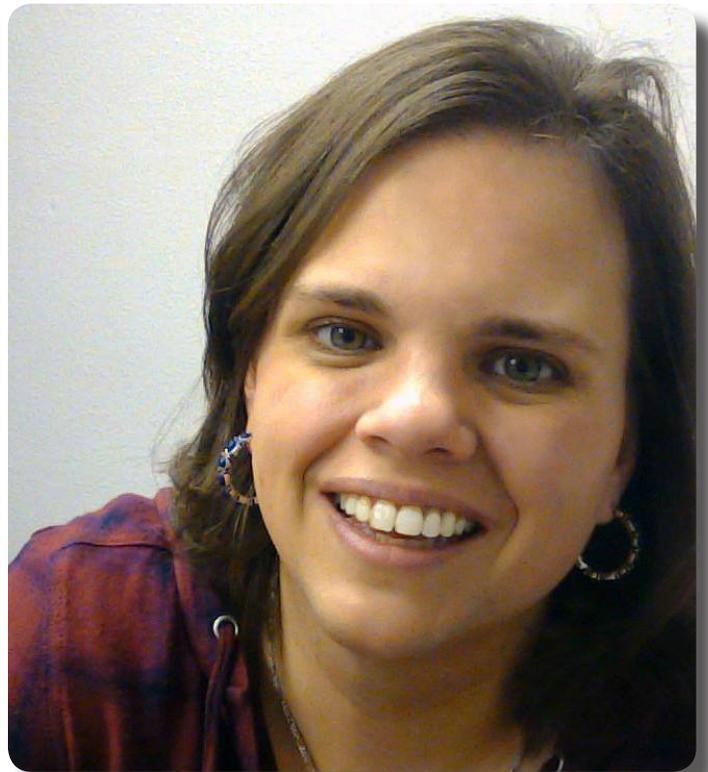


From Transgender to Transformed in Jesus

Laura Perry

My story is an unlikely one, not because of tragic circumstances but because I was like a stubborn mule with its heels dug into the mud, bound and determined not to serve God or to bend to His will. I was hellbent on going my own way and to live the opposite of the way I had been raised. I was placed in what seemed to be the perfect environment for a little girl to grow up in and know the Lord. To say we were involved in the church was an understatement: life in my family was all about church. We had to be involved in every activity that was offered on every day the door was open.

But bitterness was brewing beneath the shiny religious exterior. My poor mother who loved us with all of her heart was working herself into an early grave. She was trying to be the “super Christian”. However, the stress was no longer just bubbling at the surface, but boiling over like lava after an eruption. Her and I began to be clash on a regular basis. As she became more exhausted, I became more of a nuisance. I would try to hug her at times and she would shrug me off and tell me she was too tired. I was constantly told I was annoying. The problem was, I couldn’t understand that it was my behavior that was annoying, I thought there was something wrong with me. My brother, on the other hand, who was quiet and obedient would garner completely opposite reactions from her resulting my intense jealousy of him. On the other hand, I had a wonderful relationship with my Dad and my brother: I was Daddy’s little angel. My mom and my sister rarely wanted to be around me. I began to develop a warped hatred of my own gender. I began to see that boys were loved and in return were loving. This was warped even further when I was molested at the age of eight by a boy who was only nine. I became hyper-sexualized and began seeking out sexual experiences. I was often trying to coerce friends into trying various sexual acts. I



began to fantasize about being a boy, making up stories about being a boy every night. I would replay the same stories in my head over and over.

As a teen my female body began to develop but not function properly. My mother became obsessed with fixing it. My resentment of her had turned into loathing. I became increasingly sexualized. This loathing of my mother was turning into a hatred of God for making me a girl. So, I told God when I was sixteen that I would never serve Him again. I purposed in my heart to do everything I was ever told not to do. Over the next year I became a completely different person. It is only by the grace of God I didn’t end up in a Satanic cult.

Now in college, my sexual desires were spiraling out of control. I was hooked on pornography and began meeting strangers online for casual encounters. I kept chasing these sexual highs like a drug. The fantasies of being a boy consumed me. I had grown to hate women over the years. I wanted to be a man, and live in a world entirely of men. I found a local support group for transgenders. I was so elated to find this new-found freedom to “be who I was”. They told me how wonderful and brave I was and that after a year or so of hormones no one would ever know I was a girl. I couldn’t wait to erase my old identity. So, in November

of 2007 I completely upended my wardrobe, cut my hair, and began demanding everyone refer to me as “Jake”. I began taking massive doses of testosterone and after a couple of years of the hormones I was indeed looking masculine. My voice was lower, I was growing facial hair and my weight was even shifting slightly so that my body looked more male. I eventually met a man who was living as a woman, and we bonded over our transgender plight. Although I had no attraction to women, I detested the idea of being a gay man. I wanted to be a normal, heterosexual man. We fell in love and moved in together with the promise of a happier life together as a normal, heterosexual couple, both living as the gender opposite of what we were born. I had my name legally changed and in 2009 I had a double mastectomy. This was eventually followed by surgeries to remove all female organs. Although this was everything I had ever hoped for and was exciting at first, it left me in a deep depression following the chest surgery because I had nothing else to live for. I had my legal name and gender as male, but I was no more satisfied than before. I was glad to be rid of the cumbersome breasts I had despised so much, but I was no more male than before. The outward cosmetic change had done nothing to ease my identity crisis.

After several years of living as transgender, I knew I could never be a man, no matter how desperately I wanted it: it was all a lie. Over the next few years I became more and more disillusioned with living as transgender. I in no way wanted to be a girl, but I was sick of the hormone injections, the prosthetics that were such a pain, and the constant hiding and covering of my lies. What had been promised to be complete freedom in being transgender had become my prison cell. I was confined to the chains of this identity and was constantly looking over my shoulder, so afraid of being found out.

Then, God intervened. He had been drawing me for years, but I hadn’t noticed. My mom, who had fallen apart the night I came out as transgender, had fallen on her face before the Lord and completely surrendered control of her life and gave herself whole-heartedly to Jesus. What she had tried to do for forty years in the flesh, she now asked Him to do in her through the power of the Holy Spirit. I was about to be a witness to a miracle. She asked me to make a website for a Bible study she had been teaching. As I began to read her lesson notes, my curiosity was peaked. What I had always seen as God’s battering ram of rules was now coming to life as a beautiful story of a loving savior, revealed over and over in the Old Testament. So the mom I never wanted to talk to again, now became someone I couldn’t wait to talk to and I began calling her every day after work

to ask questions about her lessons. For the first time in my life, I began to see real faith in my mom. She was no longer the stressed out, pharisaical legalist, she was loving and patient and full of faith. This was not the mom I had always known: she was changed, and I had to know why. As she shared her journey of faith with me and how the Lord had changed her, I wanted what she had.

In the sincerity of my heart one night, I truly repented of my sins and gave my heart to Jesus. But I wanted to be a man of God. But God began to speak truth into my life through Dr. Everett Piper on the radio. At first, he and the host would discuss various political issues. But after months of my being a fan of his show, he began to talk about the rising transgender phenomenon. I remember thinking “Oh, I wish he wouldn’t talk about that...”. But I had been a fan for too long to get mad over that, so I just looked forward to the next week’s program when the topic would change. To my horror, it didn’t. Nor the next week. And slowly, the walls around my heart began to crack and I began to listen to what he was saying. I remember him saying that we are not just the sum total of our feelings, inclinations, and instincts. We are made in the image of God, and we can choose our behavior. I didn’t want to hear it, but I knew it was the truth.

I began to really wrestle with being transgender. I didn’t want to be transgender anymore, but I couldn’t stand the thought of being a girl. One night Jesus asked me, “If you stood before me tonight, what name would I call?” I didn’t know how to answer that. I knew that God would have known who I was no matter what name I called myself. But the question haunted me. I thought, “what if Jesus calls my name and I don’t realize he’s talking to me?” I had been learning enough of the Bible to know that Jesus was my creator and I couldn’t claim to love Him and yet define myself as something other than what He created. So, I told Him I was willing to leave the transgender life, but I didn’t know how. I was living in full stealth: no one except my partner and family knew I was really a girl. For a couple of more months, I wrestled with heavy conviction. I felt like I had fallen into a deep, dark pit that I couldn’t get out of. I begged God to take my life. I could barely work and I wasn’t eating or sleeping much. I felt like I was at sea in a violent storm, tossed about, moments from capsizing and going under. Then, much like the night Jesus calmed the storm with His disciples in the boat, He calmed the fear in me. I had a clear vision of Him kneeling down on one knee, reaching His hand into that deep, dark pit and asking me “do you trust me?” I knew He was asking me to leave it all behind, to walk away

from this identity I had known for nearly a decade; to leave my partner and everything I had known or loved for most of my adult life. But I said that I did, and I took His hand. I walked away from my male identity, my partner, my job, and my entire life to follow Jesus. It was the hardest thing I have ever done. I did not feel like a girl, and I didn't want to be a girl. For three days I sobbed and grieved with more pain and sorrow than I have ever felt before, I felt like I was dying: and I was; I was dying to my old life, to my flesh, to the identity I had created and believed in for so long. But the next morning, Jesus was about to show the world a resurrection from the dead. I went with my mom to her Bible study and I was surrounded by nearly a hundred women who were so filled with love and compassion and joy at seeing their prayers answered. I had never experienced this kind of love before: they loved me with a love deeper than I had ever had from a sexual partner.

In that moment, my heart was radically transformed. The veil was finally completely lifted and ripped off and I saw clearly for the first time in my life. All of those desires and feelings were washed away. I won't say I've never since wished to be male: those thoughts have crossed my mind at times, but I have never once since believed I was male, or that I was supposed to be male, or desired to be transgender. My eyes have been opened to the truth and I live in a radical pursuit of holiness and living for the Lord Jesus, no matter what my feelings or inclinations might be. And for the first time in my life I have found true freedom in trusting Jesus and found my true identity in Him and in who He created me to be. Pornography, sex, and transgenderism only led to lies, bondage, and depression. Jesus has breathed life into these dead bones and they have risen from the grave.



1330 N Classen Blvd Ste G80 , Oklahoma City, OK 73106
 info@firststone.org | www.firststone.org
 405.236.4673



"Let him who is without sin cast the First Stone." John 8:7

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