

## What Some of You Were

### Stories about Christians and Homosexuality

Editor Christopher Keane – Liberty Christian Ministries. Publisher Matthias Media, 2001. 172 Pp.  
(Winner Australian Christian Book of the Year Award, 2002)

I am convinced that far too few people in our churches understand the message of hope in this book. In dinner table and bible study group conversations too often I have heard Christian people say, “Of course homosexuals are born that way – they can never change. They can’t help themselves ... I don’t like it, but...” Others in the group may hold painful silence, because they themselves struggle with same sex attraction and dare not reveal that struggle.

In the course of bible study we may read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: “*Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is **what some of you were**. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*” The church is made up of sinners of all kinds – including homosexual sinners – who have found mercy in Christ. As Ed Vaughan writes, “If you are a fine moral upright person – watch out! You are in Pharisee country!” (P.12) That passage forms the basis of the book and its title, and Liberty Christian Ministries from which it arose.

The stories it brings together are not miracle deliverance stories; the first six are honest accounts of the way people – three men, three women – struggled to overcome their addictive same sex attractions because they knew or had come to know Jesus Christ and accepted that gay or lesbian relationships and behaviour were totally incompatible with being a Christian. The support role of Liberty Ministries – which was until 2004 led by the editor Christopher Keane with his wife Truda – comes into most of the stories. Other accounts deal with various perspectives; those of two mothers, of a lesbian and a transsexual; of a daughter of a homosexual man; and of wives. The final two personal stories *Revelation and Recovery* concern marriages undermined by homosexuality. Much shattering of myths emerges in these stories – such as the idea that gay people have life-long relationships comparable to good marriages – and much painfully acquired wisdom.

Some examples: “I am writing to encourage those who are struggling with same sex attraction to go on in that struggle. FOR YOUR OWN HAPPINESS AND FUTURE, DO NOT GIVE UP! These days, my fantasies about the ‘gay’ life are well and truly shattered.... Homosexuality is not part of God’s plan and whatever we do that is not part of God’s plan inevitably leads to failure.” (P.108) “Holiness may hurt sometimes, but it beats guilt and depression any day.” (P.111) “We are not responsible for what happened to us as children, but we are responsible for how we live as adults.” (P.113)

Obviously a major purpose of the book is to help strugglers, but an equally important purpose is to enable churches to help in that struggle. In his opening story, Christopher writes of the two-sided coin: “On one side, we have the gay community, which includes those who have chosen homosexuality as their lifestyle ... some are angry and militant” Many have been hurt by the church, and accept what the media says about the church’s attitude to homosexuality. “On the other side, we have the many Christians who are struggling with an unwanted same sex attraction, in an environment (the church) which for the most part doesn’t understand – and in some cases doesn’t want to understand – the condition or the process for those who want to change.”

He quotes John Stott, seeking “a Christian way to combine biblical thinking about God’s intention for human sexuality with an equally biblical attitude of understanding, respect and support for persons with a homosexual disposition.” He sees as disastrous the fact that there are ‘gay-friendly’ churches which fail to uphold the Scriptures in this regard and which seek to affirm people in their homosexuality. “If he had gone to such a church, he writes, “I may well have been dead from AIDS by now. Many of the people I knew when I was part of the gay community are now dead.” (Pp 26, 27) He puts forward three principles as the way forward for churches: 1) We need to uphold the authority of Scripture 2) We need to uphold one standard and 3) We need to provide for people. “Christianity is a great leveller, isn’t it? I’m ex-gay but as

Christians we're all ex-something. ... For me, it started with forgiveness and turning away from my past life. From there Jesus took me on a journey of change and healing, for which I will always be grateful." (Pp 29,30)

Though quite a short book at 172 pages, and not a heavy read, the book has an important appendix section, with articles by various authors – *How we went gay; Is homosexuality biologically determined?; On homosexuality and change;* and *Homosexuality in the New Testament* Reading lists are given and there is a Study Guide section, as well as contact details for Liberty (based in Sydney, Australia) and other similar organisations. There is a website, [www.libertychristianministries.org.au](http://www.libertychristianministries.org.au)