

Can Christ Change a Person?

One Man's Journey From Homosexuality to Christ

Dr. John Ankerberg, Roger Montgomery

Dr. John Ankerberg: Do you believe that Jesus Christ can change any person to what He is talking about in Scripture? What if you're a drug addict? What if you're a prostitute? What if you're a homosexual? Can Christ change that person? Is He powerful enough? Does the church really have something to offer to people that don't agree with what we usually consider to be normal behavior?

That's our problem and that's our question we're going to talk about tonight. My guest is Roger Montgomery who has come out of the homosexual lifestyle. All of his life that's all that he knew. And yet around 26 years of age, Christ changed him and we're going to talk about what took place in that change. How does it come about? Can it come about from maybe you?

Roger, I'm glad that you're here tonight and yet there may be many homosexuals that are watching and saying, "If he actually changed, then he couldn't have been a true homosexual." What would you say to that?

Roger Montgomery: Well, that's a lie because I lived the homosexual lifestyle for many, many years and I never experienced a heterosexual feeling until I received Christ.

Ankerberg: And you received Christ when?

Montgomery: At about the age of 26 years old. And I had over a thousand homosexual contacts during that time span. I was homosexual.

Ankerberg: Yeah. How did you get into the homosexual orientation?

Montgomery: Just like almost every other homosexual does, he was led into or recruited into by an older homosexual through child molestation.

Ankerberg: And when did that happen to you?

Montgomery: At about the age of six for several years it happened.

Ankerberg: It was your next door neighbor that came over?

Montgomery: Right. Right.

Ankerberg: And when is it that you can remember saying, "I am a homosexual"?

Montgomery: Well, at first my encounter with him was very painful. But then as time went on I began to enjoy our contact and actually seek it out and that's when I began to perceive and to identify myself as being homosexual and not heterosexual; from a child.

Ankerberg: And you didn't have any desires toward women?

Montgomery: No, I didn't. I loathed women. I hated women. And I saw them as a nuisance

and as an interference.

Ankerberg: There came a day, Rog, when you actually told God you hated Him. Why did you say that?

Montgomery: Well, because of all the frustration that had built up in me. I had some religious training and I believed that God could deliver me and help me and if He couldn't. He wasn't a God at all. And He had not changed me, so I blamed Him for it.

Ankerberg: That came a little later on because actually when you grew up you didn't go to church, you didn't read your Bible, you didn't know about these things.

Montgomery: No.

Ankerberg: You got into the homosexual lifestyle, and then you started to think about what it was that you were involved in and you actually tried religion but it didn't work. And when it didn't work, like so many other people that might be reading this, you finally said, "Okay. I'm marking it down. It doesn't work. And God you're a liar. Your Bible's a liar. Christianity is a fraud and I'm leaving." And then what did you do?

Montgomery: Well, you're definitely right. Religion does not work for the homosexual. He doesn't need religion. What I did at that point after cursing God is I went full blast into the homosexual lifestyle and lived my life as a homosexual.

Ankerberg: Okay. And for five years basically you were a homosexual prostitute. Why did you go into prostitution?

Montgomery: Well, I went into prostitution because immediately after cursing God I found myself to be homeless and jobless. I wanted to maintain sexual contacts in the gay bars so I didn't want to work. And so I went into prostitution as a means for a living. I could make as much as \$1,000 a week and spend it on cocaine and in the bars.

Ankerberg: Okay. But then after the homosexual community had used you up,... you said there came point where they didn't want you anymore.

Montgomery: Right. They no longer wanted me around, even though I was homosexual, which is very typical of the homosexual experience. After it's taken from you what they want, they discard you. It's a very common experience.

Ankerberg: Okay. And so you also had an addiction to alcohol and drugs. How did that come about?

Montgomery: Right. Well, through my gay lifestyle I was constantly in the bars and in gay bars hard drugs such as cocaine are sold very freely and I became quickly addicted to cocaine and alcohol.

Ankerberg: One day you found yourself on the street — no home, no food, no money, the homosexual community didn't want you and you were actually contemplating suicide. And what happened then?

Montgomery: Well, you're right I was very much alone. My family had given up on me, the church had given up on me, everyone even the homosexual community had given up on me and I found myself alone and begging God, if there was a God, that He would kill me, because to live only meant to suffer for me.

And that's when the miracle took place. I was not seeking after God. I was only seeking death. But God in His mercy wanted to give me life instead of death. And that's when He came to me saying, "I'm not going to offer you death. I'll give you life if you want it. But you'll have to

choose between the two.”

Ankerberg: Okay. So what was the message that God gave to you? I mean, you had heard of Christianity and you’d heard about church all your life, what was different that actually persuaded you to invite Christ into your life? What changed?

Montgomery: Well, there was a resistance there to religion because I did not want to go back to being religious — outward conformity to the law. But what changed me was Christ would accept me as a homosexual, which meant I didn’t have to change myself. There was no self reformation I had to go through in order to be accepted by God. He came to me. I did not come to Him. He came to me saying that “you can come as you are and if you trust Me and believe in Me I will change you. You do not have to change yourself.”

Ankerberg: That was not saying that God would accept you in your homosexual practice. It would be the fact that you could come and you couldn’t reform yourself before you came. **Montgomery:** Right.

Ankerberg: You were saying, “Lord, this is what I am. And I come and if you can change me, then here I am and I’m ready.”

Montgomery: Right. I came to Him totally on grace as a homosexual. If there was change and He demanded change from me, that was one of the things that I had to agree to with Him. He came demanding that change, but He was giving me the power, also, for change.

Ankerberg: Now, Rog, you came to a point where you recognized that Christ could forgive you, but even forgiven you still had the desires of a homosexual. And you wanted more from Christ than just to be forgiven, you wanted Him to change you completely on the inside and make you a new person so that what you lived, it wasn’t a fake, it wasn’t a cover-up. You wanted the actual inside to be changed and Christ says He can actually deal with that which a lot of people in the church and in the world just believe it will not take place. How did it take place? What did Christ in Scripture tell you that that change took place?

Montgomery: Well, the first thing He told, if He was a Savior at all not only could He save from the **penalty** of sin—He could forgive me—but He could save me from the **power** of sin. He was strong enough to do that. And I had to put my faith in Him. The first thing was realizing that He **could** and that He was **willing** to deliver me. And when I put my faith in Him that deliverance came. Then I had to recognize or to understand that my deliverance from homosexuality was not dependent upon me or my behavior; it was dependent upon Christ and His substitutionary death that He had already accomplished. What that means is that, when Christ suffered and died under the hand of God 2,000 years ago as a penalty for sin, I was also there too.

Ankerberg: Yeah. The Bible actually talks about, besides the fact of paying the penalty of sin, that something else uniquely took place and most Christians don’t even know this after they’ve been Christians for a long time.

Montgomery: Right.

Ankerberg: And you found that where?

Montgomery: In the Scripture — Romans Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The Lord showed me that I did not have to depend on my own self effort or my own self crucifixion. It was **His** crucifixion was the key to the whole matter: what He had done for me already, not what He was going to do, but what He has done already for me.

And what He had done already was to set me free. According to the Scripture when He died and I received Christ, that I was freed from sin. Homosexuality was no longer my master or my

slave. Christ was my new head now. I did not have to do what homosexuality told me to which I did before. All I had to do now was what Christ told me to do.

Ankerberg: Yeah. The Scripture says that when Christ died on that cross, the old Roger Montgomery also died. You didn't know this until you became a Christian, and God says in His mind that's what happened: all the homosexuality, all the drugs, all the alcohol, all that behavior, that died. Okay? And now when you accepted Christ, Christ came into you and also did things for you. He's made you a new creation in Christ and for Christ. But you have to accept that by faith.

Montgomery: Right.

Ankerberg: And how did you accept that by faith?

Montgomery: Well, that's the key is accepting that by faith. Because I had received no deliverance before, there was no other method I could use. Was I going to trust Christ or was I not going to trust Him for my deliverance. I knew that I could not deliver myself or crucify myself, that it had to be a power outside of me; a power greater than myself. And that's who Jesus Christ is. He's a power outside of me and a power greater than me that is able to deliver me and change me.

Ankerberg: Yeah. You said that one of the verses that caught your attention was that, "sin shall have not dominion [or power or authority] over you" (Rom. 6:14).

Montgomery: Right.

Ankerberg: And for a homosexual that's what he needs because, boy, homosexuality is a compulsive, addictive, strong desire that really finally take over and control you.

Montgomery: Right. What Christ does is He sets you free from homosexuality the minute you receive Him as Savior. You may not feel that way but that's exactly what happens, and you begin to reckon it and to make it real by faith. Because I am free from homosexuality, I no longer have to serve that desire in my flesh. I no longer have to. I can, but I do not have to any more. The person who says, "I cannot overcome homosexuality knowing Christ," is a liar because Christ has already said, "You are free." You're not becoming free, but you are free. You are a new person.

Ankerberg: Okay. But the steps that you took, Rog, first of all you accepted Christ as Savior and you got rid of the penalty of sin and you realized you are now accepted by God and forgiven. But you want to change the inside and you found out from Romans 6 that that old Roger actually died with Christ as far as God is concerned.

Montgomery: Right.

Ankerberg: But He wants you to see it. Then third. He says to do two things — "reckon ye also yourself to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God" (Rom. 6:11).

Montgomery: Which is faith.

Ankerberg: And you had to take that statement by faith and then it says to make it a living reality for the power to be applied to your life. You have to yield yourself. And what was the verse that you found in Romans 6 and 7 there, concerning yield?

Montgomery: Romans 6:13 says, "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

See, I was an alive person now, and my homosexual person and my prostitution who I was

the prostitute, he had died. But a new person was born. That person was heterosexual. And I began to live that and experience that by yielding myself to Him knowing that He knew the answer and He knew the way for me, that I didn't know it myself.

Ankerberg: Okay. And so every day you'd wake up you'd have these desires and you would say, "But Christ, you say I'm a new creation and I'm going to yield to you." And when temptation would come your way, the Holy Spirit would remind you of what Christ had said and you would yield. And the power was there to do it.

Montgomery: Right. The power was always there every time I wanted it. Was I going to yield to God or was I going to yield to my old sinful desires was the question. But the power was in the yielding; it was not in myself, but in Christ.

Ankerberg: Because you saw yourself now as the new creature in Christ.

Montgomery: Right. I saw myself as a new creature and I knew that my old life was going to kill me, was going to destroy me.

Ankerberg: How long, Roger, from the time that you accepted Christ did you have the change of desires from men to women?

Montgomery: Well, the first year after I accepted Christ was the hardest year of my life because it was a time of withdrawal. But then I met my wife shortly after a year, maybe a year and a half, and I began to have heterosexual desires for her.

Ankerberg: Did that surprise you?

Montgomery: Yes, it did. Because it was not a self effort type of deal. It wasn't something that I conjured up within myself. It was a natural outflowing of who I was on the inside.

Ankerberg: It just happened.

Montgomery: Right.

Ankerberg: Now was the first time it happened that didn't happen until 27 years of age, correct?

Montgomery: I was almost 27, right.

Ankerberg: Roger, in 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Paul gives a warning to those he calls "the unrighteous." He says, "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God."

But then it says, right after that in verse 11, "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God." Roger, that tells me that you can change whether you're any one of those. If you're a thief, if you're covetous, if you're a murderer, if you're a drunkard, if you're homosexual, whatever you are Christ can change you and that's what you're saying.

Montgomery: Right. You can change. There is change through Christ.