

A Boys Own Story

This article, written under a pseudonym, is shared with us by a 17 year-old young man who hopes his story will help make a difference

Although outwardly I have led the normal life of an average seventeen year old guy. . . emotionally, psychologically, physically, and even spiritually it has been anything but. Let me start from the beginning, which is usually the best place to start anyway.

All my life, ever since my adoption, I have grown up in a Christian environment. I've always been taught to trust God in all I do — that he'll be my best friend. And I still believe that. I still believe strongly that Christ is my Savior and only way into Heaven — that he was crucified for the world and in three days he rose again to cleans our sins. But relatively recently I've broadened by horizons.

Around October of 1996, I began to notice something different about myself — I finally started to become aware of myself and my place in this world. At the same time, I also became aware of my feelings, sexual feelings, towards that of the same sex.

Though it sounds horribly hackneyed, all my life — ever since I was old enough to understand such driving forces as love, sexual attraction, and physical appeal — I knew somehow I was "different." But I had never seemed to recognize their relevance to me until then.

I began to question my beliefs. Would a god as loving as my God really create a homosexual? I always thought — or was conditioned to think — homosexuality was a choice and not something one was born with.

Before I had dismissed such feelings as a "phase" and would completely disregard the fact that when all my male friends were just getting interested in the opposite sex, I was not only uninterested, but almost appalled by the thought of viewing the opposite sex as anything sexual.

For long hours into the night I would cry and cry, hoping and praying that I would awake the next day and find out I had a sexual attraction toward women, but it never happened.

I soon grew scared. I was the worst kind of sinner in the world, or so I thought. I began to practice self-mutilation, thinking the physical pain would take my mind off the emotional pain. But after a few months I stopped, seeing that it wasn't working.

I then began to slip into a severe depression. I began to starve myself — plummeting from 169 pounds to 130 pounds in just a few months — causing myself to become a textbook example of an anorexic.

During the summer of 1997, I became so depressed that I attempted to commit suicide for the first time. I entertained the thought of taking my life many times before, but I had always failed to act upon those feelings. Though unlike other times, this time I followed through. So before I went to bed, I consumed a large quantity of pills that I knew were deadly enough. Gradually I began to feel drowsy and disoriented, yet at the same time very peaceful and serene. Sure that I would wake up the next day in a much better place than the one I was in, I

went to bed, a bit anxious, though calm and at ease.

Fortunately during the course of the night I vomited the pills up, then spent the rest of the night curled up beside the toilet in tears, knowing that at that moment I could have been dead, just another gay teen suicide statistic.

Shortly after I decided to come out to myself, to finally be at peace with me and accept myself for who I was, and not for what I wanted myself to be. I thought that if God was perfect, and he made me this way, then he has a purpose for me in this world, and just for that reason people should love me for who I was. I began to see God as a sweet Savior who loved me enough to pay the wonderful sacrifice on a tree, and not as a condescending, unreachable God, condemning me for every wrong I did. I know there will be no homosexuality in Heaven . . . neither will there be heterosexuality. Heaven will not be a matter of sex . . . but of eternal life with Jesus Christ. I turned to God in my time of depression, only if I would have realized how wonderful His love can be earlier.

Today I still battle with manic-depressant syndrome and am therefore prone to unusual mood swings, though not as drastic and violent as before. But if I learned only one thing through this all, it is that I should love people for who they are, and not as they should be or not as I want them to be. Everyone is human and therefore everyone craves acceptance.

I know that in the future I will face bigotry, hatred, discrimination, and blatant homophobia, but I also know with the help of God, friends, family, and help from people like you who were nice enough to read this, I should do just fine ▼

— Paris

"For you created my innermost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful; I know that full well."

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the Good News of God's
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