



the fellowship message

"Proclaiming freedom for the captives." ISAIAH 61

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My Damascus Road Experience by Tanya*

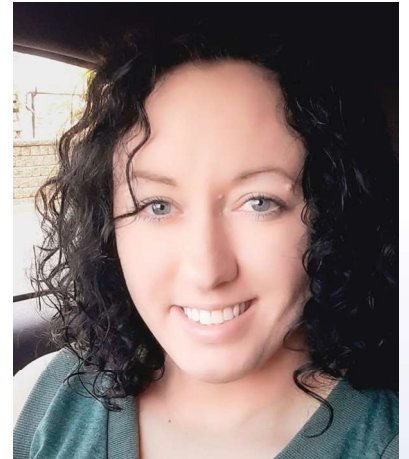
Female—one beautiful aspect of His design, reflecting unity and diversity within the Trinity. This term was bestowed on me by our Creator before the foundation of the earth, yet I disconnected from it. Surviving an attempt on my life in the womb, I internalized being unwanted.

Early onset sexual objectification and social ostracizing made me believe being female wasn't a blessing, but a curse. At the age of eight, I stumbled upon my father's pornographic magazines. Confused and enticed by the images, I often snuck away to gaze at unrealistic expectations of womanhood. The innocence behind my need to be seen and known, and to connect relationally, became quite skewed. My identity and value shifted as I experienced molestation in my formative years. Guilt, shame, and condemnation followed. Suddenly neither men, nor family, were safe. Transgender desires and same-sex attractions arose, though my young mind lacked that terminology to express my feelings. Adverse family dynamics contributed greatly to escapism, and a woman's embrace offered me comfort and safety.

Pondering my life before Jesus, I had a deep sense of hopelessness that appeared everlasting, despite my family's ability to appear picture-perfect. Jesus entered my life as a child via a Gospel VHS tape hung on our door, then again at the age of seventeen in a country church tucked in southern Indiana. My father returned from rehab stating that he didn't understand, but we needed to go to church. All I knew of Christians were twisted intentions, hypocritical character and conduct, and my Machiavellian family members. By age fifteen, I believed I was born gay. Despite wrestling internally, I was saved and baptized in water and Holy Ghost, and grew a bit in biblical literacy. I declared I was going in gay and coming out straight prior to being baptized! If only my bold declaration and their Pentecostal shouts could've healed the heart wounds that led to my sin struggles. Jesus came to change our souls, not modify our behavior.

In university, I joined the Chi Alpha campus ministry, leading others to Jesus while continuing in my sin. Thankfully, despite my prodigal years, those individuals are all faithfully serving in ministry today. Becoming comfortable with cheating on Jesus, I was unwilling to fully surrender. I met a Christian man my age in a church I began attending, and without accountability, we quickly fell into sexual sin. I desired the protection that came from his touch, but not the repercussions we'd face if exposed. Eventually, I told his mother in an unconventional manner, and my prodigal season began with the label, "Jezebel".

Despite meeting a minister who left the LGBT lifestyle, I ran, rebelling against Christians who cared. Things became worse as I neglected Jesus and pursued a career instead. Missing biblical familial support and church community, I was running solo, finding community instead with witches and the



Tanya* (name changed for privacy) is an alumnus of PF's Taking Back Ground program.

LGBT crowd. I began to transition medically, legally, and socially in 2017, and after six months on hormones, I legally changed my name/gender marker. Subconsciously, I was becoming the man I needed: a protector, provider, and leader.

I encountered my first transgender man in university, who referred me to a counselor that advocated for those transitioning. Later, I met a woman who was several years into her transition. She appeared male physically, was married to a woman, and seemed truly happy. While they became my close friends and cheered me on, I learned addiction and infidelity were tucked within their marriage as well, and a façade was lost. Many LGBT individuals I met appeared more compassionate and loyal than my biological family.

I can tell you, though, that changing all aspects of my life and body didn't appease the pain in my soul, the brokenness in my heart, the trauma of my past, or the torment within my mind as I believed it would. Once that revelation happened, I felt stuck, but was still advocating, influencing others to transition. Promiscuity turned to modeling, which led to escorting, and finally sex slavery took my freedom as deceptive opportunities came forth from the world. To be honest, much of my testimony is my pursuit of supposed "freedom" via organized chaos, my rebellion. Had I trusted Jesus years prior and surrendered fully, much of my suffering could've been avoided.

Jesus freed me in 2021, via a Damascus road experience. The prayers of my spiritual parents led to that moment! I knew because many times, strangers would approach me to remind me of my call to ministry. Donna (a spiritual mother) confirmed this in 2024 as we reconciled with tears: "I love you, the Lord loves you, I want *you* to love you. I never stopped praying for you, even when I didn't want to. I was impressed that after all this time, you would return to this church. I want to pursue a relationship with boundaries, if that's okay?" Her words stunned me, the love in her embrace overwhelming, for it was *her* son I had sinned sexually with. Speechless, I nodded yes.

I was more amazed at Jesus, who had given me a dream of that exact moment months prior. In the dream, Donna stood in an illuminating white robe behind me, and the Holy Spirit spoke that deliverance, reconciliation, and inner healing will occur. I chuckled in disbelief when I awoke to write it down and texted the details to her pastor.

Believing my Damascus road experience wasn't Jesus, I went to my physician for blood work, thinking I'd been drugged. Then I saw a psychiatrist, trying to rationalize my experience as schizophrenia or cognitive dissonance. My tests returned normative. That encounter with the Holy Spirit had consumed me with His pure love, and reverential fear hit me immediately. I was shocked, relieved, and wanted to flee all at once. He didn't come as the dictator I expected;

He came as the love of our Father—holy, but love. His words shook my body, bringing life to my soul. Decades of pain resolved in moments. He said, "Don't you know I will never leave you nor forsake you? Stop denying the calling I've placed on your life. Trust my people, they will help you." Flying from L.A. to Vegas the next morning, I canceled a meeting with my mistress, instead staying in my hotel to pray. It didn't make sense to my mind, yet fit perfectly in the confines of my soul. His ways and thoughts are higher than ours (*Psalms 51:8-9*).



Tanya living as a man (2021).

In response, I sought legal counsel to deal with my escort handlers, signed NDAs, reconnected with ministers for help, ditched the witches/Satanists, and began to de-transition. In solitude with Jesus, I shed TV/social media for nine months to dig into Scripture more. The comfort I sought via women was now found in the Holy Spirit's embrace, where He healed the heart wounds that led to my sin struggles. I regained my gender and name legally in 2023, with my spiritual parents, Todd & Kathy, standing with me. The judge scoffed, but my petition to the court stated, "I transitioned for my glory, but am de-transitioning for the glory of Jesus." As bold and unbridled as I was in my sin, I've become far louder for the truth, for the Lover of my soul.

Portland Fellowship offered community when much of the church appeared dismissive and distant, or worse, advocating for my sin. In the TBG program, KathyGrace presented love and patience I needed when I tried to analyze things that only Jesus could unravel. She pushed me to be vulnerable in the context of community, with the depths of the soul changes Jesus was bringing forth. I'd never met anyone who knew the tedious facets of de-transitioning. KathyGrace brought encouragement in overwhelming moments as the world addressed me as a son, when my heart knew I am a daughter. Many have endured the trenches with me these past several years. Now, I'd die for the church I once persecuted. I pray you're encouraged by what Jesus has done within my life. He can and will do the same for you.

A Year of Hope (Part 6 of 6): Fellowship Partners by Leah King

In this six-part series, we are highlighting different parts of Portland Fellowship that offer hope for healing and relational wholeness in Jesus Christ. For context, please read the previous parts: www.portlandfellowship.com/articles/hope.pdf

“Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always contending for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills.”
—Colossians 4:12



Have you ever wondered how the ministry of Portland Fellowship exists in a culture that is so hostile to the reality of Jesus changing lives of those in the LGBTQ+ community and those with unwanted same-sex attraction? Well, it is because of people like our Fellowship Partners.

In the previous five articles in this series, we have examined many different aspects of Portland fellowship. We've taken a look at what each area of the ministry does, and shared how Portland Fellowship exists to bring hope through our online programs, encouragement to friends and family through Hope Group, redemption and healing through Taking Back Ground, and support to churches navigating LGBTQ+ matters in their own congregations.

However, one area of Portland Fellowship that many do not know of is our Fellowship Partners. I will be the first to tell you that Portland Fellowship would not be what it is without our faithful Fellowship Partners. These are a group of people committed to praying for and financially supporting the transforming work that God is doing through the ministry of Portland Fellowship.

When I think of our Fellowship Partners, I can't help but think of Epaphras, who was one of the Apostle Paul's friends known for faithfully praying for those Paul was writing to. (*Colossians 4:12*) Epaphras understood the important message of the Gospel that Paul was taking to the churches, so much so that he prayed even to the point of struggling in prayer on behalf of the Colossian church.

How often do we pray so much that we struggle or wrestle in prayer for the sake of others? I believe that Epaphras' prayers are even seen today, because the fruit of his prayers was Paul's continuation of spreading the Gospel, the very Gospel that people learn of and receive freedom by at Portland Fellowship.

Like Epaphras' commitment to pray, this is what our Fellowship Partners do: they sow into this ministry by prayer and support in ways that many will only see in the life to come. By committing to a level of ongoing partnership with Portland Fellowship, these people get a closer look into what God is doing in and through the ministry. Fellowship Partners receive confidential video updates, reflections, and prayer requests from staff, volunteers, and participants who attend our programs. The goal is for Fellowship Partners to better understand and appreciate Portland Fellowship by getting a behind-the-scenes look at what God is doing through this ministry.

Another aspect of being a Fellowship Partner is their financial blessing to the ministry. These regular, ongoing donations allow PF to have consistency in support rather than the blessing of one-time gifts or fundraisers, which are good, but come in waves. Steady ongoing support allows PF the stability to continue to plan for the future of the ministry. Fellowship Partner support enables us to better care for our weekly program participants, and also allows PF staff to work on projects such as updated video teachings, and writing, printing and publishing new curriculum.

If you have found Portland Fellowship to be a blessing and encouragement to you, we ask that you would consider becoming a Fellowship Partner. You can sign up online at: www.portlandfellowship.com/support.php

November - December Calendar & Services

tuesdays in november **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.
6-8:30 p.m.

tuesdays in november **Hope Group**

Discipleship series for friends & family of gay or trans-identifying loved ones.
*For both Zoom and in-house.
6-8 p.m.

november 9 **Jason Speaking**

Jason will be speaking with Denise Schick's ministry, Help 4 Families, in Little Rock, Arkansas.

november 27-29 **Offices Closed**

The PF offices will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday. Regular hours of operation will resume on Monday 12/2.

Follow us!

Get updates and inspirational resources on social media.

***Facebook & Instagram:**
[@portlandfellowship](https://www.facebook.com/portlandfellowship)
***Twitter:** [@PTLDFellowship](https://twitter.com/PTLDFellowship)

Additional Updates:
www.portlandfellowship.com

Speakers, counseling and support for youth can be set up through the office.

Year-End Donations: Non-Cash Assets



As we approach the end of 2024, we invite you

to consider a unique way of supporting the mission of Portland Fellowship. The National Christian Foundation (NCF) is a biblically grounded and trustworthy organization seeking to support Christ-centered non-profits. By gifting appreciated stocks, mutual funds, or other non-cash assets such as real estate and business interests through NCF, you can maximize your giving. NCF will handle all the details, ensuring your contributions have the greatest impact.

Our partnership with the National Christian Foundation is unique for two key reasons. First, by donating appreciated stocks to Portland Fellowship through NCF, rather than cash or checks, you can receive a tax deduction for the full fair market value of the stock on the date of the gift while also avoiding capital gains taxes. Secondly, NCF can issue tax-deductible statements on our behalf, providing an anonymous way to support PF.

If you would like to utilize the services of the National Christian Foundation (NCF) to support Portland Fellowship, please call or email us, and we will provide you with the necessary form. Alternatively, you can visit NCF's website directly: www.ncfgiving.com/solutions/non-cash

Finally, if you are not already a Fellowship Part-



ner, we invite you to become a monthly supporter of this life-transforming ministry: www.portlandfellowship.com/support.php

Regardless of how you choose to give, we sincerely thank you for supporting the Lord's transformative work here at PF!



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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