'The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.' (Jn 1:5)

'Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.' (Rom. 12: 21) 🙏

“Jesus restores sight to those blinded by

homosexuality and its worldly interpretation. Hope and fruitfulness spring forth from the restored.”



Choosing the Way of the Cross



BY RON GITLAU

I have had homosexual feelings most of my life. Always have and probably always will. I have considered becoming "gay". I have had many friends that have had similar stories

to mine and chose to do just that...become gay.

I have chosen another way.

The way I have chosen is what I believe to be the way of the cross. It is this way of the cross that the church must adhere to if she desires to be faithful to Jesus.

The way of the cross is a place of grace. "Come just as you are." "God loves you." "You belong." These phrases bubble up from the biblical text and are profoundly Christian. No one enters into the family because they think correctly; they enter into the family of God by sheer grace. This is true, this is reality, and this is the appeal of Christ's gospel. For me, I have experienced this sheer grace again and again. Concerning my identity, my various proclivities and in my sin, I have experienced the love of Christ that warmly embraces me and says, "I love you just this way. Nothing needs to change for you to know my eternal, extravagant love." As far as I can tell, this is the starting point of all things Christian—God's amazing grace.

The way of the cross is a place of transformation. "Any person that would follow me, must pick up his cross, and follow me." This demand of Jesus has to do with the death of self. Paul beautifully walks



us through this death in Colossians 3. If one wants real transformation—resurrection—one must be willing to die to their desires and wants (no matter how powerfully one feels them). The fruit of such death is a different kind of life;

a life marked by love, joy and peace. If one desires to have a resurrected sexuality they must be willing to die to their old hungers (in whatever form they might come). I have experienced this in my life. For sure whispers remain but make no

Dying to self is hellish work. Is it worth it? Yes! I am becoming like Christ. I pray that the church does not lose the way of the cross, no matter the cost.

COL. 3:1-2

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

mistake; I am radically different than I once was—able to love well, and able to be a good gift.

The way of the cross is a place of truth. There is no actual argument among *competent* theologians (either progressive or conservative) on what the Bible says concerning homosexuality. According to scripture, homosexuality is not God's best. From Genesis to Revelation, homosexuality is always described as something negative. Homosexuality is a result of the fall and this is biblical

reality. One can slice, dice, and get sociology studies done that declare the health of homosexuality but one fact remains: scripturally speaking, homosexual behavior is a sin. I have a real problem changing our ancient story for one that is more easily digestible to our contemporary minds. Frankly, if I had to choose between the story to believe, our culture's or the bible's, I will go with scripture hands down, blindly, jumping ALL the way in. The church is the representation of Christ's kingdom in the world.

We are keepers of the story. God have mercy if we slaughter his story so we can be relevant, inclusive and "nice."

These days, I am a father of three boys, married to my wife Amy, and a pastor. I am living in Christ—grace, transformation and truth. Is it easy? Nope. Dying to self is hellish work. Is it worth it? Yes! I am becoming like Christ. I pray that the church does not lose the way of the cross, no matter the cost. This is my prayer and what I am devoting my life to. In Jesus name. 🙏

One can slice,
dice and get
**sociology
studies
done that
declare
the health of
homosexuality
but one
fact remains:
scripturally
speaking,
homosexuality
behavior is a sin.**

“The Way of the Cross
is a place is an grace...
No one enters into the family
because they think correctly:
they enter into the
Family of God by sheer grace!”



*If one wants real transformation—resurrection—one must be **willing** to die to their **desires** and wants—no matter how powerfully one feels them.*

New **LIFE** well Lived

BY CHRISTIE MAY



When I became a Christian, I had a wonderful childlike faith. If Jesus could rise from the dead, walk on water, and raise other people from the dead, he should not have any trouble changing my gender orientation.

In my understanding I had been born gay. I never felt comfortable being a girl. I started to fall in love with other women as soon as I reached puberty, and I could not imagine ever trusting or being intimate with a man.

But upon my conversion to Christianity, I read the first two chapters of Genesis and was convinced that God intended for women to be with men, not other women. I really wanted to do what God wanted so I said good-bye to my lesbian ways, and prayed that I would start to be attracted to men. I honestly

thought it was that simple!

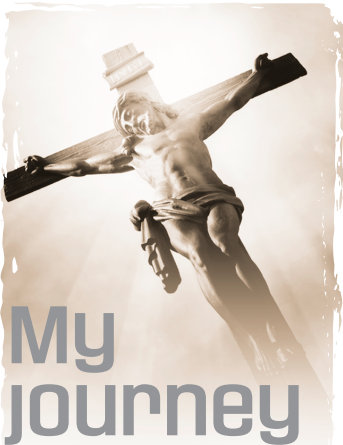
I did not know that the biggest obstacle to His work in me would be me. I did not know that the path to transformation would include uncovering wounds hidden deep in my heart, surrendering defenses, and letting go of vows I had clung to for years.

I did not know the path to healing would be so hard. At times I was tempted to give up hope. My journey was fraught with failure, rebellion and despair. But God was faithful when I was not. And more than

any miracle He has performed in my life, my gratitude rests mostly in the knowledge that He truly never will leave or forsake me. When my resolve failed, His remained true. Jesus knew who I could become, and he was willing to die for it—and essentially, he asked me to do no less.

Over time, I came to understand that my gender orientation was a symptom of a much deeper angst. I had grown up in such reaction to my unsafe and chaotic surroundings that I never felt safe to be myself. Fundamentally, my same-sex attraction was driven by this conflict. As a small child, I had learned it was not safe to be a girl, boys had it better, and that sexual intimacy was a myth.

Having been victimized by the men in her life, my mother encouraged these beliefs in me. Conflict, anger and abuse rendered my home an unsafe place, and I began to develop a tough well-defended exterior. I buried any hint of femininity for fear that I too would be victimized. But inside I was lonely, cut off from my true self. I hungered for someone or something to complete me.



My Journey was fraught with failure, rebellion and despair.

But God was faithful when I was not...

When my resolve failed, His remained true.

Jesus knew who I could become, and he was willing to die for it—and essentially, he asked me to do no less.



As I entered into puberty, my family life became extremely painful. At the age of 13, I left home for boarding school in the midst of my parent's divorce. Immediately, I found myself drawn into very intense relationships with women. In essence, I was searching for myself in them, while at the same time submerging personal pain in the emotional intensity of the lesbian bond.

I did not know why I was drawn to women. All I knew was I was only happy in the arms of a woman; without a lover, I was lost. When I heard the Gospel in college, I was between lovers—a vulnerable space in which I could sense my need for something more than a person could give.

I accepted Christ believing that it would be easy to quit falling in love with women. In simple faith, I believed that conversion alone would make all things right in my heart.

It was not long after I had chosen Christ that I realized I had a problem. While I knew I was supposed to like men, I still found myself running to the arms of women. I could not resist the pull of these feelings that drove me to seek out intense emotional attachments that often became physical. I needed help.

After five years of fruitless struggle, I enrolled in Living Waters. Through Living Waters, I came face to face with the roots of my same sex attraction. I began to understand the factors in my childhood that contributed to my inability to identify myself as a woman.

I learned to come before Jesus with my broken heart and let him minister to me. I learned the value of quickly confessing, quickly forgiving, and keeping

myself in the light. Most importantly, I learned what it meant to let Jesus name me and define who he made me to be.

When I finished Living Waters, I was not healed of homosexuality. But I was on the road to freedom. I continued to struggle for a long time as I gradually surrendered my longings and received my true identity from God. I stumbled and fell numerous times over the years as I slowly learned what it meant to be a woman of God.

Like many people, I dislike pain. But being real with Jesus requires that I be willing to face pain, both from the past and in the present. One of the greatest challenges for me has been to refuse the self-medicating, intoxicating distraction that intense entanglements provide and, together with Jesus, to face fully the pain of life. Discovering that His grace is sufficient for me in the midst of my pain and failure has been a lesson I have had to learn repeatedly.

I have found Jesus to be my all in all. It is in his embrace that I find my true self, relinquish my need to have things go my way, and yield unto his rest. The intimacy that has been formed over the years is so profound, and so precious to me; it truly is my life blood. For me, there is no safer home on earth.

As I have surrendered my fears, hungers, and wounds to Jesus, I have been transformed. Letting go of the fear of my own gender, and learning to embrace the gift my femininity has enabled me to relate to God and others with authenticity and confidence. The compulsive need to lose myself in relationship has been replaced by a God-given desire to connect with women as sisters in Christ—powered by our com-

mon desire to know Christ and be found in Him.

Today, same gender friendships are richer, more fulfilling—less intense but more empowering than ever.

Simultaneously, as I am more at ease with my femininity, there is a new empowering to engage with the opposite gender. My view of men has shifted from an intimidating menace to an intriguing mystery. I am drawn to this mystery by a desire to connect with the other. Instead of looking for completion of my fractured self, I find a kind of unity born out of confidence and comfort with my own difference.

For me this 'complementarity' has culminated in my marriage to an amazing loving man. My husband covers and protects me while not shielding me from my own pain. He is a man I can 'get behind' and support without losing my sense of self. He is so different from me, and I find myself delighting in that difference. Together we reflect the image of God more fully than we ever could have done individually.

The biggest surprise in walking into my true self is the joy that freedom has brought. This ongoing healing process is creating an intimacy with God that transforms me daily into more of my true self; out of that self, I am free to love others with a genuine, open heart.

Never in my wildest dreams could I have imagined this peace. As I reflect on the path down which Jesus led me, I am astounded at the fullness of life I now know, and I shudder when I consider how close I came to never knowing how good life could be. 🙏

The biggest surprise in walking into my true self is the joy that freedom has brought. This ongoing healing process is creating an intimacy with God that transforms me daily into more of my true self.

2 COR. 12:9

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Corporate Corner



BY ANNETTE COMISKEY

'Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert & streams in the wasteland.' **Isaiah 43:18-19**

I am writing this update having returned from Philadelphia where our second son, Nick was just married to a wonderful young woman, Meg Collins. Our eldest son, Greg, was married this past September to an equally wonderful young woman, Christina. These two weddings have brought such joy to our hearts. In the process of gaining two daughters we also gain wonderful friends in both of the girl's parents.

It is hard to express my gratitude that our two eldest sons have chosen Christian women from strong Christian families. Marriage is never easy; both marriages have two complete sets of parents cheering them on and praying for them from the sidelines.

To see Meg walk down the aisle, be "given" to Nick by her father, and to see both she and

Nick walk up to the altar is to see Genesis 2:24 lived out. Surrounded by family and friends, publicly vowing their commitment to God and life together, speaks of God's intent for marriage.

The two might become one, but the need for community and God's commitment to their union is the only way to have a strong marriage. I know of too many failed marriages to not know how hard it is to have a good marriage in this day and age.

I believe that the Kingdom and Culture insert "Compassion and Justice: Why We Stand for Justice in the Public Square" by Andrew is one of the most important articles he has written in the past few years.

It explains well why we believe that our standing for traditional marriage is very compatible

with our call to proclaim God's healing and mercy for the sexually broken.

Part of our commitment is to provide resources and tools to help troubled marriages. Beauty and the Breach has been a wonderful source of healing and strengthening for many couples. We felt we could expand and make it more effective. Andrew has recently revised the book and written a leader's guide with teaching tools and exercises for the participants. We are hoping to have the revised version released later this year.

We head into the summer ever grateful for your support, both through your financial gifts and prayers. Just as marriages need community so do we at Desert Stream—thank you for being that community. 🙏

2011
MID-YEAR REPORT

Publisher/Editor
Andrew Comiskey

Art Direction
Immanuel Communications

Desert Stream Ministries publishes the following:
 Newsletter (Spring and Fall)
 Mid-Year Report (Summer)
 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.

Staff

Executive Director
Andrew Comiskey

Desert Stream Press
Annette Comiskey

Living Waters USA Coordinator
Dean Greer

Director of Intercession
Ann Armstrong

Ministry Administrator
Lori Butler

Resources
Maite Rodriguez-Mora

Intern Staff
Jonathan Nobrega

No part of this Newsletter/Report may be reproduced or reprinted without permission.

Please address all inquiries to:

DESERT STREAM™
MINISTRIES

706 Main Street
Grandview, MO 64030
(816) 767-1730 Fax: (816) 767-7221



Naked Surrender By Andrew Comiskey available from Desert Stream Press!

"God cares about what goes on in the temple," Andrew writes. "He created the body and sexuality for holy purposes. His destiny for humanity involves our bodies!" What's more, God cares about you and your body, and He has healing for you through Jesus and through the body of Christ. This book will help you walk the path of wholeness and hope.

Available for \$13 plus Shipping & Handling

To order this and other resources visit

www.desertstream.org/shop

OR CALL 816-767-1730 EXT. 805