



I, a Poor Miserable Sinner
**HOPE IN THE MIDST
OF HOMOSEXUALITY**

by Nancy Beckcom

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The summer of my junior year in college, I worked as a laborer at a refinery in Beaumont, Texas. One of the full-time employees was much more helpful and friendly than all the others. She and I shared similar interests outside the workplace and became fast friends, cheering for the same sports team and repairing cars. She was a divorcée, and I found myself spending a lot of time with her and her two young children.

Not only did we have hobbies in common, but we also shared a taste for alcohol, and she introduced me to marijuana. We carpooled together and would often pick up a case of beer on the way home from work. Before the evening was over, all the beer would be consumed. The feeling I got from the combination of alcohol and marijuana left me wide open for the next unhealthy step.

To say I was naïve would be an extreme understatement! I had barely even dated anyone in my life, yet here I was playing with fire with this experienced woman of the world.

One evening as we were watching TV, she asked if I was bothered by her touch. I was not. I was still thinking innocently. As I was leaving for the evening, she asked if it would be okay for her to kiss me. My conscience screamed NO, but I ignored it for the first of many times. Soon she became my first sexual partner. The devil sure knows how to play with our emotions and our need for attention!



HISTORY

I was raised in a strictly structured Christian home, in southeast Texas, 90 miles east of Houston. My dad worked at an oil refinery, and Mom was busy at home raising seven children. We shared family devotionals every evening, and we were at church every time the doors were open.

I was baptized in the Lutheran church as an infant. Growing up, I had numerous pins and certificates for perfect attendance at Sunday School. I was taught and believed that Jesus is my Savior and friend, and that I am a sinner

in need of repentance, forgiveness, and salvation. I was confirmed when I was 13 and dreamed of going to a Christian college and becoming a church worker.

Even in the midst of my sinful lifestyle, I never gave up my faith entirely. I still worshipped on Sundays, though not always at the church where I was a member. From all outward appearances I remained “a good little Christian.”

Satan, the great deceiver, convinced me that what I was doing was not wrong. But deep down, I knew what I was doing was sinful because Scripture strictly forbids it in several locations. (1 Thessalonians 4:1–12, Colossians 3; 1 Peter 4:1–11; Leviticus 18; 1 Corinthians 6:12–20; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13) Even with this biblical knowledge, none of it swayed my feelings of what I thought was love in my relationship.

LIVING THE LIE

As I grew more comfortable with this lifestyle, I began to frequent gay bars. Wow. What an eye opener that should have been! I began to become more dependent upon alcohol to bolster my courage to get to know more women who were living the lesbian lifestyle.

The woman who had taken my heart won her conquest, moved on, and left me broken hearted and wanting more. I had several more lesbian relationships during the next five years, continuing to ignore that it was wrong. Satan even used Scripture against me to make me feel like I was where I was supposed to be. Since I had not committed sodomy, which was sternly warned against and punished in Genesis 19, I felt what I was doing was okay. Satan convinced me that because, in my mind we had engaged in sex, in God’s eyes we were married. *That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh* (Genesis 2:24).

There were times I was so ashamed of myself and my circumstance. None of my family or Christian friends knew of the secret life I was living. In my mind, what I was doing was right, but the love of the Lord in my heart and the working of the Spirit caused me to feel great shame and guilt for my errant ways. I asked God for forgiveness, but I never really accepted it or truly repented to turn from the sin. I didn’t allow God to penetrate the wall Satan and I had built around this lifestyle, nor did I ask God for His help to escape.

I had chosen this lifestyle. This burden was all mine.



MY NEXT MISTAKE

After I graduated from college with a degree in mathematical science and mechanical engineering, I began to focus on my future. I was hoping for a great career and a comfortable lifestyle. Because the shame and guilt got to be too much for me, I left the lesbian lifestyle behind, or so I thought. I had never really asked God for His help in overcoming this sinful life, and I didn't

count on the power Satan still had over me.

I got a job as a cashier in a grocery store, where I met a man who was also employed there. We began to date and participate in activities together, including attending church on a frequent basis. But we both drank heavily and smoked marijuana frequently. Life was good, or so I thought!

Our relationship got more serious. We began to make plans. We took vacations, went camping, and hosted parties. Even in all of this, Satan was still working on me to go back to the lesbian lifestyle. He had such a hold on me! Because I wanted to do the right thing, I tried hard to fight the feelings. So, when this man proposed marriage, I once again ignored my conscience and said yes. We were married and had two children over the next three years. By the grace of God, both of our children were born healthy. We had some good times but, when I applied for a job that would require drug testing, I made the decision to quit smoking marijuana and requested that my husband do the same. He balked at the idea but reluctantly agreed.

Because I kept up friendships with some of my lesbian acquaintances, I struggled with sinful thoughts and feelings of that lifestyle. Seeing those friends interact in their partnerships made me long for the days when I was in such a relationship.

My marriage began to suffer. My husband and I began to argue over anything and everything. I caught him in numerous lies over the course of our marriage including three instances of extramarital affairs. He told our children all sorts of lies about me, affecting their lives as well. This was the final straw.

SEPARATION AND DIVORCE

After 13 years of marriage, I had had all I could stand and I filed for divorce. Once again I thought this would go smoothly and all would be well for my children and me. The "father of lies" got me again.

I struggled through the separation and went through the required counseling, half-heartedly. I struggled because of what the Bible says concerning divorce. (Matthew 19:1-12; 1 Corinthians 7) I knew the divorce was hurting my children but also knew it was the best path forward for them. When the divorce was complete, I felt such shame and guilt. I felt I had let everyone down, especially my children. I knew the path I had taken for 20 years had drawn me away from my heavenly Father and His will for my life.

THE ROAD BACK

I began to see God break down Satan's hold over me. After the divorce, I alone purchased my first home. When I walked into the empty house by myself, the



Lord convicted me full force. I was overwhelmed by all the sinful mistakes I had made to get me to this point in my life. I was at my rock bottom, and that is where my Savior met me. I got on my knees and begged for forgiveness for all I had done wrong. I pled with God to show me His path forward for my life.

It was not an easy road. It was full of potholes, as most roads in this life are. But He made good of my mess and provided me a way out. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, St. Paul tells us: *No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.* What words of comfort!

As I began to study God's Word more and rely on Him for my every need, my faith began to grow through the Holy Spirit, and I was able to be a better witness for Him to my children and others. It took many years for this process of healing and continual restoration of my faith. I am thankful that God never let me go and that He pulled me out of the pit. Psalm 40:1-3 says: *I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him.* I am blessed to have Christian parents and friends who encouraged me along the way.

GOD'S WORK IN MY LIFE AND WITNESS

I never thought God would use what happened in my life, but He has used my messy life as a guide to help others. Because of His work in my life, several of the lesbian friends from my past were moved to change their lifestyle and have begun to grow in their faith in our Lord and Savior, Jesus. It is not because of me, but through the vessel that God has made of me, that He has brought about this change. I am blessed to have been able to see God's work in their lives.

He also has used my past experiences to allow me to counsel others in similar situations. My life cannot compare to that of the apostle Paul, but I find great conviction in his words in 1 Corinthians 9:19–23: *Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. Only by God's grace am I able to stand!*

God keeps reminding me that I am His child, and sometimes it takes terrible situations to get our attention. I'm grateful God has my attention and has used these terrible situations as a means to strengthen my faith. I am constantly reminded of my need for God's amazing grace.

In Ephesians 2:4–10, Paul describes our life in Christ: *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

God knew when I was living in sin that He would use me and my past to help others. Wow! God continues to bless me with new opportunities to serve Him in my home church, the community, and beyond. I believe I have reached the point at which God can use my past mistakes to help others in dealing with their sin. I am past the healing stage, but I continue to grow in my faith as I walk with my Lord.

I have learned to listen to and to follow God's Word. Through that Word, God has led me by the Spirit to people and places I never thought I would go for Him. Through much prayer and the study of God's Word, I look and listen daily for His direction for my life. I also make it a point to daily put on the full armor of God. (Ephesians 6:10–17) This is the sure defense against Satan and his angels.

Only by the grace of God I am who I am (Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 15:10a), and Whose I am, today! *To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen* (Romans 16:27). **Q**



LWML INVOLVEMENT

I have been a Missouri Synod Lutheran all my life and attend Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Nederland, Texas. As such, I am a witness to the wonderful avenue God has given women of our Synod to share the Gospel of Jesus through the Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML).

As a young adult, I participated with the LWML when invited to the activities of our local society and zone. Even before I became an active member, about 10 years ago, the ladies of the LWML were mentors and encouragers to me. I have been blessed beyond measure through Bible study, mission projects, conventions, retreats, and various other avenues in the LWML. As an active member, I have held offices at the society, zone, and district levels. I am continually blessed by the friendships that have developed and are nurtured through my involvement with the LWML. God's blessings abound through this mission ministry as we "Serve the Lord with Gladness!"