



# the fellowship message

"Proclaiming freedom for the captives." ISAIAH 61

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## The Simple Gospel of Grace by Heidi Perry

*A recent book I read, "Breaking Cover: My Secret Life in the CIA and What it Taught Me about What's Worth Fighting For" by Michele Rigby Assad, is about a Christian CIA field agent assigned to several Middle Eastern countries. Part of the training process she went through to find out about our enemies was fascinating.*

Near the beginning of the book, Michele talks about "moving off the X." The CIA taught her about the "flight or fight" mode that kicks into gear when danger is imminent. Michele also brought up the "freeze" mode, where you are paralyzed, stumped, or frozen in fear, unable to do anything. "Moving off the X" meant she was a target: "X" marked the spot. Michele goes on to explain that this is the most vulnerable time for an agent; it's critical to move, as you are the target of evil forces that will do anything to rob you of your safety and security.

Reading about Michele's CIA experiences reminded me that we face the same challenges as believers in Christ. When we encounter a spiritual or relational conflict, it's so hard not to get overwhelmed by our thoughts or let our fear gain more ground. Part of the process of Portland Fellowship includes looking back at your life and being honest about your brokenness. Realizing that same-sex attraction is a relational problem unveils the bias you believed about yourself for many years. Trying to hide or cover up the compartmentalized sexual struggle you have had only confuses, frustrates, and piles on more guilt, which can spin lies that you believe about yourself.

My husband, Ron, went through the Taking Back Ground process at PF many years ago after he disclosed his struggle with same-sex attraction and secret infidelity. By God's grace, I chose to walk with him through this journey of transformation. I knew my husband and I would be targeted by the enemy, and we asked Jesus to help us navigate this and protect us from spiritual wickedness. *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* (Ephesians 6:12)

As a wife, "moving off the X" meant practicing faith in a timely manner. Sometimes I needed to take a step of faith and trust that God would meet me where I was and take me to another place of grace and peace. Jesus helped with my unbelief and gave me the promise of His faithfulness. Even though I fell into anger or bitterness, God's Word assured me that He was always with me. (Deut. 31:8) I remember different times at PF when I would be stumped.



Heidi is a former PF Wives Group leader.

My mind would be racing to figure out, *How is hope possible? What steps do I begin to take? How can this be resolved in the quickest way possible? What is the next move as I choose to live in obedience to Jesus? Will God forgive me for this sin? Who do I ask for help? Who will walk with me during this time of choosing to change?* It feels like a life-and-death struggle.

And it is. If I don't "move off the X" or take the step of faith, believing that God will meet me and keep His promises, I could be overtaken by the evil darkness of hopelessness. Scary, like CIA stuff. So, it was back to basics for me. I cried out in prayer to the God who created our lives and world. Sometimes I shouted, "HELP!" Overwhelmed at times, I would be so frustrated, thinking, *This is never going to work.* But deep in my heart, I knew God kept His promises—He is all about faithfulness. "I am so confused," I said. Armed with experiences from my past and the truth found in Scripture, I knew God would answer me in His own time, giving me what I needed versus what I thought I needed.

And so, I threw out all my preconceived notions of my role as a Christian wife. All my prior beliefs about same-sex attraction. All my checklists that said, "If I do this, then that will happen." I said to myself, "No more! Just go back to the basics, Heidi—the simple Gospel of grace and peace." This was my step of faith and my "move off the X" moment. I asked God to forgive me, "unfreeze" me, and guide me through this time when I felt lost in the desert with no water. Proverbs 16:9 says, *"The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."* "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you." (Psalm 32:8) I needed to listen to my teacher and friend, who gave all for me.

Remember when Jesus said what the essence of all God's commandments was? *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"* (Luke 10:27) I was determined to walk in these truths with God's help. As angry and hurt as I was by my husband's betrayal, I knew I needed to forgive him. The Holy Spirit revealed the amazing virtue of loving my neighbor as myself: empathy.



Heidi and her husband, Ron.

I started with the practical actions first. I began going on walks, and I would pray to God while walking (loving the Lord with all my strength). The endorphins kicked in, giving me physical feelings of confidence and helping me not to be overwhelmed with fear of the unknown... I was starting to move off the X. I sought out biblical counselors, books on same-sex attraction (like Joe Dallas' *Desires in Conflict*), and other wives whose husbands were struggling with same-sex attraction (loving God with all my mind). The information filled my thoughts with a different perspective that pivoted 180 degrees from my previous beliefs.

Daily, I dove deeper into God's Word, and He fed me in new ways. As Isaiah 9:6 says, *"...And he will be called Wonderful Counselor..."* I clung to the truth that God would guide and help me process well—the perfect counselor. The promises, the stories of victory when it looked hopeless, the examples of forgiveness, redemption, and transformation through hundreds of years to other humans like me—reading all of this in the Bible changed what I believed (loving God with all my soul).

Over time, my heart softened. Layers of false cultural views were replaced by authenticity and truth. Jesus' love peeled off layers of deception and replaced it with a new heart perspective (loving God with all my heart). And miraculously, empathy followed. I was able to finally look at my husband's infidelity and hidden lifestyle with mercy. God loaned me His eyes at times when I least expected it. *"Your word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."* (Psalm 119:105) He directed me even when I felt confused and unsure.

As I put one foot in front of the other by faith, I learned about a new authenticity that has challenged and guided me these past twenty-seven years. The simple Gospel is life-changing. My encouragement to wives of husbands struggling, and really to anyone going through a transformational discipleship process, is this: Don't be a target. Take that first step of faith. God will meet you in your brokenness and take you on a new life journey you never thought you were capable of. Invite others in, trust in the Lord, and embrace His grace to move off the X.

## The Transgender Struggle (Part 2 of 6): Social Influence, or Contagion? 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, please read Part I: [www.portlandfellowship.com/transgender.pdf](http://www.portlandfellowship.com/transgender.pdf)

In the last article, we defined “gender dysphoria” and “rapid on-set gender dysphoria”, and saw how these terms are actually housed under the term “transgender”. “Transgender” is used to define a way of life, a way of thinking, and a self-diagnosis depending on how one *feels*. This is readily accepted as appropriate, and affirmed by medical professionals as accurate. The transgender identity is then followed with the only seemingly valid treatment: hormones and surgeries.



The transgender diagnosis can happen in a matter of one short office visit, and within minutes, the patient may be prescribed hormones or hormone blockers. Possibly in the same office visit, the next steps for surgery are discussed. The patient is now on the fast track to transitioning into the opposite sex without *any* mental health evaluation. Why is this happening?

When I transitioned into living as a man, it was in the early 80's. It was not easily accepted, and regardless of how normal I seemed, I was an outcast. I was labeled a freak and a black sheep by my family. Keeping my life a secret was the only way I could live a “normal life”. Today, living a transgender lifestyle has been normalized, and those who come against it are now the outcasts. How did we get here?

The transgender lifestyle and rights have been fought for as far back as 1952 by Virginia Prince, who was a trans woman. Virginia, along with some others, launched a publication called *Transvestia: The Journal of the American Society for Equality in Dress* (Wikipedia.org). This was still long before the term “transgender” would be common usage.

In researching exactly when the transgender cultural shift began to grow, I couldn't find a specific year, but I do wonder if it began to gain social acknowledgement when Planned Parenthood first provided hormone replacement therapy in 2005. Then in 2006, the world met Jared “Jazz” Jennings. At the age of six, Jennings was the first and youngest documented transgender person, and was given national attention by Barbara Walters on *20/20*. Later, there would be foundations formed to assist transgender youth bringing awareness to kids who are struggling. The Jennings family would enter into activism to show support for their transgender sibling, and eventually, TLC put out a television show called *I Am Jazz*, which followed Jennings' life and the transition process from male to female.

The next social push was from Bruce Jenner when he transitioned to “Caitlyn” in 2015. The TV show *I Am Cait* aired in that same year. Jenner's idea was to normalize transgenderism, while highlighting the growing need to care for trans-identifying youth. In the show, Jenner took on the self-appointed job of a role model, though it wasn't totally received by the transgender community. Still, the show *did* bring to light the large amount of youth struggling, and the lack of quality care.

I realize there is more to the change in culture and society than what has been written here. I know there is an enemy who “*prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour*” (*1 Peter 5:8 NASB*). I think what we're seeing is both a social influence *and* a social contagion. Social influence, because feelings and emotions are now the “truth”. Transgender is being normalized, affirmed, celebrated, and called good. Trans ideology is also being promoted openly and taught in schools.

This is also a social contagion because so many people have a close loved one who is transitioning, and contagions are only spread from one person to another by close contact. You cannot deny how your loved one feels or the anguish you see them go through. And if you don't understand what's happening, you affirm it, and the contagion spreads.

So, what's the good news? The good news is that there are actually a lot more detransitioners than what's being reported! There are youth who are realizing the truth and getting out, and some are doing it without knowing the Lord yet. There are countries that are no longer willing to support or offer “gender affirming” care, as they now understand the harm it's causing. People are learning that transitioning is not addressing the underlying issues. I think we're going to see an influx of people coming out of the lifestyle and detransitioning. As we continue to intercede for those who are in confusion, let us pray that there will be more and more who “*will know the truth, and the truth will set [them] free*” (*John 8:32*).

## March - April Calendar & Services

March 11-13

### TBG Retreat

Taking Back Ground participants gather for a powerful weekend of worship, fellowship and surrender.

March 3, April 14

### Hope Group In-Person

Support & encouragement for friends & family of LGBTQ loved ones.

6:30 p.m.

[portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php](http://portlandfellowship.com/rsvp.php)

Tuesdays in April

### Taking Back Ground

PF's intensive discipleship program for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction. Group for wives and fiancées also.

*\*For both Zoom and in-house.*

7-9:30 p.m. PST.

April 12 & 17

### Jason Speaking

Jason will be sharing with counseling students at Portland Bible College.

April 27-29

### Jason Speaking

Jason will be sharing with pastors and leaders at a Calvary Chapel leadership conference in Tri-Cities, WA.

### Follow us!

Get updates and inspirational resources on social media.

**\*Facebook & Instagram:**

[@portlandfellowship](https://www.instagram.com/portlandfellowship)

**\*Twitter:** [@PTLDFellowship](https://twitter.com/PTLDFellowship)

### Additional Updates:

[www.portlandfellowship.com](http://www.portlandfellowship.com)

### Speakers, counseling and support for youth

can be set up through the office.

## Celebrating 30 Years of Freedom



For many years now, we've had the privilege of having KathyGrace Duncan serve with Portland Fellowship, both as our Women's Ministry Leader and as our Board Chair. Many of you know her powerful testimony of transformation in Christ, after living as a man for eleven years before repenting and journeying back to the woman God created her to be.

At the end of last month, KathyGrace celebrated thirty years of freedom from a transgender identity and lifestyle. We are so blessed and excited to

be able to celebrate this milestone with her!

Seeing as March is Women's History Month, we honor the surrender, perseverance and faith that KathyGrace has displayed over the past three decades on her historic journey to reclaim the goodness of femininity. As more and more transgendered people in our culture today are beginning to de-transition, stories like KathyGrace's bring incredible hope and help pave the way for other women to embrace their God-given gender.



If you would like to send KathyGrace a note of encouragement, or thank her for the way her ministry has impacted you at any point over the last 30 years, you can email her at:

[kathygrace@portlandfellowship.com](mailto:kathygrace@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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