

“It is just a phase,” my mother, two older sisters and I said during my first year of high school. I was in love with the prettiest, most popular girl in school. Little did we know that this was the first of many times in my teenage life that I began to experience homosexual feelings.

I was hardly popular in my all-girl high school. In fact, it was a very negative experience for me. Good grades and Regents classes didn't mean anything. I didn't fit in any of their cliques, although I tried desperately hard to get in the “in” crowd, because of all the crushes I had on those girls. Like in grade school, I was the last to be picked for gym teams and was made fun of. I started hanging out with the less popular crowd, later to almost be labeled a nerd. Things got so bad that at lunchtime, I worked in the bookroom and ate with the nuns.

It wasn't until I graduated college that I really started pursuing the lesbian world. My mind was now idle. I had a serious crush on a co-worker in her late thirties. When a friend I disclosed to tried to guess who it was, she said, “It can't be Sandy because she's too much like a mother image.” From what I understood then, a major cause of same-sex attractions is a broken mother-daughter relationship. I was always very close to my mother. We were like best friends. For several months, I never understood this paradox. Little did I know that too much love and overprotection she provided due to an illness I had as an infant, was the main cause of my experience. I subconsciously perceived it as a hurt, because my emotional growth was being stunted.

A physically and emotionally distant father left it hard for me to relate to males. If I did not have a close relationship with the first man in my life, how could I relate to other men? He provided for us well financially, but he failed to give me the feminine affirmation and love I needed for a healthy self-image due to his own emotional baggage. I remember nights when he came home from work drunk and fights were frequent. My mother's submission and weakness led me to further reject femininity. And just recently I read “the best thing a father could do for his children is love their mother.” I had never seen my father express any form of love for my mother. Down deep he really did love my mother, only in the way that he knew how. As a result of this, my mother became very bitter and resentful towards him. She constantly made very bad, negative remarks about him that imbued my mind during my formative years. This left me distrustful and fearful of men, marriage, and sex. The lack of love and communication among us was a contributing factor to my same-sex attractions, as well as my being rejected by peers.

After college, I started dating a pen pal for about six weeks. I lied to my mother and said I was going out with friends. I was having the time of my life. I believed all the lies from Satan about how glamorous this was. Sure, it was new and exciting. But when we were together, I could never look at myself in the mirror. The Holy Spirit was speaking to me and I didn't even know it.

One night my father caught me in a lie. He knew I was at a gay bar. He didn't say anything when I got home, but my whole family was on the warpath. I was warned I'd better stop or get out of the house. My brother-in-law, Jerry, my sister Lonnie's husband, knew something was going on. He called me one night but I wouldn't listen to him. Soon after he warned Lonnie, "You'd better talk to your sister."

Throughout this whole time, my sister, Lonnie, was praying and praying for me. She was praying so hard, she said, that she didn't even know what she was saying. I didn't even have a full-time job yet but I decided the next day I was going to pack up and move in with my "friend." Thank God, I didn't fully identify myself as a lesbian yet, and calling her my "girlfriend" bothered me. The thought of two men together also bothered me, although I couldn't understand why. I was living in ambiguity.

Well, the Holy Spirit had other plans. I had learned that the very next day, my sister wanted to meet and talk with me. "Okay," I thought. "Now I can really give her a piece of my mind." Although down deep I was fearful and I wasn't at all happy about what I was doing to my family. I brought all my pro-gay books with me to refute whatever she had to say. I was ready for the battle. Things didn't happen as I had planned. My heart opened up when my sister lovingly spoke about the wrath of God and how she and the rest of the family really loved me. She had bought me the book entitled, How Will I Tell My Mother, by Jerry Arterburn: a story about a man's struggle and AIDS. She was willing to work with me, and asked that at the least, I give her six months to try. She said I had to immediately break off my lesbian relationships. She said I had to trust her. When I said "Yes," to my sister, I was really saying "Yes" to the Holy Spirit.

The next six months certainly were not easy, although a whole new world opened up for me. My gay literature was being replaced by godly literature. I bought a Bible and praise tapes. Lonnie and I were inundated with organizations, testimonies, phone numbers, and all kinds of

paraphernalia almost immediately. We went to prayer meetings and healing masses. My ex-philosophy professor even helped me. I watched Catholic television and listened to Christian radio. Major aspects of my healing took place when I started saying the rosary daily, attending daily mass, and spending time with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament as often as possible. My temptations dwindled. I was truly set free! The Holy Spirit also restored my lost years of friendship by providing healthy female relationships. I went out dancing and travelling so much that year while not even having any income. The Lord provided it all.

God opened yet another door. He revealed to me the truth about Creation. Ever since I was a child, the concept of evolution scared me. I was very confused. I wasn't sure if I believed Genesis anymore. How then, could I be sure about the rest of the Bible? Now, I was being introduced to all these Creation ministries that had radio broadcasts and books. Of course, one of the evil fruits of evolution is homosexuality. Now I was learning the truth! I believe that those who submit themselves to God's will learn the truth.

Today I continue to lead an active prayer life. I think heterosexual thoughts and stay clear of worldly media, absorbing Christian material. I still have temptations every once in a while, but know where they come from. They don't bother me at all. They are part of life.

I live with the hope and peace that only Jesus provides. I can't wait to see what he has planned for me according to His will and time, because "He Who has begun His good work in you will continue it until the day of Christ Jesus." My main goal is to stay focused on Him, the One Who gives me all the strength to go on more importantly than anything else, and the One in Whom you find your true sexual identity. After all, He is "The Way, The Truth, and The Life."