

# Testimonies from Exchange Ministries

“Out of the Darkness and into His marvelous light”

## **A Spouse’s Journey**

When asked this morning to write this testimony and it was needed by tonight, I had already committed to God not to pass up the opportunity to share in what God can and is doing and, to please show me. Well, here’s your opportunity. Then I was asked to write it in 400 words or less, like that would be a problem. It will take the rest of my life to write what God has done in, through, and with my life. Here is a portion. Names are undisclosed until further healing.

On December 21, 2007 at 3:00pm, I received a phone call with glass shattering news. My husband of twenty-four years had been sporadically unfaithful to me for more than half of our married life. I later learned that he had struggled with same sex attraction (SSA) since a young boy. I was in the doctor’s office for my yearly check up when I got “the call” from the spouse of the other man. I was in shock and my heart was pounding. I told the nurse there was no need to check my blood pressure – I knew it was high. I asked to be checked for every STD possible and they did. Somehow I made it through the appointment without crying. I returned the phone call to the person who had given me this news and she wanted to know what I was going to do, why wasn’t I crying, how was I so calm? She was hysterical and hyperventilating. I was in shock and had to let the information sink in so I told her I would call her back. In the mean time, my husband and youngest daughter had gone to a retirement party for one of his co-workers.

I came home and called our pastor. What encouragement he gave me. I was supposed to join the party, so I called my husband to let him know I was on my way and he said they were finishing up and he would be home shortly. So I waited. I told him what had been dropped in my lap. He denied all. I decided with counsel to give him the time to process these accusations and asked him to come up with a number of days he needed before confronting these people with these lies. He said Wednesday; it was Friday. I told him we wouldn’t talk about it again until then. That was impossible. He was so quiet and withdrawn. I had expressed to him that I didn’t want to go to church Sunday, because I was so emotional and didn’t want people to see the tension on our faces. Sunday came and I decided to go, knowing that if I went, he would too. I thought something might be said to help him confess truth because at this time, in my heart, I believed he was guilty. I was praying that the Holy Spirit would wrestle with his heart to prompt him to do what was needed. On Sunday afternoon, I got the truth. Who is this man I have been married to for 24 years? He confessed, told me he loved me, and I listened. My immediate response was that I wanted God to be glorified in this and not a victory for Satan, who is here to kill, steal, and destroy, (John 10:10).

What a painful Christmas. I talked to my Dad who was full of advice and love and sympathy for not only me, but my husband also. My parents and all his family were together Christmas day. Just having my Dad there helped me make it through the day because he knew my hurt. We made it through the day with God's strength. For the next few months, I had little or no sleep and would end up on the sofa. I could hardly function. It was so hard to just do the daily routine and be around friends and family. I just wanted to sleep. We told our pastor; Mike and Stephanie Goeke from Cross Power Ministry; my best friend of 13 years; and my husband told a friend that didn't struggle with SSA to hold him accountable. My husband seemed so remorseful, I just wanted to love and trust and believe him. A few nights I would take medicine to help me sleep but would still end up on the sofa, trying to stop dwelling on this. God gave me Philippians 4:13, "I can do everything through Him who gives me strength".

However, these things had to be dealt with. The remorse seemed so real, but in my thinking, so did the last 24 years. He had to be proactive in "fixing" this. He called Exchange Ministries and also started personal counseling, as I did also. My prayer was that God help me not to dwell on the lies but on what He wanted to accomplish through this. To deal with my husband on how God wanted to change him, grow him, and help him to be strong and compliant. Having a lot of emotional meltdowns, my heart aches about the betrayal. But God is good. This is not something my husband wants, but felt he was stuck with. God is showing me that SSA is a symptom of a lot of other issues in his life. This is not about me – whew! We decided together that we were worth fighting for! God is worthy of all glory!

We attended the first Marriage and Mentors conference and our first Exodus conference and know that God, if we allow Him, will use this pain to help others grow and heal. While praying about what to write, Matthew 11:28-29 kept coming to my mind. "Come to me, ALL who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and LEARN OF ME for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." The side note in my bible: farmers used yokes, which is a wooden frame or bar with loops at either end fitted around the necks of a pair of oxen for harnessing them together, to bind their oxen together, so yokes come to represent labor, service, and submission to authority. Yokes are oppressive when the ones in charge are harsh and cruel but God's commands are not burdensome. (1 John 5:3). Christ's servants can find rest and refreshment in fellowship with Him even when their work is difficult and stressful. Each situation is different. Just take time to be still and hear God's voice. John 13:35, says "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." This was a command not based on feelings or emotions.

If you are going through this battle **RUN** to God with your legitimate emotions of anger, disappointment, despair, confusion, shame, fear and the list goes on and on. Allow God to show you how to best handle each emotion. If you and your husband want reconciliation with the help of our Savior, it can be accomplished. Let Him reveal His mighty work through you!