

## **A Closed Heart Looking for Love – A Female Living Waters Participant**

*This article about overcoming lesbianism and defensive detachment was written by a female Living Waters participant who is now a faithful member of our leadership team.*



I was 23 years old when I came to Christ. I was living through a filter of pain from my childhood and grew bitter at what life had dealt me. I couldn't stop the pain and was angry that I had to endure it. I didn't ask to be here.

I have a wonderful mother, but I grew up afraid of my father. He had a raging temper and no patience for kids. I truly believed he disdained me. I grew conditioned to keep the peace lest we experience his wrath. I didn't receive affirmation or words of comfort, I just remember much ridicule and yelling that hurt me deeply. I found it impossible to please my father.

On my very first day of school I was told that my mother was in the hospital and wouldn't be there when I got home. She was the only love and safe place I knew, and the prospects of her dying terrified me. I found a hole in the fence at recess and sneaked home only to find no one there. I believed she died and that devastated me. Even though she was only gone for a couple of days, my heart never knew anything different. I believed at any time that I would lose her, so I shut down inside and hid my hurts and fears from that time on.

Sexual abuse began when I was ten years old by a friend of the family, and by the time I was twelve my parents got divorced. I felt a new freedom because I didn't have to live with my father, but my teenage years brought same sex attraction of which I was deeply ashamed. I felt it was a desire that chose me. I didn't want it and I was stuck with it. I lived in silent shame, but I also wanted to be loved. When I was 17 I got into a lesbian relationship.

Somehow I knew deep inside that God loved me and that He was drawing me, even though I was afraid of Him. I always felt like He got stuck with me, like when you pick players for teams and I'm what's left. I didn't believe He really desired me, but that He just had to make good on His word. I viewed Him much like I viewed my dad and had much conflict. I was also told that I wasn't saved because I still smoked some days after surrendering my life to Christ. Legalism became a way of life. I felt like I would fail His expectations and lose my salvation.

I lived in torment. I really wanted to please the Lord and to know Him in a deeper way, but I was torn at knowing I would fail Him. I couldn't keep up with all of the things that I thought I must do to be saved – praying, reading the word, witnessing. I also didn't dare tell a holy God all of the mess that I had been through and some of the unholy desires that I struggled with. I kept silent and dare not tell anyone. I couldn't bear to hear what a failure I was to the Lord.



But He is merciful and loving. One day as I was driving down the road, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, "Who do you think you are that you can add anything to what Jesus has already done for you?" I was so relieved, joy filled, and appalled all in the same breathe. I realized that I was telling Jesus that what He did on the cross wasn't enough. I had to add to it to complete the work. How ridiculous is that?! I cried tears of joy and relief and gratefulness. My heart was set free!

I look back now and realize that the Lord desired then to heal my wounds, but I was scared and didn't want to hurt again. I had just come from there and didn't want to go through the humiliation and shame of seeing it again. I wanted to stay in my denial where I believed it would all go away because, "Behold! All things are new and old things have passed away."

The Lord did a mighty miracle in my life one day in prayer. You see, I didn't care if I ever saw or heard from my dad again. He caused more pain than good in my life and I was through. But the Lord had other ideas. He took away the fear inside of me that I had towards my dad. He also took away any need of his approval. He placed within me (as best as I can describe this), a new attitude that would accept him the way he was and demanded he do the same for me. The Lord started breaking apart the box that I had put men into, and I started seeing them as individuals.

Shortly thereafter, He did another miracle. He gave me a supernatural revelation that my dad loved me. I couldn't believe it! He actually loved me! And then the realization hit me that I never believed he loved me. The ripple effect started happening after this, not only with my dad, but with men in general. The Lord started to heal our relationship after that. Words and questions would come out of my mouth in situations where I was being yelled at. It dumbfounded my father, but no longer rendered me speechless in fear. It took some time, but now he and I are friends and I look across the room at him and feel affection in my heart for someone I previously had absolutely no feelings for.



There was so much shame in the same sex attraction that I wanted to pretend it just went away. But I learned that when we don't allow the Lord to heal us, we try to medicate ourselves and it just comes to the surface again, which it did, and I fell into a relationship that lasted a long time. I didn't realize I was trying to recapture the love and safe feeling that I lost so many years ago. I was tormented because I loved the Lord and knew the relationship was wrong. What started out as something that "wouldn't last long" became too painful to try to end. That day in kindergarten was re-lived all over again.

Years later, I came to a place where I couldn't live in a lesbian relationship anymore, but I couldn't deliver myself either. I cried out to the Lord for His mercy. His mercy came through Isaiah 61:1 as He told me that He came to heal the broken hearted. Mercy also came through Micah 7:8 where it reads, "Do not gloat over me my enemy, though I have fallen, yet will I rise. Though I sit in the darkness, the Lord will be my light." I spent time in His word, waiting on Him. And one day I heard a radio interview saying if I was in this situation, I needed to confess it to someone. I said, Lord, you can heal me on the side. He said, James 5:16. Confess our faults one to another that we may be healed. I obeyed and this was the beginning of a much deeper healing in my life.

I finally relented to His way and have received so much more healing and deliverance than I am able to write here. I am forever changed! I don't even "think" the same as I did. Please don't wait!! Take courage and do it the Lord's way. The Living Waters program can forever change your life! Jesus Christ can set you free!!

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