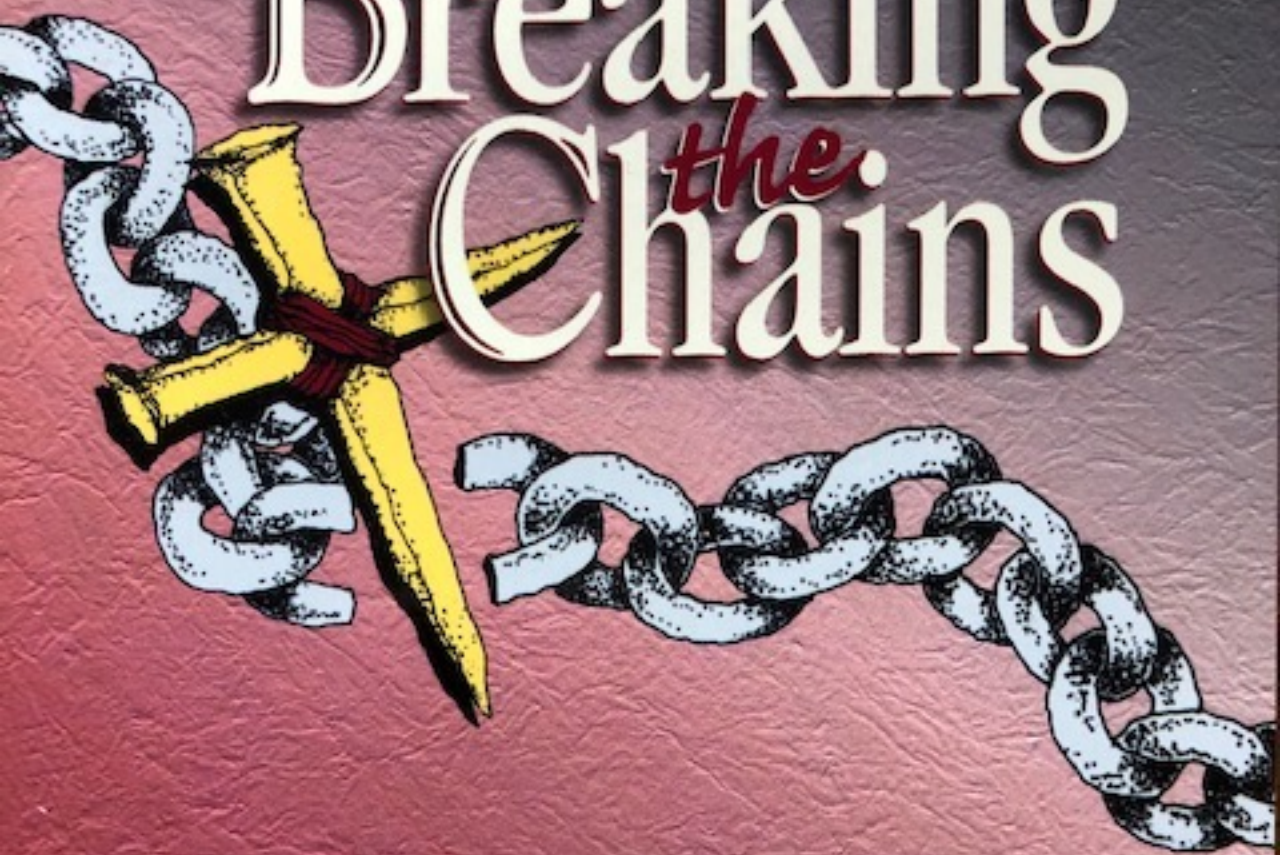


# Breaking *the* Chains



by  
Jack Morlan

*Breaking the Chains* by Jack Morlan is a compelling testimonial about how the love of parents and a spouse can help overcome the harm and hurt of sexual abuse in childhood as well as a homosexual lifestyle in adulthood. In the twenty years I have known him, I have seen Jack and his wife Paula demonstrate their Christian commitment to each other, to their children, and to people who are suffering with various addictions.

I appointed Jack Morlan to the Iowa Civil Rights Commission in May of 1997, where he provided excellent leadership. He was chosen by his colleagues on the Commission to serve as its Chairperson for two years. His leadership and fairness in dealing with everyone was a trait that convinced me he would serve the people of Iowa well on that very important commission.

I know that you will enjoy reading this compelling story.  
—Terry E. Branstad, Governor of Iowa, 1983-1999

As a personal friend for many years, I have watched God's love and grace transform Jack Morlan's life. Jack is a true testimony to the resurrection power of Jesus Christ in the world today.

His servant's heart and God's call prompted Jack to begin Freedom Ministries, Inc. as an outreach to those who are bound by sexual sins and looking for a way out.

Jack Morlan's life and testimony have not only helped many find freedom in Jesus but also have been an encouragement to the family and friends of those who suffer from chains that bind.

—Judy Graesch  
Women of Promise, Des Moines, Iowa  
Charter Board Member, Freedom Ministries, Inc.

Jack always had a pleasant personality. I also enjoyed his expertise in hairdressing. I did *not* enjoy the others in the shop. The anti-God language and lifestyles became very wearing.

When Jack told me he had received Christ as Savior, I was stunned! It was remarkable to watch as he began to live the Christian life. I have never known anyone to make a more complete about-face after conversion. God has done a wonderful work in his life and the "old" Jack is no longer visible.

He told me that the night he became a Christian, he looked in the mirror and saw firsthand what all kinds of abuse and alcohol had done. "God, I have lived my life my way and this is what I have become. I think you can do it better and I am willing to let you try."

I thank God for that change and for letting me have a small part. I also thank God for Jack's praying parents who never gave up. What a blessing!

— *Catherine Erickson*

I commend Jack for the love he shows in having this book published. It will be a help and encouragement to all who read it. What a hallmark day for Jack, Paula, and their family! Jack has shown great determination in helping others find freedom in Jesus. The mercy and compassion he shows others is easy to recognize. I thank him for the honest and sincere way he lives his life.

I am honored to be Jack's pastor, and I am inspired by the way he gives of himself sacrificially to the Lord. I pray that God will bless this book and Jack's ministry as it reaches into the middle of the battle. Sexual bondage is a huge problem in our world.

Jack, you are making a difference! Keep up the good work and keep pressing on in the name of Jesus!

— *James Weaver, Pastor*  
*New Hope Assembly of God, Des Moines, Iowa*

*Breaking the  
Chains*

*by*

*Jack Morlan*

BREAKING THE CHAINS

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Cover Art by Becky McIntosh

Cover Graphics by Troy Clark

Author photograph courtesy of Christian Photo, Brian Christian

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Library of Congress Control Number 2002 190148

ISBN 0-9721304-0-3

First Printing            2002

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To purchase copies of this book contact . . .

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P. O. Box 65950  
West Des Moines, IA 50265

Printed in the U.S.A. by

Morris Publishing  
3212 East Highway 30  
Kearney NE 68847  
Phone: 1-800-650-7888

## *Dedication*

I dedicate this book to Robert and Violet Morlan, my father and mother. Their unconditional love and prayers were key to my salvation in Jesus Christ. Their encouragement and love, which they extend even today, continue to help me grow spiritually on the strong biblical base they helped to establish.

I also dedicate this book to my best friend and wife, Paula, for all her love and support through the years. She helped me understand the love of Christ and encouraged me to be the true man that God wanted me to be. She gave countless hours of unconditional love at times when I struggled emotionally.

To my sons, Jason and Zachary, I thank you for your loving support and for allowing me to be your father, an accomplishment I never dreamed could happen. I pray you will continue following Jesus Christ and always work for Him.

I thank these individuals for different seasons of support, encouragement, and unconditional love: John and Karen Kinney; Pastor Don Poole; Judy Graesch; Pastor Doug and Diana Bacon; Lynn and Sarah Leslie; and Bill and Gloria Clark.

Special notes of thanks to Judy Graesch for her vision for this book, and to Linda Delbridge for making this book a reality.

How eternally blessed and grateful I am to all!

*—Jack Morlan*

## *Foreword*

This is a powerful story — the story of a little boy who, through no fault of his own, was forced into a sinful and decadent lifestyle. It is his heartbreaking account of brokenness — a broken mind, body, and spirit.

It is also a story of faith and victory — a story of how Jesus transformed Jack, led him out of homosexuality, and has given him many joys and blessings, including a loving, committed wife and two great sons!

This is a story of how Satan lost and God won!

It's a story that will encourage you and build your faith to believe for the impossible in your life and family.

It's a story that gives glory and praise to our eternal, loving Lord!

*John M. Palmer, Pastor  
First Assembly of God  
Des Moines, Iowa*

## *Introduction*

As you read this book, it is my prayer that those dealing with homosexuality and other sexual addictions will realize there is hope and freedom. I pray you will find encouragement to continue your pursuit for God's heart and search for change. Change can and will happen if we continue to be open to God and allow Him to work in us.

For the friends and family of those bound by sexual addictions, it is my prayer that you will find encouragement to continue in hope and not give up on those you love. I trust my life will be a testimony of the need for family and friends to stand by and pray for those bound by sexual addictions, as well as other problems, until they attain freedom from those life-controlling behaviors. I encourage you to always continue to love, as love is the greatest of all commandments.

Jesus' promise to all of us is clearly stated in Luke 4:18-19: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."*

May God richly bless you.

*Jack Morlan*





# Facts, Fallacies, and Freedom

## *Early Childhood*

We mirrored the average American family of the '50s. Our parents, my four sisters, and I lived on a farm in southern Iowa. A close-knit family, we went to church on Sunday, depended on each other for companionship, and relied on one another for help on the farm. My dad worked long, hard days so our little piece of ground would support our large family. My mom's more-than-full-time job was caring for all seven of us. Nothing tragic should ever happen in such an idyllic setting.

And it didn't until I was seven years old. My life was ruined when a cousin and neighbor boys first molested me. It was our new game, they explained. "Don't tell your parents," they warned. "It's our private secret. No harm done."

No harm done, but I became the victim of childhood sexual abuse.

*"If a man owns a  
hundred sheep,  
and one...wanders  
away, will he  
not...go to look  
for the one that  
wandered off?...  
In the same way  
your Father in  
heaven is not  
willing that any  
of these little ones  
should be lost."  
—Matthew 18:12-14*

*“Woe to the world  
because of the  
things that cause  
people to sin...woe  
to the man through  
whom they come!”  
– Matthew 18:7*

Initially, they wanted to play their game only occasionally, but by the time I was nine years old, being used as their toy had become a two- or three-times-a-week habit. I knew something was not right, and although I wanted to tell someone what was happening, I felt totally alone and trapped in this nightmare.

The abuse continued throughout my teen years, and I became extremely lonely, confused, and hurt. Oh, I had people around me. By then, I had become attractive to those who took advantage of me. At that time, I did not understand my powerful but conflicting emotions or the consequences of these acts.

Remember the dime-store kaleidoscope toys? As you looked through a very small viewfinder and turned the outside sleeve on the far end, multi-colored pebbles shifted to form ever-changing complex patterns reflected by mirrors with somewhat surreal effects. My life was kaleidoscopic. My view of relationships was restricted by the confines of childhood sexual abuse. It wasn't pebbles but boulders that tumbled in my world: fear; guilt; isolation; nicknames; manipulation; lack of athletic ability; distorted

experiences with trust, approval, love. My personality took on ever-changing patterns that became increasingly complex and unhealthy.

I was afraid to tell my parents because the older boys had directed me specifically to not tell them. Two reasons kept me from turning to anyone at church: we didn't ever discuss questions about sex at church, plus the neighbor boys and my cousin attended the same church as my family. Further, although my family attended church, we did not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I had nowhere to turn, and I blamed myself for whatever was wrong.

My parents didn't realize what was happening because I was so good at keeping the secret. They kept asking if something was wrong, but I always ran away and would not let them know. My father was so tied up in taking care of the farm that I thought he never had time to sit and talk with me.

I felt isolated from my peers. Because I was overweight, other kids called me "Porky," which was another form of emotional abuse that hurt terribly. I wasn't athletic and didn't fit in with the "jocks."

*...in the day of  
trouble he will  
keep me safe  
in his dwelling;  
he will hide me  
in the shelter of  
his tabernacle...  
– Psalm 27:5*

*...they have greatly  
oppressed me from  
my youth, but they  
have not gained the  
victory over me.  
– Psalm 129:2*

As children grow up, our society imposes a grave injustice by placing so much emphasis on sports. If a male child doesn't become athletic or macho, then there must be something wrong with him and he becomes the object of vicious name-calling. These attitudes and expectations reach into a boy's mind and make him wonder, "What's wrong with me?"

God blessed each of us with talents and abilities. To some, He gave artistic gifts, to others musical gifts, and to still others intellectual gifts. Each gift and each person is equally valuable in God's eyes. If any child, male or female, possesses what society deems to be a more feminine ability, we should enhance it with God's protection. Many male homosexuals have told me they did not want to be athletes but they were intimidated by comments such as "Then you are not a man." Rather than destroy others with our negative tongues and biases, we would do well to heed the directive found in James 1:26 that we curb our tongues. This applies to interactions with children as well as adults, because children remember. Childhood experiences and perceptions can result in permanent damage. Just as x-rays of an adult still reveal a childhood fracture, so also the scar tissue of any childhood abuse remains forever.

Scripture tells us that as adults we are responsible for teaching our children. We must encourage them to talk with us about their feelings, their fears, their interactions with other children and other adults, their views on current issues...anything! When they feel inferior, we need to raise them to become healthy self-actualized adults.

Typical of most children and adolescents, I looked up to the older kids and desperately wanted their acceptance and approval. I wanted to be included in their activities. I wanted them to like me. Also typical of children, I looked to the older people in my life for guidance, safety, security, and love. The mistreatment I received distorted my understanding of what adults should provide for children.

I believed the only way men loved me was through their abuse of me. I believed the lie that the only way I could develop a relationship with a man and be liked by him was to let him use me. I believed that to gain the approval of men, I had to please them sexually. I became accustomed to thinking that was what love was about.

*Humble yourselves,  
therefore, under  
God's mighty  
hand, that he may  
lift you up in due  
time. Cast all your  
anxiety on him  
because he cares  
for you.  
— 1 Peter 5:7*

## *Adolescence*

*...your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God[.] You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.  
— 1 Cor. 6:19*

By the time I was in junior high, I had built thick walls around myself. I knew something was wrong, but I didn't understand it and I certainly wasn't going to let anyone get close to me. I was vulnerable and assailable in relation to my molesters, and the walls became a defense mechanism that kept others at a distance, gave me some pitifully small sense of who I was, and protected me from being hurt by even more people.

I didn't realize, of course, that building walls is so destructive for any potentially positive relationship. In keeping out what we perceive as bad, we also keep out all that is good. Walls only reinforce the isolation and anger that are their very foundation. Although the walls initially served a protective function, building barriers and being used became my only approaches to relationships.

In high school, the loneliness continued and I was willing to do whatever it took to "belong." I was caught even deeper until sex with males became an obsession with me. I forced myself into sports. I tried track and failed miserably at hurdles. I tried basketball and succeeded — because

seven of the team members were gay and we had our own little club.

Like most teenagers, I was looking for love — but not a normal or healthy kind of love. I desperately wanted to fit in and I thought this was the only way to gain acceptance, especially from men. I knew my parents loved me and cared about me, but I now kept the secret because I didn't want to hurt them.

By the time I was a senior in high school, I was very involved with a group of homosexual adults. They started teaching me their games, such as “You were born this way...You must accept yourself....Just learn to live with it.” Yet inside I was being ripped apart. I learned how to be different persons depending on who I was with and whose acceptance I wanted. I developed a “fantasyland” within myself. There were the various persons I wanted others to think I was, but then there was the person I *knew* I was. I was deeply and seriously conflicted.

I went off to college to get away from all the pressures. By then, I had become a master wall-builder with a split personality. I could be sweet and caring one minute and peel wallpaper off the wall with my mouth the next.

*“You are the ones  
who justify  
yourselves in the  
eyes of men, but  
God knows your  
hearts. What is  
highly valued  
among men is  
detestable in  
God's sight.”  
— Luke 16:15*



## *Early Adulthood*

*They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator...  
– Romans 1:25*

College in the sixties was a time of rebellion and “causes” for many people. It was there that I first heard the word “homosexual” and realized that meant me. I ran into an even larger segment of homosexuality on campus. I was engaged in a real battle. I knew what I was doing wasn’t right but I didn’t know what the answer was. I explained to a university counselor that I didn’t understand my emotions, my feelings, my sexual desires. His response was, “Live with it. You were born this way. It’s who you are. Accept it.”

I sought out a second psychiatrist who also advised, “Live with it. You were born this way. There is nothing you can do to change.” Some time later at a party, I encountered both psychiatrists; they were practicing homosexuals themselves.

Not wanting to accept being gay, I thought the only way out was to get married. I began dating, found a nice young woman, and we married. Within two years, I was looking at divorce because I could no longer sustain the game with my wife. I had tried to play two roles and the result was that my marriage became a façade. I realized I

could neither continue denying my homosexuality nor continue to ruin her life. I learned I couldn't play roles with sin. Sin controls. It consumes our minds; it devours our souls.

When I talked to her about divorce, my wife insisted on knowing if I was seeing someone else. Although I was reluctant, I finally admitted that yes, I was seeing someone — another man. This crushed her even more. She could compete with another woman, but how could she compete with another man?

We divorced and I left school. I literally ran away. After all, if I had to face my family, I would have to face what was wrong with me. No one knew where I was. I planned to get to California where all the fun was, but I got as far as Des Moines. I thought I was hidden, but I was to learn I could never hide from God.

I couldn't hide from my parents, either. Several months passed, but Dad tracked me down. He called and asked me to come home. He wanted to know what was happening.

I agreed to go home for Thanksgiving because I knew I could play the game with my family for the

*Nothing in all  
creation is hidden  
from God's sight.  
Everything is  
uncovered and laid  
bare before the eyes  
of him to whom we  
must give account.  
— Hebrews 4:13*

*Cast your cares on  
the Lord and he  
will sustain you...  
– Psalm 55:22a*

weekend. Everyone was home. Later in the day when Mom and my sisters had gone for a ride, Dad sat me down. I was nervous; I was afraid; I was conflicted; I was trapped. How could I tell him the truth? I was also rebellious, and I decided to be very forceful when I told him about my lifestyle and what I had sold myself into. Numerous people had informed me that I was a homosexual, that I'd been born that way, and I believed it. There was no way anyone was going to change my mind.

“Son,” Dad began, “I want to know what the problem is. What happened with your marriage? Why did you disappear? Your life is a mess. Please talk to me. Let me help.”

I paused. “You are not going to understand this. I don't understand it myself. Dad, I am a homosexual.”

He turned white. It was the first time I saw my father cry. He wanted to know what he and Mom had done to bring this about. I told him I didn't know what had happened or how it happened; I told him I knew of nothing they had done. Dad blamed himself, he felt he was wrong, he was guilty, he had failed me as a father. But the

truth is that my parents never failed me: it was Satan who stole me.

We talked a long time. Finally I said, "Dad, I know it is going to take you a while to accept this and I also know that you will not want me to come home again because of what I am. I accept that and will deal with it myself."

Mom returned. I couldn't tell her. I left. I watched them stand at the door as Dad cried and Mom just held him. She did not know what had taken place. I had made a choice: I would continue living the lie. I wept all the way back to Des Moines, knowing I would never see my family again. I was not worthy to be their son and brother.

In the ensuing weeks, I went back to school, this time in cosmetology. I worked full time during the day and attended classes at night. I was determined to be "someone." I went full force into the "gay" lifestyle. I was a leader in bringing the Gay Liberation movement to Des Moines. I decided to develop my life totally for myself. Money and power would be my gods. I would do anything I could to accumulate more and more of both.

*But God  
demonstrates  
his own love for  
us in this: While  
we were still  
sinners, Christ  
died for us.  
— Romans 5:8*

*Let love and  
faithfulness never  
leave you: bind  
them around your  
neck, write them on  
the tablet of your  
heart.*

*– Proverbs 3:3*

I went home after work and, to my surprise, found a letter from my father. I expected him to end our relationship, but instead he wrote, “I do not understand how this could have happened to you, but I want you to know I love you. You are a part of your mother and me. If there is anything we can do to help you, we are here. Come talk to us any time. We love you.” It meant so much to know that my father cared. But I didn’t want to change; I didn’t think there was any way I could change.

To this day, I cherish that letter. My parents’ unconditional love is what brought me through and kept me from making the final break with my family and with God.

My parents began seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. They changed churches and found a spirit-filled band of believers who prayed and interceded for me. They continued to reach out in love, caring for me and my partner. They loved me in spite of my nasty attitude and my constant manipulative ways.

I did not want my parents’ help or their interference. After all, I was gaining power in the “gay” social set. I had formed a partnership in a hair

salon with other homosexual males. I was even a big part of the “normal people’s” social set! I thought I had it made when actually Satan had me tightly bound.

When my parents visited my roommate and me, they would only say, “We love you. You know the way you’re living is not right. But we love you.” They were crushed by my lifestyle but they didn’t give up.

I thought the most important thing in the world was to have power and money, no matter how I got it. And I was not a very nice person. I did not care who you were. If you could get me what I wanted, I would connive and manipulate you to get it. Once I got it, I did not need you any more. I had no remorse in tossing you aside.

My life was going well. I had built a relationship with another male, I had grown in my profession, and I was a partner in a successful business. For ten years, I lived like this, interlocked in real estate, finances, and insurance. Our business prospered. I didn’t realize it at the time, but it was Satan’s tool. I wanted money and more money — more than anything else in the world I wanted money and power. I would lie if it would get me what I wanted. I

*Love is patient,  
love is kind...It  
is not rude, it is  
not self-seeking,  
it is not easily  
angered, it keeps  
no record of  
wrongs. Love does  
not delight in evil  
but rejoices with  
the truth. It always  
protects, always  
trusts, always  
hopes, always  
perseveres. Love  
never fails.  
— 1 Cor. 13:4-8*

*"I am the Lord your  
God, who brought  
you out of...slavery.  
You shall have no  
other gods before  
me."*

*– Exodus 20:2-3*

would party as hard as necessary to get what I wanted. I didn't care what I had to do to get what I wanted. I had no scruples. I cared about no one but myself.

I was supposed to be having a good time, but I wasn't. I kept building more and more walls, not letting anybody get to me.

### *Set Free*

The tenth year, however, brought change. My roommate was done...ready to get out. I had flown to Phoenix to drive a client's car back to Des Moines, knowing that my roommate would confront me when I got home. I schemed along the whole route, deciding I would not let him go. I was in control. I was powerful. I was manipulative.

During the drive home, billboards proclaiming "Jesus Saves" and "Jesus is the Answer" kept jumping out at me. I did not want to see this unsettling message! I hated those words.

My usual drinking habit then was a half gallon of scotch a week, countless martinis, and all the beer I could get my hands on. I was planning to bar hop all the way home, but

strangely, I had no taste for liquor and I found no place to stop the entire trip. I know now that the Lord was beginning His work in me.

As I expected, my roommate confronted me as soon as I got home, and declared he was leaving. He was going home to tell his folks about our splitting. "And do you know what they're going to say?" he continued. "They are going to tell us we need Jesus."

Here it was again. I was so angry! I was tired of hearing about Jesus everywhere I turned. I was defiant. "Why do we need Jesus? We have all these material things, money, property, power. What can He possibly do for us?"

I'd had more than enough of this Jesus stuff. Still thinking I was in control, I finally told my partner, "Well, maybe we do need Him. But if I need Him, I will do it my own way."

My plan was that if it would keep my partner there, then I would pray to Jesus and see what He had for me.

I challenged God that night to prove Himself to me. Because I had dabbled in it, I knew Satan's power and

*...God exalted him  
to the highest place  
and gave him the  
name that is above  
every name, that at  
the name of Jesus  
every knee should  
bow...and every  
tongue confess  
that Jesus Christ  
is Lord...  
-Philippians 2:9-11*



*For he has rescued  
us from the  
dominion of  
darkness and  
brought us into  
the kingdom of the  
Son he loves, in  
whom we have  
redemption, the  
forgiveness of sins.  
– Col. 1:13-14*

I thought God was not all-powerful. God would have to prove to me that He really wanted me.

“Lord, everybody has been talking to me about you. I will give you one chance. I’ve tried drugs, I’ve tried alcohol, I’ve tried sex, I’ve tried everything. But I haven’t tried Jesus. My life is coming apart. Tonight is your night. If You are who You say You are, and if You are as powerful as people say You are, then I want You to do something in my life tonight. I want You to come down here. I will give you my life. I want You to set me free from all the bondage that I am in. But do not leave one vile thing in me, because if You do, I will fail.”

Memories from Sunday school flooded my mind. I bowed my head, remembering from my childhood to ask, “Lord, come into my life and change me now.” I remembered to ask Him to cleanse me. I remembered to ask for the forgiveness of all the sins I had committed.

It seemed that a concrete wall collapsed on me. I dropped to the floor. I had a vision of black chains that had wrapped around me throughout my life; they were being broken by a pair of hands and tossed to the side. A

sensation of heat went from my toes up through my head, like all the garbage was being bubbled out of me, like the vile poison within me was being cleansed away. I went to the liquor cabinet and dumped it all down the drain. I knew I was changed; my emotions were different — I felt happiness and overwhelming relief. The burden of my sinful lifestyle and all its destructive attitudes and behaviors lifted! I was no longer bound! The shackles had been removed!

So this is the joy of salvation! How do I ever thank Him enough? This was the first peace I had ever truly known. I wanted just to be surrounded by that peace. As I went to my room, I urged my roommate, “You need this Jesus too.”

Some time later I was startled by a loud scream. When I rushed downstairs to check on my partner, he told me too had accepted Jesus Christ. We were both set free!

It was three o'clock in the morning when I picked up the phone to call Mom and Dad. When they answered and I told them what had happened, Dad cried and proclaimed, “This is the call we have been waiting

*Praise the Lord,  
O my soul, and  
forget not all his  
benefits - who  
forgives all your  
sins and heals  
all your diseases,  
who redeems your  
life from the pit  
and crowns you  
with love and  
compassion,  
who satisfies your  
desires with good  
things so that your  
youth is renewed  
like the eagle's.  
— Psalm 103:2-5*

*He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him... Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.  
— John 1:10, 12*

for!” They immediately prayed for us over the telephone. Mom and Dad drove over 700 miles that next weekend to direct us to a church where we would find the Word of God.

I began to realize how much my parents had always loved and cared about me. I began to understand the great extent to which I could always depend on them. Over the coming years, I developed a deep and precious relationship with them, a relationship for which I would trade nothing in the world! Also, both my former partner and I are serving Christ today. Our relationship changed as it left behind manipulative homosexuality and took on brotherly love in the Lord.

The day after I had given my life to the Lord, I went to work at the salon as usual. I decided to say nothing about my new life in Christ, knowing what my business partners’ reaction would be. My first client came in, sat down, and asked, “What is wrong with you?”

“Nothing,” I replied.

“No, there is something different about you. You are not the same Jack I saw last week. There is a glow around you and I see peace on your face.”

I looked into the mirror saying, "Really? You do?" I could not see anything different.

She continued to badger me until I finally told her I had accepted Jesus Christ into my heart. Throughout the day, other clients repeated the same question and observation. "What is wrong with you?...Something is different!...There is a glow around you!"

Finally, the last client of the day came in. Cathy had been witnessing to me for ten years, bringing tracts for me to read every week, telling me I needed Jesus, insisting I was worth too much to be living in that particular lifestyle, encouraging me that Jesus had more in store for me than I could possibly know. As soon as she got in my chair, I said, "Cathy, I have something to tell you. But you look so sad. First, you tell me what is wrong."

She asked that I share my news first, so I told her I had received Jesus. She began crying. "Jack," she said, "I decided I could not stand coming in here any longer. I was going to tell you my whole family would no longer be coming to you. I know God answers prayers, sometimes with 'yes' and sometimes 'no.' After praying for you

*Then I  
acknowledged my  
sin to you and did  
not cover up my  
iniquity. I said,  
"I will confess  
my transgressions  
to the Lord" - and  
you forgave the  
guilt of my sin.  
- Psalm 32:5*

*"Do not judge, and  
you will not be  
judged.  
Do not condemn,  
and you will not be  
condemned.  
Forgive, and you  
will be forgiven.  
Give, and it will be  
given to you.  
A good measure,  
pressed down,  
shaken together  
and running over,  
will be poured into  
your lap.  
For with the  
measure you use, it  
will be measured to  
you."  
— Luke 6:37-38*

for ten years, I felt He had said 'no' and I should move on. But He did reach your heart! Now I know God's answer to my prayer was 'yes!'"

As Cathy and her husband continued to disciple me, I learned the importance of our witnessing. Regardless of how much we are rejected, we must keep reaching out and we must keep praying if lives are to be changed.

### *Learning to Trust*

1980 was the beginning of my walk with Jesus Christ. God is so faithful, but He asks that we be fully and totally obedient to Him and His word. He wants us to come as children, perfectly trusting the Holy Spirit to guide every step of our lives. But He promises nowhere that it will be an easy walk; He does promise to walk with us every step of the journey.

I needed to heal from a tremendous amount of emotional abuse. I had to tear down walls as thick as those of Jericho. At a home cell Bible study, I was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to realize the greatness of God. The Holy Spirit gave me power, strength, and courage for

each step along the way. He was my teacher, and He patiently showed me how to trust and obey.

*First*, He brought me out of the business partnership with the homosexuals. It was a painful process. People tend to think the war is over once you accept Christ. Wrong. It has only begun. Scripture never promises that once we pick up His cross, we will never be persecuted. The persecution was right beside me in the person of my business partner. He was so upset when he heard that I had accepted Christ that he couldn't even speak to me. When we finally talked, he informed me, "I must take control of the corporation because you have become unstable. You cannot make good business decisions since you have made these changes."

My partner called a staff meeting with everyone but me during which he instructed everyone to stay away from me. If I walked into a room, they were to walk out. They were not to talk to me, and they were not to socialize with me. They cursed me; they even spit on me. As a new Christian, I wanted to be loved rather than walk into that atmosphere of intentional hurt.

I refused to give up control of the business. I thought I had it more

*"...heal the man  
and give him back  
to his father."  
– Luke 9:42*

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."  
— Jeremiah 28:11*

together than ever before. I sought the Lord's wisdom and direction. Every night as I read Scripture, I found preparation for the next day. I finally felt directed to sell my share of the business but I continued to argue with God. I had struggled for 12 years to be successful professionally in Des Moines and I wasn't about to give it up.

I knew the Lord wanted me to trust Him, but I had never been able to trust anybody. I eventually yielded and walked out of the corporation with very little. I gave over more than \$400,000 in order to let God have His way with me. When I had signed everything over and the changes were final, ironically, my partner asked me to manage the business. He acknowledged that I controlled the atmosphere with the clients and that I possessed all the business knowledge because I did all the bookwork. He needed me.

I agreed because I had no other place to go. As time went by, I felt the Lord asking me to trust Him again, this time for a new business. A man called and wanted to talk to me about a business venture. "But Lord, I have no money," I complained.

“Trust me,” He said.

When I opened the new business, I knew what I could produce each month, and it wasn't nearly enough even to cover the expenses of my own shop. However, God has always supplied my needs. In that first month alone, the Lord doubled my income! He showed me miracles and revealed that as long as I walked with Him and gave Him control, He would keep blessing me.

As the business grew, I had to make changes within myself in dealing with bitterness, hatred, and pride. I had to deal with myself so the Lord could prepare me for something else. It took six months of daily struggle to get rid of the bitterness. God could not bring me to a new level until I got on my knees and forgave those who had wronged me. And in the midst of my refusal to do so, He asked me, “Didn't I forgive you?”

God led me to a Bible-believing church where I became grounded in the Word. The Lord gave me a mission field right there in my business. He showed me hurting clients who needed to know about Jesus. But I had to learn how to be an example before they could trust me.

*He guides me  
in paths of  
righteousness for  
his name's sake.  
Even though I walk  
through the valley  
of the shadow of  
death, I will fear no  
evil, for you are  
with me...  
– Psalm 23:3-4*



*"...I am the Lord  
who heals you."  
– Exodus 15:16b*

I was learning how to really love people. For the first time in my life, I could look at my mom, my dad, my sisters, and say "I love you" and know what it truly meant. I could love other people and I could feel compassion for them in their struggles because Jesus put love and compassion in my heart. It was only through Him that I became "real."

*Second*, through the singles' group at church, God brought a beautiful Christian woman into my life. This wasn't my idea! I did not want her because she was too strong-willed and aggressive for me. But the Lord had other plans. He knew that to break through the emotional barriers I had built up for twenty years and to sustain a meaningful relationship, I would need just that kind of person.

Because I had already ruined one life and one marriage, I was sure I would never marry again. Because of where I had been; I didn't think I could be the godly kind of husband I wanted to be and a wife would need me to be. I would be richly blessed if we could just be good friends.

"Trust me," the Lord said.

My roommate suggested I list what I considered important qualities

in a woman. As he read down my list, he observed, "That's amazing. This is the girl you keep seeing as a friend."

One Sunday as Paula and I were talking, I started to share with her about my past. A good friendship had to be built on truth and honesty.

"You don't have to tell me," she replied. "I already know."

"But how could you?"

"The first time I saw you," she explained, "I was singing in the choir. When I saw you walk in, I knew you were the man I would marry. I sensed what your past had been and I knew you had given your life to the Lord."

"Knowing what I was, how can you even be with me?" I had to know.

"Because that's in the past. You are a new creation in Christ. And besides," she continued, "if God has forgiven you, who am I to *not* forgive?"

My friend became my wife. And just as He had gone before me and prepared all the other aspects of my life, God used Paula to minister to me in my emotional needs. I had to learn

*Trust in the Lord  
with all your heart  
and lean not on  
your own  
understanding; in  
all your ways  
acknowledge him,  
and he will make  
your paths  
straight.  
— Proverbs 3:5-6*

*...my God will meet  
all your needs  
according to his  
glorious riches in  
Christ Jesus.  
– Philippians 4:19*

to love in a wholly new and different way. I had to learn to trust this person He put in my life. If it weren't for Paula, I wouldn't be in ministry today. For many years, she had to patiently show me I could love, I could have feelings, and I could let another person be close to me and know me deeply. Only Paula's strength could nurture those changes in me.

In spite of our growing love, in spite of our marriage being blessed by God, and in spite of being born again, we struggled. Instead of focusing on Jesus, I began dwelling too much on my past because I was afraid of falling back into it. Depression set in. Satan tried to destroy my marriage again. I was plagued by thoughts such as "I will never be a good husband...I failed once and I will fail again."

I thought about turning from those thoughts the second I became aware of them and declaring, "No! I am a new creation in Jesus Christ and those things will not happen again. He will direct my way." But I had unearthed the kaleidoscope. The old thought patterns persisted. I was emotionally and physically exhausted. I wouldn't let Paula know how "down" I was, and I certainly wouldn't tell her I was crumbling. I didn't want her to worry.

I have since learned that keeping things from my spouse is not a wise strategy if I want a sound marriage and if I want victory over problems and sin.

In the second year of our marriage, I decided that rather than fail again, it would be better for me to die. Paula was away one weekend on a business trip, and I planned my suicide for that time. I was home alone, sitting in the rocker, in total darkness, thinking, "This is the time for me to die." I was startled by the doorbell. "How could anyone even know I am home? Not a single light is turned on..."

Something propelled me to the door. I was amazed to see my parents. "Jack, we know something is wrong. We came to be with you. Let us help. You know we love you."

I told them I wanted to die.

Immediately, they put their arms around me and began praying. Mom and Dad stayed with me the entire night. They kept assuring me that they would stand beside me literally as well as in prayer. They promised they would not leave me alone in this battle. They helped me understand that the suicidal thoughts were Satan's attempts to gain

*"For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."  
– Matthew 6:14*

*Cast your cares on  
the Lord and he  
will sustain you...  
– Psalm 55:22a*

control of my mind and spirit, and we were determined he would not win! Through the night, my parents prayed for Jesus to take control of my life, including all suicidal and other destructive thoughts. They called on Jesus' authority to cleanse and heal my mind and my spirit. With their faith, their courage, their convictions, and their loving presence, morning brought light for the days ahead and for my heart, mind, and soul. They had given me the gift of life itself with my birth so many years before; they gave me the gift of life a second time that night.

With my parents' faithful help, Paula's love and support, prayers of our church family, and the strength of the Lord, we made it through that struggle and all the others that were to come.

During our years of marriage, God has shown me repeatedly that it was Paula's strength and determination that brought healing to me and that provided a solid foundation on which to build our life together.

We have struggled with the deep issues from our pasts, but always, *always* God has provided wisdom and strength so we could mature in Him.

Our marriage today is powerful, packed with godly love and discernment to minister compassion and deliverance together.

*Third*, in His infinite wisdom, God blessed us with children. Early in our marriage, we had decided we would not be parents, but we changed our minds with time. We would have one child. We went to the hospital for the birth of our little daughter! I was holding Paula's hand during the Caesarean-section when the doctor announced, "You have a perfect, healthy son!"

A son? "Lord," I prayed through tears, "you really do love me!"

I didn't think I was worthy to have a son because of the life I had led. But just as God in His great love gave His Son to the world, in His great love He gave me a son. He picked me out of the pit of hell. He re-created me and my whole life, and now He showed me how to love my son as our Heavenly Father loves His children. God *trusted* me to raise a son who would be the godly *man* He intended.

God will do the same for all who will give themselves to Him. It doesn't matter if you're an alcoholic, a drug

*"...if you have  
faith as small as  
a mustard seed...  
Nothing will be  
impossible for you."  
– Matt. 17:20-21*

*Bear with each  
other and forgive  
whatever  
grievances you  
may have against  
one another.  
Forgive as the  
Lord forgave you.  
And over all these  
virtues put on  
love, which binds  
them all together  
in perfect unity.  
— Col. 3:13-14*

addict, a homosexual, a pornography addict, a gambling addict, whatever. He will mold you into what He wants you to be. According to His perfect will, you will know the riches of the Father's love.

Two years later, we had decided to have one more child. God blessed us with another son to raise for His glory. Our sons, Jason which means "the healer" and Zachary which means "Jehovah has remembered," are miracle children we never dreamed possible. We praise God for their fresh innocence, their beauty, and the explosive joy they bring to our family. God is so merciful and His grace is truly sufficient!

Paula and I firmly believe God allowed us to parent these sons and that He allowed us to be healed through them — Paula from many years of rejection in relationships with her family, and myself from broken and perverted relationships. I learned and loved my responsibility to nurture and love these sons as a father.

We have always prayed together as a family, and Paula and I have taken seriously our responsibility to teach the boys about living as Christians and about being able to do spiritual

warfare. When Jason was only four or five, he was able to take authority over evil in Jesus' name. We knew he had been watching and listening and understanding as we ministered.

As we grew and witnessed through our ministry, the boys grew with us. They learned how to pray with people, how to minister, how to lay hands on those who had physical needs. How exciting it is to see God using our sons in our ministry! On occasion, people might hear my testimony and wonder if I really changed, but when they saw our family together, when they saw our sons involved and witnessing, it was confirmation that God can take a sinful life and change it for His glory. It was affirmation that a man can leave a homosexual lifestyle and become the husband and father of a family as God designed it.

When the boys were about nine and eleven, one particular meeting became a spiritual milestone for our family: We experienced God's favor as He ministered not only through Paula and me but also through our sons. A man who had just left his wife was driving through Cedar Rapids when he heard about our upcoming meeting. He had been dabbling in the

*In his great  
mercy he has  
given us a new  
birth into a  
living hope...  
and into an  
inheritance that  
can never perish,  
spoil or fade...  
— 1 Peter 1:3-4*



*...you saw my  
affliction and knew  
the anguish of my  
soul....Be merciful  
to me, O Lord, for I  
am in distress...  
– Psalm 31:7, 9*

homosexual lifestyle and decided to find out more about our ministry. He attended the meeting, listened, and then moved with us into another room where we prayed privately with individuals. This gentleman requested prayer, and he told us later that when Jason laid his hands on him and prayed over him, it was like a fire hit him.

Several weeks later, we received a letter from his wife in which she explained that he left the meeting that night and returned home. “I do not know what happened at that meeting,” she shared, “but my husband is a different man. He keeps talking about the young boy who laid his hands on him while he and his father prayed and about the fire that broke chains.” This confirmed to us that God was using our sons. How exciting to know that the mantle had been passed along to them as well!

Even when they were little boys, our sons were involved in the ministry. During one meeting when eight-year-old Jason was sitting with Paula, he turned to her and urgently explained, “Mommy, I have to go up there and pray with Daddy for that man. He needs prayer for something.” He came up and whispered to me the specific reasons the man needed prayer. Through the Holy Spirit, God used a

young boy to help free someone from a sinful situation.

At the same time Jason joined me in praying with people who attended our meetings, little six-year-old Zachary offered to help with the tables of materials and found his place in the ministry, too.

Since the days when the boys were small, we have enjoyed praise and worship music at home. Putting that music into their hearts and encouraging them to participate created the conditions so they still turn to music as they keep their teenage spirits “in tune” with the Lord.

As a family, we have worked through rough times as our teenagers face the typical challenges of peer pressure and wrestle with the development of their faith. At times, we have seen Satan come against our family to tempt the boys away from the church and what we believe. At the same time, Paula has dealt with the physical and emotional roller coaster that accompanies middle age. As we keep reaching out, as we keep discussing questions and issues, as we remain focused on who and what we believe, these have been stretching and growing times. Most important, God remains faithful.

*I can do everything  
through him who  
gives me strength  
– Philippians 4:13*

*“...there will be  
showers of  
blessing...You [are]  
my sheep, the sheep  
of my pasture...I  
am your God...”  
– Ezekiel 34:26,31*

Like all of us and like all teenagers, our sons have learned from the “school of hard knocks.” Through each test, His angels have kept them safe. Our sons are involved in the church, in youth activities there, and in ministry. Our responsibility is to keep them focused on the Lord as they seek their own answers to questions about their faith and its daily applications.

As a typical family, we are not exempt from the thorns of this world. We too have our share of days when it’s painful and difficult to keep going. Regardless of how discouraged or depressed we might be from time to time, we know God’s love and concern for us remain constant. We know we can depend on Him to provide the wisdom and knowledge we need to help others be set free from sin.

## Foundations

### *Staying the Course*

When we carry hurts from our past, whether it's sexual abuse or physical abuse or an addiction, our hearts become enslaved by unforgiveness and hate. We can't get our lives straightened out. We can't serve the Lord, and we can't go forward with Him.

For several years, I asked the Lord to allow me to return to my home church and share my testimony. When I stood to give my witness, I saw one of the persons who molested me as a child sitting right in front of me. I asked the Lord to give me compassion and love for this person who had ruined my life. I had to forgive *him* before God could use *me*. I had to get rid of the bitterness.

I had to go back and deal with my anger and hate towards those who molested me. I didn't really want to forgive them. I wanted to hold on to my hate; I wanted to fuel it. The Lord showed me I had to confess and release all the negative feelings and thoughts so I could forgive and be healed. After the Lord set me free from the chains

*Humble yourselves,  
therefore, under  
God's mighty  
hand, that  
he may lift you up  
in due time.  
– 1 Peter 5:6*

*Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."  
– Matt. 18:21-22*

of sin, the next step was to be set free from the chains of bitterness and hate.

As I talked, the molester's expression changed. It seemed to me that he wanted to crawl away because he knew exactly who and what I was talking about. Afterwards, he came to me and said, "We need to talk."

When he drove to Des Moines and found me, he admitted, "I know that you were talking about me in your testimony. I hadn't realized that's what happened to you. I didn't know what I was doing to you. I didn't know my actions caused you to go into the homosexual lifestyle." He asked for my forgiveness which I readily gave him, but he had a hard time dealing with the whole situation.

He was only 16 or 17 years old when he molested me as a seven-year-old, and although I do not know it as fact, I think he himself was molested as a child by his father. If that is true, then from childhood on, his experience told him that's just what adult males do with little boys. He didn't know otherwise.

Most of the emotions and feelings we experience during childhood are natural and normal, but we don't

understand them. Males might be attracted to other males, but it doesn't mean they are homosexuals. More likely, they are just dealing with changing body chemistry and emotions. However, if they linger on that attraction, keep moving towards it, and finally act on it and continue to act on it, then they will be in trouble.

If others make them feel guilty, that only intensifies the isolation they already feel; it only encourages them to build more and thicker walls. It is vital that we explain to our children that while they might experience same-sex attraction, it does not mean they are homosexual. As parents, we need to keep channels of communication open between us and our children on countless topics and issues; sexual identity and behavior are certainly two of the critical areas about which our children need to know our honest opinions and our love.

*A word aptly  
spoken is like  
apples of gold in  
settings of silver.  
– Proverbs 25:11*

### *Avoiding the Roadblocks – Making Successful Detours*

In Iowa, we often describe our weather in terms of the seasons. Here, we have only two: winter and road construction! Travel difficulties are a

*She is clothed with  
strength and  
dignity...  
She speaks with  
wisdom, and  
faithful instruction  
is on her tongue...  
a woman who fears  
the Lord is to be  
praised.  
-Prov. 31:25-26, 30*

fact of life year-round. The same is true in describing the path you will encounter once you have given your life to the Lord and once you have made the bold decision to leave a controlling lifestyle. Be prepared for the inevitable roadblocks, but be assured that through the support of others, through prayer, through your own growing faith, through His grace and strength, "God will make a way."

As new Christians or as life-long Christians, we expect to find support, encouragement, understanding, tolerance, acceptance, etc., when we turn to the church as we deal with our problems. However, we often forget Jesus' observation that "it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Matthew 9:12b). Just as we turn to the church for help in healing our "lifestyle sickness," so also we will find countless others in the church because of their own various "sicknesses."

Due to some members' fear of the unknown and their lack of knowledge, they may reject us as we work to change our lifestyles. Some wrongly consider homosexuality to be the worst of all possible sins. Not a single verse of scripture substantiates this view. Sin is sin and must be dealt with that way.

Many churches refuse to offer sex education as a class or even as a topic for questions and discussion among youth groups. In many churches, homosexuality and adultery are not addressed biblically or otherwise. As integral as sex is to the way God created us, the topic is still taboo among many Christians.

These attitudes mean that the former homosexual, striving to make a major life change, is often greeted with attitudes ranging from suspicion to unawareness to unacceptance to unforgiveness. The rejection and isolation, so much a part of early experiences that contributed to those first wrong choices, is now repeated but in a context where acceptance and support were expected.

How do we overcome this judgmental roadblock? Those who are changing lifestyles must stay the course. Others in the church family must walk beside them and accept responsibility for the following:

- providing education and deliberately increasing awareness,
- training members to lead support groups for spouses and parents as well as accountability groups for those leaving the lifestyle, and

*When you pass  
through the waters,  
I will be with you;  
and when you pass  
through the rivers,  
they will not sweep  
over you. When  
you walk through  
the fire, you will  
not be burned; the  
flames will not  
set you ablaze.  
— Isaiah 43:2*



*All this is from  
God, who reconciled  
us to himself  
through Christ and  
gave us the  
ministry of  
reconciliation...  
We are therefore  
Christ's  
ambassadors, as  
though God were  
making his appeal  
through us.*

*– II Cor. 5:18,20*

- making those support and accountability groups as viable as other church-sponsored groups.

Those directly affected by homosexuality must drive through the roadblocks using these approaches:

- find two or three couples in the church who will be supportive, encouraging prayer warriors,
- have someone you can call at any time,
- have a safe place to which you can run,
- participate in support and accountability groups, and
- participate in a Bible study group for fellowship, encouragement, and growth in the knowledge of what it means to walk day by day as a Christian.

It's not easy to confront the general public, but plans for Freedom Ministries include producing a video for churches interested in working with these issues, and training people who will start and facilitate support groups in their churches and communities.

A second roadblock that not only stops progress but also causes us to backtrack is any return to old habits, old friends, old activities, old haunts,

etc. Teenagers who have completed in-house substance abuse treatment are directed to a new school, new friends, new activities because old associations will lead them right back into their old abuse patterns. The same is true for anyone turning away from an addictive lifestyle, whether it is gambling, pornography, adultery, homosexuality, alcohol, drugs, etc.

Because old friends will try to draw you back into the old lifestyle, it is imperative that you break away from them. If it means avoiding the mall, you avoid the mall and shop somewhere else. If it means avoiding a particular restaurant, you find new places to enjoy dining out. If it means leaving your previous fitness club, you change memberships or develop new fitness activities. If you are to truly be a new creation, you must be a new creation in all areas of your life. You might be tempted to try and help others leave their sinful lifestyle, but you cannot help another person discard the burden until you yourself are much stronger.

A third roadblock arises from the need to be touched in caring, healthy ways. All human beings experience this need, including all single adults whether they have lost a partner through a broken relationship, divorce,

*"...if my people,  
who are called by  
my name, will  
humble themselves  
and pray and seek  
my face and turn  
from their wicked  
ways, then will I  
hear from heaven  
and will forgive  
their sin and will  
heal their land."  
– II Chronicles 14:7*

*“...choose for  
yourselves this day  
whom you will  
serve...as for me  
and my household,  
we will serve the  
Lord.”  
– Joshua 24:15*

death, or forsaking an unhealthy lifestyle. God made us as beings who need physical touch. War orphans died from lack of touch. Jesus recognized the importance of touch when He laid His hands on people as part of healing them. Churches acknowledge the importance of touch when the laying on of hands is combined with ordination of pastors, deacons, and elders in some denominations, and as it is offered when we pray with one another.

Similarly, a man or woman leaving the homosexual lifestyle needs to be hugged by others of the same gender in a brotherly or sisterly non-sexual way much as athletes share hugs as a sign of team unity, or as family members and friends share hugs as ways to say “I care about you” or “I’m here for you” or “I like the person you are.”

Even though we might acknowledge others’ reluctance to be physically close to those leaving a homosexual lifestyle, to be denied that basic human need serves only to increase the incredible loneliness we already know. Overcoming this roadblock depends on developing trust and “agape,” the godly love we can share with others.

A fourth roadblock results from the destructive behaviors typical of addictive personalities: we are manipulative, controlling, self-centered back-stabbers who slash away at others with words as sharp and injurious as any double-edged sword. We outgrow those behaviors as we become educated in the characteristics of a healthy relationship, and as we turn to Scripture in our efforts to “turn and flee” what is evil and to “renew our minds.”

It is vital that we let our families help us. They love us and accept us as we move through so many phases and stages as we grow up. Likewise, as we make a major lifestyle transformation, their love and acceptance and prayers are sources of strength and encouragement.

Parents face their own set of roadblocks, often consumed with guilt for their child's sinful lifestyle. If you are to truly help your son or daughter leave behind such destructive behaviors, it is critical to understand that while you may have contributed to the situation, your child also made choices. Don't focus on the problems, but remember that you contributed to the positive aspects of your child's personality, too. Focus on the hope you

*Praise be to the  
God and Father of  
our Lord Jesus  
Christ, the Father  
of compassion and  
the God of all  
comfort, who  
comforts us in all  
our troubles...  
– II Cor. 1:4*

*You were taught,  
with regard to your  
former way of life,  
to put off your old  
self, which is being  
corrupted by its  
deceitful desires; to  
be made new in the  
attitude of your  
minds; and to put  
on the new self,  
created to be like  
God in true  
righteousness and  
holiness.  
— Eph. 4:22-24*

now have as your child turns away from that lifestyle. Focus on the healthy relationships you can develop together.

I was adamant that because I had been responsible for one failed marriage, I would never marry again. However, God had other plans for me! The value of my supportive spouse who walks every step beside me is beyond measure. As God grants strength and peace to my wife, He not only blesses her — He also blesses me through her.

Any successful marriage involves constant attention, communication, honesty, openness, and commitment. It is an unending process of dealing with old and new problems, of adjusting to each other and the situations we share, and of growing as individuals and as a couple through our experiences.

The same is true of a marriage in which one partner is striving to leave an old lifestyle, old behaviors, and become a “new creation.” Know that additional stress and tension accompany those changes. Agreeing in prayer, believing together, and growing together in faith and trust are mandatory if such a relationship is to survive.

A dependable traveling companion is yet another necessity in overcoming roadblocks. We need one person we can call at any time of the day or night and ask for help and encouragement. We need someone to whom we can say, "I'm so discouraged...I'm frustrated with...I don't know how I can bear this loneliness another day...My faith is wavering..." God not only made us so we need other people, He also sends the right people at the right time. Our part is to be willing to reach out.

We also need "driver education" if we are to re-train our minds and our hearts. We must study and know the Word of God if we are to pour it into our thoughts and actions and decisions. We've been attending Satan University and we have transferred to JC (Jesus Christ) University. We must be able to retrieve His Word and live it. We must become attentive listeners who turn from negative destructive thoughts, knowing they come from Satan, and turn instead to positive constructive thoughts knowing they come from the Lord.

And finally, we must learn to trust as we encounter roadblocks and try new routes to a changed life. This is a most difficult task because our past is

*Set your minds on  
things above, not  
on earthly things.  
– Colossians 3:2*

*...as God's chosen  
people, holy and  
dearly loved, clothe  
yourselves with  
compassion,  
kindness, humility,  
gentleness and  
patience.*

*– Colossians 3:12*

littered with the “wrecks” of not finding trust in any relationship except with another homosexual. Suddenly we are confronted with the daunting tasks of trusting others who are not homosexual and trusting God whom we haven't known and cannot even see!

### *Called According to His Purpose*

The author and finisher of our faith is not finished with us yet! With time, I felt God leading me to speak out about my former lifestyle and how Jesus had healed me. I knew He wanted to use me to show that homosexuals can be healed, that through His grace, they can be delivered. I didn't want this call! I wanted to go to Africa as a missionary, but the Lord had other plans. I prayed that He would find someone else to minister to homosexuals. He didn't let me run away this time!

I thought I would minister to people on the street, but the Lord had other plans again. He convinced me that my ministry was right before me in our churches and that this was His

will for me. I could rest in Him and know that in His strength alone I would be able to speak boldly.

Once more, I gave God a condition: He would have to confirm it through my wife because she would bear the brunt of such a ministry with me. The Lord spoke to Paula and she released me to share my testimony. She has remained my loving and faithful partner through every step of our married life and through every step of our ministry development.

We've learned to let God put His shield around us. We've had some heavy-duty battles, especially when we started Freedom Ministries. We have encountered demonic forces. Christian brothers and sisters have attacked us. It hurts to know we are called to love the unlovables, to reach out to lost souls, but then encounter battles initiated by our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paula and I have walked through trials, through fires, and sometimes wondered why we were obedient in starting Freedom Ministries. But we have trusted the Lord to prepare us and continually renew us for this ministry that deals with homosexuality and sexual abuse and offers support for parents and spouses.

*No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. 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 stand up under it.*

*– 1 Cor 10:13*



*Let the peace of  
Christ rule in your  
hearts, since as  
members of one  
body you were  
called to peace...Let  
the word of Christ  
dwell in you richly  
as you teach and  
admonish one  
another with all  
wisdom...  
– Col. 3:15-16*

We started Freedom Ministries in 1985. Paula and I felt it was time, and we had friends who encouraged us to speak out. Our basic format was to work with support groups by providing spiritual guidance. We offered weekly support groups for individuals as well as monthly groups for the families. Paula worked with wives of homosexuals in dealing with the anger, the frustration, the self-esteem issues, and other deep hurts they endure.

Our first groups contained seven men in one group and twelve spouses and parents in another. The common problem was sexual addiction, whether it was homosexuality, pornography, or adultery. All were Christians who experienced frustration, difficulty, and hurt within the church structure; they wanted to be set free from the bondage they were in, but found little support and understanding.

Parents suffer tremendously when they don't understand what happened to their children. Spouses endure great suffering, and they need to be supported as they confront their own issues. Our churches need people who will come forward and support those who want to live within God's will.

As the body of Christ, we in the church are called to intercede for each other, to remember that in spite of rejection, it is love that breaks all barriers. My parents and my wife serve as God's examples of accepting, patient, consistent, unconditional love. Churches are also waking up to the need for people trained to deal with the problematic facets of homosexuality.

This prompted us to begin speaking to church groups and conducting workshops to help Christians grow in their awareness and understanding, and to help them know how to respond to homosexuals in their midst who choose to give up that lifestyle.

As the boys reached their teenage years, Paula and I knew they needed me to spend more time with them. Our ministry focus shifted as I no longer spent so much time speaking on evenings and weekends. We now serve as an educational and resource center, and we are moving towards offering conferences and other avenues of support.

God has raised others to lead the groups and continue that vital aspect of the ministry. Freedom Ministries has an active, involved board of directors,

*...if anyone is in  
Christ, he is a new  
creation; the old  
has gone, the new  
has come! All this  
is from God who  
reconciled us to  
himself through  
Christ...  
– II Cor. 5:17-18*

including a female counselor who meets with women. We do try to keep participants in their own gender groups because people can't share as openly when males and females are in the same group.

*The Lord is close to  
the brokenhearted  
and saves those  
who are crushed in  
spirit.  
– Psalm 34:18*

Our groups use a Bible-based curriculum that addresses issues one step at a time; participants respond positively to it. Over eighty ministries similar to ours are aligned across the United States and in some foreign countries. Through Exodus International, we refer people to new groups as they move to new communities so they receive the support they need.

Just as support groups are integral to the growth and recovery of persons leaving a destructive lifestyle, so also support groups are integral to the healthy recovery of spouses and family members. Upon learning that a child is a homosexual, parents typically experience a flood of emotions ranging from denial and anger to guilt and bitterness. The same is true of a spouse who learns that a husband or wife has been involved in homosexual activity.

To understand these emotions, for guidance in making biblically-based decisions and actions in response to family issues, to learn how to heal



*Create in me a pure  
heart, O God, and  
renew a steadfast  
spirit within me.  
Do not cast me  
from your presence  
or take your Holy  
Spirit from me.  
Restore to me the  
joy of your  
salvation and grant  
me a willing spirit,  
to sustain me.  
— Psalm 51:10-12*

example, in 1997, then Iowa Governor Terry Brandstad appointed me to serve on the state's Civil Rights Commission (that appointment was approved by the Iowa Legislature). Issues surrounding homosexuality loomed large, and he wisely sought input and direction from key citizens. I remained on the Commission for four years and served as its Chairperson for two years.

At times, the information we must communicate and the attitudes we must cultivate seem overwhelming — especially for a part-time ministry. For instance, people still do not believe the epidemic proportions of childhood sexual abuse. Recent estimates suggest that as many as 60% of all homosexuals were forced into that lifestyle when they were sexually abused as little boys. This is quite shocking to those who think little girls are the usual victims of abuse.

I have focused on male homosexuality because it happened to me; however, most lesbians have been molested by a father, uncle, or someone else nearby. They can be tied more into emotional rather than sexual bondage. Some say they always felt like outcasts because they never felt loved by their fathers and couldn't get along with their mothers. They were molested by their fathers, rejected by their mothers, wanted their mothers'

approval emotionally, but never got it. They come to hate men. Often, they turn to drugs, alcohol, and even the occult.

I do not believe people are “born” gay. I do not believe God makes mistakes. And I do not find anything in scripture that supports such theories. Furthermore, several psychiatrists throughout the United States have verified through studies why they do not support that approach. Most of the popular media suppresses this information and uses only people who agree with its liberal unfounded stance. For instance, we are seldom told that one frequently quoted researcher who insisted homosexuality is genetic was himself a homosexual and that his subjects were corpses on whom there was no history. We must be cautious in what we hear, read, and say.

It is essential that people understand the very real dangers of pornography. It goes hand-in-hand with sexual addictions and is an addiction itself. It destroys marriages; it builds walls; it isolates. It destroys a family budget. It causes its victims to become conflicted as they cannot reconcile the person they want others to perceive them as being with the person they know themselves to be.

*How priceless is  
your unfailing love!  
Both high and low  
among men find  
refuge in the  
shadow of your  
wings.  
— Psalm 36:7*

the community or church, only intensifies the stigma for both males and females. All people need to be valued for who they are, for their unique abilities, and for their individual personalities.

If you are a homosexual leaving that lifestyle, it is critical that you find Christians who will guide, teach, enlighten, and love you for who you are.

Know that God loves each and every one of you. If He can love me as evil and vile as I was, He can love you.

Even as much as you want to be loved and accepted, you must love and accept the Lord first.

*Greater love has no  
one than this, that  
he lay down his life  
for his friends.  
— John 15:13*

## *To give your life to the Lord...*

If while reading my testimony, you have been led to give your heart to Jesus, to renounce your sin, and to become His new creation, you can do so right now, at this very moment, wherever you are. Just take these three steps.

1. Sincerely offer this (or a similar) prayer:

*Lord Jesus, I acknowledge my many sins. I ask you to forgive me for disobeying your laws, for using and hurting others, for thinking only of myself.*

*Come into my life now, right now, and cleanse me from all sin, from all negative attitudes and actions. Wash me so I can stand whiter than snow before you.*

*I know you paid for my sins as you died on the cross; such love awes and amazes me; I humbly admit I know no words large enough to thank you.*

*Help me to be your faithful servant. I give you my heart and my life. In Jesus' name, through His grace and His redeeming power, Amen.*

2. Now know that you are saved! You have been born again and you are His new creation! Rejoice in Him, and rest in His peace.

3. Find a Bible-teaching church. Call a friend or a pastor. Become involved in learning of God's will for your life.

God's children who suffered as slaves in the desert longed for the Promised Land where they would be set free. Know that you have arrived!



*Share Your Story, Continued*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

1. I am \_\_\_ (a) the person changing my lifestyle,  
\_\_\_ (b) the spouse of someone who was/is involved  
in homosexuality,  
\_\_\_ (c) the parent or other family member of someone  
who was/is involved in homosexuality.
2. In dealing with homosexuality and related issues, I found  
the greatest help to be...
3. For me, the best source of encouragement was/is...
4. I would encourage others in a similar situation to...
5. My best advice to someone in my situation is
6. Other information you want to share about yourself, your  
situation, your healing, etc.

## *About the Author*

I first heard Jack's testimony a number of years ago when he shared it one Sunday evening at church. I was amazed at the honesty and boldness with which he shared his past. I respected him because it was clear he viewed it not as *his* story; instead, he told how the *Lord* had dramatically changed his life and how He would do so for all who willingly gave Him their sins, their pasts, their hearts, their lives.

That's how Jack sees this book, and that's why he has been reluctant to include a page "About the Author." He wants attention focused on the reality of freedom and change only the Lord offers. He wants only to be the obedient servant of the Lord who trades the chains of bondage for cords of love.

Just as Jack is forthright in explaining how he was molested as a child, so also he is bold in acknowledging that it was by his own choice he remained in the homosexual lifestyle as an adult. And so also, he analytically yet caringly confronts anyone who would cling to sinful, destructive behaviors.

Jack is truly a "new creation." He is a successful Christian businessman. He is respected in the church and the community. He is a prayer warrior always ready to minister to the needs of others. He proclaims the good news with confidence, conviction, and commitment.

Jack's greatest joys come from being Paula's husband and Jason's and Zachary's father.

And he humbly thanks God every day.

— *Linda Delbridge, Editor*