

# Change Comes From the Inside **Out**

by Janet Boynes

While Janet Boynes is reluctant to talk about her lesbian past, she realizes that it is her privilege

to tell how she has been set free by Christ, and how others can be, too. Explains Janet, "Christians need to know what draws a person into the gay lifestyle, and what they can do to help people break free of it." Following is Janet's powerful story, told in her own words.

**A big factor that drew me into a lesbian lifestyle was the abuse I witnessed and experienced as a child.** My parental figures were my single mother and the four men who fathered her seven children. I was the middle child of the seven, and saw my mother repeatedly abused by "big men." **Determined to avoid that same fate for myself, I became a tom-boy. I hung out with guys and became known as a bully.**

## **I was alone...it was hopeless. Now I know God never left me.**

I moved from Philadelphia to St. Paul to attend college, and gave my life to Christ at Jesus People Church. Although I dated men, I still had a fear of them. Then I became engaged to a great Christian guy and we enrolled in pre-marital counseling at our church.

But I was lonely. My fiancé traveled extensively, so I spent a lot of time with girlfriends. When a girl I'd met at work initiated a sexual relationship one night, I was caught off-guard and went along with it. Immediately I knew how Eve must have felt. Condemned! I sought out my pastor the next day, and he told me that, of course, the wedding had to be cancelled.



Devastated and repentant, I told my fiancé everything. "No, that's not you," he protested. "You just made a mistake." But I had such a strong sense that God had turned His eyes away from me that I walked away from the Lord. It was hopeless, I thought, so

I might as well have "a season of fun."

Now, years later, I know I was mistaken on all counts. God never left me. He continued to protect me and work in my life. I never found the satisfaction I was looking for in the gay lifestyle. Instead, I went from relationship to relationship and became totally confused.



Was being gay OK with God? Should I have a sex change? Was the Christian life I had previously enjoyed over for good? Would I die before I could repent and come back to the Lord?

**Deep down I knew only the Lord could rescue me.** Didn't the Bible say Jesus seeks any of His sheep that get lost? I'd see people on the bus reading their Bibles, and I'd want to run up to them and say, "Help me! I'm a backslidden Christian and I don't know how to get right with the Lord."

Fourteen years went by. I had a cleaning business and owned my own home in Maple Grove.

Whenever I'd pass the Maple Grove Assembly of God Church near my house, an inner voice would tell me that someday I'd be going to that church. The suggestion was so strong that I even mentioned it to my girlfriend and we laughed about it. Yet the idea stayed with me even though I was doing drugs, cheating on my steady girlfriend, suffering from an eating disorder, and extremely unhappy. I knew the Lord was knocking on the door of my heart (Revelation 3:20), but I didn't know how or even "if" I should respond.

One night I ran to the grocery store, and noticed a woman in the parking lot with her groceries at 3 a.m. She said she'd

- Continued on Page 2 -

Upper Right:  
Janet's "new life."  
Above: Janet's "old life."

been helping her son move into the dorms at Northcentral Bible College, so I knew right away she was a Christian. We talked and talked, and then she invited me to come to her church — Maple Grove Assembly of God!

I accepted her invitation, and a few days later went to her Bible Study. I came in late, and there sat nine feminine women. I was dressed like a boy in an old shirt and jeans with a hairband around my cropped hair. I wanted them to like me.

I knew **I wanted Jesus, but I had no idea how to get back to Him.** Those nine women loved me as I was. They answered my questions and helped me every way they could. When I asked them, they gave me pointers on how to dress and apply make-up.

They educated me about spiritual warfare, and helped me break the stronghold the devil had erected over my life.

The change in me was so dramatic that I sold my home and moved in with a Christian family for a year. I needed that role-modeling of a healthy family life and being held accountable. I never could have survived as a Christian without it. Gradually, my mess became the message of salvation. It was a real struggle, but I wanted God more than I wanted the lesbian lifestyle.

Six years later, I still stay in the Word of God and pray daily that I won't slip back into that lifestyle. I try to stay transparent, accountable, and control my thoughts. I never

could have changed my life by myself, but now I can say, "Look at what the Lord has done!"

I know God wants me to speak out about these things. Hollywood makes the homosexual lifestyle look so glamorous. Gay activists are aggressively pushing for society to condone their agenda. But we need to remember that God is "in the changing business" and wants to transform lives. The Christian women at Maple Grove Assembly loved me and spent time with me, and that made me want to grow spiritually.

Too many gays and lesbians "hate" Christians and feel condemned. But it's the love of Christ - not condemnation - that draws us toward repentance. After all, everybody wants the same thing: love and acceptance.

When God calls us out of darkness and into the light (I Peter 2:9), He calls in love.

After attending Exodus International's conference on homosexuality this past summer, I was greatly encouraged by their ministry and look forward to working with them to reach the African-American community.

My message and my heart will continue to be for helping those struggling with homosexuality by bringing the church together across racial lines to minister to the hurting in love. I truly believe that what God has done in my life, He can also do in the lives of everyone who calls on His name. ☯

### **When God calls us out of darkness and into light, He Calls in love**



Janet Boynes has shared her testimony publically to several audiences, including a Minneapolis women's conference and engagements with Minnesota State Senator Michele Bachmann, an untiring defender of family values. In the next month, she has opportunities to share with college students at Northwestern University, as well as at a pastor's summit hosted by the Minnesota Family Council and Minnesota for Marriage.