

DELIVERANCE IS A LIFESTYLE: UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN MEN WHO FACE SAME-SEX ATTRACTIONS

By: Gregory McGee

I am a black, Christian man who has been attracted to other men. I know that is a contradictory and an impossible statement to some, but for me it is a reality that I have faced. However, the key to my victory over homosexuality has been understanding that I am a man, and that I can be a man who lives for the Lord.

Often times I find myself empathizing with other men whom I know are struggling. I'm also approached by men with ulterior motives, and I have to tell them "no". In some cases, I tell them that I can relate to the struggle that they face, but I choose not to give it any place in my life. I tell them that I do not accept the condition—the *behaviors* associated with the mental process—as my lot in life. I tell them what I believe the Word has to say about the issue and about our deliverance. I teach deliverance, not because I'm never tempted, but because I understand the struggle, I fight the fight, and I love the Lord.

"The Struggle"

Typically, I don't talk to other brothers about the sinful behavior first. They've already heard that the homosexual life is a sin. Their problem is not labeling sin, but rather knowing what to do with their internal desires that lead to sin. It's not the sinful acts that we struggle with; it is the thought process. We like men! We are attracted to men! The sinful actions can be avoided, but how do we get rid of the thought process—our undeniable attraction to men?

Let me tell you about the thought process. The thought process is waking up frustrated because you dreamed about a sexual encounter with a man. It is being ashamed and afraid when you are introduced to a new face because you find him attractive. It's trying purposely not to make eye contact with some men because you are afraid they can see your attraction to them in your eyes. It's being in a room full of men, and knowing intrinsically that you are "different". It is hearing other men talk about sexual fantasies and encounters with women, and trying to hide the fact that you have had fantasies and encounters with men. It is hearing other men talk about how disgusting homosexuality is and internalizing the belief that you are alone. It is trying to keep up an "image" because you're afraid someone will call you out and tell the world what you already know—that you like men. It is being afraid that your thoughts will be exposed and the world will come to see that you are incomplete. It is having to keep calling yourself a man but still knowing that you are physically attracted to other men. It is seeing preachers "busted" on television and wondering if that's going to be your fate. It is seeing married men "come out" on talk shows, discussing how they have reconstructed the meaning of family, and leaving you wondering what does that mean for you!! It is being afraid that your wife will find out about your thought process by discovering the porn on the computer. It is being afraid of a relationship with a woman because you don't want her to know your most vulnerable secret, and then have her reject and humiliate your ego because she can't accept you as a man! It's getting upset and frustrated with your own thoughts, and not knowing who to tell about your internal struggle. It is crying at night because you don't know *why* you think like this or what to

do about it! It is hearing the world's explanation that it's okay and just wanting to be free. It is discovering like Paul, "that when I would do good, evil is present with me!" ([Romans 7:21-23](#)). It is wanting to do what is right, trying to change, but having a forbidden desire within me. It is crying out just like Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death" ([Romans 7:24](#))? That's why men "come out" of the closet because they get sick of hiding the thought process!! They're struggling to bring what they think in line with who they're supposed to be, and without the Word of God, they can't do it!!

Pornography becomes an addiction because it is an opportunity to live out a fantasy that has already played out in your mind!

Secret affairs are so easy because you've already been hiding a truth about the way you think from everybody. When a married man suffering with homosexual desires engages in an affair, to him it is just a continuation of the same charade.

Sex with women does not cure the process. There are plenty of married men having sex with women who are struggling with their thoughts. The thought-life is what we seek to be delivered from.

I Am a Man: The Burden of Insecurity

Personal experience leads me to believe that insecurity about one's manhood is a potential progenitor for homosexuality. For example, when a female friend found out about my struggle, and then told me that she still found me attractive anyway, that ministered to me because it released some insecurity. What she told me in effect was that I was still a MAN. That was also the message of counseling I received after a suicide attempt in 2001. These sessions aided me in understanding that I am a Man despite not measuring up to the false perceptions that told me I wasn't. For me, a woman's validation of me, and the affirmation of the counseling sessions were part of renewing my mind and my definition of myself, and thereby beginning my healing and deliverance from the stronghold of insecurity.

The message "I'm a Man" must be securely embedded within every man's definition of himself. I think that is why the fatherhood connection is so crucial because your father is the one who has power like no other to affirm you as a man. I think gay men seek that affirmation from other men. Also, some homosexual men have never really *felt* or *known* the true and godly expression of masculine love. Loving acceptance by other men as a fellow man is a validating experience. That's why gay clubs and bars bring a false sense of security and affirmation. To know, despite not fitting a particular mold, that you are still "one of the boys" is psychologically rewarding, especially for one who is already insecure about his manhood, and homosexuals seek that experience—that love—often through sexual activity and relationships with other men.

Insecurity is a big root of homosexuality. Then I would add molestation and experimentation, which often breed and preserve insecurity. I do recognize, however, that this assumption is based on *my* own life experiences and may not apply to all situations. I will also acknowledge that I am forced to contemplate at times a broader question: Which came first, the insecurity or the orientation? Was my insecurity perverted into an attraction for men (their masculinity and acceptance), or did my attraction to men initiate my insecurity? Regardless of the answer to that question, a biblical perspective of homosexuality leads me to view it as part of a larger, universal struggle among all men—the conflict of an intrinsic sinful nature.

Sin and Temptation

Deliverance begins with understanding what sin is, and then renewing our minds and our definition of ourselves ([Romans 12:2](#)). One brother once told me that he didn't think he was going to heaven because he *was* sin. He knew his own homosexual thoughts, and he called *himself* sin. But I shared with him that *he is not* the sin: "Now if I do what I don't want to do, it is no more I that do it, but the *sin that lives in me*." ([Romans 7:20](#), *paraphrase*). He had to learn that he struggled with something *all* men and women struggle with—internal sinful thinking. Then, he had to use that knowledge to change his definition of himself, and know that he *is* still a *Man*! I think that is why the verse, "If any man be in Christ, He is a new creature" is so important ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). Men become new creatures by renewing their thinking and their definition of themselves.

I remember preaching a message on temptation once before based on [James 1:12-15](#). This is what it says:

⁽¹²⁾ Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

⁽¹³⁾ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

⁽¹⁴⁾ But ***each one*** is tempted when he is drawn away by ***his own desires*** and enticed.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. *NKJV*

Notice that when *each one*—the KJV says "every man"—is tempted, he is drawn away by his *own desires*, but if he gives in to those desires, that's where sin is born, and that's what leads to death and destruction. To desire something outside of moral bounds is universal, and there are those who for various reasons experience homosexual desires. My concern is that in modern times, too many brothers and sisters have come to accept this natural proclivity, with all its inherent behaviors, as *who they are* instead of recognizing it for what *it is*, the internal conflict that all mankind faces—the "sin that dwelleth in me" ([Romans 7:17](#)). Instead of claiming as James suggested, "I am tempted by God", the current phrase is "God made me like this" or "I was born this way". Even if that were true, consider the words Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, "You must be born again" ([John 3:3,7](#)).

Someone reading this may not be able to relate to the homosexual struggle, but you can relate to the sin struggle. You yourself know that you are tempted by various things. You also have taken measures to keep yourself from sinning, but that doesn't keep you from being tempted. It is the same with homosexually oriented men. We protect ourselves by applying preventive, biblical standards to the way we live, but that doesn't mean that we will never be tempted. You've also slipped up, and so have these men, just in a more delicate, socially stigmatized, and secretive area. There have been days when my own battles with temptation made me feel unworthy to tell anyone about deliverance, but in the words of a friend, "On your best day, you're still not worthy." And I'll add to that, "But you're still a man!!!"

SIN AND THE BIBLE

Why is homosexuality equated with sin? As Christians, we believe homosexuality is sin because the biblical record recognizes it to be so. Admittedly, there are historical, cultural, and literary questions raised about the Bible's credibility; however, its historical, cultural, and literary variance does not negate its spiritual and revelatory truth. Christians believe the collective scriptures of the Bible were written by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit ([2 Peter 1:20-21](#)). Thus, we hold the Bible's canon as the inspired, authoritative, and manifested Word of God ([1 Thessalonians 2:13](#)). This truth is essential to the Christian faith and when we as believers began to doubt and destroy its foundation for Christian doctrine and practice, we open ourselves up to a host of ideological and humanistic attacks. The Bible provides the context for the expression of our faith. To view its teachings on homosexuality as not valid enough to be articulated advocates a hypocrisy that is dangerous to Christian conviction and integrity. The Bible presents homosexual practice as an abomination and aberration from God's divine order and purpose for His creation ([Genesis 1:26-28](#); [Leviticus 20:13](#); [Romans 1:20-32](#)). Christian morality extends from God's plan for life and humanity as presented in the biblical text. It is within this context that the Christian community accepts homosexual behavior as unrighteousness and sin ([1 John 5:17](#)).

Someone may be asking the question, "If homosexuality is such a deviation from God's plan, why does he allow some men and women to experience homosexual temptation?" For that question, I reference a passage of scripture in John chapter 9 where a similar question was asked by the disciples of Christ about a man born blind. "*Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' ³ Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him'*" ([John 9:1-3](#), NKJV). Sometimes there are those who are more open to homosexual experience because of the actions of others or through choices of their own—primarily molestation and/or experimentation. However, I believe that there are those who may have never been molested, and who showed a clear thought pattern of homosexual attractions before ever having had their first homosexual encounter. For these brothers and sisters, I assert that neither they, their parents, nor some other irresponsible adult sinned, but only that the works of God should be manifested in them through the power and testimony of Jesus Christ (*consider* [1 Peter 4:12-19](#)).

Spiritual Influence

When believers refer to a "spirit", we refer to one of two things: (1) a demonic presence that possesses and controls or (2) an attitude of the human mind that can be changed through revelation and knowledge. We acknowledge the existence of demonic spirits that can influence individuals through possession or persuasion. In possession, demonic spirits exert control over the mind and will of the individual, and must be cast out for the individual to find true freedom. This truth is solidified in the Christian faith as Jesus Himself cast out demonic spirits from those who were tormented by them ([Matthew 4:24](#)). In one particular incident, there was a man who lived among the tombs, whom no man could bind, and who often cried and cut himself with stones ([Mark 5:2-5](#)). However, when he came in contact with Jesus, the demonic spirits that beset him were rebuked with a word from the Savior, and those that came to Jesus saw him that was possessed sitting and clothed in his right mind ([Mark 5:8-15](#)).

No doubt that there has been, in some cases, demonic activity that has resulted in homosexual indulgence and should be called out by the authority of Christ ([Mark 16:17](#)). However, most times, it is the “spirit of the mind” that must be cast out. It is a *mindset* that must be renewed and changed in order for deliverance to take place. This mindset can be the result of demonic influence and manipulation but not necessarily possession as we so often attribute to homosexuality. There are those who are victims of spiritual influence, “whose *minds* the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them” ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#)). It is to these brothers and sisters that we have the responsibility “to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in [Christ]” ([Acts 26:18](#), see also [2 Timothy 2:24-26](#)). In most cases, bondage to homosexuality is a “spirit of the mind” that must be changed and renewed by biblical truth. Men and women must learn that our true identity is defined and discovered in Christ, and thereby must be “renewed in the spirit of [their] mind” ([Ephesians 4:17-19](#), [22-23](#); [Romans 7:25](#); [8:6-8](#); [12:2](#); [Colossians 1:21-22](#); [2 Timothy 3:8](#); [1 Peter 1:14](#)).

Another point to consider is that believers are not possessed with a demon if they have the indwelling Spirit of God ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#)). Jesus taught, “When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. ⁴⁴ Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵ Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation” ([Matthew 12:43-45](#)). When the unclean spirit finds his former home “empty, swept, and put in order” he returns, but believers have a new tenet dwelling in their temple. Believers have the Holy Ghost, the presence of God, making His abode within our lives, and the presence of God and a demonic spirit cannot inhabit the same temple ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#); [2 Corinthians 6:16](#); [Romans 8:9](#)).

Believers may be influenced by demonic persuasion but not possession. It is the flesh that we war against. “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish” ([Galatians 5:17](#); see also [1 Peter 2:11](#)). Therefore, we overcome the flesh by renewing our minds and walking in the Spirit ([Romans 8:5-6](#); [Galatians 5:16](#)). As an unclean spirit cannot dwell in a vessel that is inhabited by the Spirit of God, neither can an unclean thought retain its residence when new thoughts from the Word of God move in. Our thoughts of who we are and how we can live are changed as the Word of God becomes engrafted into our hearts, minds, and souls; we are changed and renewed in the spirit of our minds as we are regenerated by the presence of the Holy Ghost and the Word of God (please read [Titus 3:5](#); [James 1:21](#); [Ephesians 5:26](#)).

The Lure of Memory

In addition to the sinful nature and spiritual influence, I believe the very memory and knowledge of a thing gives opportunity for temptation. The memory of sinful acts leads to temptation because experience opens our lustful eyes and fleshly appetites to new possibilities however immoral or inappropriate they may be. As experience

engraves memories on our minds, we lose our innocence, becoming aware of both good and evil. Consider the temptation of Eve: “*Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings*” ([Genesis 3:4-7](#)). The only thing that was true about the serpent’s words was that their eyes would be opened—their innocence was lost as they were awakened to the knowledge of good and evil. Christians view this experience as the beginning of sin ([Romans 5:12](#)). Likewise, our innocence is lost as we venture into new territory with sin, and we are awakened to new possibilities and options for the flesh. Experience (voluntary or involuntary) brings the memory (knowledge), and memory opens the door for further temptation.

Consider also the Israelites of the Exodus. After God had delivered them out of Egypt and when Pharaoh was hot on their trail, they remembered Egypt and, in a lack of faith, thought that their lives would be better back in their bondage ([Exodus 14:10-12](#)). Their memory of their past tempted them to turn around. It is the same with *all* who have struggled with *sin*. Memory reminds us of our past and serves as a vehicle for temptation. However, our persistent commitment and Christian maturity determines the strength of the temptation that memory brings. We can live our lives in communion with the Spirit of God so that it progressively becomes easier to say “no” to temptation ([Romans 8:13](#); [1 Corinthians 10:13](#)). Memories also have to be put in check when they show up. The devil as much as possible will try to throw up a replay of your life’s activities back in your face, but we must remain secure in our identity, knowing full well that I *am* a new creature in Christ (*compare* [Galatians 1:13-16](#), *esp.* [1:23-24](#))! We through consistent commitment assert our faith in Christ, acknowledging that though I may have lived in the flesh, I have died to the flesh ([Galatians 2:20](#); [5:24](#)). With that faith, we can then cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and thereby bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ([2 Corinthians 10:3-5](#)).

At this point, I ponder the question: if God removed the memory, doesn’t He remove the testimony? Don’t we sing, “Jesus, I’ll never forget what you’ve done for me; Jesus, I’ll never forget how you set me free”? Memories not only remind us of *temptations*, but they give voice to the *testimony*. I have read the testimony of a brother who has claimed his deliverance for twenty years. He asserts, “When the memories of the past come up now, I just turn them into altars of praise to Him for His mighty deliverance. My goal is to continually worship Him in every trial and temptation” (http://www.stonewallrevisited.com/pages/stephen_b.html). When memories surface, as a born-again believer, I bring my body as a living sacrifice of worship to God, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ([Roman 12:1](#); [Titus 2:11-12](#)). Memory is the narrator of my testimony, and the Word of God declares that we overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony (Revelations [12:10-11](#)). My testimony is that I have struggled, but the blood has washed and delivered me from my past and my old man is dead ([1 Corinthians 6:11](#); [Romans 6:6](#)). Praise be to God.

The Meaning of Deliverance

As an heir of the promises of God, biblical truth assures me that my heart can be made perfect in *love* toward God—sanctified—so that even when I have opportunity to sin, I don't want and don't have to (*compare* [Genesis 39:7-9](#); *also see* [Romans 7:18-8:5](#))!! That is the change that takes place in Christians; through the infilling of the Holy Ghost, we develop a determination to *love* the Lord and to *live* our lives for Him ([Romans 5:5](#)). His love for us gives us a new *definition* of ourselves, and our love for Him allows us to *deny* ourselves and *die* to the sin that lives within (*please read* [1 John 3:1](#); [Luke 9:23](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [5:24](#)). Therefore, DELIVERANCE IS A LIFESTYLE, AN ATTITUDE OF THE HEART, AND A STATE OF MIND. As a lifestyle it is *choice* I make everyday to live until living it becomes habitual; as an attitude of the heart it is a *conviction* that the Holy Ghost helps me keep about the morality of the problem and my love toward God; as a state of mind it is a *constant confession* of my identity in Christ despite my temptations. It is a *choice* about how I want to live, a *conviction* about how I should live, and a *constant confession* of how I am going to live in Christ. Deliverance is the freedom to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength despite your struggles, and the Word of God declares that as we *love* Him, we'll keep his commandments (*please read* [1 John 2:3-6](#); [Matthew 6:24](#); [John 14:15](#)).

Because of *internal desire*, *spiritual influence*, and *past experience*, temptation exists. The orientation *may* never change, but behavior and pressure to conform can; our identity can change even if the orientation does not ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)). By orientation I mean the knowledge of and susceptibility to homosexual sin ([Genesis 3:5, 7](#)). That, I believe, is a consequence that I will live with, and get my complete deliverance when Christ returns—when sin and temptation are forever eradicated ([1 Corinthians 15:51-58](#); [1 John 3:2](#)). However, I do believe that despite one's "orientation" toward a particular sin, one's *attitude* toward that sin can completely change ([Psalm 97:10](#); [119:104](#); [Luke 16:13](#); [1 John 2:15-16](#)) and thus your *activity* in that sin can change as well ([2 Corinthians 4:2](#); [Ephesians 2:2](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:9](#); [1 Peter 2:25](#); [1 Corinthians 6:11](#)). I will also acknowledge that God *can* do a distinct work or gradual healing and remove the homosexual temptation *if He chooses*, but until He does, we practice the biblical principles that guard against the sinful behavior ([Romans 13:14](#)). Personally, this struggle is not something that I have *wanted* for my life; however, my attitude is that even if I am tempted, my heart has been changed, and I am fully committed as His child to say "no" to sin and to proclaim my deliverance in Christ (*please compare* [Daniel 3:17-18](#); [2 Corinthians 12:8-10](#); [Matthew 26:39](#)). It is important also to remember that Satan—the tempter—is always on the prowl, looking for whom he may devour ([1 Peter 5:8](#); [Matthew 4:1](#)). If he didn't tempt men in this manner, he would not be doing his job. It is up to us, however, to be sober, vigilant, and aware of his schemes so that we are not overcome by his devices ([2 Corinthians 2:11](#); [Ephesians 4:27](#); [6:11](#)).

I believe in complete deliverance from *all* acts of homosexuality, but deliverance from the temptation is distinct from deliverance from the acts. It *may* be possible for homosexually oriented men to become fully heterosexual (without any homosexual attraction or temptations), but men will *still* be tempted by sin—whether homosexual or not ([Psalm 51:5](#); [James 1:13-14](#); [4:1](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#)). Furthermore, homosexual temptations do not make me less than a man; my deliverance is secured in knowing that I

am a man in spite of my temptations and in spite of who thinks otherwise. It is the *nature of sin*—in whatever shape, form or fashion it comes—that must be confronted, subdued, and overcome ([Genesis 4:7](#)). Many times an internal healing, from the life experiences that predispose us to certain habits, needs to occur in order that we may be free to walk in deliverance. Yet, in every case, we must be born again, filled with the Holy Spirit, and renewed in the spirit of our minds before we can truly walk in our destiny as new creatures in Christ.

The Practice of Integrity

Deliverance and integrity are parallel concepts. A lifestyle of deliverance is a lifestyle of integrity. However there is a slight difference. Deliverance means I have the freedom to walk in victory over sin, but integrity involves the conscious choices I make to maintain victory over sin ([Romans 6:15-16](#)). Living with integrity does not mean that we never make mistakes, or bad choices. It does mean, however, that when we fall or make wrong decisions, we acknowledge those failures so that our lives may be brought back in harmony with our status as the delivered. Being delivered and living with integrity does not mean that I am infallible. It does mean, however, that if I make a mistake or fall short, I confess it, remove it from my life, and keep pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus ([1 John 2:1](#); [Philippians 3:13-14](#)). Hear what Paul says, *“I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection! But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be”* ([Philippians 3:12, NLT](#)).

In contrast, the lack of integrity is dangerous because it tramples upon the grace of God. When we fail to acknowledge our shortcomings and then repent from them with an attitude of love toward God, it leads to “apostasy”, a Greek-based word meaning a “falling away”. It is a condition of the heart in which we persist in willful transgression and rebellion against the truth of God ([Hebrews 6:4-6](#); [10:26-31](#); [2 Peter 2:20](#)). That is why the homosexuals, lesbians, and others of Romans chapter one were given over “unto vile affections” and viewed as “reprobates”. It was not because of the temptations they faced but because they, having known the truth of God, *chose* not to acknowledge Him ([Romans 1:26-28, 29-32](#)).

Although confronting this aspect of our lives is a challenge, I believe God can take the weight out of this struggle. I've bragged to someone before, that one day I'm going to preach a message called “Will and Grace”, and through straightforward preaching tell the homosexual brothers and sisters that if you've got the *will* to give it up, God's got the *grace* to keep and see you through.

“Coming Out”

Oftentimes many brothers are suffering in silence, afraid to share this secret struggle. Too often we keep this stuff to ourselves because we are ashamed, and we also fear rejection from others. We fear what they will think of us, and thereby make us feel even worse than we already feel about ourselves. As long as we keep it to ourselves, however, we are never really forced to acknowledge that it's there. We tell ourselves “it's just something that I've gone through, and I can handle it”, as though it were a common cold that will pass. As long as we never really vocalize and recognize our experience, instead of handling it, we go back to it over and over again. We keep it

hidden in the dark, and it becomes our “little secret”. However when we vocalize it or confess it, we give ourselves the opportunity for deliverance by invalidating the insecurity that keeps us bound. Confession loosens our emotional chains of guilt and shame and gives us a chance for self-acceptance and renewal. It is through acknowledging our experience that we can see that I am still human, and that I don’t have to be ashamed of myself anymore. (My desire does not make me deficient; it does not hinder my success as a man or a Christian, but entertaining the desire does.) Confession gives us a chance to heal. “*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed*” ([James 5:16](#)). The context of that scripture deals with physical healing, but I believe the application is spiritual and emotional as well. That is the healing I have experienced, and that is where I want other brothers to be: to know that, even if they never speak publicly about it, they have nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to hide from anymore because they can be free.

Believe me, I know confession is not easy. Confession is like looking in a mirror; we force ourselves to look at our vulnerabilities and only then can we accept or do something about them. A friend had to drag my story out of me with tears in my eyes because I was exposing myself; I was forced to look in that mirror again, and I did not want to see or hear what it would show me about myself. I was afraid that it would show me that I was weak, insufficient, a fake, unwanted, deficient, marred, that I didn’t fit, and that I wasn’t a man. I was very afraid. Also, dealing with this stuff can evoke a whole range of emotions all in one setting. For example, after sharing my story with a respected mentor and advisor, I became tremendously depressed. It was the lowest I had been in a long time. The reason for that was because his inability to relate and his religious devotion to change me challenged everything that I thought I knew. He forced me to really evaluate who I was and what was really going on in my head and in my life. Truth be told, he made me mad! His inability to relate was also coupled with an inability to listen, and I was forced to assert myself, my identity, as a Man and as a Christian. In my anger and frustration, I put my struggle on paper, and this writing is the fruit of that labor. That release brought me to a new place in my life. I finally acknowledged my struggle, and finally realized that I *am* okay in spite of it. I am also still *saved* in spite of it. I still don’t want it, I don’t act on it, and I count it as dead, but it doesn’t make me any less of a man or any less of a Christian because I have struggled with it. I finally reached a point where no one can dictate to me who I am and what I’m worth because of this. My deliverance began with freedom from insecurity. In the words of a gospel song, “I’m free, no longer bound, no more chains holding me!” I have been transformed by the renewing of my mind ([Romans 12:2](#); [Ephesians 4:23](#)).

To those of you hiding within the caverns of shame, I’m writing this as one who feels empowered by scriptural truth and as one who knows the liberty that comes from confession and true self-acceptance. I write this because I want to share that there is more value in confession than fear. I write this because I believe that we should feel free to be open—not *casual*, but open—about our experience. God has not called us to hide behind fear of condemnation and rejection from anybody—not the saints, not parents, not friends ([Romans 8:1](#)). Hear me, brother, you have nothing to be ashamed of; you are a MAN and *nothing* you’ve done and nothing *anyone* says can change that; you are a child of God and *nothing* and *no one* can separate you from God’s love ([Romans 8:37-39](#)).

By emphasizing confession, I am not endorsing the acceptance of a gay identity, but I am encouraging the acknowledgment of your personal experience. In this regard, confession is not a “coming out” *to* sin, but rather the initial step to coming out *of* sin. It is not the acceptance of a homosexual/bisexual identity, but an opportunity to acknowledge Christ’s power to transform ([Roman 10:9](#); [1 John 1:9](#)). *For myself, I acknowledge that I have been attracted to other men, and in certain situations I still can be* ([Luke 4:13](#); [Romans 13:14](#)). I am not ignorant of homosexual temptations, but I by no means accept myself as a homosexual, nor do I deliberately put myself in situations that could lead to my failure. Despite my personal experiences, I by no means celebrate homosexuality as the life that I want or should live; it is NOT an “alternative”. Rather, my identity and manhood is found in Christ and not in my past experiences or current circumstances. Also, confession does not mean to tell several people; that kind of comfort comes with time, experience, wisdom, and support. I’m not asking you to make any kind of public declaration. What I am saying is be free to fully confess it—the acts, the thoughts, the decisions, experiences, and insecurity. If you do nothing else, brother, write your story on paper and share it with nobody but you and God. Stop carrying an unnecessary burden. Stop hiding your past and your vulnerability. Confront it. Acknowledge it. Get free from it. Stop letting it define you; it’s handicapping your ministry and your peace. Satan is accusing you and condemning you, but you overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of your testimony: *“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death”* ([Revelation 12:10-11](#)). No matter how you dress it up, your testimony *is* that you *have* struggled, but the blood can wash you and set you free from your past and the pain that started and perpetuated it. Stomp the head of your accuser; stand up on your testimony, and hold it with love for Christ until the day you die ([Romans 16:20](#))!!!

To be clear, I am not saying that the struggle with temptation will completely be gone when you do that, but from experience, it is a good place to start. As for me, I’m moving to a place where I really don’t care who knows it. Am I still scared? Yes. Do I plan on telling the whole world? A Resounding No! I acknowledge that it is not always practical or beneficial to tell every one in every situation: *“All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful”* ([1 Corinthians 6:12a](#)). But I am *ready* to tell any man that “yes, I have dealt with it, no I don’t want it, and yes, I’m still saved, and I AM a MIGHTY GOOD MAN!” That is true deliverance. *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: ¹⁶ Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ”* ([1 Peter 3:15-16](#)).

At this point, I am reminded of the NBC show *The Biggest Loser*. I love that show because it starts off with people who are fat, embarrassed, and ashamed of themselves, their habits, and their circumstances. Some are literally dying from all the weight that is on them. These people, who have been sadly suffering in silence, decide to put themselves out there (on national TV) and go through hell just to experience the pleasure that comes from throwing off their weight. On the fall 2006 season finale of the

show, the winner of the contest was a previously 407 lbs, self-condemning, white, bovine brother who lost 214 lbs to become a sexy, self-loving, salacious symbol of seduction!! (*I know how that sounds, but I'm trying to make a point!*) Well, brother, I look forward to the day, when you can look back and say to yourself, "I threw off the weight!" ([Hebrews 12:1](#)).

The Role of the Church

Christians are a diverse community. We are not just diverse within social, cultural, or theological contexts, but we have a diversity of experiences with sin. All who profess faith in Christ must acknowledge that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; that we were all dead in trespasses before Christ came into our lives ([Romans 3:23](#); [Ephesians 2:1](#)). However, although all have sinned, all have not experienced the same measure, degree, or form of sin. Paul acknowledges this diversity in his letter to the Corinthians: "*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God*" ([1 Corinthians 6:9-11](#), NKJV). He acknowledges that there are a multitude of sinful experiences that can hinder one's spiritual growth and compatibility for the kingdom, but more importantly, he acknowledges that "such were some of you". We all have had our conversation in times past fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, but now we have a testimony of the transforming power of Christ ([Ephesians 2:1-6](#)).

Sadly, there is a group that is often left out of this spectrum of testimonies. This group, through a silent social coercion, is forced to keep quiet about their experience—a sort of "don't ask, don't tell" policy in the church (*compare* [Luke 18:37-39](#)). Our careless, judgmental attitudes and our "harmless" joking compel men and women to keep quiet about their experience and frustrations. Men and women with homosexual experiences and orientations are often forced to conceal that life experience, fighting their internal battle in isolation, in order to avoid being stigmatized as the worst of sinners. If you don't believe me, try talking about other sins in your church, then mention homosexuality and notice the difference in the reactions that you get.

As one who believes in the grace of God and love of Christ, I look forward to the day when individuals in and among the church, can turn to a Christian brother or sister, and reveal their struggle without fear of condemnation and ignorance. Many are already condemning themselves and are being edged on by Satan, the accuser of the brethren. I look forward to the day when rather than condemnation, these believers and potential believers can find support and hope for biblical love and deliverance. In order for this to happen, some saints are going to have to check their self-righteous attitudes at the cross, and get over themselves so that they may be free to minister the grace and love of God and the knowledge of his power to deliver ([Luke 18:11-14](#); [Romans 12:3](#)).

I also pray that those who *are* delivered would love themselves and their brothers in the struggle enough to be bold and assert the healing power of God's Word in the hands of the Holy Ghost and in the heart of the believer. Too many are dying in the darkness, having not known about the light. They are dying emotionally through self-hate, fear, and isolation; dying physically from AIDS; and dying spiritually in sin. In this regard, I share the sentiment of the gay and lesbian movement asserting that

“Silence=Death”. Thus saith the Word of God, *“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things’”*([Romans 10:14-15](#), NKJV). This “preaching” may be personal and/or public, but someone has got to tell the story; someone has got to speak up; someone has got to articulate the faith; someone has got to proclaim the Word of God. Paul in this passage goes on to assert, *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”* ([vs. 17](#)).

My fear is that the world is going to surpass us and claim potential servants for Christ if we don’t speak up. Many of those who are struggling—having endured enough silence, suffering, and confusion—are going to “come out” whether it be to Christ or to the world with its pleasures. We need to be a voice crying in the wilderness, preparing the way of the Lord, casting up the highways, and gathering out the stones for the return of the people ([Luke 3:4](#); [Isaiah 62:10](#)).

The Church must proclaim the message of deliverance as God’s alternative to the homosexual life. Again, I assert that deliverance is a lifestyle, an attitude of the heart, and a state of mind. It is a choice, a conviction, and a constant confession that are all maintained through the power of the Holy Ghost ([Philippians 2:13](#); [1 Corinthians 2:9-12](#); [12:3](#); [1 John 4:2](#); [Romans 10:8-10](#)). The church should present this message and challenge the individual to choose deliverance. We should adopt God’s purpose for men, *“not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”* ([2 Peter 3:9](#)); provide a biblical hope, and declare like Joshua, *“If it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”* ([Joshua 24:15](#)). We should echo the writer of Deuteronomy: *“I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; ²⁰ that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days...”* ([Deuteronomy 30:19-20a](#), NIV).

As we share this gospel, there may be some Agrippas who are “almost” persuaded but not convicted ([Acts 28:26](#)). There may be some hard hearts that reject our message in disbelief, but “preach the word” ([2 Timothy 4:2](#)). In your dealings with men, always present them, with arms of grace, the right to choose deliverance. It is an option; it is God’s option. The right to choose is essential to divine order and imperative to personal integrity and well-being. A man (or woman) cannot make this choice to please his family, his friends or his church, but it must be an internal conviction of the heart that compels him to pursue the promise of deliverance. Yet, they will never know of the possibility of freedom, they will never know what a true biblically based alternative is if we, the church, don’t SPEAK UP!

Will the REAL men of God, Please Stand Up!

I think Christian men who suffer from this experience are REAL MEN because they have had to learn how to identify themselves as *men* and *Christian* in the midst of a situation that told them that they were neither. The single men are REAL MEN because they learned to say, “I know what I struggle with, but I won’t be promiscuous with

women or *men*. I'm holding out for a Holy Ghost filled woman who is secure enough to love me for me!" The married men, who have had the thought while married but resisted, are REAL MEN because they learned to tell both women and *men*, that "I won't help you destroy my home". They go even further to proclaim God's healing over the psychological scars that this condition has wrought in them.

As a student of African-American history, I know that black men *became real men* when they learned that they *are* MEN because God made them so. They became *real men* when they stopped letting white "men" tell them that something was wrong with them. They stopped letting white men tell them that they were sick and inferior and that they could never be real men because they are black. Homosexually oriented men have to learn the same thing: "Yes, I struggle. Yes, I am a sinner, and sometimes I unavoidably think certain "unnatural" thoughts—for what reason I don't know! But I AM a MAN, and I CAN LIVE my life as a MAN in spite of my temptations. I can live a life of deliverance as a MAN of GOD." And to me, "that's real"!!!

An Appeal to My Brothers

Perhaps you are a man like me, who daily endures "the struggle". Perhaps you have never even heard the teachings that I have expressed in this writing, but you feel a *conviction* about what I've said. Perhaps your heart is tired of the frustration of not knowing what to do or who to turn to. Let me tell you from experience, brother, that God has heard the cry of your heart, and with open arms, a MAN, who has the definition of manhood within Himself, is reaching to save you from your despair. This man, JESUS, whom other men bow to, understands your struggle; and He is waiting to welcome you to the true brotherhood of men. Hear His Word: "¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" ([Hebrews 4:15-16](#)). His straightforward, unfettering, experiential love is so strong that it sent Him to die on a cross in order that your internal struggle could die with Him. As He hung on that cross, the Bible declares, "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished**: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" ([John 19:30](#)). Let Him fill you with that revelation today: IT IS FINISHED!! He is speaking to your life to let you know that if you have the *will* to give it up, then He has the *grace* to see you through. The world teaches homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle for those who face homosexual temptations; but hear me today, brother, *Deliverance* is a lifestyle, and it is a lifestyle that you can live! I ask you to respond to Him today by acknowledging homosexuality as a sinful lifestyle. Turn from it and give up your struggle to God. Ask Him to fill you with the power of His Holy Spirit, and teach you how to walk in love toward Him so that you can be free to live a life that reflects the image of God. "If the Son makes you free, YOU SHALL be **free indeed**" ([John 8:36](#)). Respond to Him today. Deliverance is a lifestyle, and it is a lifestyle that YOU CAN LIVE!!!