

## **NO LONGER ALONE – DAN HITZ**

*This is the story of Dan Hitz's deliverance from a life of homosexuality and desperate emptiness. The story of how God reached a lonely, broken man with the transforming power of Jesus Christ. Once in bondage, isolated and full of shame, Dan is now happily married, has five kids, and is full of hope. Dan is the executive director of Reconciliation Ministries of Michigan, a ministry dedicated to helping people struggling with sexual and relational issues.*



**As the youngest in a family of two boys and three girls, I remember feeling left out and isolated as I watched my brother and sisters get on the school bus.** At four years old, I didn't understand why I couldn't be a part of that group. I felt very alone. My father worked a lot of overtime to get out of the house and avoid my mother's bouts with mental illness that would occur at five-year intervals. When I was in high school, her illness progressed into paranoid schizophrenia. Though she was violent towards my father, she grew inappropriately affectionate towards me. The long process of my father committing my mother to a psychiatric hospital increased the feelings of hopelessness within me. When I testified at her mental competency hearing, she rose from the table and yelled, "You're not my son!" She left the room. I sat there numb.

My father was a good provider, but his emotional detachment left me longing for intimacy. My mother's behavior made me terrified of true intimacy with a woman. **I wanted so desperately to have friends, yet I was emotionally unable to step outside the walls I had built for protection.** The dark emptiness grew as I entered college. My sexual encounters were extremely limited because I was afraid of further rejection from potential partners who would see the scars from cystic acne on my back, arms, and face. I placed myself inside a world of homosexual fantasy, and tried to create the intimacy that I longed for through masturbation. My feelings of inadequacy and loss of control drew me into anorexic and eventually bulimic behavior. The Jesus that I had learned about, and even asked into my heart years earlier, had been assigned to the same category as false religions and useless beliefs.

My salvation came a year after I graduated from college. I was envious of a co-worker. He was everything that I wished I was – handsome, creative, and most of all well accepted by others. God seemed to do extra favors for him "just because he prayed and went to church". **One day he talked to me about Jesus.** The main thing that I remember him saying is that everyone will one day have to say "yes" or "no" to God. I didn't know what would happen to me if I said "no" to God, but I knew it would be very bad.

I began to learn what would happen to me if I said "yes" to God. The Lord instantly delivered me from bulimia as the emptiness inside began to be replaced by the love of my Heavenly Father. Unfortunately, my homosexual lusts did not instantly fall away. My feelings of inferiority remained as I struggled to feel like "one of the guys". At times I was comfortable with the new male friends the Lord provided; other times I was terrified that I would have a lustful thought toward a Christian brother. As I learned more about holiness the shame of my sinful heart deepened, and battles with condemnation came. There were seasons when I felt like a prisoner in my own body – so full of shame and fear that I was afraid to reach out to others.

Gradually, the Lord dealt with the woundings. **He began to show me that sex was not the ultimate issue, and that the lust was a symptom of holding onto the deep hurts.** One by one, He would call up the deep hurts within my heart, help me to confront them, and soothe them by His Spirit. I was able to forgive my mother for the pain she caused; and the Lord, Himself, for allowing it to happen. As my healing continued, I met a loving, caring woman who became my wife. The divorce of her parents when she was five and the detachment from her mother helped her to understand my feelings of rejection and inferiority.

As my journey progressed, the Lord began to show me that other sins I had been holding onto perpetuated the homosexual drawings I was trying to avoid. Homosexual lust was also a symptom of not glorifying God as God, and not allowing Him to make some difficult choices for my life. When I didn't accept what God chose for my life, I grew angry and resentful. I became envious of others who had what I wanted. That envy led to lust as I tried to fill up the hurt in my own broken way. Not only was my constant inferiority a sin, it caused me to be drawn to men who had the character traits that I wished I had. The Lord in His mercy took the sinful identity that I was holding onto, and replaced it with His pure, holy image. **Much like the Israelites who longed to return to the familiarity of Egypt, ex-homosexuals must resist the tendency to hold onto the "security" of their wounded identity.** The Lord helped me to lay aside the "security" of dwelling within my sinful past and learn my true identity as I embraced the image of Christ in me.

I thank the Lord for my first pastor who was an excellent source of support and encouragement in my journey and was instrumental for laying the foundation for my Christian walk, but he did not understand the intricacies of same sex attraction. After many years on the journey out, I still wrestled with residual issues which were not overcome simply by crying out to God for deliverance. When I met Tom Cole of Reconciliation Ministries, the Lord added a crucial ingredient in my healing – the Living Waters program and the Body of Christ. **I learned the importance of being open about my struggles with others who have been down the same path that I have walked, and who can share insights into Christ's cleansing power specific to my issues.** I also learned the importance of being open about my past with my family and friends who then accepted me for who I was – not who I pretended to be. I thank the Lord for the Living Waters program that has confirmed and expanded many of the precious truths the Lord has taught me in my journey out of homosexuality, and into His perfect plan for my life.

**I am thankful that the Lord has taken a wounded, broken man; and has transformed me into a new creation in Christ with a loving wife and five children.** The Lord has taken me out of the prison of loneliness and has given me a heart for the body of Christ and the lost. As a minister, I thank Him for a heart that longs to reach out and touch others with the healing message of the cross; and tell them of a heavenly Father who desires to give them the love they're crying for.

***Jesus Christ can set you free from the addictive power of sin.***

If you would like more information about Reconciliation Ministries, or any of the ministries we offer, visit us on the Web at [www.recmin.org](http://www.recmin.org), or call (586) 739-5114. You may also e-mail us at [info@recmin.org](mailto:info@recmin.org). **All correspondence will be kept strictly confidential.**

Reconciliation Ministries is an affiliate ministry of **Restored Hope Network ([www.restoredhopenetwork.org](http://www.restoredhopenetwork.org))**, and uses many of the programs written by **Desert Stream Ministries ([www.desertstream.org](http://www.desertstream.org))**.