

Such Were Some of You

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From my earliest memory I wanted to be a boy instead of a girl. Somehow I just knew that if I had male genitalia, my life would be complete. I prayed repeatedly for God to make me into a boy and became obsessed with my pursuit. I was a tomboy in every sense of the word and was often mistaken for a boy, which always made my day.

In the fourth grade, I learned about sex reassignment surgeries and vowed I would have the operation and change my name to David as soon as I was old enough and had the money. About the same time, I was exposed to pornography, which developed into sexual addictions that would span the next twenty-plus years.

In junior high, when all the other girls were interested in makeup and boys, I was lamenting that my voice wasn't changing or my body developing into a man. And then, to my surprise, I found myself attracted to women—especially older teachers who were strong yet nurturing. I desperately wanted to be held and comforted by a woman, which then developed into sexual fantasies. I was horrified by my attractions, but I dared not tell anyone.

Around seventh grade, I started to consider the logistical difficulties of having sex reassignment surgery. Where would I get the money? How would I tell my family? You can't just be Linda one day and David the next. I considered running away to have the surgery without ever telling my family, but I loved my family, and I knew that would devastate them. I made a conscious decision at that point to try and conform to society's expectation of me to look more like a girl in order to fit in. But inside, I still longed deeply to be a man, and the attractions to women became increasingly difficult to resist.

I became a Christian during my junior year in high school, but within days, I began doubting my salvation experience because my struggles didn't go away like I thought they would. I tried to conform and even wore dresses on special occasions, but inside it always felt like I was wearing a costume, like dressing in drag.

In college, I got involved with a campus ministry and developed a deeper relationship with God, praying and reading my Bible regularly, even sharing Christ with the lost. I eventually became a student leader despite the fact that I still longed to be a man, was deeply attracted to every woman who mentored me, and was enslaved to sexual addictions behind closed

doors. I prayed privately for God to please take my transgender desires and same-sex attractions away, hoping no one would ever know.

My senior year in college, I heard a sermon about overcoming habitual sin. The speaker quoted James 5:16, “Confess your sins one to another and pray for each other so that you may be healed,” stressing how important it is to get sin in the light in order to be free. I was deeply convicted and knew I had to confess my secret to my campus pastor if I was ever to experience freedom.

It took all the courage in the world to finally tell my campus pastor my lifelong secret. In fact, I seriously considered suicide as a way out but did not follow through. I expected my pastor to react with shock, horror, or condemnation because I was a leader in the ministry living a double life. But instead, he responded in love, assuring me that he was committed to finding me the help I needed. I walked away from that conversation with a fresh revelation of God’s grace. I had always felt God hated me and condemned me for my sin. My campus pastor’s reaction was a living illustration of the Father’s heart toward me. For the first time, I discovered that being completely transparent with another person was very healing. That day in 1994 was my first step in what would be an eleven-year journey towards freedom.

The next decade was full of ups and downs as I sought freedom. I read every book I could find on homosexuality, listened to tapes, attended conferences, and met with multiple counselors. It was a slow process, as there were not a multitude of resources at that time to help women struggling with transgender issues. In fact, well-meaning Christian counselors told me they had seen homosexuals and lesbians set free but never anyone transgender, so I should do my best to cope in this life and know that I will be totally free in heaven. Despite their discouragement, the Lord gave me assurance He would set me free and that the transgender issues would be a thing of the past. Nevertheless, I thirsted so deeply for maternal nurture, I seemed to get worse before I got better, falling into sexual immorality with another woman from my church. I eventually repented and broke off that relationship, realizing my fantasy of being a man who slept with women would never fill the deep void in my soul. By God’s grace, I resolved to tug at the hem of His garment and not let go until I experienced the freedom Jesus died to give me.

As I continued to pursue freedom, the Lord put a spiritual mother in my life who was only a few years older than I but spiritually more mature. I was deeply attracted to her, yet she wasn’t phased by my struggles and began to invest in me relationally in a wholesome way. I found myself wanting to be just like her (much like a daughter might want to emulate her mother), so she helped me buy more feminine clothes and gave me advice concerning

makeup and mannerisms. My outward appearance began to change, but inwardly, I still believed the lie that it was better to be a man, and I was still battling attractions to women.

In the fall of 2005, the Lord led me to a prayer counselor experienced in helping those dealing with sexual issues. Over the course of a week, we spent hours praying through a lifetime of deep emotional wounds from my childhood that fueled the lie that it's better to be a man than a woman. I forgave those who hurt me, let go of bitterness, renounced inner vows, and repented for my wrong responses toward those who had wounded me. I embraced the cross, and we closed every door I had opened to give the enemy legal ground to influence my life. During that week, I saw a tender, compassionate side to the Father that I wasn't aware existed. It's as if I could literally feel His hands holding my heart. My lifelong yearning to be held and comforted by a woman was finally met in the tender arms of my heavenly Father.

After that powerful encounter with God, I had a newfound contentment in being a woman and was set free from my sexual addictions, which were essentially a counterfeit to the comfort I could only find in my Father's arms. I found that I was no longer attracted to women, as the emotional wounds in my heart that drove those attractions were resolved. As I continued to walk out my healing in subsequent years, I eventually started experiencing sexual attractions toward men. It was as if I was going through delayed emotional puberty in my mid-thirties, which was both awkward and thrilling at the same time! God had transformed me from the inside out and accomplished the impossible. I still feel like I'm living a dream.

Though I wanted to share my testimony in 2005, the Lord had me wait. I see His sovereignty in that now, as I needed time for my healing to be tested and to prepare me for the warfare that lay ahead. I kept silent for eight years until, in 2013, the Lord gave me the green light to go public upon my eighth-year anniversary of freedom, a "new beginning" of sorts. Now, I am finally coming out of the closet in a redemptive way, sharing my story with others to bring hope and restoration during this crucial hour. The eleven-year journey towards transformation was totally worth it. The length of the journey itself has given me empathy for those who are currently struggling to break free from similar issues and sometimes feel hopeless. Healing from sexual brokenness is rarely instantaneous—it's more like peeling back layers of an onion one at a time—but if we will hold fast to the truth of God's Word, lean on His body, and determine never to give up, we will experience the freedom that Jesus died to give us. God promised: such were some of you (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).