



# "Let him who is without sin cast the First Stone"

And Jesus also said, "Go and sin no more." John 8

## I Keep Falling in Love with Him *Finding Freedom from Homosexuality*

**Aaron Girod**

As a young boy growing up, church was a huge part of my upbringing. My parents brought me up to love God and love His people, and I am so thankful for that heritage.

In the environment of the church, I always knew that God had a plan to use me, but as a young boy, I unfortunately had an attraction and curiosity towards men. When I went through puberty, this attraction became full blown lust. I knew that this was not accepted at all by my church, but I was at a crossroads. I couldn't understand why I had these attractions and lust which seemed to be so natural to me, yet I knew that the Word of God forbade homosexuality.



As a teenager, I would go to every meeting, every youth camp, anything that might bring "deliverance" to me, but to no avail. I began to think that something must be wrong with me and God must be mad at me because He sure wasn't freeing me of this problem. I decided I would just fake being close to God. I knew all the church catchphrases, and I knew how to act like a Christian. As I look back on this time in my life now, I see it as one of my darkest times. People would continuously comment about what a godly young man I was turning out to be. I'd smile, thank them for their kindness, and inside I'd be thinking, "I'm the farthest thing away from being 'godly'!"

Time went on, and I thought if I went to Bible college, God would have mercy on me and "heal" me. The counselor at my university immediately got me in touch with Stephen Black with First Stone Ministries. I began to feel like I was finally dealing with my problems.

While at college, I thrived. I was managing my sin by my own willpower. I still dealt with same sex attraction daily, but I had a real desire to serve the Lord, so I just decided I would just change by faith alone. I now know that I was only setting myself up for failure. I am not now, nor was I then, holy on my own. For the next four years, while completing college, I did my best to follow all the 'laws' of scripture. I began to be proud of the change I had made in my life, as if **my efforts** were pleasing to the Lord.

When I finished my degree, I had no idea what I would do next. I thought the next step was to enter ministry in some manner. I had been working with a church through college, but a position had not been offered to me, so I became disheartened. I thought, "Here I am working for You Lord, and nothing is happening for me." I became very discouraged, and that led to disdain towards the Lord. I'm not sure how long after college I started acting out in my lusts, but I did. I would go through this horrible cycle of acting out and then feeling conviction, and shame immediately afterwards. After every time, I'd vow to never do it again! I became a slave to this sin cycle. It owned me. I would pray and cry at church and ask the Lord to change me. It was always easier for me to assume that change wasn't happening because God didn't

### this issue

Testimony **P.1**

Remembering **P.4**

2016 Year-In-Review **P.5**

Staff **P.6**

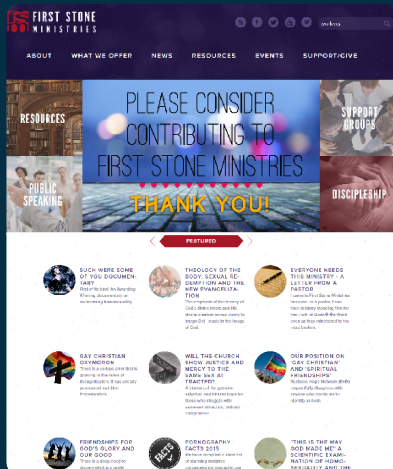
2017 RHN Conference **P.7**

Fundraiser Trio Special **P.7**

Upcoming Groups **P.7**

MLK Quote **P.8**

Check out our  
website; It's  
loaded with  
goodies!



*continued on page 2*

## THIS PUBLICATION

This publication is produced by First Stone Ministries (FSM). Since its founding in 1976, FSM has been an independent nondenominational, Christ-centered, para-church organization. We are a full-time ministry with ordained ministers and discipleship staff and are governed by a Board of Directors to ensure financial and ethical accountability.

We are a Restored Hope Network member ministry.



Our primary purpose is to lead the sexually and relationally broken into a liberating relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Discipleship and restoration in every area of one's life is stressed; however, there is detailed emphasis on overcoming all forms of sexual brokenness including homosexuality, sexual abuse and addiction to pornography.

## TO CONTACT

First Stone Ministries  
1330 N Classen Blvd Ste G80  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106-6856

[www.firststone.org](http://www.firststone.org)

405-236-4673 o

405-236-4672 f

[info@firststone.org](mailto:info@firststone.org)



[facebook.com/FirstStoneMinistries](https://facebook.com/FirstStoneMinistries)

*Continued from page 1*

want to do it, than to accept that change wasn't happening because I didn't want to take any steps to change. I had the illusion that one day God would step in and override my free will and change me. Never once did it dawn on me that, if I wanted to change, I had to have a real relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and not just a bunch of memorized catchphrases and clichés.

Time went on, and I couldn't understand why I couldn't find a church to work in, so I went out and found a job as a limousine driver. In the beginning, I felt like I was doing what I had to do to provide for myself but, in the back of my mind, I always had a chip on my shoulder because ministry had not happened for me. As time went on, this job took its toll on my body. I would stay out until all hours of the night. I was right in the middle of a huge party every night. One night, a friend introduced me to meth just to help keep me awake. Overnight I was hooked! Not only did meth help me stay awake, but I also noticed that I didn't deal with as much conviction while I was high.

During this time, I was working at a church with dear friends that I know love me to this day, but I just decided for once in my life to make myself happy. This is when I chose to fully separate myself from the ministry and God as well. I moved a guy into my apartment, and a few months later we became "partners." As long as I stayed high, I didn't have to worry about conviction as much. Still, God began calling His Word up out of me, and His Word kept constantly point me back towards Christ. A lot of people may not know this about me, but I can be stubborn from time to time. I wanted what I wanted, and didn't want to honor God's Word with my life.

A couple of years went by, and my partner and I decided to move to Duncan, OK. We made a trip back to Oklahoma City to get some of our stuff we were storing at a friend's house, and I decided to walk to the gas station to buy some cigarettes. As I walked across the busy 4-lane street, I was hit by a pickup and thrown 50-feet down the street. I was rushed to OU medical Center. I spent 5 days in ICU, and 18 more days in the hospital, and yet to this day I have no permanent injuries, although it was years of healing.

I believe that, even when I was running from God, He was chasing me. At any point, I could have chosen to follow Christ, but I still wanted my way. I had placed my partner on the throne of my heart, and believed that without him I couldn't be happy. However, God was moving in me in ways many cannot understand. Let me pause here and let my mother, Regina Girod, and Stephen Black tell you what they observed in the hospital.

I can truly say that the "deliverance" that I had been seeking when I was younger really happened in my life, but it didn't come easily or without cost. I had to give up some things that my flesh liked and had become quite accustomed to. It is still a daily choice to walk in my deliverance, but I resist the devil, the flesh and the world and embrace Jesus.

### **A Miracle Observed – The Holy Spirit Reveals Himself as Deliverer**

**Regina sharing:** *Aaron shared with you about his accident that became an unexpected turning-point in his life. I've been invited to share part of our story which took place during that time—a part of which Aaron has no memory.*

*Our son, Aaron, had been critically injured in an auto/pedestrian accident and was left with a traumatic brain injury. He was unable to put words together to form a sentence. One night while Aaron was comatose the Holy Spirit moved into the room as we were praying. There were 3 of us standing around Aaron's hospital bed praying: Stephen Black, my sister-in-law, Barbara, and myself. Suddenly, Aaron began singing (in perfect pitch and perfect speech) a song he knew from growing up in the church, "I keep falling in love with Him, over and over and over and over again. I keep falling in love with Him, over and over and over and over again. It gets sweeter and sweeter as the days go by. Oh, what a love between my Lord and I. I keep falling in love with Him, over and over and over and over again." The presence of the Holy Spirit filled the room. It was so thick that the air in the room felt heavy. It was such a beautiful time of worship. At that point we knew God would restore our son, both physically and spiritually.*

*continued on page 3*

**Stephen sharing:** *It is just as Regina shared. We had been praying, and asking God to intervene in Aaron's life. We were praying heavily in the Holy Spirit. All the sudden, Aaron began singing exactly as Regina described. I was totally awestruck by the power and presence of God as we worshipped and prayed. It was amazing. After Aaron stop singing, he went right back into his comatose state. I remember being in awe, and by the time I got to the parking lot, I was weeping like a baby as my understanding of God was really challenged. How could this be that the Holy Spirit would do this in Aaron knowing that he was living in sin and rebellion at the time? I was in absolute awe of the mercy of God to intervene and answer a mother and father's prayers! Aaron belonged to the Lord. Despite what I thought or believed, The Holy Spirit was saying, "I have Aaron!"*

**Regina sharing:** *Aaron had learned that song as a young boy in our church in Pauls Valley, OK where he had attended church all his life. He had learned about God from an early age. Even though he had strayed far from God, those things he had hidden in his heart were still there, and God was about to lovingly, mercifully, and yet very forcefully bring those things to the surface of Aaron's heart. He was never able to get away from what he knew to be the truth—that God is real, that He loved him, and that He had a good plan for His life. God's word is true. Every promise that my husband and I had claimed, and every prayer we had prayed relentlessly during those years Aaron was living in the world and doing anything he wanted to do, we have seen come to pass in our son's life. Stand in the gap for those you love, and you will see God's hand at work in their lives. God is faithful to answer our prayers according to His will. It is always God's will to bring our children into repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.*

#### **Aaron gets back to the rest of the story...**

Things didn't work out like we wanted, and my partner and I separated. I moved home to live at my parent's house. This was a huge blow to my ego and pride. I was a 33-year old man who was living with his parents. It was by the design of the Lord though. I immediately began to live in accountability because they saw me every day. I promised myself I'd never go through the pain of breaking up from a partner again, and to give Jesus Christ a try, just one more time.

I didn't want to become totally sold out or anything. I just wanted fire insurance. The Lord is so full of grace that He met me there.

It seemed that every message I heard—whether from my pastor or any other preacher—was directed straight at me. I felt like God was chasing me. I began to realize that Jesus has been pursuing me the whole time I had been running from Him.

The main reason I had run from the Lord was because of the enormous amount of guilt and shame that I was living with. I believed that my sin was so bad that the His Cross wasn't enough for me. One day, the Lord was dealing with me while I was showering. I heard His voice more clearly than I had ever heard it before. He said, "If you cannot put your faith in Me, you won't be saved."

I can show you where I was standing when I just decided to take God at His Word and believe. I felt all the guilt and shame lift from me. I decided then that I'd never live in my rebellion, guilt, and toxic shame again. It was gone! Sometimes it is a daily choice to believe that I am truly redeemed, but I will believe the report of the Lord. I press on into the high call of Jesus as my Lord!

Now that I had truly surrendered and really embraced His salvation, the Lord took me back to my history and the places of much needed healing that He had tried to walk me through while I was in college. The issues had not changed. I still had some hard, emotional and inner healing issues that, in times past, I had chosen to run from rather than to deal with my pain. So, I just decided that this was something I was going to have to do, and I did! I can truly say that the "deliverance" that I had been seeking when I was younger really happened in my life, but it didn't come easily or without cost. I had to give up some things that my flesh liked and had become quite accustomed to. It is still a daily choice to walk in my deliverance, but I resist the devil, the flesh and the world and embrace Jesus.

I began meeting with Stephen Black again, and 13 years later, he was still asking me to go through Living Waters. I thought, "Why not?" Living Waters began to show me the inner turmoil and unresolved issues needing Jesus' touch. Week after week, just like an onion, layer after layer was peeled off. I immediately began to deal with my heart issues and started seeing victory in my life. I began as a participant in 2015, and I am so thankful that I did. Jesus met me and has made it possible to overcome sin ever since. I know I want to serve others, so they can receive the same comfort that I received from Jesus Christ.



# CovenantEyes.com

Internet Accountability and Filtering

first month free! use promocode: firststone

PC & Mac  
versions



# Remembering...



## REMEMBERING **LEZLIE BROWN**

We will miss Lezlie Brown, (March 25, 1955 - September 27, 2016) former Co-director, Administrator and Women's counselor of First Stone Ministries, (from 1991-1994). Our dear and precious friend Lezlie fought a long battle with Multiple Myeloma Leukemia. Lezlie was comforter of those afflicted, and she brought godly counsel to many who suffered with sexual abuse and confusion. We celebrated Lezlie's life with a memorial service on December 27, 2016 which Stephen Black officiated. We focused on the beauty of Lezlie's life and on the reality heaven. The message was about the joy of heaven that waits for all those who love Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives. It is wonderful to know that Lezlie loved Jesus and is in heaven awaiting our arrival. For a detailed obituary go to [www.legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com) and search for Lezlie's name.



## REMEMBERING **FRANK WORTHEN**

We already miss our dear friend Frank. (February 24, 1929 - February 11, 2017) Frank was 87 years old at his passing. Stephen Black says, "I will always remember my friend Frank as the man who rallied me to gather the 'Truth Squad!' He was a dear encouragement to me in the passing of my own daughter in the midst of the Exodus debacle and later implosion. I will never forget the many hours on the phone crying and praying together over a group of people who hijacked Exodus into heresy." Frank was considered the true stable founder of Exodus and one of the founders of the new network, Restored Hope. "I will forever be grateful for his encouragement in bringing together the founders of RHN, Frank's 'Truth Squad.'" Our friend David Kyle Foster said it well, "A great man has gone to God's great reward. Frank Worthen, who is considered to be the father of the ex-gay movement, went to be with his greatest love, Jesus Christ." Frank is remembered in saying, *"Homosexuality is a misguided search for love and affirmation in sexual behavior that is contrary to nature."* Until the very end of his life, despite his many hateful detractors, Frank said, *"male homosexuality is best understood as a father replacement search – hungering for a father's love."* He is right! Frank's Memorial Service was held on Saturday, March 25 in San Rafael, CA at the church where most of Frank's ministry began, "Church of the Open Door."



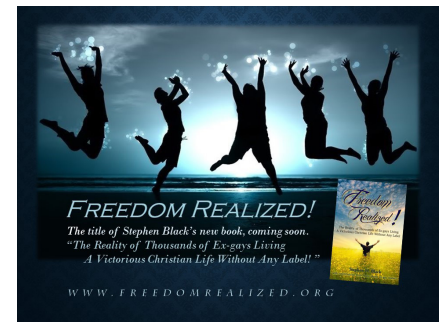
## REMEMBERING **JOSEPH NICOLOSI**

Another leader in the world of ex-gay ministry, clinical psychologist and godly advocate for reparative therapy has also passed away. Our friend Joseph Nicolosi was 70 years old at his passing this past March 8, 2017. He was born January 24, 1947. Linda, Joe's wife says it best: "Joe was certainly a larger-than-life, one-of-a-kind guy. He never worried about political correctness; he was happy to swim against the cultural tide when he was sure the culture was going in the wrong direction. That got him into trouble quite a few times. Gay-activist websites, for example, are still fond of quoting the occasional risqué jokes he made during his life in the public eye, and of showing and re-showing him tossing a mic back at a rude TV interviewer, but Joe had ardent convictions about the truth of male and female design, and because of his conviction and courage, his awareness that he would face biased reporters didn't stop him from appearing on many cable and network news and talk shows." Joseph Nicolosi will be remembered as the father of freedom in helping us understand the development and causalities of male homosexuality. He helped thousands to freedom from a life of homosexual chaos. We are eternally grateful for his work.

# 2016 Year-In-Review

## JANUARY

- Began "Freedom Realized" book project - Oklahoma City, OK
- Stephen spoke at Abundant Grace Community Church's Men's Retreat and Sunday Service - Gainesville, FL
- Week-Long FSM Planning and Vision Casting - Oklahoma City, OK



## FEBRUARY

- FSM participated in "Secular or Sacred" student conference day at Christian Heritage Academy - Midwest City, OK
- Stephen & Robin attended and spoke at the national International Ministerial Fellowship conference - Orlando, FL

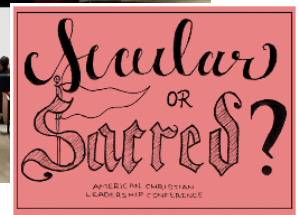


## MARCH

- Stephen spoke and testified at Christian Heritage Academy Chapel - Midwest City, OK

## APRIL

- Stephen spoke at men's prayer breakfast at The Bridge Church - Mustang, OK
- Laura Leigh and Marci host FSM table and attended the Oklahoma Assemblies of God General Conference - Oklahoma City, OK
- Stephen & Joseph spoke at Men's Rewired Conference at Falls Creek - Davis, OK



## MAY

- Annual closing banquet of Living Waters. Sixteen participants finished the program.
- Laura Leigh taught at the Women's Counseling Group on Breaking Free from the Spirit of Death and Despair - Oklahoma City, OK



## JUNE

- Stephen & Laura Leigh played crucial roles in the wedding of long-term participants of FSM - Kansas
- Stephen, Joseph and Laura Leigh attended the national Restored Hope Network conference in Orland Park, IL a suburb of Chicago. Stephen spoke on the Freedom Realized Project revealing first 10 years of the FSM Effectiveness Survey.

(Youtube video: <http://tinyurl.com/rhn-FR-2016>)



## JULY

- Stephen, Laura Leigh and Marci served on the national Living Waters training team - Kansas City, MO
- Joseph shared his testimony at an area Hope Gathering conference put on by Help 4 Families - Fort Worth, TX



*continued on page 6*



# 2016 Year-In-Review (cont.)

## AUGUST

- Provided 1st day of our local Living Waters team training - Oklahoma City, OK

## SEPTEMBER

- Provided 2nd day of our local Living Waters team training - Oklahoma City, OK
- Stephen hosted RHN table at the American Association of Christian Counselors national conference - Dallas, TX
- Local Annual Living Waters program begins - Oklahoma City, OK



FSM Volunteer Leadership

## OCTOBER

- Stephen spoke at the Exchange Truth Ministries, Two Loves conference - San Diego, CA
- FSM celebrates 40 years of ministry with a Fundraiser Banquet - Oklahoma City, OK



## NOVEMBER

- FSM hosts "How Do You Like Me Now?" documentary screening - Oklahoma City, OK

## DECEMBER

- Annual Christmas Party - Oklahoma City, OK



## Staff



L-R: Stephen Black, Laura Leigh Stanlake, Joseph Thiessen, Verla-Marie Hull and Jim Farrington.

**Stephen Black** .....stephen@firststone.org  
Executive Director

**Joseph Thiessen** .....joseph@firststone.org  
Office Administrator

**Laura Leigh Stanlake** .....laura@firststone.org  
Director of Women's Ministries

**Verla-Marie Hull** .....verlamarie@firststone.org  
Minister of Intercession

**Jim Farrington** .....jim@firststone.org  
Intern



Restored Hope Network™ presents

# HOPE2017

San Diego, CA

## Register Now

"And Such Were Some of You"

JUNE 16&17

<https://hope2017.eventbrite.com>



The Healing Art \$30



Healing Tee \$20



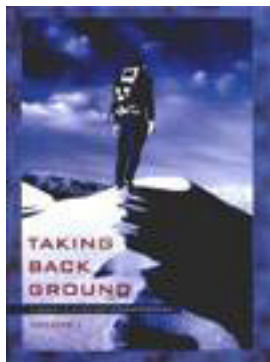
40-Year Mug \$10

## FUNDRAISER

TRIO

Trio Special \$50 [fsm-marketplace.myshopify.com](http://fsm-marketplace.myshopify.com)

## Support Groups



Our **Parents, Family & Friends** group meets each month on the 1st and 3rd Friday from 7-9:30pm, except for holidays and any conflicting FSM events. If you have someone in your family or friendship circle and need support from other biblically-grounded people, we encourage you to apply for admission to this group.

**2017 Summer Group** will be going through Portland Fellowship's *Taking Back Ground* curriculum. Group begins June 29th and runs through September 14th. \$75 program fee covers materials and closing meal. Application Required.

For information and application on any of our groups, please visit <http://www.firststone.org/support-groups>





40 YEARS!  
#FSM40YRS

1330 N Classen Blvd Ste G80  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106-6856

[www.firststone.org](http://www.firststone.org)

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK  
PERMIT NO. 2616

Address Service Requested



“Cowardice asks the question, ‘Is it safe?’  
Expediency asks the question, ‘Is it politic?’  
Vanity asks the question, ‘Is it popular?’  
But conscience ask the question,  
*‘Is it right?’*

And there comes a time when one must  
take a position that is neither safe, nor  
politically correct, nor popular – **but one  
must take it because it’s right!”**

– Martin Luther King Jr.