

# WHEN SOMEONE YOU LOVE IS GAY<sup>©</sup>

By Sy Rogers

## Case I

Susan and Carol had been friends for years. Because of their close relationship, it was no secret that Carol and her husband were having marital problems. One day, while having lunch together, Carol admitted she had something to confess—something important. Susan sensed the apprehension in Carol's voice: "A divorce," Susan thought, "she's getting a divorce!"

Taking a deep breath, Carol began: "It's so scary for me to tell you this, but I have to. I can't keep on pretending. I just don't want it to affect our friendship—you're like a sister to me!"

Susan reached across the table, taking Carol's hand. "What is it, Carol. Is it your marriage? Whatever it is, you can tell me."

Tears began to well up in Carol's eyes. "Susan, it's not the marriage—that would make this easier, I think. It's me. I . . . I'm gay. I'm a lesbian."

## Case II

As she passed her son's room, she noticed the white piece of paper taped to the side of the door. A note from Mark. She knew something was wrong. She took the note into the kitchen, sat down, and began to read:

*"Dear Mom and Dad,*

*Since you both know about me being gay, I have decided it would be best for all of us if I moved out. I know how you feel, and I don't want to make things worse. I'll be staying with some friends for awhile. I guess this means putting college on hold, too; but please try not to worry about me. I'll make it. I'm really sorry I've let you down. I'm sorry for the big fight the other night. I didn't want you to find out that way, but I guess it's just as well you know. Most of all, I'm sorry you don't understand about me. I'll be in touch.*

*Love, Mark"*

She laid the note aside. "Is this really happening?" she thought. "It seems so strange; only a few days ago everything was normal. Then I had to be the one to find his 'dirty' magazines . . . and those letters! I had to be the one to confront him and push him into telling me the truth. Why did I ever tell his father? And now," she asked herself, "will anything ever be normal for us again?"

## Unprepared

An event most people are totally unprepared for is the discovery that someone close to them is gay. Whether the confession of homosexuality comes from a son or daughter, husband, wife, or close friend, the reaction is often the same: "What do I say to them now?"; "How can I help?"; and sometimes, "Could I be partly to blame for this situation?"

The impact of learning someone close to you is gay can be as great as if that person had died. Suddenly, your expectations and hopes for his future may never be realized. Often, a variety of emotions common to the grieving process surfaces. First comes the shock, denial, and disbelief, followed by a rush of shame, anger, and tears. Depression, even physical symptoms of distress, may result. Almost

always there are tremendous feelings of guilt. "Where did I go wrong?" especially true with parents and the spouses of gays. Anger and resentment may grow into bitterness. "How could you do this to me!" The grieving process will pass in its intensity, especially as you yield your hurt and struggle to God, trusting Him to help.

The purpose of this tract is to help the friends and families of gays deal with their own reactions to homosexuality and to help them respond to homosexuals in a positive, Christian way.

## There is hope—

First, there is HOPE for YOU! Apart from the need of your gay loved one, God desires to help you deal with the situation. God does not want to see you overcome with frustration and despair. We have the promises of God. Apply them to your situation. God tells us that as we humble ourselves and seek to obey Him, regardless of what we face, He will supply us with the power to do what is right. He promises to give us wisdom if we ask. He promises to comfort and strengthen us in time of need. He promises that His grace will keep us from being overwhelmed by our circumstances. His grace also supplies us with the faith we need to trust our loved one into His capable care. He can give us the patience to wait on him to work in his life. He can supply us with the ability to forgive and demonstrate love toward those who have hurt and shamed us. God can teach us to see circumstances from **His** perspective, and then we see that all things are possible with God. "All things" includes freedom from homosexuality! Then we see that there **IS** hope!

This is the second point: Not only is there hope for you; there IS hope for the homosexual. There IS a way out of homosexuality for those who want it! Although homosexual behavior is consistently condemned throughout Scripture (see references on back), as is all sin, there is also Biblical record of people being set free from homosexuality. (I Corinthians 6:9-11). Remember, where God requires us to change to obey His standards, He has the power to make that change possible in our lives. This is true for the homosexual, just as it is true for the prostitute, the addict, and all who need Jesus!

Though your friend or loved one is involved in homosexuality, that doesn't mean he always will be. Many men and women around the world have been (and are being) set free from homosexuality. God doesn't play favorites. Your loved one can be free too—but it may not happen overnight. God's Spirit must be the One to draw him. Therefore, your only hope is in the power of an unlimited God!

## Steps you can take:

1. GET HOLD OF YOUR EMOTIONS. After the bomb has been dropped in your lap, it may be difficult to gain control of your emotional reaction (especially true in a confrontation). While emotional reactions are part of being human, try not to let your feelings get out of control. In your anger, sin not. Try to limit your immediate reaction to lessen the strain on your relationship with the gay person. If you've already had a 'blow up,' you can always work towards reconciliation.

2. **FORGIVE.** Release your anger, hurt, and shame through forgiveness. This prevents bitterness from setting in and speeds healing to you and your relationship with the gay person. In addition to forgiving those who have hurt you, ask God to forgive you for anything in your past that may have contributed to this situation. With God's forgiveness, you need not remain a prisoner to GUILT and condemnation. Once you've received his forgiveness for any failure on your part, mark the date on your calendar. Remind yourself and the devil that on that date you *know* God forgave you for your past mistakes.

3. **GET GOD'S PERSPECTIVE.** Get your attitude in line with God's Word. Having a gay loved one is not the end of the world. Homosexuality is sin. It is not the worst sin. It is not 'incurable.' God doesn't hate homosexuals either. As a matter of fact, He loves them and wants to redeem them. He sees their need for love, acceptance, and identity, and longs to meet these needs. Jesus did not condemn the prostitute, traitor, adulteress, thief or murderer. Instead He offered them another chance at life. Jesus showed them a way to become pleasing to God. He offers this same new life to the homosexual. As mentioned earlier, 'all things' are possible with God, including freedom from homosexuality. There is Biblical record of homosexuals being changed by God's power. Share this hope with your gay friend or loved one.

4. **KEEP LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN.** Use good judgment in sharing with the gay person. Our words can either build up or tear down. Don't make every visit or conversation a sermon on sin. Avoid arguing—be a listener. The gay person needs to know that he can at least talk to you, especially when he is hurting. Pray for wisdom in communicating God's standards. Encourage the gay person to see Jesus in a positive light, as a person who loves, cares, and wants to help.

5. **DEMONSTRATE LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE.** Sometimes our love must be firm. The Christian cannot compromise God's standards or condone sin. However, it is vital that the gay friend or loved one understands that your disapproval of his sinful behavior is NOT a rejection of him. Maintaining God's standards often puts us in the place of drawing the line on a person because of sin. This can be painful and necessary in some instances. But we can still demonstrate love and concern for the gay person in many practical ways. Be willing to talk and listen. Don't be afraid to hug or touch. Don't exclude the gay person from your life and activities. The gay person may resent your stand on sin, and may isolate or withdraw himself from you. Yet you need not be the one to turn your back on him. You may be an important link between that individual and God—if not now, perhaps later. So guard your witness. Maintain God's standards, but love the gay person too.

6. **LET GO.** One of the most difficult of all these steps is having to trust your loved one into the care of God. Let him go. You can't save that person. You can't stop him from pursuing the gay life. You're not in control—God is! You must learn to trust God to draw your loved one by His Spirit. Trust Him to protect your loved one. God's desire is to set him free from sin and deception. Remember, He loves the one you love even more than you!

7. **PRAY, FAST, AND WAIT.** You can pray! You can fast! Prayer combined with fasting is a powerful spiritual weapon.

Like it or not, it's going to take much prayer and fasting, but for the sake of a friend or loved one, isn't the sacrifice worth it? Jesus knew prayer and fasting got results. He practiced it, as did His disciples. Throughout the Bible, when men and women faced difficult circumstances, they prayed and fasted. God often responded in miraculous ways. Read and study Isaiah 58, the chapter on the purpose and power of fasting. Though God does answer our prayers, He rarely answers them when or how we want. We want to see our loved one free **now!** But God's timing is perfect. His methods are perfect. So in addition to everything else, wait on Him to work in the life of your loved one. Use the waiting period as an opportunity to strengthen your faith and trust in the Lord. He hears you. He **WILL** help you.

### **Finally . . .**

--If you are having a difficult time dealing with any person because of his homosexuality, then you need to take a look at your attitude—and get it right. Being squeamish about homosexuality is one thing, but having a reaction of revulsion, hostility, or violence toward the gay person is sin. It is called 'Homophobia,' an irrational fear or hostility toward homosexuals. Homophobia is a defensive reaction, often masking insecurity or fears about one's own sexual identity. Needless to say, homophobia hinders the effectiveness of your witness. Fortunately, the Lord can set you free from this sinful attitude and deliver you from any fears or insecurities too.

--If you suspect that a loved one is involved in homosexuality (or any other form of immorality), try not to panic or lose your temper. Rather, in firm love and honesty, confront the person with what you suspect. **Don't accuse!!** Be prepared for lies and covering up, defiant admission that it's all true, or a broken-hearted confession of guilt. Also remember, the person may truly be innocent of any wrong doing. When the situation reaches this point, or is headed in this direction, seek Christ-centered counseling for yourself, and if possible, for your loved one. Remember to see Christ as your hope, knowing "That all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." *Romans 8:28*

### **Scripture**

**HOMOSEXUAL BEHAVIOR:** Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:20-32; I Corinthians 6:9-11; I Timothy 1:9-10. **SEXUAL IMMORALITY:** I Corinthians 6:13-20; Romans 6:12-13; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-6; I Thessalonians 4:3-8. **ENCOURAGING SCRIPTURES:** Romans 7:14-24; 8:1-3; I Corinthians 6:9-11; II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:1-10; Hebrews 12:5-17; II Peter 1:3-11; I John 1:9; II Timothy 4:18, and Jude 17-25.

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Exchange Ministries  
3000 S. John Young Parkway / Orlando, FL 32805  
(407) 514-4356  
[www.exchangeministries.org](http://www.exchangeministries.org)