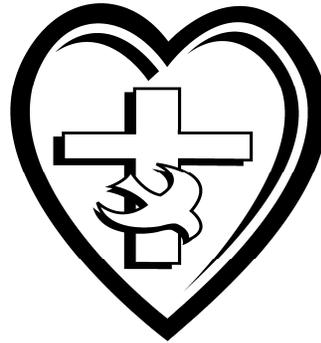


I then found a local Exodus ministry where I learned that I had believed a lie – that I was not born gay and that there are NO gay genes or scientific evidence that homosexuality was biological. I learned that God had NOT been responsible for this cruel joke on me. I also learned that I was NOT alone – that there were countless thousands and undocumented millions of people like myself who were having encounters with God or Jesus where He was calling them out of homosexuality or lesbianism. (UNFORTUNATELY – you will NOT hear any of this on the 5 o'clock news!) I then started to learn that there were legitimate God-given unmet needs in my life that I was trying to satisfy in an illegitimate way. Just like it says in an old country song, I was basically “looking for love in all the wrong places.” Inside of every little boy there is a legitimate hunger for masculinity that God intends for us to satisfy by having healthy gender affirming relationship with our same gender parent and same gender peer group. When we don't get that hunger satisfied before the onset of puberty, then that hunger becomes intertwined with our emerging sexuality. This then leads to trying to satisfy this hunger for same gender affirmation by having sexual relations with someone of the same sex. IT DOES NOT WORK! And it NEVER will – having sex with someone of the same gender will NEVER satisfy the deeper unmet need for same gender affirmation. It always leaves us desperately hungry for more and never satisfied. I also learned that there was a way to reverse the effects of what I experienced. The most ironic thing was that I did indeed desperately need men to help me satisfy this hunger for masculinity – I needed to have healthy NON-sexual gender affirming relationships with MEN! This revelation started my journey out of homosexuality. It was not a quick fix but rather a long process. I did not get this way over night and it was not going to go away over night either.

Our son was 6 when my wife and I remarried. Six months later we were expecting our daughter. My wife was willing to walk out my healing journey with me. We both became involved with the local Exodus ministry for several years, eventually becoming involved in leadership. Then in 2002 God called us back to the Saint Louis area to start our own local Exodus ministry while I continued my own healing journey. Today, I can tell you that I am no longer a homosexual and am no longer interested in having sex with men. I am an ordained minister and my wife and I allow God to use what He has brought us through to help countless others. (We estimate well over 1000 individuals have come through our offices and we have had the opportunity to speak to countless thousands in small and large churches and other gatherings during the first 8 years of full time ministry.) I'm not at all proud of my past, but I am very proud of our Lord and what He has done in my life. I'M A BRAND NEW MAN !!!



Venice family in 2002



Pure Heart Ministries

PO Box 1024
St. Peters, MO 63376

Call us at any of these #'s:

(636) 679-6815 (St. Louis suburbs)
(314) 259-1204 (St. Louis city)
(618) 589-0392 (St. Louis-MetroEast)
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Or visit us on the web:

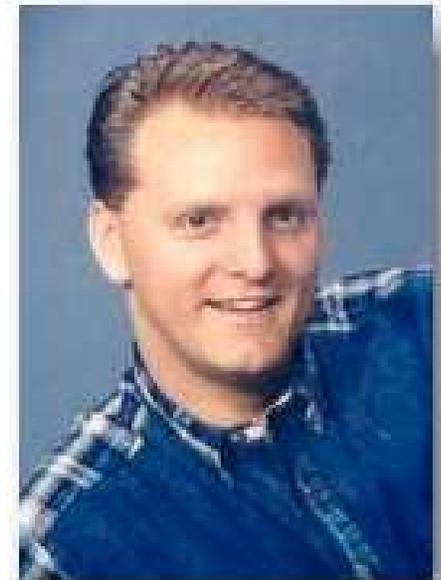
www.PureHeartMinistries.org
info@PureHeartMinistries.org

PURE HEART MINISTRIES

Flee sexual immorality and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the name of the Lord from a PURE HEART.

2 Timothy 2:22

***Jim Venice's journey
out of homosexuality***



I am a brand new man!

I was born and raised in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Both of my parents were just 16 and newly married when I was born. They married to escape the turmoil of their sin-filled homes, thinking that things would be better on their own. Their relationship was doomed from the beginning, being so young and both without even a high school education. My father turned to alcohol to deal with the pressures of his young life.

After the birth of my second brother, just 3 years later, my parents' marriage came to an unexpected ending. My father ended up in prison for several years because of a crime that he had committed. Alcohol and sin had taken my daddy away, and my mother was left to raise three baby boys on her own. She worked hard, determined to feed and clothe us boys. Sometimes she'd work 2 or 3 jobs at a time, just to be able to provide for her babies. I remember being left with very young female sitters. While I was just a toddler, on two separate occasions the sitters molested me. I never told my mother until years later.

My daddy was gone. I knew that he had done something very wrong, but my 3 year old mind didn't understand fully why. I did not have a daddy to hold me when I cried, no one to teach me how to play catch or throw a ball, to fight and rough-house with, or even to use the restroom like boys do. I don't remember a time when I got to be bounced on my daddy's lap, to be held and kissed, or told that "I love you" by my dad. All that I knew was that my daddy did something very bad and that I didn't want to be anything like him. All of this happened at a time when most boys are saying, "I want to grow up and be just like my daddy."

Instead, my mother was my hero, the only one I could depend on for whatever I needed. She had to be both mother and father to her boys. I became "a mama's boy" and somewhat of a "sissy." I was never affirmed in my masculinity. I didn't want to be mean, rough and tough, and I didn't know anything about sports. There came a time when I remember watching the other boys and wishing that I could be more like them. I felt different, alienated and separated from them. I envied the other boys. I was the one who always played with the girls, their dollhouses, hopscotch, and jump rope. When I was forced to play teamed sport games, I was always one of the last ones picked.

Then came puberty; I was so ashamed and embarrassed of my changing body. I did not want this to happen. Most boys are excited when they start becoming a man; when they get that first whisker or that first hair on their chest. Not me - I did not want to be a man. The girls that I had played with were now becoming attracted to young men. They had crushes on them and talked about their great looks, or how cute they were.

Where did this leave me? I became more alienated from the guys. The envy that I felt toward the other boys gradually turned into an attraction toward their masculinity. I didn't understand why this was happening to me. I became attracted to my own sex. I began fantasizing what it would be like to be one of those "cute" guys. My fantasies turned to lust and I began to have a problem with masturbation. I needed help desperately.

When I was 12, I was invited into the church's youth group and became involved in their Bible Quiz program. Jesus became my Lord; I was baptized in the Holy Spirit, and I loved the Lord with all of my heart. My family quit going to church with me. I was determined to serve the Lord. Various people from the church saw that I got back and forth to church. I went to three weeks of church camp every summer. I became involved in many other church activities. Every time the church doors were opened I was there, usually on the front pew. I became very close to the Lord and even had a very special anointing on my life. His presence was so real and so strong. I felt a calling to some kind of ministry, not of preaching, but of teaching, encouraging, and healing. This ministry never had a chance to develop because of my secret struggle.

All through junior and senior high school my best friends were always girls. My alienation from my masculine identity continued to deepen. I would never play sports, not only because I never learned to play, but I felt inferior. I had a very poor self-image and even stuttered. I became a loner. The church was my escape from my world. I never became close enough to anyone to share my private sexual struggles. I was embarrassed and ashamed. I kept it all to myself for all of those years; I never told a soul. I knew what the Bible said about homosexuality and perversion, but I still had my secret problem with fantasizing and masturbation; it became "my thorn in the flesh" to keep me humble and continually on my knees asking for God's forgiveness. I even fasted frequently, praying for deliverance. Because of my lack of athletic and social ability, I chose to excel in academics. I was an honor student at school. My Bible Quiz Team won national finals in 1981, 82, 84, 86. In 1986, I was the #1 National Bible Quizzer of the year. I won several scholarships in high school. I was still very close to the Lord with an humble heart.

After high school I became very frustrated with God and tired of waiting on Him to "fix" me. I had what I thought was a bright idea and decided to "help God out." I had learned in 1 Corinthians 7:9 how that the Apostle Paul said that "if any of you burn with lust" then you should get married so that at least we could have a "God sanctioned" sexual outlet. I decided to take the Apostle Paul up on his advice and I also decided that getting married to a woman was going to be how God was going

to "fix" me. I decided that I was going to marry my best friend Debbie, whom I had met when we were just 13 and 14 at church camp. It was going to be a huge leap of faith for me. She would never need to know and I would never have to tell her anything about my struggles because getting married was going to fix everything for me.

Getting married did NOT fix me at all! My attractions towards men did not go away - if anything they intensified. I loved my wife dearly but shamefully I wanted men more than I wanted my wife. After five years of marriage, I was introduced to homosexual activity. In my desperation to make sense of my life, I bought into the concept that I must have a gay gene and was born gay. I opened up to my wife for the first time and I decided that we should separate. In the middle of all of this we found out that we were going to have a child. Becoming a father did NOT make those feelings go away either. We finally did divorce.

I became very promiscuous and drank a lot to numb the pain and confusion of my life. I then entered my first long term gay relationship; it lasted 3 years, and my second almost 3 years. During that time I became very angry and bitter with God and with the church. I even grew to hate God. I could not reconcile His Word which was hidden deep in my heart with the reality of what was going on in my life. "God YOU did this to me and I hope that I hurt You!"

To make a very long story short, in November 1996, I found myself in church for the first time in about 7 years. It felt good to be in God's house and to feel His love softening my hardened heart. I told God that after everything that I had been through, nobody wanted to be changed more than I did. I had always wanted God to take those feelings away. God's love continued to overwhelm my now broken and softening heart. I found myself kneeling at an old fashion altar crying out to God to fix me, change me, heal me, take it all away. Before I knew it, I had told God that I was so very sorry for all that I had done and the mess that I had made of my life. I then asked Him to forgive me and to my surprise I instantly felt clean on the inside for the first time in years. I had forgotten what it had felt like. It felt so good to have my slate wiped clean. My sins were forgiven and cast as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12.) It dawned on me that I had never felt LOVE like I was feeling at that moment in the arms of another man and never wanted it to end, even if it meant giving up my homosexuality. I thought that maybe it would be a matter of "going back into the closet" and becoming a gay celibate man. There were no divine transformations or glory cloud experiences, but when I got done praying I knew that I didn't want to go back to my homosexual life style. I knew that it would be a walk of faith, obedience, and self denial.