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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

unconditional love, church, people, gay, hear, christian, god, lesbian, talked, long, unconditional, called, exorcisms, pregnant, spent, handed, believed, started, gave, lovingly

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00:02

Rebecca and I went camping. We made camp. We spent some time eating, we were laying down by stream, and all of a sudden there were shots. My arm exploded. Rebecca was hit twice and started to bleed to death. tempted to carry her clothes on successful, the entire walk out of the woods, I believed myself to be hunted. My name is Claudia Brenner. We were identified as lesbians by a stranger with whom we had no connection. He will spend the rest of his life in prison. But Rebecca, who was 28 years old, is gone. Homophobia can



00:40

kill, education is the only lasting weapon against bigotry, which is why the lesbian and gay public awareness project wanted you to hear and think about this message. For more



00:53

information write us at Post Office Box 65603 Los Angeles, California 90065.



01:06

Music politics and the underground culture. It's all that in a bag of chips when you tune it, Steve Bob, the political Hip Hop magazine for the radio every Thursday morning at 1am hosted and produced by the renegade chive collective I KPFT 90.1 FM World Radio



01:34

Okay, and we're back talking about Christianity, how the religious belief structure affected us personally. And for the people on the panel tonight we're talking about things that have helped us things that are important to us how they shaped us and how maybe they can help you too. Greg, I think you had some little personal insight into what's happening. Yeah. How did how did that affect you? I mean, what are you?



02:06

Well, for starters, my father, whose name is Gerald Wayne Ford, is a Baptist minister with Rafa. I discovered that I was gay. When I was 15, I'm 17 now and my at that, at that time, my father was paying for my apartment. We went to the grocery store every like, two times a week, and you know, paying bills and



02:46

your father took care of you at that. Yeah.



02:49

He found out that I was gay. He kind of started slacking off. He's kind of started slacking off.



02:55

And did it just totally freak him out? Yeah. He, he



03:00

gave me that time period. He said, you know, son, in a while, you will discover that God's way is the right way and you will find a good girl you will find you'll find a a nice a nice girl and you'll you'll create a family and I'll



03:18

settle down and make babies.



03:22

Like I want children but I'm a frag.



03:27

So what do you think? How did that make you feel?



03:31

Um, I've always had the slight notion that the most most of the things that my father said well, while I was sitting there in the auditorium torium and he was up there on the pulpit. Screaming his buill. Yeah. Well, I didn't know it as both in but I'd always had that notion that what he was

His son, I mean when I right I know it as such in fact I always had that notion that what he was saying was not was not correct was not right. You know, children, no. Small children know what's right and what's wrong. Not even if not really know what's right went wrong. But they can tell. They can tell they can tell hot from cold. You know.



04:15

It's a good way of putting it. So how do you feel about God now? I mean, how did that you went to church when you were a kid, right? You went to church, like from like, one to 15 is that?



04:24

Well, one to 12 or 13 or 13? Yeah, yeah. I don't really know. I've been I've been struggling with it. Because, I mean what kind of stuff would that have on effect on a child you know, you know, here's this, here's this. Here's this man who's supposed to be you know, loving and caring and he always talked to me about unconditional love, unconditional love and kindness. Love that unconditional love this, but I don't feel see or hear any. Right. My father, my mother, she's a very intelligent woman, but my father gonna have had been gone having gone to what's it called that place where that where they go to seminary? Yeah, you know, my dad learned, knows knows 10s and 10s of big giant words, and my mom sometimes didn't know. And he would he would kind of



05:37

you know sort of pounded into her that pounded into her that she was less than right because she didn't know, you know what, what he was talking about? And that would that would get her frustrated and angry, you know? And then he would say that she was the one yelling, starting the yelling and screaming, and I don't I don't see. I don't see Christian in that. Yeah, I see I see anti humanism.



06:09

Well, there's a point that I think the spiritual and the human have to separate and have to come together. And he never can tell when the two are separating. And when they come together and once wet. If you've been listening to my radio show, you know a little bit about me because God knows I like to talk about myself.



06:30

You know that



06:32

I am a gay Christian. And my background is pretty Presbyterian. And I'm pretty. I think that I came from a church that was very governmental and bureaucratic and undemocratic. And my

preacher now cause Presbyterians to frozen chosen, thinks that, you know, clapping is a big deal. And, you know, if you stood up, you were really excited. And if you clap to sit up the same time, they better be singing. You know, that's pretty emotional. And, and when I was 14, I found out that I was a lesbian. And I didn't really think much of it, I hadn't heard any hate and didn't know that there was anything wrong or write about it. And I mean, it was different than what everybody else was going through. And I knew enough to hide it because I didn't really talk to people about it. But it didn't hide it. And I brought my girlfriend to my church youth group. And we didn't hold hands. We didn't like kiss. We didn't have sex in front of people. We but we did look at each other. We did look at each other lovingly and our eyes met. And I think that they sense that there was some kind of special bond between us that EU wasn't supposed to be there at that young age between two women. And they pretty much shunned us. And I had, well, I kind of left the church over that. Now. When I was 16. I tried to find a church that I really felt comfortable in. And I did and that was MTCR. And I went back I was with lover at the time who wanted to go to church. But basically we were lazy and didn't get around to doing it. I saw a friend of mine from that church era. And I saw she called me at my work one day, and she found me through my parents, and told me that she was in trouble. And she needed help. And I said, I haven't seen you in, you know, five, five years, let's say. But you were once my best friend in the world. And I'm here for you please. You know, this is why I live come to my house. She said that she needed a place to stay. Well, I talked to her on the phone again and gave her directions and she told me that she was pregnant. And she was about eight, almost nine months pregnant. Her boyfriend was a drug user, and they weren't married and he was unemployed, and didn't wasn't working. And the people that he tried to get a painting job had stolen all his painting equipment from him. And she drank. And she came to my house pregnant needing help, and I let her stay at my house. And we talked another friend came over somebody that I was seeing at the time. And she like didn't understand why this woman came over expecting me to spend the night in my efficiency apartment and why it was so important. And I lovingly asked this person to you know, leave for the evening while I dealt with my friend and can't come out to her and all that stuff. Well, I did come out to her. She asked me point blank and I said, Yes, I am gay and yes, I am a Christian. She meanwhile, had taken a bottle of Jack Daniels out of her purse. Keep in mind she's eight months pregnant, actually almost nine months pregnant. And she started condemning me. She told me that God was going to condemn me to hell, there was no way I could get out of it. I was a sinner. I was gonna die. And, you know, all I could do was say A please feel free to spout that if you like, but I don't want to have to hear it. And, you know, I would just prefer you just go to sleep and sleep for the evening. And if you need something, I'll try to find your place to stay in the morning. As a matter of fact, I think she left that morning, I think she did stay, we stayed up all night long talking about it. And she left and I haven't heard from or seen her since she gave me she called me with the name of her, she called a friend to call me with the name of her son. And she named him after biblical names and told me that she was gonna, you know, start going to church again, and I'm she ever did. That's just my personal story. I do go to church regularly now as regularly as I can. I'm been a member of MC star for the past, I guess, three years in September. I want to take this time as long winded as I am to talk about a caller that called earlier. Breathe. This callers name is Mark and Mark, if you're out there, I want you to know that, that I appreciate your call. It was very important to me to hear it. And I'm sharing it with the people that you told me I couldn't thank you for it. I'm sharing it with people because it's important. And it's Colin. Mark feels like most Christians are absent minded and misguided. I kind of took notes during this conversation. He thinks they're very misguided because they take human, you know, human thoughts and ideas into something that's spiritual. And when you get those two mixed up, I think it's always, you know, going to be a chore. He was forced by his parents to go to charge, just like probably most of us were at one point if, if that's the kind of culture we grew up in, you know, because it's the thing you do, you can't really say No, when

you're three years old. Yeah. learn by example. He was forced to go to church, it was a Pentecostal church. And he went through, basically hell and this Christian church, he was forced in his Pentecostal church, hey, and shame. And they tried to give him exorcisms the whole bit. Because he was gay during when he kind of hit puberty, he realized that he was homosexual. And it was very scary for him. He went to those support systems and the family that he knew and trusted. The people that he loved the people that surrounded him and said, you know, this is happening to me, what do I do? You know, I'm terrified. Well, he spent four or five years going through exorcisms and being baptized, and getting shame and for them, telling him that he can change and that with, you know, God's help he can change the way he is, and his faith. And if he believed enough, he could make it happen. You know, with God's help, he can make it happen. He spent four to five years going through this, trying to change because he thought that that was right, not necessarily because he wanted to, but because he thought that that was the right way because it was what these people believed and it was his support system. He was so shook his his social structure was that if you were not a member of the heterosexual community, then you should be shamed and exercised and punished and put to death. He eventually they were completely shunned from the church, they were excommunicated. They wished on him aids, they said he was a fag and deserved to get AIDS and die. His family went along with it for most of the time at first. And then finally after seeing what was happening and the pain it was causing him. And he he finally said, I can't take any more of this, you know, I'm leaving the family said, you're our son, and we love you. And so does God and God loves you and we love you. And the church basically threw them all out he he has a lot of questions. You know, if church equals love and support, then why are these people not giving him love and support? He went to the bars on Pacific street couple years ago. He's 22. Now so this didn't happen that long ago. He went to the bars on Pacific street, I believe and saw his cousin handing out the flyers to convert people. And his cousin is still a member of this congregation. He didn't. His family per se is no longer a member of the church, but his cousin was there. He saw his cousin and his cousin handed him a flyer and says, We love you. We support you. Please come back. You're welcome. He took the flyers. He thought about it hard and long. He did come back to the church. He got to the front door and the door. I don't know what kind of church most people around here was right? Were raised that but at my church, there's greeters that stand at the front door that opened up the front door. Well, his church too. There were two young men standing at the front door and when he got to the door, they didn't open it. And he reached out to open it. And they said please leave. You're not welcome there. Christian love. Yeah. This was pseudo Christian led to me as a gay Christian. I take offense at any one of these hateful people call themselves Christian. And frankly, pisses me off.



15:06

This is I see this all the time here. I deal with these people week after week after week, and I hear the same kind of garbage wicket wick. And Mark is a prime example of the same thing that these people practice, they will say one thing, but in reality, in truth, they, they, it is scary.



15:33

Well, let me ask you, Tom from from a production that was here earlier, I really wanted to get specific, I wanted to ask those people questions desperately in the questions I want to ask him as this guy came into this earlier on in the program, and I don't really want to get onto that too

heavily. But he came on saying, We love you, we love you just the way you are. We don't want to change you. And yet they hand out flyers every day of conversion, saying that if you work hard enough, with God's help, you can change. And my point is that with God's help anybody can change to be the way that God wants him to be. But what just What if maybe, God says for us to be gays natural, you know, who's



16:16

saying exactly that. I have,



16:17

in my back in the other part of the studio. pamphlets that were handed out, don't hear the street corner. Now. What they what he was saying is not see. I have learned a long time ago that never to accept what anybody says. But I watched their actions. And that's where that's where I take. And that's what I see on the street. They will tell you in a New York second, that you are welcome to the church. Anytime you want to come, please come, but you better be able to the to recognize that are patched because you will be I mean, they will test the strings T fine. We're glad you're here. Now here's string number one, you cannot be queer. You can't do this. You can't do come on. Let's be realistic. I was at the church. I know. I mean, I talked to the preacher, the big boy down there, and it's a big church. And the what I received back from him was not love in any form. So, so so. Um, so can you



17:39

can you explain the the definition the true definition of unconditional love?



17:45

That's I want to I want to ask all y'all that a little bit just to think about it for a second. I want to dedicate this kind of little portion portion of the discussion to Joel Joel and I had a really long discussion about it unconditional, unconditional love one day. And I know we talked about what is conditional love mean? Unconditional and conditional. She doesn't think that there is an unconditional love. And she doesn't think that unconditional love necessarily exists. Because even God says I love you unconditionally. However, I want you to behave this way or act this way or whatever. That's what she hears. Do you I want to ask all y'all hear what you particularly think about it? Do you want to answer that time?



18:35

Yes. First of all let me preface what I'm going to say with this. I do not believe in God, I know there is God. The reason? The reason I know there is a God, contrary to believing is that this unconditional love, there is an absolute acceptance. First of all, there is no such reality as a heaven, there is no such reality as a hell. And that is how I can see unconditional love. I am a staunch believer in reincarnation, it therefore allows me to seek unconditional love as as

conditioning for a person advancement. It is absolutely no judgment. It is it is it. If I can put this in words here. Unconditional Love is absolutely no judgment. You see the individual as part of yourself. Therefore, if you're willing to render judgment to him, you render judgment of yourself first. And once you render that judgment of yourself, then there is no judgment of the other person because you are a part of have all that there is I, I sing, I do hope that that you understood what I said, it is really the basis of my knowing that there is God. All persons white, black, brown, gay, straight, I don't really give a damn. But the point is that they are we all are a part of each other.



20:32

Let me let us learn just that there can be unconditional love, which is, like you said, loving somebody not needing them to be any certain way in order to be able to love them. But there cannot be unconditional relationship. I can love somebody, but not be able to relate to them, because of some decision that they're making that to be abusive to me or whatever. And the same with God. I believe God loves us unconditionally. And that we might choose to go outside his plan, and he can't relate to us because we don't choose to be with him. But that doesn't change his love for us. And so I believe that there can be unconditional love but not unconditional relationship. I believe God loves us. Just as we are he doesn't need us to be gay or straight or anything for him to love us. And I and I can love a person that says they are not okay with me being gay, because that's where they are. But I cannot relate to them because to relate to them as to agree it's okay for me not to exist and be who I am.



21:44

That's a great way of putting it. And I think I'll write that down and plagiarize it for me because like, did you have something you wanted to say that unconditional love?



21:53

Oh my I think I think I didn't not to discount how you how you define it. But the definition I think I was grasping for was how unconditional love is a and condition