

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 my logical mind. 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. But it was during that dramatic 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 for me?

It was at this time that 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 for me 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 as revealed in the Bible.

But then in my fall semester, as I was embracing my homosexuality I began having dreams troubled by the appearance of Jesus. I confided these dreams to my closest friends who happened to be Jewish, and they scratched their heads with me as to what the dreams could mean. Then, one day at a gay meeting on campus, the realization suddenly pierced through me—“You will not find what you are looking for here.”

What?! Not find the love I was seeking in the gay community with a woman to spend the rest of my days with? But amazingly, this “other voice” was telling me the truth and in my heart I knew it. It was as if a light pierced through my soul from heaven. I left that meeting sobbing in grief at the truth that had found me.

But this new truth did not mean that I was ready to embrace Christianity. In fact, although I was ready to accept the truth, I didn’t want it to be the Christian truth. I knew enough from reading the Bible that the Christian God did not approve of homosexual relationships and that if I became a Christian, my hope of a female life partner would be forever gone.

Something was going on, but I couldn’t comprehend it. So my next question was, “If there really is a God, then who is the true god or gods?” In order to find the answer to this question, I put God—whoever He was—to the test. I asked that the true God would be shown to me by answering 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 this list, but my request was answered with the appearance of an upperclassman in my accounting class. She stood out to me as being very kind to a punk rock girl—and she 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.

Meanwhile, 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.

Still, I decided to ask all my friends and dorm mates what they thought about Jesus. They all had flimsy answers so I asked at a campus Christian ministry and was soon enrolled in their “Evangelism Training” class. I pretended to fit in with these people, but God was not deceived.

One night as we prayed, God revealed Himself to me in an amazing way as a Person with great authority and tenderness, as this One moved about the room while students prayed. It also was very clear to me that where I was, there was a vacuum of space without this amazing Person.

Did God exist? Yes...but not in my life. He was revealing Himself to be the Christian God—and yet I was still faced with the tug-of-war between my own same-sex desires and this new reality.

After that experience I spoke with the campus pastor and told him about my experience, and then he shared with me how to receive Christ into my life and that, yes, it was true, homosexuality and Christianity were incompatible. As he shared with me from the Scriptures, I knew what he was saying was true. God was real, and He wanted a relationship with me and had provided the way 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.”

From that point on, my life became filled with rich adventure and healthy sister relationships with other women. Yes, some struggles too—daily battles with my own errant desires, but then victory 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 the homosexual struggle is often based on wounds of the past. In confronting and praying about these dark corners of my life, I began to experience greater freedom from the source of my heart’s pain and as a result, the grip of homosexual struggle lessened. I found hope and freedom as I moved along this path, including the freedom to choose how to respond rightly to temptation. I found freedom to delight and enjoy being a woman. I found new possibilities that I had never thought would ever happen, romantic attraction to a particular man, then marriage and a family. I found that God is able to finish the work He began in me and that He’s able and willing to align me with His great plans that are rich, right, and full of unadulterated beauty.

I have also found the intimate companion who will never leave or forsake me. I’ve faced many challenges along the way, including the betrayal of my husband and our subsequent divorce. Through it all, I’ve sensed God’s nearness, care, and delight in me. Since embarking on this wonderful 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 in every sense. “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine” (Song of Solomon 6:3).

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