

*"Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass."  
~1 Thessalonians 5:23-24*



## The Journey through Lesbianism

by Melissa Ingraham

*This article was originally written as the second part of two addressing important issues for Christian women experiencing emotional and/or sexual attractions to other women (lesbianism).*

### THE DESTINATION

Where are we headed on the journey through lesbianism? You might be surprised (or relieved) that it is not automatically to marriage, a family, and a house in the suburbs with a white picket fence! Rather, we are headed in the same direction as every other Christian – towards Jesus Christ! Our journey is to become more like Him in our thoughts, words, actions, and relationships. This process is called sanctification, and God is able and willing to do it (1 Thes. 5:23-24).

The goal of our journey should not be to stop a certain behavior. That's good enough to get you in the door, but don't stop there. Rather, we should seek to invite Jesus to transform our lives into His image and likeness. "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:17-18). Ask yourself this hard question, "If I were to receive no further "healing" in my same-sex attractions, would I still follow Jesus?"

### OBEDIENCE

Obedience is an integral part of the journey out of lesbianism. Obedience is "to do as asked; to yield to someone's command or wishes." Have you yielded to Jesus as the Lord of your life, not just your Savior from your sins? There is a big difference. He is worthy to be obeyed, and our love is expressed in our obedience to His commands.

Many of us doubt God's love, care, and provision because of hurtful relationships with significant others, especially fathers. I had to confess doubt and unbelief, and choose to believe He is who He says He is in the Bible. I wrote out many of the scriptures (and promises) I had difficulty believing and put them on my bedroom wall so I would see them multiple times a day.

An opportunity to choose to believe God's truth about Himself and His relationship to me instead of my feelings came one night during worship when I was a participant in Living Waters. I was feeling ashamed of my sexual sin, and generally unworthy and unlovable. The worship

leader sang a song over us entitled "Your Beloved." The chorus goes like this: "I am Your beloved, Your creation, and You love me as I am. You have called me chosen, for Your kingdom, unashamed to call me Your own." The worship leader sang over and over, "Unashamed to call me Your own." In that moment, I knew I could remain seated, wallowing in my diseased feelings, or I could stand up, open my hands, and receive God's love and truth. I stood up, in spite of my feelings, and God honored that choice. Today, several years and several hundred choices later, I know

beyond head knowledge that God loves me and cherishes me. That night was pivotal in my journey of spiritual growth.

One of the most important decisions I had to make in obedience to Jesus was to shut the door on lesbianism being a viable option. Now, I should tell you that this decision came several years into my journey, when I was a small group leader with Regeneration. In a prayer time with my accountability partners, I brought up feeling

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attracted to a classmate in graduate school. The questions that followed revealed that, in the back of my mind, I had always kept the option of a lesbian relationship as plan B if this whole Christian thing didn't work out. I had deceived myself by having a door that could be kicked open at any moment. I wrestled that afternoon to shut the door permanently; it took every ounce of my will and surrendering to God.

**ESSENTIAL STEPS ON THE JOURNEY**

**Once we are walking in obedience to God, we need to know where to walk.** There are many essential steps on the journey. The first essential step on the journey through lesbianism is to find a support group or Biblically-based counselor, preferably an Exodus member ministry or professional (you can visit <http://exodus.to/> to find one in your area).

**Another step in the journey is to acknowledge and forgive others' sins against you.** Lesbianism is often a reaction to many relational wounds and abuses. We must offer

these wounds to the Healer of our souls, who will cleanse and restore. Denial and pretending like it didn't happen keep us imprisoned to the shame and pain of the abuse. Forgiveness is not minimizing, excusing, or denying what happened. Because each person hurt us in specific ways, forgiveness must be specific. I couldn't just say, "God, I forgive my dad for never being there." I had to name specific instances, such as, "God, I choose to forgive my father for missing my first karate belt promotion, because I felt abandoned, unloved, and neglected. I release my father for You to deal with."

**Confession of our own sinful choices and decisions is an integral step in the journey.** In reaction to the hurts we experienced, we make decisions to act in certain ways to get our needs met. Many times, this behavior is sinful, e.g. pursuing lesbian relationships. No one held a gun to my head. Confession is not primarily about being sorry. Many people are sorry they got caught. That is not what God is after. Our sin grieves Him, because we choose other, lesser things over Him and His intimate love for us. He wants our hearts to be moved to genuine grief and repentance, a turning away from the old things we pursued. Confession should name the specific sin, e.g. "Lord, I confess that I sinned against you by fantasizing about so-and-so and masturbating. I confess I did not turn to You to meet my loneliness and need for connection. I ask that You would forgive me in the name and by the blood of Your Son, Jesus Christ."

As I asked and allowed God to reveal my sin, I had to confess and renounce the defenses I had used to protect myself, including judgments and vows. Judgments are intellectual assessments about people or situations based on our perceptions. For example, "My mother is weak, passive, and a victim of my father," or "all men are clueless." Vows are decisions we make in reaction to judgments. In my case, I vowed, "I will never be like my mother." Making the choice for self-protection, these judgments and vows walled me off from others, including my mother. As I grew up, I related to women and men from that broken place, because I was stuck there. By renouncing the vow never to be like my mother, I chose to allow Jesus Christ to protect me, not only in my relationship with her, but with all women. The good of the feminine, and my mother's love, could now flow to me unobstructed. The cross of Jesus Christ protected me from unhealthiness.

**Confession of our specific sexual and relational sins to other sisters in Christ is extremely beneficial in breaking through shame and condemnation.** Have you

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**Please Pray With Us . . .**

**Prayers**

- Please pray for the Christian men and women living in Poland who are trying to begin their own ministry to men and women seeking freedom from homosexuality .
- Please pray for our staff planning retreat which will take place from June 29 until July 1. Pray for us as we seek the Lord and plan for our upcoming year.
- Please pray for our executive director, **Josh Glaser**, and his family as they are taking a mini sabbatical until the end of June. Pray for our entire ministry staff as well during this time.

**Thanksgiving**

- We praise God for the success of our Baltimore Banquet that was held on April 11. Two hundred sixty people came to share the evening with us and 150 of those people had never had direct contact with our ministry before! We are so thankful for all of the contributions that came in that night totaling \$25,000.
- Thank God with us for **Josh Glaser** and **Bob Ragan's** ministry trip to Poland in April. The Lord moved in some incredible ways (*see page 4*).

For more information or in-depth monthly prayer requests,  
E-mail [info@RegenerationMinistries.org](mailto:info@RegenerationMinistries.org).

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ever experienced someone ministering God’s forgiveness to you in the moment after you confessed participating in some sexual sin, perhaps something you’ve never told anyone before? God through the power of His Holy Spirit and the ministry of community is powerful to cleanse and shine His light of love in every dark place in our hearts and minds.

**Receiving healing prayer is a valuable step in the journey through lesbianism.** Healing prayer is the process of inviting Jesus, through His Holy Spirit, into the middle of whatever you are dealing with emotionally, spiritually, and sexually. A disruption in attachment to mother as the primary source of security, love, and well-being leaves the growing daughter empty and struggling with anxiety, depression, and an inability to rest. Even in lesbian relationships, our hearts cannot hold onto love because it feels as if there is a chasm that can never be filled. Prayer for a sense of being asks God in His nurture and love to fill the emptiness, mend our hearts, and lead us to quiet waters and fields of rest (Ps. 23:2-3).

Prayer to receive the Father’s blessing comes on the heels of prayer to receive a sense of being. Just as God provides love and nurture where our mothers were unable to, He also affirms us and calls us out to become the women He created us to be. Where our earthly fathers were unable to bless us **as women**, God names us as His beloved, precious daughters. This Father’s blessing comes through the prayers of Godly, safe men in community. It is scary to receive prayer from

men, especially when we’ve been hurt by them. However, it is necessary, and wonderful! Much of my “healing” has come through men I have served with in leadership. Only men (because they are men!) can adequately bless us with the Father’s heart. Of course, Father God is also blessing us as we seek Him as Father in prayer and scripture study.

Healing of memories is a category of healing prayer that identifies painful events from our past that continue to affect us today. Time heals nothing, as I’m sure you know if you have been abused in some way. Those memories contain a range of emotions and lies we believe about ourselves, God, and other people. Some common beliefs for sexual abuse survivors are, “It’s my fault because I should have said no,” or “I am dirty and unlovable now.” The Holy Spirit is able to minister His truth and soothing balm to every painful place you offer to Him. Lay or professional counselors **trained** in healing prayer are often necessary to help identify stumbling blocks and emotional defenses to accessing that deeper emotional pain. Also, just as we are sad and cry over physical deaths, we must give ourselves permission to grieve other losses: the loss of our childhood to dysfunctional family dynamics, personal and emotional safety to abuse, and family members to divorce, strife, and addictions. Again, counseling may be helpful or necessary in this grieving process.

**Involvement of healthy others in your journey through accountability, finding a church home, and friendships is a life-long step toward growth and maturity in Christ.**

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## MINISTRY NEWS

### S.A.L.T. (Seeking After Liberating Truth)

SALT is a 20-lesson, support program, in Northern Virginia, for all men who are struggling with the overt sensuality and the sexual onslaught we experience in our every day life. It offers help to find freedom from these struggles and any associated behaviors. The program begins May 29 and runs until September 11.

### New Beginnings

New Beginnings provides a supportive group environment in which men learn to apply biblical tools to overcome habitual sexual sins, to improve their relationship with Jesus Christ, and to develop healthier relationships with others. The program begins at in the beginning of July in the Baltimore office.

### Living Waters

Living Waters is for men and women dealing with relational or sexual issues. It is an in-depth 24-week program that seeks to lay a foundation of sexual and relational wholeness. Through teaching, healing prayer and discipleship, Living Waters ministers Christ’s grace and restoration.

For more information on our programs please call (410) 661-0284 or e-mail [info@Regenerationministries.org](mailto:info@Regenerationministries.org).

To access an archive of past Regeneration Newsletter Articles please log onto our website [www.RegenerationMinistries.org](http://www.RegenerationMinistries.org).

If you would like to start receiving our newsletter via e-mail simply send an e-mail to [info@RegenerationMinistries.org](mailto:info@RegenerationMinistries.org).

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Accountability is wisely choosing at least two women who fully know your struggle, and are willing to ask you hard questions about your sobriety. Ideally, accountability is an intentional, weekly meeting where it is your responsibility to make sure the right questions are asked. As trust grows in the group, you should be able to not only confess sin, but also call one or more of your accountability partners for prayer when you are feeling tempted to sin. Begin to pray now about whom the Lord would have you seek out for accountability.

Forming healthy same-sex friendships with women who have **not** struggled with lesbianism meets our legitimate needs for love and connection from other women. It seems scary, intimidating, and almost impossible to think about having non-romantic or non-sexual relationships with other women. It is normal to feel attracted to female friends but accountability helps us to press through our feelings of attraction and awkwardness until we can have intimacy with others and not have it be sexual. Having more than one “special” friend is necessary to avoid emotional dependency.

**BEYOND OUR BROKENNESS**

Those of us on the journey through lesbianism can be used as a prophetic witness to the Church and the culture of God’s truth regarding sexuality and relationships, and His awesome, infinite ability to change lives and restore relationships. We are overcomers by the blood of the Lamb, and the word our testimonies (Rev. 12:11). Will you stand up and testify of God’s love and grace? You are so much more than your lesbian feelings and attractions. You are beloved, and precious, and God wants to use you in a might way! ■

**For further reading**

*Out of Egypt* (2001). Jeanette Howard. (Available through amazon.com); *Restoring Sexual Identity: Hope for Women who Struggle with Same-Sex Attraction* (2003) Anne Paulk; *Strength in Weakness* (2003) Andrew Comiskey ([www.desertstream.org](http://www.desertstream.org)); *Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men and Women* (1994) Bob Davies and Lori Rentzel.

*Melissa is a National Certified Counselor working in upstate New York. She is the former assistant director of Regeneration NOVA and is the Chair of the board of directors for Exodus International.*

**Poland Ministry Trip Follow-Up**

In April Bob Ragan and Josh Glaser traveled to Warsaw to offer training to Christian leaders interested in reaching out to men and women struggling with unwanted homosexuality. Forty-five psychologists, therapists, pastors, and laymen took part in the day and a half training sessions.

Mid-week, Josh and Bob shared about freedom from homosexuality and sexual addiction with approximately 60 members of the host church. Later in the week, they had some individual meetings to provide healing prayer, recorded their testimonies for a Polish Christian radio program, and were featured on a late-night TV program addressing whether freedom from homosexuality is possible. It was a full week!

God’s hand was evident throughout the trip, and we pray that the ministry in Poland might take root and flourish. Please pray for our host pastor, Grzegorz, a wonderful man who both Bob and Josh believe the Lord may be raising up to help lead this new movement in Poland. Please also pray for us as we seek the Lord about how He might be leading us to support these efforts in the future.

**Regeneration Is . . .**

**Staff Team**

**Joshua Glaser**  
Executive Director

**Rev. Bob Ragan**  
Northern Virginia  
Director

**Jay Wilson**  
Baltimore Program  
Coordinator

**Ann Cohrs**  
Interim NoVA Ministry  
Associate

**Devon Medinger**  
Staff Accountant

**Stacey Feehley**  
Administrative Assistant

**Alan Medinger**  
Founder &  
Executive Director Emeritus

**Group Meetings**

**Baltimore, MD**

- Living Waters
- New Beginnings  
(Sexual Addiction Group)
- New Directions
- Growth Into Manhood
- Wives’ Group

**Northern, VA**

- Living Waters
- Women’s Group
- Wives’ Group
- Men’s Group
- s.a.l.t.  
(Sexual Addiction Group)