

# Risk that Brings Healing

by Carol Moore



## December News

In December of 1994, our daughter sent us a letter saying she was bisexual and had chosen a female partner. My world fell apart. I could not read the materials she sent nor deal with her situation unless I brought my own past into the light. As I wrote to her, I shared a secret I'd never shared with anyone, pouring out a lifetime struggle with homosexuality and how God had changed my life.

When my husband Roy came home, I gave him our daughter's letter and a copy of the letter I had written her. After reading them, he came to me, put his arms around me and just held me. He had never known of my struggle.

As of that year, I had not had an affair with a woman for ten years. Still, over the next five months, I experienced confusion and depression over my past: my memories, decisions, and my sexuality. I began questioning what I really believed the Bible taught on this subject. God started to get through to me in May of 1995, as I began to memorize scripture and accept His forgiveness. I finally told God, **"I want to be who You created me to be and do what You want me to do."** I realized I was to walk deeply and closely with Him, absorbing His Word so I could grow spiritually from within. I started a daily journal of what God was teaching me and how He was leading me.

I thought God had changed me earlier in my life, but I had merely buried my past and started rebuilding on the burial ground. I needed to dig up the past, deal with it, confess, forgive and let God heal.

## Looking at My Past

God began to show me that early in my life I rebelled against Him for making me a girl when I wanted to be a boy. I rebelled against anything that was feminine, including my mother, and built up a wall against femininity. I carried guilt from a heterosexual experience in my teens that I had never resolved, which had made me more skeptical about relating to men.

As I was growing up, I had found myself physically attracted to girls and later women. These same sex attractions never seemed to be a serious problem until after I was married. Then, my attraction to women became uncontrollable. I was also going through a lot of spiritual confusion and emotional turmoil. I did not have much emotional intimacy with my husband, or with Jesus.

A dear friend and I began to become emotionally dependent on each other, and with time, crossed physical boundaries. I know now that the lines of adultery had been crossed well before. I vowed never to let anything like that happen again; but it did happen twice.

There were other emotionally dependent relationships over the years that were affairs that had truly been hidden in my heart. Eventually I saw the addictive patterns and never entered another unhealthy relationship again.

I spent years burying myself in school, ministry, and other activities to keep out of trouble. I did not allow myself to get close to anyone.

## Risking the Journey

A few months after my daughter's letter, I was at a Women's retreat at a conference center in North Carolina. There on June 30, 1995, I sat looking at the commitment card I was to fill out that asked what new risk I was willing to run. All week our theme had been, "Risking the Journey," and God had been tugging at my heart to risk sharing my testimony.

*How could I possibly go public and risk the shame and embarrassment I would bring to my family, my Lord, and myself?* After all, I had served as a missionary in Africa, taught and led English as a Second Language (ESL) ministries in several churches over 25 years. Roy, and I had been married for 28 years, we had a son and daughter in their twenties, and most people thought we had a perfect marriage. Why would I even think of revealing my lifelong burden and struggle?

In that auditorium, I realized that God was giving me the opportunity of a lifetime. **This was a chance to obey Him, to see what marvelous things He would do as I shared my life experience to minister to others, and to be ministered to.**

I was scared to death, but I knew there would be no further growth with God if I did not answer His call. So I wrote on the card that I was willing to run this new risk of "sharing my testimony." I was excited and petrified. I knew I had taken the first step into the journey of a lifetime. I had no idea what the future held, but I knew the One who held the future.

## Taking First Steps

My relationship with Roy grew rapidly as a result of his forgiveness and understanding, my newfound openness with him, and my commitment to the Lord and His Word. Up to this time, we had only shared our daughter's situation with a few friends, and my husband was the only one who knew about my personal struggles.

My first test was in sharing at the 30-year reunion of my missionary group. The response was very supportive. It truly opened up communication.

Spiritual warfare worsened. It had been more than 20 years since I had experienced anything like this. But I had received my orders, and I had to obey. For the next few weeks, it seemed like almost everything I read, heard, or saw reaffirmed God's call.

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Before sharing publicly, out of respect, I shared the basics of my past in person with my sister, our son, and my parents. I decided to write a letter to share with other relatives, and some of our closest Christian friends in the many places we had lived, as well as new friends. We wanted them to hear from us first, before hearing it from others.

One morning when I was getting ready to send out my testimony, I heard a message on Gethsemane, and felt I could relate with some understanding of what Jesus felt when He said, "Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what You will" (Mark 14: 36). I cried and said, "God, I don't want to do this." Then I went to the church, and handed the first copy of my letter to our Minister to Internationals.

### A New Sense of Freedom

Each letter I handed out or mailed was a traumatic experience for me, but afterwards there was a new sense of freedom and victory in Jesus. Revelation 12:11 says, "**They overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.**" Secrecy and fear of being found out had been the greatest obstacles to my spiritual growth and other aspects of my life.

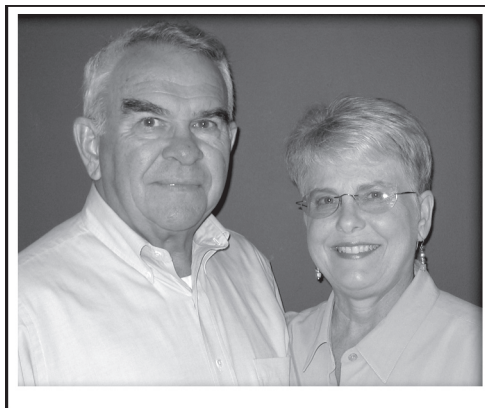
People who responded gave love, encouragement and support. I know others were not sure what to say. I regret that I had to be a source of shock, disappointment and disillusionment to those who had trusted me.

### A Local Ministry

God began to show me there was such a thing as "ex-gays" and ministries that helped people leave homosexuality. My next step was to write to a ministry requesting help for understanding my daughter and myself. I was amazed at the materials that were available, the number of Christians who struggled with homosexuality and the multitudes who had left the homosexual lifestyle.

In April of 1996, I went to my first Exodus Regional Conference. It was one of the most inspirational conferences of many I had attended.

Soon after, my husband and I became part of Beyond Imagination Ministry in Raleigh, NC, an Exodus Member Ministry. We found a Christian atmosphere where I could be honest about my life yet be loved and accepted unconditionally; where the biblical viewpoint



The Moores: Roy & Carol

about homosexual behavior is upheld and uncompromised. We've grown to know, love and appreciate many people whose paths we might not have crossed otherwise.

God continued to work in me, setting me free from those fears and attractions. My relationship with Jesus is the most important relationship in my life, and it has been helpful to realize that God's goal for me is to accept my God-given femininity and heterosexuality.

In January of 1997, God got my attention through the story of Jonah, as I realized I had obeyed, but only in part. I had not yet had the courage to share with my home church, and the time had arrived. The response was warm and supportive, and I felt a sense of relief. Sharing the next Sunday at my local church, there was an outpouring of support and an immediate opportunity for ministry.

The last weekend of February 1997, my husband and I were privileged to attend the first national "Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays" (PFOX) conference. In the fall of 1998, we began leading a support group through our local Exodus ministry, providing support for family members and friends who have gay loved ones.

In the summer of 1997, we attended our first Exodus Freedom Conference. We gained so much from that experience that we have attended eight of the next nine national conferences and several regional conferences as well. We hope to attend them for many years to come.

### Prepared to Serve Him

Since that commitment at the retreat in 1995, I have begun to realize that everything that has happened to me in my life has been a preparation for this new avenue of ministry. If I don't share, then all of my trials will have been wasted.

I praise the Lord that he gave me the courage to risk the journey of opening my life to others. This exciting journey of a lifetime has only begun. God is awesome! ☺

*The Lord gave Carol the courage and opportunity to share her testimony with her high school classmates at her 45th reunion in October of 2006.*

*Carol has been an active participant with Beyond Imagination Ministry (BIM) in Raleigh, NC, since May 1996 and has been leading the group for women dealing with same-sex attraction since 2005. She and Roy have led a parents group since 1998.*

*Carol is president of a family business, Banner Machinery Corporation, and is a qualified English as a second Language (ESL) teacher with 37 years experience. She and Roy enjoy time with their children, daughter-in-law and grandchildren, ages 3 and almost 2.*