



the fellowship message

"Proclaiming freedom for the captives." ISAIAH 61

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Generational Healing and Enduring Hope by Paul B.

It all started on August 4, 2006. At least that's what I thought for many years. That is the date our son "came out" to my wife during his summer break, after his freshman year of college. There was a strong apprehension as I sat at home waiting for them to return. You see, we had set this lunch date to ask him if he was homosexual.

We decided for me not to bring this up, because it seemed wrong for a dad to ask (accuse) his son of such a thing. As I look back now, I realize it was just another way for me to avoid the responsibility of fathering—an example of the generational brokenness that existed in our family.

Let me go back to the beginning. As a baby boomer, I grew up in what you would call a typical middle-class home in the suburbs. My dad was a WWII vet who met my mom while stationed in Liverpool, England. They were married when she came to the U.S. after the war and, along with thousands of other vets, moved from a small coal mining town in Pennsylvania to beautiful southern California. I grew up in a strong Catholic family of five children attending parochial grade school and Catholic University. My dad was part of what is now called the "Greatest Generation": those who grew up during WWI, experienced the Great Depression, and then fought in WWII. They were great men and women, but many didn't know how to parent. My dad was handicapped by growing up in a home without a mother and father. He was raised by elderly grandparents, so he had no strong father figure in his life. In addition, he also worked two jobs during most of my childhood and teenage years, so I, too, had a life without a strong father figure. This was the generational brokenness that brought us to this place.

Like many in my generation, I experienced the unrest of the 1960's along with the drugs that accompanied my teenage years. Thank God, however, at the same time, the seeds of the Jesus Movement were sprouting, and many of my peers began to speak to me about God in a personal way I had never heard. My story really started on March 10, 1973. That's the day I attended a small home church meeting and gave my heart to Father God. A few years later, I met my wonderful wife, and we married and started our family. We had two lovely daughters and then our son. We were faithful to our church, had strong Christian friends, and brought our kids up in children's and youth ministry. I was determined to not be the absent father that my dad was, so I spent quality time with all our children. Yet, the seeds of generational brokenness were still present.



Paul* is an alumnus of PF's Hope Group Online Zoom course. (*Name changed to protect privacy).

As our son grew, I felt more and more estranged from him. Not having experienced a strong father's presence in my own life, I was at a loss on how to relate to my son as he grew into a young teen. We spoke less and less about his life experience. I had this nagging feeling we were losing him to something, but I didn't know how to stop it or what to say. Eventually, we came to the realization that our son was experiencing what many in his generation have known: sexual brokenness. This brought us to that day in 2006 when he shared that he did, indeed, feel attracted to men, and was now pursuing that life. We were devastated. There is no other way to describe that feeling as a parent. So many lost dreams of what you hoped you would experience as your son grew into a man, married, and then had children of his own...now suddenly gone. Or, at least, that's what we thought in those first few days and weeks.



Nevertheless, in those first hours and days, God was with us in a way we had seldom known. We knew that our lives were grounded on The Rock (*Matthew 7:24-25*). We poured our broken hearts out to God the Father, and His Holy Spirit came in a special way to comfort and speak to me about my own broken father image. I soon realized that healing began with me, and not with my son. I cried out to God and He met me in my brokenness; healing those generational sins that had infected my life as a young man and a young father. I thank God for His healing touch of the Spirit on my soul.

At the same time, we sought out help from our local Church. We were put in touch with a handful of families who had recently gone through a similar experience. We met together every other week and shared our stories and tears. We learned, from each other's experiences, on how to communicate with our children in a way that expressed not only the truth of God's Word, but also the grace and love of our heavenly Father. It is an ongoing process. Now, seventeen years later, we continue to provide compassion, comfort, and support to parents of strugglers through a monthly meeting we lead.

Through our experience, we learned many truths that we now, in turn, share with grieving parents:

Don't try to argue your child into submission or repentance (*2 Timothy 2:24-26*). It won't work, and will only drive them away. Be willing to listen to your child's story, their struggles, with compassion and without judgement. Keep communication open and build bridges: "*If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*" (*Romans 12:18*) Pray and set boundaries for yourself and your family where needed. Partner with others in your church or community of believers who will support you in prayer and provide

Godly counsel (*Proverbs 24:6*). We thank God for such great support and resources provided by groups such as Restored Hope Network, Tower of Light Ministries, Desert Stream, Living Stones Ministries, Portland Fellowship, and others.

We came into contact with Portland Fellowship through Jeff Simunds, who is the Executive Director of Tower of Light Ministries. We recently attended PF's Family

and Friends Hope Group Zoom course, which we highly recommend to any parent or family member of a struggler. The PF team packs these meetings with encouragement, insight, teaching, hope, prayer, and an opportunity to share in a small group breakout setting. Just a few topics they cover are: *Dealing with Grief, Roots of Sexual Brokenness, Effective Communication, and Restoring Relationships*.

Our bottom line is that we keep in relationship with our son because we love him no matter the circumstance. Daily, we pray for his salvation. Our focus is on our son's salvation, and not on his struggle. It all starts there. My wife and I pray that the strongholds of the enemy will be broken in his life, and that any walls of confusion and deception that have led to this bondage will be vanquished (*Ephesians 6:12*). *Romans 15:13* says, "*Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*" We have enduring hope that one day our son will turn his heart back to God, forsaking all for the kingdom: "*Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.*" (*Jer. 24:6-7*)

*If you would like to sign up for the Hope Group Online video discipleship series, go to: www.pfhope.com

The Transgender Struggle (Part 4 of 6): The Social Media Barrage by KathyGrace Duncan

PF proclaims the message of hope and healing for those with unwanted SSA and gender confusion. This six-part series explores transgenderism and how to respond biblically. For context, read the previous articles: www.portlandfellowship.com/transgender.pdf

Growing up with gender dysphoria wasn't only extremely difficult, it was also the loneliest thing I have experienced. There wasn't anyone to talk to about it. I was afraid that if I did talk about it, I would be rejected, shunned and very misunderstood, as all those things had happened when I tried. There weren't any groups who were celebrating being transgender. I didn't know of any "safe" places for me, other than my own thoughts and conclusions.



One memory I have was when I was in the library, and I think I was about ten years old. I was alone, and I'm not sure why I was in there (since I hated to read), but I found this magazine. I don't remember the name of the magazine, only that I found an article about someone named Jude Patton, who was born a girl and was now living as a man. The story I read was very similar to mine: the age she felt she should have been a boy, the intense desire to be a man, and the desperation to change. This article and many others gave me hope I could be free from this suffering.



So, why am I bringing up that memory? To show how the enemy is "prowling around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour", and he is still coming "to steal, kill and destroy" (1 Peter 5:8 & John 10:10a NKJV). Before there was the internet or cell phones, there were only magazines, newspapers, and the news on television or radio—the lies still reached me. Now, the enemy has a larger platform called social media.

With multiple social media platforms like Tumblr, Reddit, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook (which is the largest), kids have a lot more access to "stuff". They can view and read about all things transgender, such as surgeries, the effects of hormones, how to join an LGBTQ group or become an activist. The platforms are brainwashing our youth. The real facts of the harms and effects of hormones and surgeries are not being presented.

In order to promote transgender ideology, algorithms are used to provide transgender content; they do this by directing a person to similar things or subject matter close to what they've been viewing. TikTok isn't the only villain—Facebook, Tumblr and Reddit also use algorithms, as well as YouTube and Instagram. The really scary thing is the predators that are also on social media, looking to find someone to influence or to "help". They will often coach young children and teens about making the "right decision", telling them how much more they will be loved, and how to cut off contact with their parents if the parents don't agree with the transitioning. There have even been posts about getting hormones free of charge, with no questions asked, to those who live in states where the hormones are illegal for minors.

Oli Landon, who is a Detrans activist, released a video speaking out against TikTok and the contents of the videos that are posted. He talks about the addiction of the validation given, and how that caused him to consider changing his identity. Oli also speaks of the progression of changing of one's identity based on how many views someone gets. The more physical changes someone shares on social media, the more views and "likes" they receive; the increased attention then leads the person to make even more physical changes, and the vicious cycle continues. I have watched and read other testimonies of those who have detransitioned who made reference to the influence social media has had on them. Social media gave them a false sense of belonging and hope that they had been searching for. However, by staying off of social media, they were able to see life differently, think more clearly, and come to a different understanding of the underlying issues that needed attention.

Though it may seem like nothing can be done about social media, if you're a parent, you can and should see what your child is doing while on the internet. Who are they messaging online? Do random searches on their laptop or phone to see who they are talking to and why. You won't be their most favorite person, but you can explain that as a parent, you will do whatever you need to do to protect them. Pray for the Lord to expose what they are doing, and the discernment to know how to respond. We need the Lord in this hour, and thankfully Jesus has told us, "In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33b NKJV)

**July - August
Calendar & Services**

**Tuesdays in July & August
Summer Series**

This year, PF's summer discipleship program for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction will be "The Journey: From Captivity to Freedom." Join us on Zoom on Tuesday evenings for video teachings, group discussion, and small group sharing/prayer. 6-8 p.m.

**July 14, August 11
Hope Group In-Person**

Prayer, support & encouragement for friends & family of gay or trans-identifying loved ones. 6:30 p.m.

portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php

**July 25
KathyGrace Speaking**

KathyGrace will be sharing her testimony with the Portland East Gate chapter of the organization Full Gospel Business Men.

**August 27
Jason Speaking**

Jason will be sharing at a fundraiser for the ministry Help 4 Families in Southern California.

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Additional Updates:

www.portlandfellowship.com

**Speakers, counseling
and support for youth**

can be set up through the office.

Summer Series 2023: The Journey

This summer, we invite you to join us for "The Journey: From Captivity to Freedom". This eight-week discipleship series will walk through your own process of leaving Egypt and moving toward the Promised Land.



The program will feature short video lessons, questions for group processing, and time

for personal sharing and prayer. We will be offering "The Journey" via Zoom, and meetings will take place on Tuesday evenings in July and August from 6-8pm (PST). To register, please sign into your account at www.portlandfellowship.com, click on "Join a Program", and select "2023 Summer Series: The Journey". The cost is only \$25, but scholarships are available, and a simple intake form is required.

Helpful Resource: "Responding Biblically to LGBTQ Loved Ones"

If you have a loved one embracing a gay or trans identity, we have a resource for you called "Responding Biblically to LGBTQ Loved Ones". This packet walks through practical questions and topics to Consider, Clarify and Contemplate as you construct a biblical response to your LGBTQ loved ones. You can view and download the packet here: www.hopegrouponline.com/resources/responding.pdf



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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