

SET FREE FROM SAME-SEX ATTRACTION

There are many, even in Christian circles, who say that it is impossible to change one's sexual orientation. My story challenges and confounds this assertion.

I was aware of a strong same sex attraction right from my early teen-age years. I came from the classic background, alienated emotionally from my father, and over protected by a fearful, anxious mother. This destroyed any confidence I had as a male and resulted in severe gender confusion. I failed dismally to identify with either my father or my sex.

At the age of sixteen I became a Christian. My "conversion" so called, radically changed my life, but not my gender confusion. I loved God with a passion – but was increasingly troubled by my sexual orientation. As I look back, I realise how strong this same sex attraction was, and how it coloured my relationships with my own and with the "opposite" sex. There were times when I was O.K with my orientation – and other times when it bothered me deeply.

In spite of my difficulties in the gender area, I met and married a wonderful Christian girl, and we had a pretty "normal" married life – and four children.

But then, after about ten years of marriage, the orientation and attraction returned. This rather horrified me. You know the old story. Get married and have a family and all the problems will disappear. Wrong! I realise now, that the underlying issues had still not been dealt with, and I needed help. Fortunately I had a friend who had been into the whole gay life style and was now director of a ministry to homosexuals called Exodus Ministries. He had come out of the gay scene, and was now helping others who wanted to do the same. What's more, he invited me to come and assist him with the programme they were running – Living Waters – a programme designed by Andrew Comiskey who had also successfully exited the gay life style.

Little did he know how desperately I wanted – and needed – to apply everything we were learning to my own life. Talk about the old saying "Physician heal thyself!" I was desperate for a way out, or rather some answers to my problems. I haven't got time here to go through the various "issues" we addressed, but they included things like forgiveness – towards my father; repentance – for my own wrong choices; dealing with male envy and idolatry; sexual addiction – including masturbation and fantasy; dealing with sexual "triggers"; sexual identity – and what it means to be male; and, possibly most important, who I am in Christ. We were taught that God is the source of our gender identity and, as such, is the only one ultimately who can heal our gender identity and restore us to wholeness. We worshipped together, shared together and prayed together. And we were open and honest with each other – and with God. We were encouraged to realise that healing is a process – and to be patient and forgiving of ourselves when we failed. But above all, we were reminded that God loves and accepts and forgives you – regardless! The one who condemns you, or wants you to condemn yourself, is Satan and his accusations are to be resisted at all costs!

As the T.V advertisement says – it may not happen over night – but it will happen. And it did. Little by little, as we addressed the various issues in our lives, wholeness came.

That was over 25 years ago, and while there has been the odd temptation, I can honestly say I have never been or felt so free in all my life. The same sex attraction is virtually non existent, as is the gender confusion. I feel whole and well and secure in my sexual identity – and totally fulfilled in my marriage. We have been married for 37 years and have never been happier.

My homosexual past seems like a distant memory and I marvel at how whole and strong and secure I feel. I once was lost but now am found. I once was confused but now am secure and whole. I once wondered who and what I was – now I have no doubts. I am a man in Christ, and totally secure in Him. Praise God!

P.S. Exodus Ministries is still operating in Auckland. Phone (09) 268 0346 or email exodusnz@maxnet.co.nz

The Living Waters programme is also available at www.livingwaters.org.nz or Desert Streams Ministries.