

A Life Redeemed

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There are many reasons I think that God has a sense of humor—His sense of irony is one of them. For example, who would have guessed as I argued in my university English class in favor of abortion and the compatibility of Christianity and homosexuality, that I would become the woman I am today?

Back in those university days, I excelled at several things, one of which was logic, but that didn't necessarily mean my life bore the fruit of logic. In fact, that first year at university, my life was full of confusion.

I had known for a long time that I had a strong romantic attraction for girls, though I tried to cover it up by dating men. It was during my dramatic college freshman year that I finally conceded I was definitely gay. It was an exciting admission at the time to be able to identify myself by my long repressed struggles. The question now became: Would I be able to find that perfect woman?

I also discovered I was attracted to a particular third-year student. "Is she the one?" I wondered. As I began to imagine life with her, I also considered what would happen if we were separated by death or tragedy or betrayal. I've been known to look ahead, but this time I was looking quite far ahead. In my imagination, I saw my future self alone at some point, devastated and empty. Then one night as I looked up at the night sky and considered the permanence of the stars that have and will exist for numberless centuries, I asked myself, "Is there something more in life?"

That question was unexpectedly answered in my next year at university, though not by my college classes. I should preface this by saying that as a young woman embracing a gay identity and yearning for future relationships, I had come to see the idea of the Christian God as more of a difficulty than a help, so in my pursuit of my new gay identity, I had discarded my wobbly (and uninformed) concept of God and the Bible.

In the fall semester, I began having dreams in which Jesus appeared. I confided these dreams to my friend, who happened to be Jewish, and she wondered what the dreams could mean. Then, one day at a gay meeting on campus, a thought spoke to me—"You will not find the love you are looking for here."

I was shocked by this thought. Not find the love I was seeking in the gay community with a woman to spend the rest of my days? I somehow knew this other voice told me the truth. It was as if light pierced through heaven to my soul. I left that meeting experiencing grief.

But this new thought did not mean that I was ready to embrace Christianity. In fact, I hoped it would not be Christianity as I still hoped to find the right partner. I knew enough from reading the Bible that the Christian God did not approve of homosexual relationships. But if God was the Christian God, I asked him to answer this request—to connect me with a woman who dealt with homosexuality in her own life, had short brown hair, was athletic and kind.

Within weeks I had forgotten my list and conversation with God. Just then an upperclassman in my accounting class stood out to me as being very kind to a punk rock girl. She also had short brown hair and an athletic build. Very soon our paths inexplicably crossed again and again, and finally we ended up studying together, with me falling “head over heels” for her. She explained to me that while she understood my struggle personally, Jesus was her “husband.” This made no sense to me. Oh no, Jesus again... I thought to myself. I did not realize until later that she was an answer to my previous prayer.

At the same time, I decided to ask all my friends and dorm mates what Jesus said about himself. They were not able answer my questions. So, I asked at a campus Christian ministry booth and was soon enrolled in their “Evangelism Training” course off campus. When attending the classes, I pretended to fit in.

On the final night of the course, God revealed Himself to me in an amazing way as a Person with great authority and kindness. He showed me that He was weaving in and out of the with the other students' prayers and that He was not in my space. Now I knew God existed, and that He wasn't in my life. He was revealed Himself to be the Christian God—and so I was still faced with the tug-of-war between my same-sex desires and this new reality.

Afterwards, I spoke with the campus pastor and told him about my experience. He shared with me how to receive Christ into my life. He also confirmed that homosexuality and Christianity were incompatible. As he shared with me from the Scriptures, I knew what he was saying was true. I also know that God was real, and He wanted a relationship with me through Jesus.

I quickly knew I would trade everything—even the hope of having a female life partner—for this One to be in my life. For this reason, Matthew 13:44 has been such a joy to me: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all he has and buys that field.”

Over time my life became filled with rich adventure and healthy sister relationships with other women. Yes, struggles too—initially daily battles with my own errant desires. Victory came as I surrendered my hurts, wounds, and wrong perceptions to God. It became a process of exchanging the lies I had believed for the truth of what God says. I also began to confront the demons of my past: molestation at the age of four and the resultant perception that men were generally dangerous and not trustworthy. I began to trust God to be my defense, which softened my heart and my mind as a woman.

Over the years, I had help from Christian ministries that walked alongside me and encouraged me. I learned that homosexual struggle can be based on wounds of the past. As I surrendered my wounds, I began to experience greater freedom from the source of my heart's pain and as a result, the grip of same-sex attraction struggle lessened. I found hope and freedom as I moved along this path, including the freedom to choose how to respond rightly to temptation. Surprising to me, I found freedom to enjoy being a woman. New possibilities emerged that I never thought would happen, romantic attraction to a particular man, then marriage, and a family. God is indeed able to finish the work He began in me. He is both able and willing to align me with His great plans that are rich, right, and full of unadulterated beauty.

I have also found that Jesus, my intimate companion, will never leave or forsake me. I've faced many challenges along the way, including intimate betrayal and subsequent divorce. Through it all, I've sensed God's nearness, care, and delight in me. Since embarking on this journey, I've been able to share the hope that is mine in Christ Jesus with many hurting people whom God loves.

Because of God's kindness, I'm able to thrive despite life's ups and downs and continue to share my hope with others. I can say that trading my ways for His ways was the best trade I have ever made.

"I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" (Song of Solomon 6:3).

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