



# the fellowship message

"Proclaiming freedom for the captives." ISAIAH 61

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## Embracing My Name in Faith by Samuel Klement

*Maybe you've read in the book of 1 Samuel, where Hannah prayed fervently for a son. When she received him, she named him "Samuel" because she asked the Lord for him.*

I was born to my parents shortly after my parents had a miscarriage, so it makes sense that they named me as such. However, in the years following, I didn't believe at all that I was wanted. Right off the bat, I was the youngest of three boys. My older brothers at the time weren't too thrilled to have me breaking their Legos or what-not, but it was comforting being around my mother, who always seemed to make me feel wanted. This wasn't hard to do, since she homeschooled us and my father had a day job.

By the time I was ten, however, big changes had occurred. My parents adopted two young girls from Haiti, then they had another baby and we left our home in Los Angeles to make a new life 1,000 miles north in Washington. They started a hobby farm with the dream of fiscal sustainability, attempted a "self-teaching" homeschool program, adopted five children from Liberia and had another baby.

My parents tried to juggle all of this and didn't give up on homeschooling. Since my two older brothers and I appeared to be the most capable of doing schoolwork on our own, my father would leave a list of assignments to complete while he was out at work. This didn't work well for me, since I had ADHD and couldn't sit still to read or work math problems for hours on end by myself. I rarely completed said assignments, and my dad would always come home disappointed, which only widened the distance I had always felt between my dad and I. My mom no longer had time for me, arguing that I wasn't "one of her students". My dad continued to be the one mostly responsible for the hobby farm, and he was always frustrated having to do the lion's share of the work. I felt ashamed, because I felt like I should be doing something to help, but it was always hard to approach my dad for anything.

And so I withdrew. I obtained a computer from a garage sale and found it to be much more mentally stimulating than schoolwork. Learning how to operate computers was interesting, and I found computer games to be quite fun, but my mom believed that they were bad and prohibited them. Although my dad had a more moderate view, I was more scared of him finding out that I secretly played video games than I was of my mom.

My new siblings from Liberia came from a civil war, and the hurts and pains they had to process often threw our house into chaos. My parents showed less and less interest in me, except when they needed help with their computers. When I mentioned that I didn't feel that I was valued aside from my skills, my parents would deny the validity of my statement, but never act on it. As I did worse at school, depression set in and I found excitement only in acts of self-bondage.



Samuel is a graduate of PF's Taking Back Ground & Upper Room Community programs.

When my grandfather died and my family drove south for his funeral, I was exposed to pornography. I longed for some partner to mistreat me as I thought I deserved. Since I was growing up in a Christian home, I “knew” what was true, but didn’t see it happening in my life. When people at church reminded me about the Hebrew roots of my name, it felt like a total joke. There were even times when I considered suicide. I knew logically that people wouldn’t be pleased with the outcome, but I wondered if an attempt would be enough to get people to care. The one thing that kept me going wasn’t the medications or the counselors, but Christian radio. If it weren’t for that continuous reminder of Jesus caring, no matter how hard it was to believe at the time, there would’ve been no way out for me.

God started setting things in motion in 2012, when He led my family to join a more local church with youth and children’s ministry programs. At youth group, it was the first time I had someone ask if they could pray for me. At first, I was reluctant to join social activities outside of the weekly gatherings, but something about the youth group felt less chaotic than home, so eventually I agreed to go to a weeklong summer camp. The first year wasn’t super smooth, but the second year I attended camp, Jesus showed me the value of relationships. That year, I also passed Driver’s Ed, which helped me realize that there was a possibility of academic success in a more structured environment, but my parents didn’t want to send me to the local high school.

In 2015, I got a GED certificate, which I thought would make my life easier, but my subconscious beliefs and struggles didn’t go away. I went to youth camp again that year, and after a transition in the youth ministry leadership, I ended up attending services at another church, where I quickly surrounded myself with structured groups that felt very supportive. Slowly, I began to see that it was safe to show myself to people around me. Once, while driving home from something late at night, I heard a Mikeschair song on the radio:

*“What if my walls came down, and you saw everything?  
All of my weakness, all of my scars, all that I’ve hidden deep in  
my heart, and I’m scared to set it free? Show me a life that’s  
broken can be redeemed. Show me that you can handle my  
honesty...Show me that grace was made for people like me.”*

I remembered what I had heard from another Chris-

tian artist about James 5:16: *“Confess your sins to one another, and pray for each other that you might be healed.”* I knew God was telling me that it was time. Time to let God do his work. Time to stop hiding myself. Time to confess to others.

This freaked me out, but I knew that nothing would change unless I obeyed Him, so I reached out and prayed that He would bring me to a place where it could happen. And you know what? He did! A few weeks later, I was finally able to tell my youth pastor all the terrible things inside, all the dirt and yuck within me. And God remained faithful. My pastor had gone to Bible College with Jason Thompson and recommended Portland Fellowship. I called, met with Jason and started the process.



I started Taking Back Ground not really understanding what to expect, but soon I saw and experienced God’s love through my small group leaders. Contrary to what I thought I deserved, they actually cared about me and my problems. My job and my car’s consistent need for maintenance distracted me from much of my heart issues during the first year of TBG. Still, as my first year ended and I sensed it was time to move out of my parents’ house, I asked about the Upper Room Community. Amazingly, God provided me with a trouble-free car and a new job that would help cover the cost of the URC.

During Upper Room this past year, we dove into my early childhood development, and I learned that the lies that I believed about myself stemmed from my perception of my parents’ actions and lack of affirmation for me. My mentor, Patrick, helped me understand that feelings do have value, just as logic and reason does, in their proper place. As I learned about how my past was affecting me, I started to feel resentful of my parents’ failure to meet my needs. Patrick also encouraged me to pray about my relationship with my parents and forgive them. Eventually, God worked in my heart and helped me to forgive and reconcile with my parents! They even came and celebrated my graduation from TBG and the URC this spring, which was such a blessing.

While I have not arrived, I do believe that God has healed me a lot this past year, and I believe that I am better equipped to handle the battles ahead. God continues to help me believe and live in faith that I truly am Samuel, “God has heard”.

## RHN HOPE 2018 Conference by Jason Thompson

Radio show host, author and Restored Hope Network (RHN) conference speaker, Michael Brown, wrote a blog post entitled, “*The Smallest and Most Rejected Minority in America*”, in which he concluded that those walking away from homosexuality are now the most rejected and smallest group of people in our country today. As a leader in sexual redemption ministry, I concur with this view, which makes connecting with others who are doing similar ministerial work such a huge blessing.



Jason & Patrick sharing about PF's online programs at HOPE 2018.



Patrick sharing his testimony.

At the RHN HOPE 2018 June conference in Washington, D.C., leaders from around the country met to encourage and pray for one another. It was there that I stood alongside others whom I've known for close to thirty years! These are faithful men and women who have kept their hearts on Christ and ministered to His people in the area of sexual and relational brokenness. At HOPE 2018, we heard powerful testimonies of lives transformed by the love of Jesus, including our very own Program Coordinator, Patrick Silvis. I also joined several other leaders in planning for the long-term health and survival of discipleship ministries like ours. It is important for me to remind you that we are not alone in this work. Your prayers and partnership not only bless us here at Portland Fellowship, but they spread around the country and throughout the world.

In the midst of all the uncertainties ministries like Portland Fellowship are facing today, I'm reminded that no matter how small the people of God may seem from a cultural point-of-view, we know that we serve a God who works mightily in those who are faithful to Him. Once again, thank you for standing with us and continuing to pray for God's transformational work to continue in those who desire to surrender their sexuality to the lordship of Christ.

## PF Summer Series: Sy Rogers' Lessons Learned by Patrick Silvis

During the summer months, our Taking Back Ground and Upper Room Community programs take a break. This year, we are excited to offer a Summer Series that is open to the general public (not just individuals struggling with same-sex attraction). PF leaders Ron and Heidi Perry will be working through international speaker Sy Roger's video teaching series, *Lessons Learned*.

Sharing from his personal experience of God's redemption in the areas of same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria, Sy explores several topics that are crucial for anyone seeking sexual and relational wholeness and healing. Some of the lessons we'll be exploring are *The Power of Relationships*, *Realistic Expectations*, *Forgiveness*, *Renewing The Mind*, *What Works* and *Relapse Prevention*.



Please join us for video teachings, discussion groups and prayer on Tuesday nights from 7-8:30pm at the PF house. Meetings begin on July 10th and run weekly until the end of August. If you are new to Portland Fellowship, please call the office at 503-235-6364 or email [office@portlandfellowship.com](mailto:office@portlandfellowship.com) to schedule an intake to register. If you're already connected to Portland Fellowship, you can register for the Summer Series by signing into your online account on the PF website, clicking “Join A Program” and selecting the 2018 Sy Rogers Summer Series.



## July - August calendar & services

### Tuesdays in July & August Summer Series

Beginning July 10th, we are offering Sy Rogers' video teaching series, *Lessons Learned*. Discussion & prayer follow the video teachings. 7-8:30 p.m.

### July 13 & August 10 The Hope Group

For friends and family of gay or trans-identifying loved ones. Join us for a time of prayer, support, encouragement and a great meal. 6:30 p.m.

### July 21 TBG Leader Celebration

PF Staff celebrate and honor Taking Back Ground leaders and volunteers.

### July & August Side Lot Project

Work on the side lot patio project will take place in July & August. Contact the PF office to help out.

### August 14-16 Reach Truth Rewrite

PF Staff are taking a few days away to revise the Reach Truth online program for youth.

### Follow us on Facebook!

Stay connected for updates, prayer requests and inspirational resources. Like and follow our page at: [www.facebook.com/portlandfellowship/](http://www.facebook.com/portlandfellowship/)

### Additional Updates

[www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)  
Please take advantage of your online profile. If you don't have a username, please email or call.

### Speakers, Counseling and Support for Youth

can be set up through the office.

## Project Update: Side Lot Patio Area



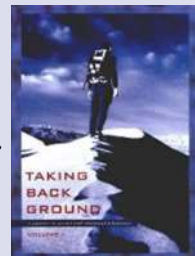
Last month, we shared our plans to turn most of the side lot beside

the PF house into a patio area for community and group use. This will include building a new staircase off of the main porch, retaining walls, and laying patio pavers. This month, we are moving forward with purchasing all of the materials and planning out the building phases.

If you haven't partnered with us on this project yet, there's still time! We have been price comparing to try and keep building material expenses as low as possible, but we estimate the total cost of the patio could reach \$10,000—it's a huge area! Please consider making a special donation to this project. You can donate online and select the "Side Lot Project" category, or write "Side Lot Project" on check memo lines. Thank you for considering this partnership!

## Fall Program Applications

We are currently accepting applications for both our Taking Back Ground and Upper Room Community discipleship programs. Taking Back Ground is for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction, and also includes a group for wives/fiancées. The Upper Room is a 9-month live-in program for strugglers seeking deeper community and spiritual growth.



To apply, please contact the office or check out [www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com).



PORTLAND  
fellowship

The Fellowship Message is a monthly publication of Portland Fellowship, a ministry proclaiming freedom from homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ

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**Heidi Perry**  
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