

# The Seeds That Grew

Real Stories - Women

by Melissa Fryrear



I am the second and last child my parents adopted, in 1966. I grew up in an upper middle-class subdivision in the east end of Louisville attending church. Trinity Presbyterian was less than two miles from our house. I was dedicated there as a baby, went to Vacation Bible School in the summers, played the hand bells in the children's choir, and took my first communion when I was twelve. Although I had attended church all of my life, I had not yet accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior. Church seemed like something we did because "it was the right thing to do." Looking back, I remember hearing dozens of stories about Jesus, but I never recall hearing a message about salvation. I did not know I was a sinner in need of a Savior.

When I was thirteen, I remember sitting in the sanctuary with my parents one Sunday morning waiting for the service to begin. I picked up a Bible and began to flip through the pages at random. I stopped in the book of Leviticus and my eyes fell upon a scripture in the eighteenth chapter: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable." After I read that verse, I froze and everything around me stopped. My eyes darted to the beginning of the verse and I read it again. Without looking around, without saying a word to anyone, I closed that Bible, returned it to the pew in front of me, and said "No" to God. When I read that verse, the words after the semicolon read "Melissa is detestable."

I had known for a number of years that something seemed "different" about me. Many gays and lesbians believe they were born homosexual. This is what I believed because I had always felt that way. As early as age seven, I was aware of being drawn to other girls. This was a seed that began to take root in the soul of my heart. As my adolescent years continued to unfold, it only became increasingly obvious to me that I was not like the other girls. My mind was filled with an endless barrage of tormenting questions: "What is wrong with me?" "Why don't I act like the other girls act?" "Why don't I seem to like boys?" "Why do I hate being a girl?" In an attempt to answer those screaming questions, I opened a dictionary one day and read the definitions to words like homosexual, lesbian, and gay. And the seed sprouted.

I was sixteen when I first became involved in a lesbian relationship. That marked the beginning of the next 10 years of my life. Unable, unaware, and unwilling to resist the draw and temptation any longer, I embraced my lesbian identity. When I left home at the age of eighteen to attend college at the University of Kentucky, I immersed myself in the gay community. Everything in my world revolved around being gay. My only goals in life were to have a good time, to make a great deal of money, and without overusing a cliché, to find "the girl of my dreams." And the seed flourished.

The years continued to unfold. I was on my way to achieving my goals: I was having some really good times; I was making \$40,000 by my mid-twenties; I was involved with a woman. However, something was stirring within me.

In 1988 I began working for an in-house advertising agency in Lexington. One of my co-workers, Bill Martinez, was a Christian. He was always kind, respectful, and caring.

One Saturday night, unexpectedly, I asked my partner if she wanted to go to church the next morning. We were so emotionally enmeshed with one another that I think if I had suggested jumping off a bridge, she

would have agreed. We looked in the phone book and found Versailles Presbyterian Church. It was a small congregation of predominantly older couples, so when my partner and I showed up, it was obvious.

I became involved in the church immediately: I went to Wednesday night potlucks and an adult Sunday school class; I even joined the adult handbell choir. A couple in their seventies, Doris and L.J., took us under their wings

L.J., Doris and Bill knew the life I was living. They were discerning people, and, of course, I looked the part. They met me where I was, accepted me with grace, loved me unconditionally and prayed for me fervently. It was through relationship with them that I was led to make the most important decision of my life. One day in February of '91, I said quietly in my heart, "Jesus, I need You. I receive You. Please, please, please come and be the Savior of my soul and the Lord of my life." And He did. And a new seed was planted!

When my partner gave me my first Bible I discovered there were a number of scriptures that addressed homosexuality: Leviticus 20:13, Deuteronomy 23:18, Romans 1:27 and 1 Corinthians 6:9. This is when the wrestling ensued.

For months I went around and around with the Lord. I didn't understand. I argued with Him, begged Him, ignored Him, hurt Him and fled from Him. One night with clinched fists and tears streaming down my face, I yelled at Him, "If it is so wrong, if it is an abomination, why did You let me go down that road? Why didn't You stop me? Why?" Silence.

The Bible says the Word of God is "living and active." That it's "sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Isaiah 55:11 also says that God's word will not return empty, but it will accomplish what God desires and achieve the purposes for which He sends it. Over the next months, the Holy Spirit continued to work God's truth in my heart until I ultimately came to the point where I knew that I knew what I was doing was wrong. Even in my confusion, even in my anger, even in my rebellion, God showered me with His kindness, which led to repentance. In October '92, by His grace, I repented of my years of sexual sin. And the new seed sprouted.

I heard about Exodus as I was getting ready for church one morning on "The Coral Ridge Hour," produced by Dr. James Kennedy's ministry. I had never heard of Exodus before. I listened as men and women shared their testimonies of change. I watched in utter amazement. I had no idea there was anyone else who had made the decision to walk away from homosexuality, much less to say that they had changed.

I called Exodus first thing Monday morning and received a packet from them by the end of the week. I ripped into that packet as if it were Christmas morning. Enclosed was a state-by-state alphabetical listing of referral ministries. I scanned the list as quickly as I could, and in bold letters I read: "CrossOver Ministries, Lexington, Kentucky." I broke down and wept. As excited as I was to receive that material, though, I was more afraid. For three months that information sat in the top drawer of the desk in my home office. Eventually, because of God's wooing grace, I called CrossOver. The next week, I met with the ministry's director.

As a participant of CrossOver, I immediately involved myself in the support groups, one-on-one counseling, reading literature and resources and attending conferences. I began to learn the various factors that contributed to my same-gender attractions: my perceived rejection of my biological mother and father, my perception that my adoptive mother was distant and stoic and that my adoptive father was emotionally absent, sexual molestation, sexual experimentation, with both sexes, during my preteen years, understanding the schemes of the devil, and dozens and dozens of lies I believed about everything. I began to take responsibility for my own sinful beliefs, choices, and behaviors. Most importantly, though, I

began to learn about the Holy Trinity and to form a relationship with each Person.

During my years of restoration, I also began to learn about this thing called womanhood. Goodness! Who knew there was so much to learn: plucking eyebrows, hair bleaches, hair waxings, facial mud masks, eye lash curlers, manicures, pedicures, push-up bras, tummy tuckers, rear-end boosters, last year's colors, and next year's fashions?

I also began to learn about boys. Let me say that if anyone thinks puberty is tough at fifteen, try it in your thirties!

And the seed flowered.

**Additional Information:**

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