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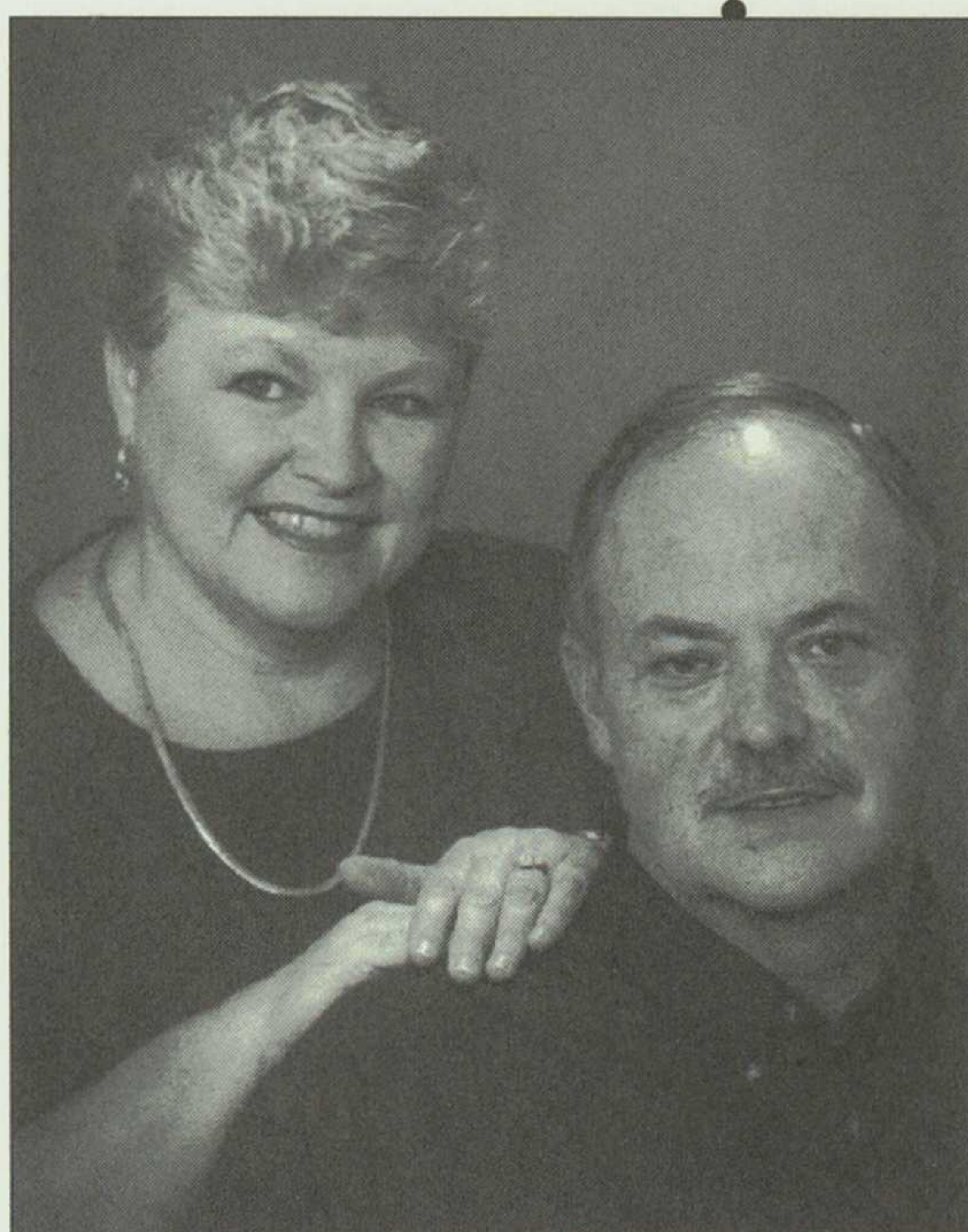
Freedom from
Homosexuality
Through the
Power of
Jesus Christ

EXODUS NORTH AMERICA

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Learning to Love Again *By Juanita Sutphin*

The hatred inside was eating me alive—and destroying my relationship with our son.



Juanita and her husband, Ronnie, are directors of Walking Together Ministry in Skyland, NC.

In January 1991, our oldest son came home and announced he was moving out to live with a friend. Ron was 25 years old; we trusted him and had raised him to be independent. We even helped him get together some things he would need to live in an apartment. By February 14, he and his friend Mike had found a house they could afford to rent and began the move.

That night Ronnie, my husband, took me out for a nice Valentine's Day dinner. When we returned home, we found boxes and other items of my son's in the living room which they were preparing to move out. On the coffee table was a stack of pictures of Mike. When we glanced through them, we were sickened to find a photo of him hugging and kissing another man.

About half an hour later, they returned to pick up another load. I asked our son to come into our bedroom and told him about the photos. "I know Mike's gay—but we're just friends," he said. "I'm not gay, so there's nothing to worry about!" That night, I sat down and cried; somehow I knew that my son wasn't telling the truth.

At first, Ron came over for supper or to do his laundry about twice a week. After about a month, however, we saw him less and less. We would have to call him or drop by his workplace to see how he was doing. We kept praying, hoping that God would intervene in whatever was happening.

On Mother's Day, we went to my mother-in-law's house, as we always did. Ron and Mike were invited, and they both came. Later, my husband had to go to work. As we were leaving, Ron asked me if I was going to be home later because he wanted to

come over and talk.

About three o'clock, he arrived and said he would enjoy a ride in the mountains, something we both loved. We pulled off at a lookout and watched the sunset. Ron presented me with a beautiful Mother's Day card and told me how much he loved me. Then he proceeded to tell me that he was a homosexual.

I was devastated. His words, *I'm gay! I'm gay!* bounced around in my head like an echo chamber. I tried to tell him that homosexuality was not right and that God had provided a way out through His Son, Jesus Christ. He wasn't interested in what I had to say.

Somehow I managed to turn the car around and drive home. I went into the house, sat on the floor in my bedroom, and cried for three hours. "God, what have we done?" I sobbed. "Why is this happening? Where are You?"

My husband arrived home about eleven o'clock and we talked for a long time. Finally I went to bed and cried myself to sleep. The next morning, we told our pastor what had happened. He reassured us that we had done the right things; now all we could do was pray. He also instructed us not to tell anyone at church because it might embarrass our son and hinder him from ever coming back to church.

We kept praying and hoping for a miracle, all the while hurting inside. But I had no one to talk with: My husband didn't want to discuss it, I couldn't talk to anyone at church, I had no brothers or sisters, my father was dead, and I didn't want to break my mother's heart. So I kept the secret for seven months; every day it ate away at me inside until I felt like an empty shell.