

From Shattered Dreams to Answered Prayers: A Wife's Story of Hope

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We had dated for five years and were married another five years before expecting our first child—life couldn't be any more perfect. Then one day in November of 1990, my world came crashing down.

My husband, Jim, had been working out of town for about five months and had been coming home every week. His behavior, however, had changed. We had been high school sweethearts and best friends for many years, but now it seemed that we had trouble even talking to one another. It was like a wall had gone up between us. Jim had become so distant—so withdrawn. I was extremely concerned by his behavior and confronted him—thinking that he was involved with another woman. Through his tears, he finally told me that it was not another woman, but a man that he had become involved with. At first, I was actually relieved to learn that it wasn't a woman, but then I realized that this was a whole other gender—I didn't have a clue how to deal with this!

Jim went on to tell me that he had experienced same sex attractions as long as he could remember. He told me that he had prayed countless prayers, fasted innumerable meals, and begged God to change him. Why hadn't God "fixed" him?

Jim and I had met at youth camp and had quickly become very close to one another. I remember very early in our relationship believing that God had brought us together to one day be man and wife. As teens, we had spent five years together on a Bible Quiz team and between us could quote a large portion of the New Testament. It didn't make sense for us to be going through such devastation. Jim knew what the Bible said about homosexuality—he could quote it chapter and verse—but he had believed the lie that if God hadn't changed him, maybe God had made him that way. He had decided to stop fighting it and just accept it.

I felt completely betrayed, as though my entire life had been based on a lie. Had I not been a good enough wife? What kind of a woman was I that my husband could leave me for another man? I went through a period of intense grief and emotional trauma like I never thought possible. I experienced physical pain as a result of the intensity of the emotional trauma. Looking back, I believe God protected me from finding out about Jim's struggle earlier in my pregnancy in order to prevent a possible miscarriage. As it was, I really didn't want to live. I desperately wanted the pain to stop.

The day our son was born was one of the happiest days of my life. I could no longer consider only myself and my needs—my son needed me, and I was committed to care for him no matter what.

I began to draw on the faith that had been instilled in me as a little child as I never had before. God began to bring people into my life to build hope in me and help me to understand what Jim was dealing with. God also used these people to rebuild my self-esteem, which had been shattered by Jim's leaving. God also helped me to see that I had put so much confidence in Jim that I had depended on him for my spirituality. I began to realize that I had to depend on God solely for everything. God was to become my husband, my counselor, my provider, and my best friend. He knew the things that I had need of—the things my son needed—and he provided for us in ways that were nothing short of miraculous.

We separated, and Jim eventually became involved in a committed long-term gay relationship. We divorced after months of battling over visitation rights. It was a very difficult situation. On one hand, as a Christian mother, I knew my God-given responsibility was to protect my child. However, I also knew that Jim was his father and he loved our son very much. We had wanted to have a baby so desperately. It was so unfair for the situation to turn out as it had. I questioned God for allowing me to become pregnant. After all, my Christian upbringing had not prepared me for life as a single mother. I had envisioned the perfect Christian marriage where we would raise our children to love God and serve him with all of their hearts. To say that I was disappointed was such a major understatement. I realize now that had it not been for our son, Jim and I would have had no reason to stay in contact with one another. Our son was a part of God's plan to reveal His "Father heart" to Jim.

Over the course of time, Jim and I were able to work through our anger and bitterness toward one another and develop a friendship for our son's sake. Nevertheless, it still took me quite by surprise when I received a call from Jim in November 1996. He had received a phone call from our former youth pastor inviting us to a homecoming at our home church in Missouri. We had not spent much time together since our divorce, but now we were planning a long car trip together with our six-year-old son. I didn't know what God was up to, but I had a strong sense that something very big was getting ready to happen. It was a good opportunity for us to talk about what had happened. I told Jim that I had never stopped praying for Him, that no matter what, I was deeply concerned for his spiritual wellbeing. Jim told me that no one wanted God to heal him more than he did—not even me. On our way back home, we stopped to attend service with some dear friends. That night, God welcomed Jim back into His loving embrace and washed away years of guilt and shame.

A little over a month later we remarried. It was a wonderful time of celebrating what God had done, and it was a reminder of His promise to never leave us nor forsake us. Little did we know that this was really only the beginning. God had begun a work in us, and He would be faithful to complete it, but sometimes even the healing process is painful. We still had so much to learn about how Jim had gotten into this situation, and what we would need to understand to protect him from falling into sin again.

In His loving providence God had provided a ministry, which would help Jim learn the roots of homosexuality, how to break the hold that this sin had over his life, and how to walk in complete freedom. As Jim learned what had caused him to have same sex attractions, and as God revealed to him the depth of His love for him as a Father, the attractions that Jim had began to subside. It wasn't an overnight change, but God proved Himself faithful.

Six months after we were remarried, we learned that we were expecting our second child. We were thrilled to learn that it was a little girl. After we had named her, we learned that one of the meanings of her name was "something beautiful created from something that was bound and then cut away". What a beautiful description of what God has done in our lives! Another meaning of her name is "full of praise" —which she definitely is. She truly has a beautiful spirit that is full of worship for the Lord.

When God brought our marriage back together and healed the hurts that sin had brought into our lives, we knew that one day God would use our experiences to minister hope to others in desperate situations. After working with "First Stone Ministries" of Oklahoma City for several years, God instructed us that it was time to move. God was going to move us back to our home of St. Louis to establish a ministry there. We sought God's direction, vowing to follow Him through every open door. Pure Heart Ministries was established in May of 2002 and has been such a testimony of God's provision. God has given us much favor in relating to people of various backgrounds.

We have had the privilege to minister to many people and we have been able to provide them with a new level of hope. Our desire is to lead people into an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ where they can find true freedom from ANY struggle or area of bondage. JESUS is our only hope! He is more than able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ever ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

What are you believing God for?