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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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01:31

Parents we watch our children grow, from the time of their birth, their first steps. And through their days in school. We watch them develop their individuality and their characters. Year by year, they grow to become the people that they will be as adults. During these years of growth, we also tend to develop our own images of the people that we want our children to grow into. We want our kids to be honorable, to be moral, and to achieve more in life than we ourselves were able to achieve. Then one day, like one in four other families, we discover that one of our children is homosexual. Our parental dreams are then often shattered. All those years of careful raising, teaching and protecting our children seem lost to a situation that we cannot control that we do not understand. And that does not meet our expectations of life that we had for our children. Many, many parents have faced and have lovingly dealt with the homosexuality of a child. Like the vast majority of those parents, you too, will in time, say in your heart, no matter what, he is always my kid.



03:06

We never had a clue that he was gay. Never. It was just a complete shock. It was never anything in his behavior. Never anything in his relationships with other people that would indicate that he's gay.



03:22

I guess the first time that I had any clue whatsoever, I believe she was a sophomore in college, and her roommate was doing a needlepoint thing with her name on it and watching her do it. And it was sort of like, tender loving care she was doing and I thought, Gee, that looks like something more than friendship going on there for her to be doing that kind of thing. And I mentioned something to Gail. And she didn't think so. And so I dismissed it also, and I really



03:49

didn't suspect it. He always had girlfriends. He always dated. He always went out in big groups. And I guess I didn't really I wasn't surprised, but I didn't really suspect it as much as I did with Jody,



04:00

I did ask Phil about a year prior to His coming out and he wasn't ready to let us know. Right? I don't think to let himself know at that time. And he said no, that he wasn't but I had let him know that. I was open to it. And if it was so that it was okay.



04:19

No, no, never. No, he's the antithesis Well, I don't know he's very he's very creative. And and but there are a lot of straight people are very creative. He was the captain of the swim team. He had the lead and all the high school plays and musicals. He had a lot of friends boys and girls. No, I never never suspected



04:47

He's very handsome and I always wondered why he didn't date and I got so I would have sinking spells when I would see other young men with their girlfriends or hear friends telling But I never acknowledged and my husband had already ran across some gay literature and he did not tell me that he had found it.



05:10

I never I know parents speak about suspecting that their child was gay, especially I think a male child for some reason, seem to parents seem to suspected. Think about it. I never had any reason to it



05:23

was sort of an agonizing process of trying to get some information and trying to decide what to do about it. But we couldn't, couldn't name it or couldn't say anything about it. So that was hard. That was the hardest part. For me, it was that time in between wondering and finding out for sure.



05:41

Philip was in college, it was his senior year. He was 21 years old. And he was actually home on spring break when he led us now when he told us



05:54

and he brought it up in such a way that I looked at him. And I said, Tim, something's going on here. Why are you so casual that this friend and I looked at him and some kind of intuitive way.

I said, Tim, are you gay?



06:09

Jennifer was 20 years old. When we first found out she was gay. We had been suspecting for about two years before them.



06:18

Patricia was 25. When we found out that she's lesbian. She we had suspected for about three years before we found out. And during that period, it was it was very hard for us because nobody dared ask the question.



06:33

Vince was 14, when he first came to us and just told us, we just sat down had a really good conversation.



06:43

Actually, the first time I found out with Jodi, who's my lesbian daughter was about seven or eight years ago. And she came to visit me from California with her new roommate. And they got out of the car, and it took a look at her roommate. And I went, Oh my God, God. God is a lesbian.



07:03

Paul was 29. When he first told us, he's 31. Now. So we've known for two years. You wrote your letter, he wrote us a letter.



07:16

I got a call when my son Nick was a senior in college. And he told me he had something really important that he had to tell me, but he couldn't tell me over the phone. And honest to god, I thought I was going to hear I was going to be grandma,



07:32

he just wasn't himself. I knew something was wrong, never occurred to me. What was wrong? But that was that was how I found that about berries. He did it in a letter, I called him up and said, How can you think I would ever think anything different of you because I found out



07:47

after her sophomore year, when we were all hung together, all four of us in the family. We sat down and I just said, Jennifer, there's a real wall between us. Do you have anything you want to tell us? And she said, No. And I said, Do you want me to make it easy for you? And she said yes. And I said, Are you gay? And she said yes. And we all just cried and hugged her and sobbed. And it was such a relief to have that secret out.



08:18

I remember going and getting in the shower behind the shower curtain and just just screaming. Because it was the thing that was the most precious to me, my children, and that she had been tarnished in a way that I could never repair.



08:41

I did a lot of grieving and feeling bad and worrying. Actually, before we even asked Jennifer and knew the truth. I didn't want it to be true.



08:54

The first words a bit out of his mouth where I'm gay, and I don't want to be. I've always wanted to be a dad. And I think that broke my heart at that moment. So I felt real sad for whatever losses that he thought he would have. Being who I am I also thought, well, I don't know that you can't be a father.



09:18

Gosh, our initial reaction was disbelief and a lot of fear for what the future would bring for him. Shock not ever any anger. A lot of concern, but haven't had lots and lots of questions. Oh,



09:40

just devastation. absolute devastation. I cried and cried and cried, cried for a whole year.



09:49

And I have a lot of really wonderful memories as a mother. And the night my son told me was one of those really wonderful moments. He had had so many things that he'd kept locked up. Because he thought that if I knew that about him, I wouldn't accept him, or I'd, I'd hate him. I don't know, all sorts of terrible thoughts. And he'd suffered with it. And when he told me, it was, it was probably the closest I'd ever felt to him. And we spent the whole night talking. And laughing, hugging, crying. It was a it was a wonderful experience. It really was.



10:38

We start thinking, Well, is it something that we did, you know, in his upbringing, upbringing that turned in that way environmentally induced, and at the time, we could think of nothing. And this was kind of reaffirmed because Benson was such a neat kid that and we wouldn't have done anything different. It



11:03

was as if a missing piece of the puzzle had fallen in place. And that felt good to me it really, it was like, something that had not been quite right about Philip I now understood and I'd never been able to put my finger on that piece. So there was a relief.



11:23

But I wasn't surprised, shocked, worried about him not having a real life. And but in time, I kind of as I met his vectors, probably what I'm part of what I'm gonna say is I met his friends and got to see people or realize that they're just lovely young men. as lovely as they've always been, if I didn't know they were gay.



11:48

It wasn't so much guilt. It was more disappointments. And as I said, the death of my own dreams. You know, she was my oldest daughter, and I wanted her to be married and live the life that everybody had figured for her, for her to have. And I wanted Barry to be married and have children.



12:04

Yeah, I thought God had deserted our family. I thought it was the worst thing that has ever happened, that this would happen to our family.



12:14

My son's a fine, a fine man. And he had he had promised himself that he was going to be celibate all of his life. And when he was a senior, he fell in love with this wonderful graduate student. And I had met him the Christmas before MIT came out to me. So in one fell swoop, I found out I knew two really wonderful gay men. And the two of them defied every stereotype. Every hateful thing I've ever heard about gays.



12:46

I went through a lot of the same things that a person goes through when somebody dies. It was

disbelief, shock, some grief, anger at the situation, not events, just, you know, anger at the world.



13:00

It wasn't that Oh, my God, my son's gay wasn't that kind of reaction? It was more worried about him? And was he going to be alright, and Was he happy and that kind of thing.



13:14

This the first thing that we did, as parents since he was 14 was to haul him off to psychiatrists to making sure that he knew what he was talking about. And the psychiatrist It was a wonderful, wonderful person. And thank the Lord, we made a good choice, because it could have been a disaster. spent about six weeks with him. And when it was over, he said that he's one of the best put together young man he's ever talked to. And he said, Stay out of his sexuality.



13:40

He wanted he had moved in with another young man, and he wanted to bring the young man to visit us. But we weren't quite ready to meet him. So he came by himself instead. And we basically told him that we still loved him. And I asked him what I had done wrong. And that I was sorry. And he said, No, Mother, it's nothing that you did wrong.



14:08

My first fears were, that I was a bad parent that I had wanted so much to be the perfect mother. And here was living proof that that I wasn't. So it reflected back on me is how it's how I felt. And again, that was in my ignorance.



14:27

My fears. For Barry were health reasons. I told you the one thing I said to him when he came out to me was, this is great. You can be whoever you are, and I love you for it. But I'm terrified of AIDS,



14:41

having having to deal with all the discrimination and all the prejudice that is inevitably out there. Worrying about the fact that he was so young, I think that was probably one of my greatest fears personally, the fact that he was so young worrying about him being so squatted being taken advantage of.



15:02

And I worried a lot about people judging her without knowing her. And I'm not proud of it, I did a lot of worrying about what people would think about us and about our family,



15:15

or how can she progress in her career, how, just what kind of life she would have felt she would be persecuted, and they should be discriminated against. And that's a very painful thing for a parent who has known a child all those years, had no, no, nothing to be discriminated against for and then all of a sudden, that child is and the other someone who will be is, is vulnerable.



15:46

I was worried about discrimination. I was worried about just her lifestyle in general and how people would react to her never being married and the old maid and what what they might call her and what they might say to her and people outside the community maybe ostracizing her.



16:03

I do know that as a teenager, certainly in junior high school, high school years, I knew I had certain feelings towards men, I couldn't identify those. Because honestly, I didn't even know the word gay. I didn't know the word homosexual. And all that time, I kept thinking this is a passing face. I'm just thinking about men, but I shouldn't be thinking about women, because that's the norm. And I'll get over it. Before long.



16:28

It was in high school when I first started thinking that I might be gay, I, I really didn't have that word for it. I knew the word gay, I knew that there was such a thing. But I, you know, considered myself to be a really normal person. So it was hard for me to, to think that I might belong to that category. I started



16:46

to know, probably in grade school around third or fourth grade. But as I was living life as me, I probably didn't know until high school when other people were saying it about me that I became consciously aware. Well, I would guess



17:01

that I was probably around 14, when I felt attracted to same sex. But I fought that feeling. And coming up from a very conservative small town in south Texas. I fought that feeling for probably, I'd say 12 years, I really didn't come out till I was 26.



17:30

I guess the first time that I that I thought I might have gay feelings. And I don't know if I identified them as being gay feelings, per se, was probably about five had my best friend who I was attracted to. And I also had a girlfriend in kindergarten.



17:48

I'm 43 years old. And I think about two years ago, I, I had an amazing connection with a woman that was unlike anything I've ever experienced before.



17:58

I was very, very young when I felt that there was something different. I don't know if it was just because of the environment that I was in my parents were divorced, I was the youngest of all of my brothers and I was alone a lot. So I did a lot by myself and thought a lot. And there was just, I was just knew something was different. So it was really young. I mean, under 10.



18:26

And it was mainly in high school that I started feeling like something was really different about me. And it was when I was a sophomore in college that I was attracted to a friend of mine and started having a relationship with her. And I knew that something was different.



18:44

Well, when I first admitted it to myself, I was pretty devastated. It was something I didn't I didn't want in high school when other people would say it about me. And I wasn't supposed to supposed to hear it. Of course I would. When people are being spoken about they're always the first people to hear it.



19:04

When I discovered or accepted the fact that I was gay. I felt like I was a freak. I was very protective of my family. I I remember some of the first times that I went to gay nightclub, my heart would just be pounding through my shirt from the excitement of going and the thought that I was doing something I shouldn't be doing. I



19:29

had felt some kind of conflict and angst and I mean just this part of me that was so unsettled and not at peace and when I finally figured out what it was all about, there was a huge piece of relief for me. And that is still there but I think right now the more about less. I ended up 16 years



relier for me. And that is still there but I think right now it's more about loss. I ended up 16 year marriage that was pretty wonderful. Um, and and I have two kids that are coping one better than the other, but it's hard for them.



20:09

Or you just knew something was wrong, something was different. And all through middle school in high school you heard the word gay, but I don't think anybody really knows what it is just by hearing it, you know, gay men that you are, you're a deviant, you're, you know, sexually different. And it was just bad.



20:37

So I would say there's probably a good 789 years where I just didn't know what was going on with me sexually, that I was thinking about men. On the other hand, I knew I was supposed to be with women and I dated women, I dated the cheerleaders, I



20:52

only knew that I didn't really seem to fit in with my friends, that when they were talking about dating, and all of those kinds of things that I just couldn't identify with them that I didn't feel like I fit in, in a lot of different social circumstances.



21:10

And I definitely did think that there was something wrong with me. We live in a homophobic society, where, you know, the worst insult you can hurl at a friend, when you're playing bombardment is to call them a fag, or call them gay, or call them a woman.



21:25

The times that I've denied it. After I had denied it, I felt very ashamed. I felt like I was denying it so that I would be socially correct, socially acceptable, or whatever. There's times that I've denied it to the point of saying that I was bisexual. Because that seemed like a more easy thing to say, then I'm gay.



21:49

I always thought that it could be worked out that something. If you worked hard enough edits, it would change and something would be different. And then finally, after working probably 21 years on thinking what I could do to make things right to be in the normal part of society. I decided, that wasn't it. And that's when I met Jim. And everything changed. And it really just became right for me.



22:18

When I finally realized that I was gay, in other words, that I went out to a bar and saw men together and talk to them and express my feelings with them, and eventually was able to have some relationships with gay men. I was elated. I mean, it's kind of like this big burden off your shoulders, I was just hiding something that I couldn't even identify myself. It was like, Finally, I've discovered myself, I know what it is.



22:46

Those years in college and everything, I fought it, and I didn't know any gay people. So I just assumed that there weren't any and the ones that I did know of, later on, I didn't want to be associated with any way because they really they made me uncomfortable, the way they acted and, and everything. And I had a hard time accepting that. I was the same as them.



23:14

And I had a lot of self hatred. And I felt that it was constantly on my mind that I was constantly thinking, If people only knew what would they think of me,



23:29

it forced me into, into lying about who I was spending my time with, what I was doing, where I was going, you know, who I was saying. And once I started the lies, it just kept piling up and piling up and piling up until it's difficult to tell what's what's aligned with the truth. And you have to remember the lie that you told such and such and try to see it's consistent with the other one.



23:51

Yes, it would hurt to have to lie, lie. There's no doubt about it. I mean, I hid for 21 years, it hurts to hide and I don't want to have to hide anymore. I



23:59

never really came out to my family. It wasn't so much an acceptance thing with me is that back then we were so ignorant. I was I felt like I was letting my family down by not getting married, having a family carrying on the family name, and all those guilt things that can be laid upon gay people and gay relationships.



24:24

The year that I found out I, I drank a lot. I was. I mean, I really think I exhibited a lot of alcoholic kind of behavior. And that was one way that I coped with it

kind of behavior. And that was one way that I coped with it.



24:41

Once with parents know the secret that our kids had kept from us, we have many questions. There are things we need to learn that before we're not important to us. We need to learn the facts about homosexuality. We need to know the facts so that we can overcome our own negative images of homosexuals that we grew up with. Learning, we have to separate the truth from the lies, and the ignorance that breed homophobia.



25:07

My name is Wayne Bachman. I'm a family practitioner. I have a practice which is largely devoted to HIV care, although not exclusively. I've worked in the field about seven, eight years now.



25:24

I'm Chris Jimerson. I'm the director of the Houston Clinical Research Network, which is a local, community based organization dedicated to providing access to experimental therapies for people living with HIV and AIDS.



25:40

HIV human immunodeficiency virus is a virus, which targets a subset of our white blood cells and destroys them or alters their functioning, such that one who is infected with HIV has an impaired immunity.



26:03

AIDS is not the disease. HIV is the disease and AIDS is a rather arbitrary point that, that we picked and said, If you have HIV, and any of these things happen, other infections, a low CD for account, whatever we're going to call it aids.



26:23

This virus doesn't know the lifestyle of the person that infects it. Having having HIV disease has nothing to do with being gay, except that that subpopulation of people was the first in this country to become infected. A lot of people have have therefore sort of made the association between HIV disease and gay people. But you know, there is no such Association. Worldwide 75% of the cases are in heterosexual.



27:02

At everybody's at risk, unless you don't have sex, you've never gotten a blood transfusion and you've never don't use IV drugs, then then you have to consider yourself at risk.



27:16

There are viruses but they're transmitted in a different way. For instance, flu is transmitted through the air, and you can actually breathe water particles that contain the virus and and acquire the infection. With HIV, it has to be person to person contact or body fluid to body fluid contact. The belief or the fear that you can catch it casually through a handshake through sharing a cup or eating utensils or through caring for someone with HIV is unfounded. It's very accurate, it's so I'm greater than 99% accuracy. Within eight to 12 weeks after exposure, if one is going to acquire the infection, then the antibody tests the Eliza, Western Blot that we do will become positive.



28:15

I think I'd want to say to those that are infected with HIV, or those who are worried that they might be infected with HIV and don't know. There's hope out there. Despite the fact that I just said there's not a vaccine or a cure around the corner. The disease's becoming treatable despite what you sometimes hear in the media.



28:42

The biggest problem I see in my practice is that of denial, the belief that because one is young or heterosexual or lesbian or Hispanic or or somehow different, that one is not at risk for HIV disease. That just isn't true. There are people in all of those groups who who have HIV. And it only takes once it only takes one slip up. And I've seen it too often. And, you know, once it's done, it's done.



29:22

My name is Bob McLaughlin. I'm a clinical psychologist here in Houston. I hold a couple of faculty appointments at Baylor College of Medicine in the Houston psychotherapy Institute. I have primarily an outpatient psychological practice with a major focus in child sexual abuse issues as well as Sexual Minority Concerns for youth and for adults, and do a lot of school consultation regarding adolescent substance abuse prevention programming. I've had a practice in Houston for 10 or 11 years at this point. My understanding is that the American Psychiatric Association and then a year later, the American Psychological Association took positions that homosexuality is not a mental illness or disease. All of the research on mental stability or mental health regarding sexual orientation suggests that there are no identifiable differences in mental health in homosexual populations or heterosexual populations. And I think it can be documented and argued pretty successfully, that the high relatively high incidence of those issues in gay lesbian and gay populations, results from societal oppression, rather than from anything that's inherently wrong or weak about the constitution of gay people themselves. The data are actually quite clear concerning child molesters, and indicating that 90 to 95% of adults who molest children are in fact heterosexual. There very frequently youth will talk about

having had experiences since the age of five or so that caused them to be aware that they feel different somehow from their peers, or different from how people expect them to be. But they lack a label for that at that point, and certainly, in no way does it get interpreted as anything that's, that's sexual in nature. Some researchers positing that as many as three times as many lesbian and gay youth attempt suicide, as with heterosexual youth, and that is many of the third, as many as a third of teenage suicides may be people who are struggling with sexual orientation concerns. And a large part of that, I think, is a direct response to the fact that they don't feel they have a place to go, they don't have a sense of community, and they can't be certain about the reactions of their loved ones. I have never heard of any conversion techniques that have been at all successful. Although I certainly know of several that have been tried. In decades past some of those have been medical and surgical and orientation. These days, they tend to be more religious, religiously oriented. And paradoxically, attempting to brainwash sexual orientation in very much the ways that I think cannot happen. Whether the brainwashing is happening in the direction toward heterosexuality or toward homosexuality. People are more frequently harmed and helped by those kinds of interventions. The standard in the mental health field at this point, is much more oriented toward helping people come to terms with the societal oppression, against their sexual orientation, rather than trying to change their sexual orientation in accord with societal demands or expectations. Probably no other issue creates as much anxiety as much anticipation even in solid adults, then how their parents are going to react to learning about their sexual orientation. And I see adults in all phases of their lives struggling with this kind of issue. I think if parents could understand how critical their love and acceptance of their children continues to be, that it might help them to deal with their child's disclosures about sexual orientation. I think parents essentially have three choices, you can ignore your child's sexual orientation and all of those important aspects of their capacity to love and relate to other people. You can reject them, and miss out on all the opportunities that you could otherwise have to enjoy what your child can bring in richness to your life and what you can contribute to your child. Or you can really work toward acceptance and struggle through some of the same struggles your child has been dealing with for years already long before they got the courage to tell you what was going on. And I think if parents are confronted with those three choices, most truly loving and concerned parents will choose to do the work they need to do to come to understand and accept their child.



34:42

My name is Dawn Sinclair and I'm a have a history of Florida three years in the Texas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. My president of want money is at baring Memorial United Methodist Church. And before coming to this congregation, eight years ago knew nothing really specific about homosexuality.



35:17

My name is Doug Ensminger. I'm a Presbyterian minister, been in the ministry for over 20 years, when for 10 years was pastor at the central Presbyterian Church in Houston. And then a little over a year ago, I left that congregation to found the community of the reconciling servant, which is an independent congregation that's founded to be inclusive of people regardless of sexual orientation.





35:45

I'm Barry Bloch. I'm the assistant Rabbi here at Temple BethEl and San Antonio. I've been here in San Antonio since the summer of 1992. I was ordained a year earlier at the Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. The rabbinic school I attended, and this synagogue are institutions of the reform movement in Judaism, which is to say that I am a rabbi of the liberal branch of Judaism. By that we don't mean liberal politically, so much as we mean liberal, in terms of our interpretation of the Bible, in our religious tradition.



36:22

There are a lot of people who will say that homosexuality is a sin, and they'll point to particular biblical passages, but I think, well, most of them are sincere, I think they're sincerely wrong. I think they have misunderstood the biblical passages that they quote, and that the weight of the rest of the scriptural evidence, in terms of God's attitude towards humanity, just is overwhelmingly on the other side. So no, I do not believe homosexuality is a sin.



36:51

God created many different people with many different characteristics and proclivities. And in my view, God created some people, as homosexuals, or at least God created the world in such a way that some people would have a natural inclination to be attracted to persons of the same sex.



37:18

Therefore, in my view, persons who do have that natural inclination, are not acting sinfully when they carry out that inclination,



37:31

homosexuality is not bad. It's not evil, sex is not bad. It's not evil. It is called Evil by a lot of religious persons, a lot of religious, professional person, but it's a natural part of the creation of God. We must allow and find a way for ourselves to let this be what it really is,



38:05

if there's inhumanity and sin and this sexual orientation question. It's the inhumanity and sin that leads straight people to abandon gay children.



38:16

Biblical prohibition of homosexuality is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of homosexuality. In ancient times, you know that ancient Jews prohibited people who were deaf, for instance, from leading the congregation in prayer that was based I think, on a

misunderstanding that deafness was a sign of stupidity.



38:45

I'm 63 years old. And in my lifetime, I am not surprised to see the anger and the use of judgment proclaimed from the pulpits of the church against persons who have this virus or who have developed age. I am not surprised to hear people simply jump to the conclusion that God has condemned or is punishing people for wrongdoing



39:24

and the notion that AIDS is God's punishment for men who are gay not only misunderstands people who are gay and misunderstands aids and misunderstands God's if God wanted to punish men who were gay, I think God could manage to think of some way to do it that wouldn't also involve infecting people who are straight. I mean, after all, most of the folks worldwide who are infected with AIDS are straight



39:52

to say that that AIDS is a punishment for homosexuality is as offensive as to say that the Holocaust was a punch adjustment for being Jewish.



40:01

Jesus never mentioned a word about homosexuality, which suggests that while you can't argue from silence that something is of no importance, it clearly wasn't a major issue for him. He did talk a lot about other things. particularly things like greed and self righteousness and judgment of others, which I think are texts that folks who were sure that they can bring God's judgment upon homosexuals need to be willing to wrestle with.



40:29

People use the Bible. So liberally, and so strangely, to attack homosexuals, and the Bible has just almost nothing to say about it.



40:45

It was true during the period of slavery of people who would find evidence in the scriptures to support slavery, and why it was God's will that white people should enslaved black people. It's been true that people have used the scriptures to explain why women ought not to be the equals of men where they ought not to be able to vote where they ought not to be able to have leadership in church positions. By and large, we've grown out of both of those abuses of Scripture, we still have people who are using scripture, or abusing scripture, to justify pre existing attitudes, in opposition to gay and lesbian people



41:23

that Sodom and Gomorrah story is not about homosexuality, but it's made to be about homosexuality. And that's why people want to take something and use it against somebody else. And of course, that's always somebody that's not like me, that's the one that I tend to want to go after with my deadly instruments. And the Bible is used as this



41:47

is only one place where Jesus sort of tangentially refers to the Sodom and Gomorrah. And that's when he's sending his disciples out and says, If any city doesn't receive you, shake the dust off of your feet, it will be worse for that city than it was for Sodom and Gomorrah, a failure to receive a messenger of God.



42:08

Those who, what we call the scholars who spend their lives studying these parts these times. And these, these passages do not understand him to be about homosexuality, it's about a very important issue among the Jewish and in the tradition of Israel, is that you must never allow a stranger to be in your midst and not be cared for called hospitality that



42:43

there are a couple of places in the Old Testament where the prophets talk about Sodom and Gomorrah and refer to the sin of Sodom. And when they talk about the sin of Sodom, they talk about things like greed. They talk about having wealth and not sharing it with those in need. They talk about the oppression of the poor within the cities, they never once mentioned anything sexual,



43:08

one rarely sees Christians. Adhering as strictly to the Levitical provisions that prohibit the eating of pork and shellfish, as one sees them at hearings strictly to the prohibition of homosexuality or insisting that others adhere strictly to the prohibition of homosexuality.



43:30

The Levitical code is dealing with things that the Hebrews were told would be a defiling in some ritual sense, a violation of the holiness code is something that makes you unfit to appear in worship. And part of the same passages in Scripture with the same sort of rationale and the same language as the prohibition against. I think the actual language is a man lying with a man is with a woman. And interestingly enough, a lesbian relationship is not mentioned, because apparently women weren't important enough to be concerned about, say that it's unclean, a



woman is unclean during her menstrual period, that you're prohibited from eating shellfish, that you're prohibited from eating meat that still has the blood in it. In other words, a medium rare steak would be out that you're prohibited from wearing clothing that combines two different kinds of stuff such as a cotton wool blend. Most of the things that are dealt with in the holiness code are issues that we have come to recognize. Don't apply. So if somebody tells me they're going to pull two verses out of the midst of this, and say, Oh, yes, these are still binding morally for me. I want to know how they made that selection.



44:50

The State of Texas does not recognize or allow same sex marriage. I wish the church would tackle this, but we haven't even begun to face the issue of homosexuality enough to look at it reasonably, and without all a lot of heat and anger, I long



45:11

for the day when it's possible to do a marriage for a gay couple or a lesbian couple. But until society gets a lot more open minded, we can't do that. But we can do is within those places where there is a religious community that recognizes the legitimacy of a relationship between a gay couple or lesbian couple, gather that community of faith around those people and support them with with prayer and witness their commitments to one another.



45:44

We need, especially in an age crisis, to encourage people to a monogamous relationship. The homosexual people have nowhere to go, they have no way to be acknowledged, as in love are in Union are wanting serious commitments. So I wish the church would find its way to look more reasonably at this and allow this kind of thing. My understanding is that it is necessary. It is a natural thing. And it's something the church needs to develop services far,



46:32

there are people who question whether or not a gay couple can be stable and happy by pointing to studies that will say there's a high rate of promiscuity in the gay community, or there aren't very many long lived gay relationships. Seems to me, you have to look at the difference between what society will do to support a straight couple and what it does to oppose a gay couple. And even with all the religious and social supports, I certainly wouldn't want to brag on the success rate of heterosexual relationships.



47:05

We didn't choose it can't change it. Again, you could write with your right hand. But it doesn't make you right handed. If you're left handed, you're still a left handed person. And it comes from somewhere insight on a biological level definition of a trait which would be an appropriate subject from biology research. Sexual orientation is essentially the same,



47:25

I have never felt it was choice. Long before Vince came out long before I had any reason to think about it. I have never, ever looked at it as a choice. It just, you know, it amazes me that anybody can.



47:41

Because the road is so hard. And you know, you're going against the grain so much why would anyone choose to go that route?



47:49

How does anyone get their sexual orientation? My conviction is through the scientific information. people's sexual orientation is formed very early in the embryo. And it is a natural part of life to have a sexual orientation. It is not something that you can go fix. It is not something you can even operate on a brain and fix. It is established, and it is permanent. And it is not changeable.



48:26

In my view, it's absurd to think that anyone would choose an adaptation that subjects them to the amount of oppression and ridicule and stigma that homosexuality does in our culture. And to propose those notions, flies right in the face of all evidence to the contrary,



48:46

believe me, if I could be straight, it would be so much easier. Again, in respect to the job the career, it would be so much easier to be straight, because I wouldn't have any fear of any prejudiced against me.



48:58

I really believe my son was born gay. And now with this new this new findings, it looks like, you know, I can take responsibility if it is genetic, and it is biological. And I said that I would love to take credit for my son. He's a fine young man. Right now, if I had the power to change him. I wouldn't. I wouldn't. Because being gay, I think has shaped who he is. And I would I wouldn't change.



49:27

I think our sexuality comes to us, though, far before we have any capacity to make any judgement about it. I think the world still out on what the mix is of what kinds of genetic factors

judgment about it. I think the jury's still out on what the mix is of what kinds of genetic factors and perhaps some very, very early environmental factors, but I suspect it's set well before somebody is one or two years old. It's certainly nothing anybody chooses or is forced on someone.



49:52

Simon Ave has a very famous study out. He looked at two nuclei in the brains of gay men, straight men and straight women. And what he found was that there is one nucleus called Aina three, which is two times larger in the brains of straight men than it is in the brains of gay men. So you've got different brain structure, it would appear in gays and straights.



50:19

Homosexual homosexuality is an orientation, just like heterosexuality that's determined either before birth or very early in life, it's not changeable. It's not a choice. It has nothing to do with morals.



50:30

If it hadn't been proven already. In it has there's several studies out that I think is, is in the next couple of years, you're going to see it scientifically proven and accepted throughout the scientific community,



50:44

I think it's probably going to be a very complex answer regarding biology, genetics, lots of things. But beyond a shadow of a doubt, I know that this is not something that people choose. Absolutely not.



51:03

I feel that you choose to act upon your sexuality. I acted upon being heterosexual and I thought that I was heterosexual, but that was working out. So I think people are definitely born with a sexual orientation. It's acting upon that orientation. So I don't feel that you choose to be gay, you act upon being that,



51:35

I think until a parent is convinced that a child doesn't have any choice in the matter, it can be difficult for parents who will see this as more of a challenge to their authority than seeing it as who their child really is. So I think parents need to get clear about the fact that there's there's no choice involved.



51:54

Can you see this 11 or 12 year old who wakes up one day and says, you know, I think it would be really fun to be, you know, hated and persecuted all my life, to have my parents think about rejecting me to not be welcomed in the church and to be afraid of losing my job. If I'm exposed. I think I'll be gay. I mean, can you imagine that by making that kind of a choice.



52:19

On the evening of November 30 1993 23, year old Nicholas West was abducted from a city park in Tyler, Texas, by three young men. They drove him to a clay pit outside town, beat him and sat him nine or more times. Why? Because he was gay.



52:54

On January the eighth 1994 gays and lesbians in the Tyler area organized to stop the hate rally. As many as 1500 Gays, lesbians, parents, and many friends of homosexuals from all parts of Texas, participated in showing Tyler and America that the hate has gone too far. What people are the sexuality, skin color, or ethnic background does not justify hate and murder. However, this happens all too often in America. Next time, it could be my son, or one of your children.



53:34

I have recently viewed some of the videotapes and some of the material that's being put out by what's called a Christian Right? The attitude is unbelievable. It's distortion, actually, even in misrepresentation entirely not based upon fact. But seemingly based on fear and enormous misunderstandings.



54:12

Well, having watched the the Christian right video, it was kind of appalling to see that they just portray everybody in one single aspect. I mean, the gay community is so diverse. And so, so many ways that it's ludicrous for them to show us as just one group of people.



54:38

And as far as their whole thing about special rights. I think that we don't gay and lesbian community doesn't need an attention to special rights. We need to be attended as far as having basic civil rights. And that's just a jargony kind of catch. Word that they've used to fool people.



55:03

I think they're basically using it to build a political power base for a much broader agenda that I

I think they're basically using it to build a political power base for a much broader agenda that I think threatens us all.



55:12

And let me tell you what the Christian right has done it in our community and all over Oregon, it has split communities wide open. Instead of bringing people together in love and understanding. And let's get to know each other and appreciate differences. They have created fear and hatred.



55:34

I'm not aware of any special rights that anyone's lobbying for no one certainly come knocking on my door trying to get me to join the bandwagon for special rights.



55:44

And when I am on marches, or go to gay events, and people who claim to be religious are the ones with signs telling us that we're not okay. It makes me really angry because they have no idea the long road that I have traveled, how much praying I've done about that? How much Bible reading I've done about that, how many different ministers I've talked to, and I doubt that they have undergone that type of self examination and for them to say, what my relationship is, with God, or that I have done anything wrong in the eyes of God, I think is, is really horrible. I



56:29

think they're doing it for control. I think they just want control. And



56:38

like, Yeah, I'd like to throw in why I think that's excellent thought there. The reason is, they feel that the world is out of control. I mean, they sincerely believe that society has, you know, lost it or it's lost its mores in general. And their feeling is that if we can control things, get everyone under control, controlled all the situations, then we'll get things back to the way they were years ago.



57:11

And the religious right seems to want a brand name as wanting special rights. But I don't think the religious right could name a special right, that the gay people are asking for.



57:26

It really bothers me to hear they they love the sinner, but they hate the sin. You know, we're so

it really bothers me to hear they they love the sinner, but they hate the sin. You know, we're so tight about sex in this country. And that's all anybody can think of. When when I tell them I have a gay son



57:47

pressure brought from the religious right. Much of which I believe is, is might politically first and religious only secondarily. It's people who have chosen to use homosexuality as a hot button organizing issue. Just as earlier, they used communism and the Red Menace is a way of scaring people into making financial contributions and to buying into a whole fairly rigid conservative agenda.



58:22

I mean, the people they showed dancing around in a parade making absolute fools of themselves, saying this is typical of the homosexual population is about as realistic as filling a k k k rally and saying this is a typical heterosexual population. We know that those are extreme groups that keh keh keh is an extreme minority of the heterosexual population, and also the people running around with pierced nipples doing crazy things in the streets during gay pride parade, are also a very, very small portion of the true homosexual community.



58:54

One thing that we come to understand when we studied the Holocaust, is that what made it possible for the average European to go along with, to be a bystander, as Hitler and the Nazis went about the business of killing millions of Jews was the dehumanization of the Jews. In other words, Jews were treated differently from other human beings were not accorded equal rights where their civil rights were stripped from them. It was a long process of defining the Jews as something other than human something other than German, in the case of Germany, something other than polish in the case of Poland. I see something analogous happening in our own country, when leaders of the religious right and such political leaders is Pat Buchanan. attempt to define homosexuals as other than fully human other than fully American and not deserving of full and equal human and civil rights,



1:00:02

I worry about the Christians of any kind participating in this kind of behavior. Because the Christians in their beginning, were treated somewhat this way. Enormous distortions of their behavior like eating the flesh and blood of their fellow man, we call it the Lord's Supper. But in the beginning those rumors, were they drinking the blood of your your leader.



1:00:32

It's amazing how people can justify or lie to meet their needs. I don't want any special rights. I don't know of any of my good, gay, close friends that expect or want special rights. All we really want is just to be treated equally, and to be given the same rights as any other United States

citizen. And I really considering the contribution that the gay community has made to the United States of America. I really don't feel that's asking too much.



1:01:08

Why didn't our side get heard? Why didn't members of Congress have at least as much pressure from the gay community and their friends and supporters around the country as the emergence of hate as the so called Christian right and the organized right wing? Well, the answer, I think, is really quite simple. And that is that most of us are still invisible. Notwithstanding all extraordinary changes the last few years, notwithstanding all the the visible parts of our community in the large cities, I think the fact of the matter is that 90 God knows why but well, over 90% of all gay people are still as they always have been closeted.



1:01:41

And so in lots of ways, part of the hard part about coming out of 43 is, you knew what it felt like to have citizenship papers, you knew what full inclusion felt like. And now you don't have it anymore.



1:01:52

I think as a gay person in a gay relationship, I want or I expect, or I hope to receive the same rights that a married straight couple would receive, as far as housing, insurance, any other type of benefits. If I'm in a monogamous relationship, I feel that I should be treated the same as a straight couple, send a monogamous relationship or marriage. And I consider myself to be married.



1:02:29

As a homosexual person, I realized that there are certain things in the world today that straight people can take for granted that gay people cannot and that is in respect to relationships, for example of one should die. Even without a will a wife will automatically get her husband's estate, should he die in advance of her but in respect to two homosexual people, whether they be women or men, should one of them die, there's nothing automatically covering the other person. Therefore, I would like to see equal treatment.



1:03:01

I feel that the controversy over gays in the military is ridiculous. I served four years in the military, during the Vietnam era, saw many of my gay friends kill in Vietnam. It never was really that much of an issue. I think it's a shame that the straight community cannot accept what the gay community wants to do as far as serve and give to this country. I would think that they would be more than happy. But that's not what I've seen, like, like,



1:03:37

Israel, like many European countries, has not excluded homosexuals from service in the military.



1:03:45

But I had a magic wand. I would see to it that at noon tomorrow. Every gay men and lesbian in America stood up for two minutes. Everybody, doctors, lawyers, teachers, carpenters, clergy, Marine Corps, Army, Navy, House, Senate, you name it for two minutes, they could then sit down again and we could go out our business and the battle would be over and it would be one.



1:04:07

Families often wonder, what do I do now? Where can I go? Who can I talk to? And that's what my organization is all about was parents, families and friends of lesbians and gays was started in 1981 by a group of families who had gay or lesbian children and felt the need to talk to one another. Many of them belong to little groups scattered around the country. We've now grown to an organization of 150 local chapters, and about 300 telephone helplines. We're there to help families learn to appreciate their gay and lesbian children voice their concerns, get the information that may not be available to them in their communities or that they may be too nervous to seek out to support them on the journey that we all take when those of us who have gay family members or loved ones have. We've all taken that journey. And we



1:05:16

basically have a mission and incorporating three parts. We celebrate real family values. By having support groups throughout this country and 15 other nations. We advocate equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual people. And we work to educate society about homophobia,



1:05:33

we work with other groups who are interested in civil rights. We form a network where we can assist one another in resisting some of the anti gay movements of our times, both at local and state and national levels.



1:05:52

It's important for people to realize that there is an alternative there. And PFLAG is one of those opportunities that you can go to where we have people who have been through similar situations have learned to deal with coming out of learned to deal if you will, with their with their gay, lesbian or bisexual loved one. And that we're an alternative to a lot of the nasty things that are going out there.





1:06:16

For a parent that is having trouble dealing with their child just coming out, I would suggest that they get in touch with their nearest PFLAG chapter and call somebody and talk on the phone with them. As a minimum. All of the PFLAG chapters have volunteer parents that are ready and willing to talk to people over the phone as long as they need, those parents have been down that same road. And they can they can be of help, they will can at least be a knowledgeable listener.



1:06:49

It's a wonderful organization. And I would suggest anybody that has a PFLAG chapter, call it immediately. Because there's a lot of loving families that have been through everything that any family would go through that are ready and white waiting to help.



1:07:06

I think parents who are looking for something to do to deal with the issue of their child's homosexuality. PFLAG is to me the greatest source of both information and support.



1:07:20

And I joined because I was, I wanted to be active and I wanted to do something. And I wanted to work for the gay community and be a straight gay activist. And that was my into the community.



1:07:31

So that's very helpful to hear somebody else that's gone through the same thing, and in particular, to become acquainted with some parents that have been at it longer than you have, so to speak, and have progressed farther down the road of understanding and acceptance and to, to see parents that are very accepting of their child. very open about it willing to talk, not upset about it at all. It's very, very helpful to just see them and talk to them and just see as a role model, but accepting parents look like



1:08:03

if anybody out there celebrating love is celebrating what it's to be a true family. I think it's PFLAG. And it's there's just a magic when when you go to a meeting, and people are there and strangers you don't know, you know, a mom will walk up and give you a hug. And there's just such an expression of love and caring. And there's no judgement. You're there for who you are, and expressing that. And I think PFLAG has always had support there and always will. And anyone who has ever been curious about gay people should go.



1:08:46

I have seen homosexual persons who are exceptional in their religious devotion, and their desire to serve God in their following of Jesus Christ as their Savior in doing the things that the Bible talks about as that a Christian would be interested in doing that's looking to the neighbor's needs.



1:09:16

And that I think it's important to keep communication lines open with people and know that that most gays and lesbians weren't okay with with this in the beginning, either.



1:09:28

I've learned more about unconditional love. Because my daughter's gay than I ever thought I could understand. I have had my life enriched by so many people. I have opened myself up in ways that I never thought I could. And for that I'm eternally grateful.



1:09:50

I think if every gay person could come out, then the world would know that most gays are quite normal and certainly no threat to society as some people would, would want us to believe.



1:10:04

I think people who would suggest that accepting a gay child is quote, giving up on the child abandoning them to some evil, a destructive lifestyle or perhaps confused as to who in fact is giving up on their children. It seems to me that if you, if you love your children, if you care about them, and what they want, what is good for them, you won't bring some preconceived notion and drop it on your child, you'll spend the time and the pain and the struggle to try to understand your child, listen to what they say what they have to tell you about their feelings and their experience.



1:10:41

Oh, I think it's very important that parents make gay friends, their children. Because I think that's one of the fears. This is also unknown, you know, who are they with what's going on out there. And every time we've met one of instance, friends, it has, it has just reassured us that he's okay. He's in good hands.



1:11:03

I remember a man saying in a lecture. In my own time, we made black shit at the back of the bus, because of the color of their skin. The reason that struck me so hard is that's in my own time. That's the way it was most of my life. And now it's gone. Forever. It's gone. I think the

homosexual issue will come to that. I hope so. But we haven't made much headway. We need to God help us do that. I do believe the Lord will bring us to that moment, over this issue of homosexuality. We have to get a lot of information out to correct misinformation. And I owe it to all of my colleagues out there to share with them. What I think is the greater truth that I did not know, eight years ago.



1:12:02

One thing that people told me my gay, lesbian bisexual friends, was that they can handle whatever the world could dish out as long as their family was there for them. And I believed it when I heard it from them, but now I know it in a whole different way. And it's true.



1:12:22

Be there for your gay and lesbian children when they need a friend.



1:12:29

You just call out my name. And you know, wherever I am, I'll come run. See you again. Winter, spring, summer or fall. Oh, all you gotta do is call and I ain't it good to know. You got a friend. When people can be so cold. Oh, they'll hurt you. They'll desert you. Oh, they'll take your soul if you let them. We won't let them. You just call out my name. And you know wherever I am. I'll come run. To see you again. Winter, spring, summer or fall. All you got to do is call and be there. Yeah. You got a friend. Thank you