

"Homosexuality & The Father-Wound"

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Married and a grandfather at 50, George (not his real name) had engaged in many homosexual relationships until three years earlier, when he became a Christian and renounced them all. Lately, however, same-sex desires had resurfaced, and he came to me for help.

Uncertain, I offered to pray together and ask God to help him in his struggle. To my surprise--and his--a memory came to George's mind when, at 5 years old, he huddled terrified under the kitchen table as his raging father, with fist raised, was yelling at his mother. "I was scared to death of him!" he declared, shaking even as he talked.

I invited George to hold that memory in his mind and ask Jesus to come and be with him in the kitchen as he trembled under the table, and do whatever He might want to do.

"Yes, Jesus, please come and be with me," he pleaded. "I need you here, Jesus!"

I prayed quietly--if not uneasily. Moments later, George sat up, his eyes still closed but eyebrows raised. "Jesus is here!" he burst out excitedly. "He's right there, standing in the middle of the kitchen and...and now He's reaching down and picking me up. He's holding me in His arms! I can feel the strength in Him. He's talking to me. He says, 'It's OK. I've got you safely in my arms now'."

"Let Jesus hold you," I offered, "and receive His strength."

I looked and saw George smile, relax for a moment--and then stiffen. "But Dad's still angry and yelling at Mom!" he said, his eyes now squinting in fear.

Hesitantly, I forged ahead. "Now that you're safe and secure in Jesus' arms," I suggested, "why don't you speak up and tell your dad once and for all how you feel about what he's doing?"

"Daddy, stop it!" George cried out. "Stop yelling at Mommy like that! You scare me so much. Stop yelling, Daddy! Stop and...and just...just hold me, Daddy!" George's head fell into his hands and he began sobbing uncontrollably. "Please, Daddy," he managed, gasping for breath, "please, hold me...."

Later, George sat quietly amazed. "Now I see where that desire for a man to hold me came from," he said. "I did want a man to hold me--but not some other guy. I wanted my dad. But he was so big and out of control--it was just too scary for me to let myself feel that. So everything got-misdirected toward other men instead."

George noted that Jesus had come with palpable masculine strength--which he could feel from His arms and receive--bearing courage enough even to stand

up at last to his abusive father. "I've always felt so weak as a man," he sighed. "I can see now that when I went looking to draw strength from some other guy through sex, it was just that wounded little boy in me looking to get manly strength from Dad. That's why I always felt attracted to bigger, muscular guys. But really, all they did was take from me and leave me feeling weaker and abused--just like when I was a boy with Dad."

That day, George met his true Father and experienced graphically His masculine strength through Jesus. "Whoever has seen me," as Jesus said, "has seen the Father" (John 14: 8).

In order to heal his image of manhood, I knew George would need to see his father from God's perspective. So I then invited George to pray, "Jesus, show me my dad the way you see him." As he did so, George sensed clearly that his father had been similarly wounded by his own father (George's grandfather) as a boy himself. Eventually, George was able to cry for his wounded father. "I realize now that you just did to me what your father did to you," he spoke out. "I forgive you, Dad, for not controlling your anger and scaring me so much--and for making me afraid to be a man."

I knew also that enemy spirits often enter by taking advantage of wounds and fears (see my chapters "How Demons Enter--and Leave," in *No Small Snakes*). As we prayed further, an anger surged up in George toward his father, which we sensed was a man-hating spirit. I had encountered that before in women, especially those who had been abused by men. But how, I wondered, could it enter a man?

Praying for understanding, I saw that to stand weak and frightened before his angry, overpowering father is just too dangerous for a little boy. Yet it's not natural for a boy to hate his father, so he needs super-natural power to do it. Here, the Father of Lies is happy to oblige, with a man-hating spirit. The boy receives this readily, as it fabricates a sense of strength and power before men--but it cuts him off from enjoying genuine friendships with other men, and indeed, leads him to hate his own masculinity.

Seeing this deception at last, George prayed with a boldness and strength that surprised him. "In the name of Jesus, I set the cross between my father and me, between him and his father," he declared, "and I bind you, man-hating spirit in me and command you in Jesus' name to get out of me and go into the hands of Jesus!" We then asked that the blood of Jesus would cleanse his natural bloodline of this evil, and that Father God would replace it with a spirit of true manhood and the freedom to embrace it in himself--instead of grasping after it in other men.

"Father God," I prayed, "let George know the joy in his manhood that is Your joy in him as Your son."

George had much healing work yet to do, but these powerful revelations of God's truth and grace in Jesus (John 1:17), set the course for his struggle and spurred him later to persevere.

My ministry experience since then suggests that this man-hating spirit is the fountainhead of homosexual desire, focusing on a father who is either abusive, or absent (physically or emotionally). I've noticed, for example, that a second son of such a father especially may draw this spirit in feeling less than his older brother in his father's eyes, leading him to hate both Dad and his older brother--and often to take refuge in Mom. In many cases, a man has been sexually molested as a boy by an older male and hates him for it. Whether the boy "inherits" it generationally from his father or mother (who hated his or her father) or draws it from boyhood wounding, the man-hating spirit "broadcasts" from within him, attracting other men similarly broken--even molesters, who most often were molested themselves as boys. (see "Kick Me Spirits" in *No Small Snakes*)

George, meanwhile, saw his mother as the weak one before his father--in fact, as the victim, like himself. Too scared to identify with masculinity, as falsely caricatured in his abusive father, George instead was drawn to his mother and her weakness. In fact, she had often been seductive toward him, even holding him as a boy for comfort from her husband's outbursts. So he bonded with his mother to avoid his masculinity, seeking a safer identity in femininity.

Many similar stories have led me to regard homosexual desire as preeminently unreal--a misfocused distortion of otherwise genuine, but frustrated, longing for Daddy. It's like an addiction, generated by deep pain and fueled by shame, maintained by a compulsion to cover these up. An addict's most common defense against this truth is denial, by dumping his or her shame on others--as in, "I'm not an alcoholic--you're just judgmental!" Or, similarly, "Nothing's wrong with homosexuality--you're just homophobic!"

Addictions are sustained largely by others so wounded themselves that they fear the addict's judgment, and so are intimidated by such shame into silence and even complicity. Thus, the term "codependent," for those who--often the emotionally blinded children of addicts--make excuses for the addict or otherwise enable him/her to avoid facing the truth that would expose the addiction.

At a city-wide clergy meeting I once attended, for example, several local pastors advocating "tolerance and acceptance" promoted a "seminar" entitled, "Toward a compassionate view of homosexuality."

"Some of us here," an ordained Christian therapist countered, "don't think it's compassionate to abandon a brother in his brokenness."

Is homosexual impulse inborn? My ministry experience suggests that, apart from inherited/generational spirits, it is not. But even if it is, so from a Christian view, is sin. Even as Jesus has come to overcome the effects of sin, that is, there are no parades for "Alcoholic pride."

Truth is, we're all homophobic--because the father-wound that fuels homosexual desires is today so vast and pervasive in our culture that it's become normative. The father properly confirms masculinity in a boy, stirs him by attractive example to want to become a man. Yet, at a recent men's conference, I asked 150 Christian men, "How many of you did your father talk to you about your sexuality when you were growing up?" Only two hands went up. Today, as many as 50% of boys in America are being raised without their blood father in the home. No wonder the politically correct mindset--rooted in a man-hating spirit loosed by father-abandoned post-WWII boomers--has swept our culture.

Codependently accommodating the father-wound and its destructive effects, our entire society has become an addictive system, so accustomed to being wounded that we've forgotten what healed looks like. Emotionally crippled and spiritually starved, we can neither weep for men trapped in same-sex desires nor stand and offer them hope for freedom. Desperately, we trade uncomfortable truth for manageable ideology, covering our shame with a patronizing "more compassionate" worldview.

When such epidemic shame reaches a tipping point, the greatest aspiration of society becomes not to hurt anyone. It's a good thing surgeons don't feel that way! Surgery, like the truth, hurts. Those who want to be healed more than they want to hide their shame, however, not only submit to the operation, but seek it with all their hearts. This, at last, marks a real man--who soon discovers that manhood is not about either politically correct ideology, nor religiously correct morality, but trusting relationship at last with your true Father revealed in Jesus--the Father, in fact, "from whom all fatherhood, in heaven and on earth, receives its true name" (Ephes. 3:14 NIV footnote).

Those who by faith enter into that relationship soon discover that a good Father does command sexual boundaries--not to deprive His children of pleasure, but to protect them from pain. Only a cruel god, in fact, would command behavior without providing the power to walk it out. Thus, Father God has poured out His Spirit unto today upon all who would entertain His presence and power in Jesus.

Over the years, I've been privileged to meet and minister to many heroic men like George, who have courageously faced their spiritual/emotional wound, taken it to Jesus, and determined to persevere after Him. As with most brokenness in this fallen world, it's not an instant "cure"; most often, it's a process of painful honesty, terrifying surrender, and increasing trust.

"The opposite of homosexuality is not heterosexuality," as Exodus, an international ministry to sexual brokenness, duly notes, "but faithfulness to Jesus." (www.exodusinternational.org)

(For a further discussion on this topic, see my chapter "Lost among Men: A Non-Political View of Homosexuality," in *Healing the Masculine Soul*, which includes a list of resource ministries for sexual healing. Available (as *No Small Snakes*) at <http://store.abbafather.com/SearchResults.asp?Cat=1>).

Ministry Update

No Small Snakes: A Journey into Spiritual Warfare was released in June, to my great satisfaction after working on it for over 20 years. Now in my 65th year, I find myself wanting to get to the root issues of life more sharply than ever before. I know that mine has been a pioneering ministry, and others have prophesied that my greatest influence may well come after I've passed away. I'm becoming OK with that. I've been blessed far beyond what I could've imagined as a young man, and the privilege of fighting on the frontiers of the Kingdom has always been the greatest adventure to me.

I have few speaking engagements in the US these days--only 3 full conferences this year--have made no money from *No Small Snakes* (my advance payment went directly to a much-needed new roof on our old home), and have managed without a car since our (un-insured) car accident in April. But my AbbaFather specializes in miracles, and has provided all our needs month by month, often by stirring others to support my ministry. If you feel led to respond, see http://www.abbafather.com/ministry_support.html.

The greatest frustration in my ministry has always been not the lack of ministry opportunities--though I confess I do wonder about that at times--but that most of us simply don't want to be healed--at least, not as badly as we want to cover our shame. Since *No Small Snakes*, I've become acutely aware of how our Western/scientific materialistic worldview, geared toward maintaining control, has blinded us to spiritual reality, and thereby, handicapped us not only in our personal relationships, but from seeing what God's doing at large in these times and taking part in it. Spiritual power, after all, dwarfs our human power (2 Corinth. 10:4), and therefore stirs fear and shame in us all.

Jesus, of course, died on the cross to bear our otherwise unbearable shame; I for one don't want him to have died for nothing. I draw closer to him the older I get not because I'm more righteous, but more desperate. I always seem to have enough demons to deal with, whether in myself or the situation I'm facing, to keep me unsatisfied with the way things are and dependent upon Father God to change them.

Now in my 65th year, I don't have the energy anymore to run away from Him, or to chase after others who do. Like Alcoholics Anonymous, I'm becoming content to wait for people desperate enough to get real; that is, broken enough to give up on their own ability to run their lives, honest enough to face that, hopeful enough to go to God, and surrendered enough to trust Him to do what they can't. That's where the kingdom of Me and my control ends, and the Kingdom of God begins. When I was younger, I feared that. Now I welcome it eagerly, even desperately. And--can you believe this?--that rule of God, and your intended role in it, is at hand even now. It's no further away than the floor from your knees, and a heart to say, "I give up, Jesus--to you."

Meanwhile, I'm working on a new warfare book. Chapters so far include, "Real Mysteries for Real People," "Unmasking Halloween," "X-Rated Spirituality: Warfare in the New Hollywood," and "The Antibiotic Christ: Racism, Imperialism, and Spiritual Denial."

If you've read this far, I thank you for your interest in my ministry--and pray the Father's richest blessing on yours.