



# A Measure of *Grace*

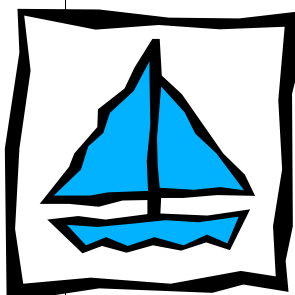
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## How Did I Get Here? Part 2

*By Mary Heathman*

*My* actual call to ministry came while I was in San Francisco at the 1985 Exodus conference. We had been in intense training and ministry for four days and I was exhausted and ready for an afternoon off. I looked forward to an afternoon apart from the others, though one of the crowd. The idea of it was God would be my companion on this boat trip on San Francisco Bay.



While we were waiting for our bus, I was watching everybody talking and laughing, then noticed one young man who was not happily alone as I was. He was leaning against the side of a building — body language obviously dejected. I thought, “Somebody ought to befriend him,” then realized I was the only one who saw

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him. In hesitation because of my need to rest, and really wanted to spend my time alone with God, I finally approached the young man, introduced myself and asked him how he was doing.

In a detached, matter of fact tone of voice, he told me of his pain and discouragement. He had done well for a year, attended the conference hoping to gain understanding and resources to start a ministry in his hometown. But what he had learned at the conference was that sexual issues are complex and he still had too much work yet to be done in his own sexuality before he could help anyone else. All his temptations then flooded back, he became discouraged and decided to take his own life. His purpose in coming on the boat trip was to jump off in the middle of the bay.

Not knowing how to reach the leadership, I stuck with him like glue—lost sight of him once on the boat and frantically looked over the side, thinking he had jumped.. I was also aware of a

weary detachment, so I prayed silently “Lord, I want to be real with Willy. Forgive me for sort of going through the motions with him, but I just wanted to spend the afternoon with you.”

Here came my most powerful experience with God. I heard His voice, a firm strong voice as if in my left ear, yet internally, in my head as well, *“You spend the afternoon with the least of these and you have spent the afternoon with me.”*

*“You spend the  
afternoon with  
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I looked up and met Willie’s eyes—they were Jesus’ eyes—for an instant, twin shafts of bronze light beamed into my eyes searing my very spirit with the recognition of my Lord. I was overwhelmed in His presence, and remembered the desire of wanting to do something important for God. At that moment in San Francisco Bay, I realized, “Oh, this is it!” I said yes to Him, then and over and over again in the past nineteen years.

In the nineteen years since then I have worked out the call in fear

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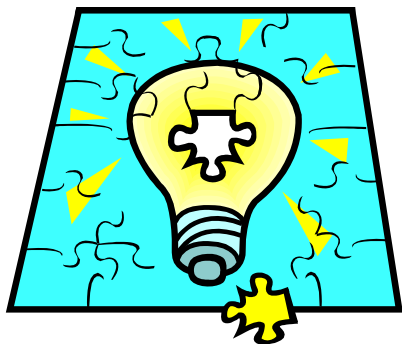
# Tips For Life ~ 10 Tips for Christian Parents of Gay Children

*By Steve Arterburn*

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1. Finding out your child is a homosexual does not negate your parental love, any more than God negates His love for His children when they have fallen into sin. It is right that you still love your child. But God demonstrates His own love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

2. When kids tell their parents about their homosexual involvement, at least their own inner struggle has been externalized, and the process of dealing with the issues that led them to this choice can begin. Understand that telling you has probably been the most difficult thing your child has faced. Lovingly guard your response.



Your reaction will be long remembered.

3. Set clear boundaries. You love your child, but you . . . hate their sin because it hurts them. Be clear in your distinction between your love for them and your position on their behavior.

4. Draw close to the Lord. Often, situations like this move people closer to God. If you were not in fellowship with other believers before this, you should be now. The toughest times often draw us to a much greater understanding of God's love. He does love you and your child, and you must hold on to that. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from God's love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38,39

5. When children reveal a piece of their own life to you, this is an

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## Reflections: Thoughts From a WGA Leader

By *Patrick Maschka*

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*He cares for those who trust in him  
(Nahum 1:6)*

Whatever. Oh well. I don't care. Who hasn't uttered or thought these modern bitter sentiments when life just doesn't always go the way we want it to, or people aren't always there when we need them or want them? It seems that from an early age we are trained to brush off pain, both emotional or physical. Whatever. Oh well. I don't care. We know though, that when we speak or think such words, what we really feel is sorrow, anger, loss. It is so much easier to be tough than to break down, be honest, and cry, draining all the energy needed to move on. Whatever (This is not what I want). Oh well (I can't think about how much it hurts). I don't care (I care so much).

I believe every Christian feels, at some point, that God's care is not present in their life. A sort of vacancy is experienced in which the words of truth merely bounce off the walls and seem to have no practical reality. Faith is all there is left, and that is supposed to be

enough so no complaints are allowed. This is such a difficult place to be, because it is truly painful and relief seems completely elusive. If God doesn't care, then who does? Who can? If God is who he is, all-powerful and all-caring, where is he when most needed?

If there is even one person that reaches out to you, then God cares. If there is even the shortest moment of peace, then God cares. If there is even the briefest phrase written or heard that gives you hope, then God cares. If you take even one more breath to sustain your life, then God cares. I remind myself frequently that if the gospel is true, which I believe it is, then any blessing I experience is from the Lord who saves me (see James 1:17). We do not all get burning bushes or bolts of lightning. We do get the Lord's care, though: his simple, profound care.

*Cast all your anxiety on him  
because he cares for you (1 Peter 5:7)*



(Tips for Life... continued from page 3)

expression of deep trust. What a terrific opportunity for you to show your unconditional love. That doesn't mean you approve of their lifestyle choice, but it will help keep the door open for honest communication.

6. Your child is no tragedy. He or she is still your child. Knowing they are involved in homosexuality does not erase all the joy and blessings they have been to you over the years. Just because you learned of the problem doesn't mean you can't be the same loving parent you were a few hours before you became aware of the situation.

7. You probably feel as though you are a solitary case, perhaps even afraid to share your dilemma for fear of rejection. It is important, however, that you find support from trusted friends, pastors or family members as you begin the process of examining your feelings and your response to your child.

8. Demonstrate your love to your child in every way possible. This will prevent stagnation and bitterness from settling in your own heart. It will assure and insure them of the unconditional love you are showing them which

will, in turn, remind them of God's love.

9. Don't give up! Wrap your child in love and present them to the Lord. This commitment will free you to pray for the healing power of the Holy Spirit to inspire and liberate them, and you. Behold I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is anything too difficult for Me? Jer. 32:27

10. In many instances, homosexual attraction begins at a young age, in the pre-teen period. At that point it is emotional and not sexual. Examine this time period in your child's life, with them if possible, to explore root causes of their behavior.

Steve Arterburn is the founder of New Life Ministries, <https://newlife.com>; Reprinted with permission from New Life Ministries.



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and trembling. The knowledge of my inadequacy overwhelms me sometimes and the Apostle Paul's words come to me, "*When I am weak, then I am strong.*" When the immensity of the need paralyzes me, I remember the Lord's admonition—"*be anxious for nothing, today's troubles are enough unto themselves.*"

When the first group member fell away from the path of healing, I grieved deeply and tried to find a place of objectivity. I told myself that as I get used to working in this field of ministry it would become less painful. I was actually talking myself into this place of professional detachment, when the Lord intervened firmly,

*"No! You will experience the fullness of my grief when one of my children falls!"* I said, Lord, how can I bear it?" He said, "*You will experience the fullness of my joy when one walks in victory. Balance.*"

And He has brought balance as I've learned to hear and obey his leading day to day. He has affirmed me in ways I find so personal and intimate I can't

describe them well. One day I was discouraged because I didn't have an answer for those who want success rationale statistics—the paper the next day had a quote from Sister Teresa. She had been asked "Don't you get discouraged by not seeing any success in your efforts?" She said, "I am not called to be successful, only to be faithful."

When I felt alone and isolated from the rest of the Body of Christ, and complained to God that nobody recognized my call, and "I'm not a **real** missionary," a counselee prayed, "Thank you God, for not sending all the missionaries to Africa, but saving some and sending them to us."

*"...be anxious  
for nothing,  
today's troubles  
are enough  
unto  
themselves."*

When we were without groceries and I felt neglected, God sent timely provision. One morning I said to God on the way to work, "Lord, we don't even have three dollars for bread and milk!" One of the women stopped by the office. She had just gotten another job, had made \$30 that day. She looked up at me in shy hesitation and said, "I want to

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give you a tithe of this for groceries or something.” As I received the \$3 I sensed God’s care for me more intimately than ever.

So, I’ve given you bits and pieces of the call on my life and how it’s working out. When I first told my testimony, I was so frustrated trying to express myself. I asked God to give me the right words and to let His heart be exposed. I wondered, “How do you bleed and dance on paper?”

To sum up my hearts commitment to the call on my life, I’d just like to share with you my answer to those who say, “Mary, how can you do this?”

“I can’t help it; I can’t not do it. I carry around a piece of my Father’s heart. I see the pain and I yearn to touch and comfort. I want to blow away the clouds of confusion, bind up the hurts, remove chains of rejection. I want to clean away the scales from eyes that don’t see Jesus’ love for them. I want to free up hearts so tied up with condemnation that they can’t receive God’s forgiveness. There’s a song that expresses my heart, some of the words are  
*“Faith has a voice, Love has a*

*touch, It’s not enough to pray at night hoping god will make everything will be all right.”*

I want to be God’s voice and keep touching people for Him.



# JANUARY

## Thursday Night Group

January 6th - 40 people  
January 13th - 45 people  
January 20th - 42 people  
January 27th - 41 people

Orientation meeting - 7 new people

## Discipleship Counseling and Mentoring

The WGA staff provided about 13 hours of discipleship counseling and mentoring each week last month.

January - Survivors of Abuse Group and Commitment Group began. Combined Participation totals 17 people.

January 2nd - Mary spoke at First Denver Friends Church.

January 11th - Mary spoke at a local MOPS meeting at Arvada Covenant Church.

# FEBRUARY & BEYOND

February 4th - Introduction of WGA to a group of pastors in Greeley, CO.

February 8th - WGA presentation at a Missions Dinner Party sponsored by Arvada Covenant Church

February 10th - 12th - Participating in the Christian Ministries Convention.

May 6th - Sexuality and the Church, an educational seminar for pastors and ministry leaders, with special speaker Joe Dallas.

May 6-7 - Redeemed Sexuality Seminar, with special speaker Joe Dallas.

## WGA Staff

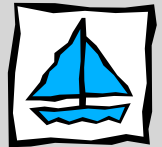
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Assistant Program Director

**Operations Department**  
**Roger Jones**  
Operations Director  
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## Purpose Statement

*Where Grace Abounds exists to guide and support men and women who seek to understand sexuality and relationship, and to inspire all people to know and personally appropriate God's plan for their sexuality and relationships.*



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