



**TRANSFORMED
BY
NEAR-DEATH
EXPERIENCE**

HOWARD STORM

skeptiko.com

1
00:00:11,570 --> 00:00:09,049
on this episode of skeptic Oh Alex talks

2
00:00:13,940 --> 00:00:11,580
with Pastor Howard storm about his

3
00:00:17,570 --> 00:00:13,950
conversion to Christianity by way of

4
00:00:21,410 --> 00:00:17,580
near-death experience your experience is

5
00:00:24,470 --> 00:00:21,420
just so specifically Christian in a way

6
00:00:27,140 --> 00:00:24,480
that I gotta tell you I cannot tell you

7
00:00:29,450 --> 00:00:27,150
one near-death experience researcher

8
00:00:33,110 --> 00:00:29,460
that I've encountered that would be on

9
00:00:34,610 --> 00:00:33,120
board with your interpretation of this

10
00:00:38,540 --> 00:00:34,620
experience in terms of it being

11
00:00:42,110 --> 00:00:38,550
singularly a Christian kind of thing how

12
00:00:45,020 --> 00:00:42,120
do you square with that I certainly

13
00:00:47,720 --> 00:00:45,030

believe that all near-death experiences

14

00:00:50,180 --> 00:00:47,730

are idiosyncratic I believe that these

15

00:00:52,250 --> 00:00:50,190

experiences their gifts and everybody is

16

00:00:54,200 --> 00:00:52,260

given a different gift just as some

17

00:00:55,910 --> 00:00:54,210

everybody is different in this world

18

00:00:57,490 --> 00:00:55,920

they're all going to have somewhat

19

00:01:10,470 --> 00:00:57,500

different experiences

20

00:01:14,200 --> 00:01:12,730

welcome to skeptical where we explore

21

00:01:16,810 --> 00:01:14,210

controversial science but leading

22

00:01:18,910 --> 00:01:16,820

researchers thinkers and their critics

23

00:01:20,950 --> 00:01:18,920

I'm your host Alex Icarus and on this

24

00:01:23,770 --> 00:01:20,960

episode of skeptic Co we're going to

25

00:01:26,350 --> 00:01:23,780

look at the link between Christianity in

26

00:01:28,300 --> 00:01:26,360

near-death experience this is a show and

27

00:01:31,480 --> 00:01:28,310

interview that I was really looking

28

00:01:34,719 --> 00:01:31,490

forward to because the Christian

29

00:01:36,610 --> 00:01:34,729

near-death experience thing has kind of

30

00:01:39,670 --> 00:01:36,620

been in the media quite a bit lately a

31

00:01:41,260 --> 00:01:39,680

major movie came out pastor Howard storm

32

00:01:43,510 --> 00:01:41,270

or you're gonna hear from today has been

33

00:01:45,760 --> 00:01:43,520

out for quite some time there's actually

34

00:01:48,219 --> 00:01:45,770

another gentleman out there in McCormick

35

00:01:50,469 --> 00:01:48,229

who I'm going to interview today I mean

36

00:01:52,090 --> 00:01:50,479

with this time-shifted interview

37

00:01:54,880 --> 00:01:52,100

scheduled you won't hear it for a few

38

00:01:58,150 --> 00:01:54,890

weeks but this is a topic I really

39

00:02:00,420 --> 00:01:58,160

wanted to dive into because as you

40

00:02:03,280 --> 00:02:00,430

probably know there's this divide

41

00:02:06,730 --> 00:02:03,290

between near-death experience

42

00:02:09,999 --> 00:02:06,740

researchers who say yes this phenomena

43

00:02:12,070 --> 00:02:10,009

is real it seems to be connected with

44

00:02:15,190 --> 00:02:12,080

this spiritual transformation that

45

00:02:16,930 --> 00:02:15,200

people go through but no researchers say

46

00:02:20,830 --> 00:02:16,940

there doesn't seem to be any link

47

00:02:23,259 --> 00:02:20,840

between this and any specific religious

48

00:02:25,810 --> 00:02:23,269

experience as a matter of fact every

49

00:02:28,300 --> 00:02:25,820

near-death experience researcher I can

50

00:02:31,270 --> 00:02:28,310

think of says just the opposite that

51
00:02:33,520 --> 00:02:31,280
even people who go into a near-death

52
00:02:35,229 --> 00:02:33,530
experience with some kind of religious

53
00:02:37,750 --> 00:02:35,239
background Christian background Hindu

54
00:02:40,479 --> 00:02:37,760
background are often surprised at

55
00:02:44,650 --> 00:02:40,489
getting back the message that it's not

56
00:02:47,530 --> 00:02:44,660
about their particular religion but then

57
00:02:49,300 --> 00:02:47,540
you have folks like Howard storm who are

58
00:02:52,509 --> 00:02:49,310
gonna hear from today who have a very

59
00:02:54,699 --> 00:02:52,519
distinctly Christian kind of experience

60
00:02:57,130 --> 00:02:54,709
so I really wanted to sort all that out

61
00:02:59,580 --> 00:02:57,140
and that's what I tried to do or at

62
00:03:02,289 --> 00:02:59,590
least start to do with this interview

63
00:03:04,199 --> 00:03:02,299

the story of Howard storm is well-known

64

00:03:07,180 --> 00:03:04,209

to many familiar with the near-death

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00:03:10,120 --> 00:03:07,190

experience phenomena pastor storm was a

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00:03:12,910 --> 00:03:10,130

committed atheist until a severe illness

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00:03:15,699 --> 00:03:12,920

left him in a hospital bed in Paris

68

00:03:18,310 --> 00:03:15,709

France on the brink of death what

69

00:03:20,620 --> 00:03:18,320

happened next was a dramatic near-death

70

00:03:22,690 --> 00:03:20,630

experience that brought him to the

71

00:03:25,570 --> 00:03:22,700

depths of I guess what most

72

00:03:29,410 --> 00:03:25,580

us would call hell and finally to a

73

00:03:32,530 --> 00:03:29,420

dramatic encounter with a spirit being

74

00:03:35,559 --> 00:03:32,540

he understood to be Jesus all of this is

75

00:03:38,619 --> 00:03:35,569

chronicled in his book my descent into

76

00:03:40,360 --> 00:03:38,629

death Howard welcome to skeptic oh

77

00:03:41,860 --> 00:03:40,370

thanks so much for joining me

78

00:03:46,080 --> 00:03:41,870

well thank you Alex for having me on

79

00:03:49,270 --> 00:03:46,090

your program my pleasure your story is

80

00:03:51,880 --> 00:03:49,280

amazing I've given folks just a brief

81

00:03:54,130 --> 00:03:51,890

thumbnail sketch there do you want to

82

00:03:56,289 --> 00:03:54,140

quickly fill in some of the details the

83

00:03:58,690 --> 00:03:56,299

most important details that people need

84

00:04:00,130 --> 00:03:58,700

to know about this incredible experience

85

00:04:02,910 --> 00:04:00,140

of yours as we were chatting about just

86

00:04:06,039 --> 00:04:02,920

before there were 38 years old you're a

87

00:04:09,360 --> 00:04:06,049

teacher at a university and an atheist

88

00:04:12,930 --> 00:04:09,370

and then this thing happens yes I

89

00:04:17,370 --> 00:04:12,940

sincerely believe that I was as

90

00:04:22,330 --> 00:04:17,380

unproduced to have an experience of

91

00:04:25,210 --> 00:04:22,340

ultimately of Jesus God total conversion

92

00:04:27,640 --> 00:04:25,220

of my whole way of thinking as anyone

93

00:04:29,650 --> 00:04:27,650

could be I was very committed to

94

00:04:32,800 --> 00:04:29,660

Nathan's point of view and I do not mean

95

00:04:36,640 --> 00:04:32,810

agnostic people sloppily confused those

96

00:04:39,670 --> 00:04:36,650

two terms and I was quite committed to

97

00:04:43,540 --> 00:04:39,680

the notion that there was no God I

98

00:04:45,760 --> 00:04:43,550

didn't have any doubt in my mind that

99

00:04:47,409 --> 00:04:45,770

that was true and because I was a

100

00:04:50,610 --> 00:04:47,419

university professor and hung out with

101
00:04:53,650 --> 00:04:50,620
other professors were the same worldview

102
00:04:55,870 --> 00:04:53,660
we all shared in support of one of their

103
00:04:59,409 --> 00:04:55,880
in those views and there wasn't anything

104
00:05:02,980 --> 00:04:59,419
in our world or in our culture that was

105
00:05:05,409 --> 00:05:02,990
contradictory in our society in American

106
00:05:07,360 --> 00:05:05,419
culture at this time you can be quite

107
00:05:11,140 --> 00:05:07,370
comfortable being an atheist and I think

108
00:05:14,620 --> 00:05:11,150
that the popular culture supports that

109
00:05:20,529 --> 00:05:14,630
point of view so when this happened to

110
00:05:24,010 --> 00:05:20,539
me it was all new and shocking and

111
00:05:25,480 --> 00:05:24,020
amazing and it was transformative to I

112
00:05:27,969 --> 00:05:25,490
mean I think that's one of the things

113
00:05:30,820 --> 00:05:27,979

that you can look at from the near-death

114

00:05:33,520 --> 00:05:30,830

experience that is truly difficult for

115

00:05:36,040 --> 00:05:33,530

anyone to explain and that's your life I

116

00:05:36,640 --> 00:05:36,050

mean your life is is was completely

117

00:05:39,520 --> 00:05:36,650

transformed

118

00:05:41,890 --> 00:05:39,530

and has been here tell us about what you

119

00:05:44,530 --> 00:05:41,900

do now and how it changed after this

120

00:05:47,260 --> 00:05:44,540

experience well after the experience I

121

00:05:50,830 --> 00:05:47,270

knew that I had to remake everything and

122

00:05:55,840 --> 00:05:50,840

that's a very difficult process because

123

00:05:58,330 --> 00:05:55,850

I had spent 38 years developing my life

124

00:06:00,189 --> 00:05:58,340

my persona and my everything and I

125

00:06:03,790 --> 00:06:00,199

worked hard I worked my way through

126
00:06:06,219 --> 00:06:03,800
school to undergraduate graduate school

127
00:06:08,439 --> 00:06:06,229
to get terminal degree in art so that I

128
00:06:11,140 --> 00:06:08,449
could become an art restorer and had

129
00:06:13,029 --> 00:06:11,150
worked my way through academia to being

130
00:06:19,600 --> 00:06:13,039
a tenured professor and a department

131
00:06:21,730 --> 00:06:19,610
head and to undo all that but because

132
00:06:24,850 --> 00:06:21,740
when I say I have to undo all that I had

133
00:06:27,760 --> 00:06:24,860
to undo all the assumptions that

134
00:06:29,589 --> 00:06:27,770
underlie doll that I'm about what life

135
00:06:32,350 --> 00:06:29,599
was about what what I was doing this

136
00:06:36,550 --> 00:06:32,360
world how I was treating myself other

137
00:06:39,850 --> 00:06:36,560
people and most especially um the great

138
00:06:42,159 --> 00:06:39,860

wonderful mystery that referred to as

139

00:06:47,140 --> 00:06:42,169

the Creator God the maker of the Supreme

140

00:06:50,710 --> 00:06:47,150

Being the other the holy the one and as

141

00:06:52,629 --> 00:06:50,720

a consequence I became very involved

142

00:06:55,420 --> 00:06:52,639

with the church and felt that I was

143

00:06:59,409 --> 00:06:55,430

called into the Ministry of the church

144

00:07:01,360 --> 00:06:59,419

so after my experience I went back to

145

00:07:03,550 --> 00:07:01,370

the University and after a few years I

146

00:07:05,770 --> 00:07:03,560

left the university and went to seminary

147

00:07:08,439 --> 00:07:05,780

said I could be trained and qualified

148

00:07:10,500 --> 00:07:08,449

for ministry which I went to a Methodist

149

00:07:12,629 --> 00:07:10,510

Seminary for three and a half years and

150

00:07:15,550 --> 00:07:12,639

graduated and was ordained and served

151
00:07:19,990 --> 00:07:15,560
churches as a full-time pastor for 22

152
00:07:21,610 --> 00:07:20,000
years amazing so let me take a different

153
00:07:23,920 --> 00:07:21,620
angle on this hard the near-death

154
00:07:26,950 --> 00:07:23,930
experience is something we've looked at

155
00:07:29,740 --> 00:07:26,960
a lot on this show we usually try and

156
00:07:32,350 --> 00:07:29,750
stick pretty close to the science of it

157
00:07:34,649 --> 00:07:32,360
because at this point as I'm sure you're

158
00:07:37,060 --> 00:07:34,659
aware there's a large body of

159
00:07:39,040 --> 00:07:37,070
peer-reviewed scientific literature on

160
00:07:41,020 --> 00:07:39,050
this you know we've had a lot of those

161
00:07:43,060 --> 00:07:41,030
people on this show dr. Jeff long

162
00:07:44,980 --> 00:07:43,070
somebody I know you're familiar with I'm

163
00:07:47,399 --> 00:07:44,990

really impressed with his work PIM van

164

00:07:49,649 --> 00:07:47,409

Lommel another really impressive guy

165

00:07:52,019 --> 00:07:49,659

from the medical community 20 years

166

00:07:53,820 --> 00:07:52,029

collar cardiologist

167

00:07:56,729 --> 00:07:53,830

a bunch of other folks Suzanne Gordon

168

00:07:59,309 --> 00:07:56,739

Jan hold there's a list goes on and on

169

00:08:02,909 --> 00:07:59,319

of people who are serious academics

170

00:08:04,409 --> 00:08:02,919

who've published scientific literature

171

00:08:06,389 --> 00:08:04,419

peer-reviewed stuff on near-death

172

00:08:10,589 --> 00:08:06,399

experience what do you make I've never

173

00:08:14,249 --> 00:08:10,599

really seen much of your view or opinion

174

00:08:15,779 --> 00:08:14,259

on this body of scientific work dealing

175

00:08:20,189 --> 00:08:15,789

with near-death experience what do you

176

00:08:22,679 --> 00:08:20,199

make of that I'm aware of some of it and

177

00:08:24,899 --> 00:08:22,689

I appreciate the fact that people are

178

00:08:28,079 --> 00:08:24,909

trying to study this objectively but

179

00:08:32,369 --> 00:08:28,089

there's a huge limitation because the

180

00:08:34,409 --> 00:08:32,379

actual experience can't be observed by

181

00:08:37,079 --> 00:08:34,419

any other person so the only thing that

182

00:08:41,069 --> 00:08:37,089

is observable the only thing that's

183

00:08:42,689 --> 00:08:41,079

measurable is the after-effects and the

184

00:08:44,519 --> 00:08:42,699

interesting thing about the near-death

185

00:08:46,410 --> 00:08:44,529

experience that you've already mentioned

186

00:08:51,360 --> 00:08:46,420

is is that near-death experiences are

187

00:08:53,490 --> 00:08:51,370

transformative as opposed to drug trips

188

00:08:55,170 --> 00:08:53,500

or you know people you know there's

189

00:08:56,970 --> 00:08:55,180

there's a bunch of quacks out there

190

00:08:59,009 --> 00:08:56,980

quack scientists or say oh we can

191

00:09:01,829 --> 00:08:59,019

reproduce near-death experiences with

192

00:09:04,259 --> 00:09:01,839

drugs and stuff like them and it's not

193

00:09:07,199 --> 00:09:04,269

true and one of the measures of that is

194

00:09:10,019 --> 00:09:07,209

there isn't any real measurable

195

00:09:12,090 --> 00:09:10,029

difference in terms of transforming the

196

00:09:14,420 --> 00:09:12,100

people people that I know that have had

197

00:09:16,889 --> 00:09:14,430

near-death experiences lives are

198

00:09:20,309 --> 00:09:16,899

radically changed and when I say radical

199

00:09:22,259 --> 00:09:20,319

on the Latin root means to go to the

200

00:09:24,780 --> 00:09:22,269

very root I mean the very core of their

201
00:09:28,170 --> 00:09:24,790
being has changed and that it that is

202
00:09:29,639 --> 00:09:28,180
measurable not only in what they do with

203
00:09:31,670 --> 00:09:29,649
their lives after the experience but

204
00:09:34,019 --> 00:09:31,680
also attitudes like for example

205
00:09:36,540 --> 00:09:34,029
measuring anxiety about death people

206
00:09:39,420 --> 00:09:36,550
have near-death experiences tend to

207
00:09:41,730 --> 00:09:39,430
register no fear or anxiety about death

208
00:09:44,189 --> 00:09:41,740
whatsoever as opposed to the general

209
00:09:45,600 --> 00:09:44,199
population where it's death of course

210
00:09:50,369 --> 00:09:45,610
it's the number one fear and anxiety

211
00:09:52,799 --> 00:09:50,379
about life so it's hard it's hard stuff

212
00:09:57,569 --> 00:09:52,809
to scientifically measure but there's

213
00:09:59,280 --> 00:09:57,579

this huge body of evidence and by what

214

00:10:01,140 --> 00:09:59,290

I'm referring to as millions of lives

215

00:10:02,940 --> 00:10:01,150

not hundreds not

216

00:10:04,590 --> 00:10:02,950

since millions of lives in the United

217

00:10:07,230 --> 00:10:04,600

States alone and all over the world of

218

00:10:09,170 --> 00:10:07,240

people's whose lives are changed by

219

00:10:12,170 --> 00:10:09,180

these experiences so there has to be

220

00:10:16,140 --> 00:10:12,180

something going on and it's not

221

00:10:17,910 --> 00:10:16,150

reproducible in in any way by the

222

00:10:21,090 --> 00:10:17,920

scientific community they can they can

223

00:10:23,460 --> 00:10:21,100

try electric shock and taking people you

224

00:10:26,400 --> 00:10:23,470

know with anesthetics or other chemicals

225

00:10:27,780 --> 00:10:26,410

to the edge of death they can administer

226

00:10:29,580 --> 00:10:27,790

a hallucinogen since things like that

227

00:10:32,550 --> 00:10:29,590

and none of that produces the same

228

00:10:34,500 --> 00:10:32,560

result yeah but I think don't we have to

229

00:10:36,030 --> 00:10:34,510

be kind of careful when we start saying

230

00:10:38,280 --> 00:10:36,040

that or when we start saying that we

231

00:10:40,590 --> 00:10:38,290

can't approach it this way or that way I

232

00:10:43,820 --> 00:10:40,600

think there's some very interesting work

233

00:10:46,080 --> 00:10:43,830

that that has been done about both

234

00:10:49,200 --> 00:10:46,090

understanding both the medical

235

00:10:52,410 --> 00:10:49,210

conditions preconditions that are

236

00:10:54,840 --> 00:10:52,420

associated with the reported experience

237

00:10:58,140 --> 00:10:54,850

so let's break that down so as you say

238

00:11:01,770 --> 00:10:58,150

we cannot re-experience what you

239

00:11:04,080 --> 00:11:01,780

experienced but of course science does

240

00:11:06,330 --> 00:11:04,090

this all the time we can there's a

241

00:11:10,080 --> 00:11:06,340

variety of different ways that we can

242

00:11:12,660 --> 00:11:10,090

collect and look at those experiences

243

00:11:17,210 --> 00:11:12,670

and try and find patterns in them try

244

00:11:20,490 --> 00:11:17,220

and find predictable preconditions that

245

00:11:23,100 --> 00:11:20,500

that would suggest what those

246

00:11:26,040 --> 00:11:23,110

experiences are really about we can look

247

00:11:28,170 --> 00:11:26,050

at them cross-culturally we can see if

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00:11:30,120 --> 00:11:28,180

the experiences in the United States are

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00:11:32,910 --> 00:11:30,130

any different than the experiences in

250

00:11:34,530 --> 00:11:32,920

India or Japan and you know one of the

251
00:11:36,210 --> 00:11:34,540
guests I had on this year that I thought

252
00:11:40,200 --> 00:11:36,220
was really interesting because she took

253
00:11:42,780 --> 00:11:40,210
an ethnographic perspective on my or

254
00:11:44,880 --> 00:11:42,790
death experiences was dr. Suzanne Gordon

255
00:11:49,500 --> 00:11:44,890
and you know this whole idea of

256
00:11:51,120 --> 00:11:49,510
ethnography is is well established in

257
00:11:52,770 --> 00:11:51,130
the sciences that we can look at

258
00:11:54,180 --> 00:11:52,780
different cultures we can look at

259
00:11:56,580 --> 00:11:54,190
different people who have different

260
00:11:58,050 --> 00:11:56,590
experiences and we have this body of

261
00:12:02,940 --> 00:11:58,060
tools that we can use to break that down

262
00:12:05,280 --> 00:12:02,950
so I'm not so sure that I would say we

263
00:12:07,620 --> 00:12:05,290

can't penetrate this and I guess where

264

00:12:10,340 --> 00:12:07,630

I'm really going with this is that when

265

00:12:13,500 --> 00:12:10,350

we start doing that you know Jeff long

266

00:12:14,910 --> 00:12:13,510

has looked at thousands of these cases

267

00:12:18,690 --> 00:12:14,920

dr. Jeff along with

268

00:12:20,610 --> 00:12:18,700

the very rigorous 150 question at least

269

00:12:23,100 --> 00:12:20,620

last time I checked there's 150

270

00:12:24,509 --> 00:12:23,110

questions survey we asks all these

271

00:12:26,940 --> 00:12:24,519

questions about people's near-death

272

00:12:30,360 --> 00:12:26,950

experience in comparison contrast those

273

00:12:32,699 --> 00:12:30,370

how do you think your experience would

274

00:12:35,699 --> 00:12:32,709

fit in with the broader body of this and

275

00:12:37,740 --> 00:12:35,709

more importantly do you care how it fits

276

00:12:39,889 --> 00:12:37,750

in or what any of these researchers

277

00:12:44,280 --> 00:12:39,899

might have to say about your experience

278

00:12:46,560 --> 00:12:44,290

well first of all since I am a human

279

00:12:50,009 --> 00:12:46,570

being and tried to have some insight

280

00:12:52,170 --> 00:12:50,019

into my nature I want to be validated

281

00:12:55,050 --> 00:12:52,180

just like anybody else you know and it's

282

00:12:57,060 --> 00:12:55,060

pretty painful when people tell me I'm

283

00:13:00,030 --> 00:12:57,070

crazy or I Colusa Nate it or I'm

284

00:13:02,579 --> 00:13:00,040

fabricating all this or I'm you know

285

00:13:05,449 --> 00:13:02,589

doing this for profit or whatever they

286

00:13:08,639 --> 00:13:05,459

know that that's hurtful the research

287

00:13:10,560 --> 00:13:08,649

some of it is really validating and some

288

00:13:12,360 --> 00:13:10,570

of it of course is demeaning like for

289

00:13:15,090 --> 00:13:12,370

example when I read research where if

290

00:13:17,759 --> 00:13:15,100

someone says near-death experiences are

291

00:13:20,430 --> 00:13:17,769

the same things as epileptic fits

292

00:13:23,130 --> 00:13:20,440

because people that have epileptic fits

293

00:13:24,449 --> 00:13:23,140

see bright brilliant white lightening

294

00:13:26,040 --> 00:13:24,459

heads so that must be a near-death

295

00:13:27,480 --> 00:13:26,050

experience and you know they don't know

296

00:13:29,400 --> 00:13:27,490

what they're talking about because the

297

00:13:31,319 --> 00:13:29,410

the part that's so important about the

298

00:13:33,780 --> 00:13:31,329

new death experience that everyone that

299

00:13:35,970 --> 00:13:33,790

I've ever met that's had a positive

300

00:13:38,009 --> 00:13:35,980

near-death experience and we and we do

301
00:13:39,710 --> 00:13:38,019
know that this a portion a substantial

302
00:13:42,569 --> 00:13:39,720
portion of people have negative ones

303
00:13:45,389 --> 00:13:42,579
everyone that's had a positive one the

304
00:13:47,670 --> 00:13:45,399
key word is love and I've talked to many

305
00:13:50,449 --> 00:13:47,680
of these people and we are all in

306
00:13:53,790 --> 00:13:50,459
complete agreement that there is no

307
00:13:57,380 --> 00:13:53,800
equivalent to what we experience in this

308
00:14:01,050 --> 00:13:57,390
world that this the sense of love is so

309
00:14:04,650 --> 00:14:01,060
overwhelming so all-encompassing so

310
00:14:07,490 --> 00:14:04,660
completely affirming that that's the

311
00:14:10,380 --> 00:14:07,500
essence of the light life-changing

312
00:14:13,139 --> 00:14:10,390
transformative experience in that love

313
00:14:15,930 --> 00:14:13,149

and I went to seminary

314

00:14:18,900 --> 00:14:15,940

I studied theology and I don't I don't

315

00:14:23,790 --> 00:14:18,910

have any words to even begin to

316

00:14:25,650 --> 00:14:23,800

encapsulate stuff stuff nope it fair

317

00:14:27,870 --> 00:14:25,660

enough and and I I guess where I'm

318

00:14:28,590 --> 00:14:27,880

coming at this from is I'm always a

319

00:14:31,439 --> 00:14:28,600

little

320

00:14:33,720 --> 00:14:31,449

but Leary to be honest with you the

321

00:14:36,720 --> 00:14:33,730

folks that rely too much on their

322

00:14:39,449 --> 00:14:36,730

experience I mean this is the same thing

323

00:14:43,590 --> 00:14:39,459

Howard that atheists will tell you or

324

00:14:46,519 --> 00:14:43,600

people of different religious stripes or

325

00:14:49,319 --> 00:14:46,529

different spiritual strips hey I have a

326

00:14:52,730 --> 00:14:49,329

guy who came on the show and a consumer

327

00:14:55,889 --> 00:14:52,740

friend good guy Graham Nichols he has

328

00:14:58,259 --> 00:14:55,899

out-of-body experiences which is one

329

00:15:00,569 --> 00:14:58,269

part of the near-death experience that

330

00:15:02,879 --> 00:15:00,579

you had you're out of your body well he

331

00:15:04,800 --> 00:15:02,889

practiced this for a long time and was

332

00:15:06,900 --> 00:15:04,810

able to achieve out-of-body experience

333

00:15:10,350 --> 00:15:06,910

and I've had other people on that report

334

00:15:13,499 --> 00:15:10,360

similarly but they say there's a no God

335

00:15:15,509 --> 00:15:13,509

kind of experience right so they're out

336

00:15:18,030 --> 00:15:15,519

of their body they're open to

337

00:15:19,800 --> 00:15:18,040

experiencing any kind of religious

338

00:15:21,629 --> 00:15:19,810

things but they say hey it's not out

339

00:15:23,970 --> 00:15:21,639

there or you'll have an atheist he'll

340

00:15:26,610 --> 00:15:23,980

say that's Suzanne Gordon again who

341

00:15:28,800 --> 00:15:26,620

studied these near-death experiences one

342

00:15:31,290 --> 00:15:28,810

of the people she studied in depth

343

00:15:34,590 --> 00:15:31,300

hundreds of hours of interviews was an

344

00:15:36,509 --> 00:15:34,600

atheist had a near-death experience came

345

00:15:39,929 --> 00:15:36,519

back from the dear death experience and

346

00:15:41,850 --> 00:15:39,939

wasn't completely transformed in terms

347

00:15:43,620 --> 00:15:41,860

of a religious experience did

348

00:15:46,590 --> 00:15:43,630

acknowledge that hey well there is

349

00:15:48,629 --> 00:15:46,600

something more I did learn that but no

350

00:15:52,199 --> 00:15:48,639

I'm not ready to say that you know I'm

351
00:15:54,030 --> 00:15:52,209
down with the whole God and Jesus thing

352
00:15:56,970 --> 00:15:54,040
so there's a variety of different

353
00:15:58,740 --> 00:15:56,980
experiences out there don't we have to

354
00:16:02,340 --> 00:15:58,750
account for those if we're going to take

355
00:16:05,579 --> 00:16:02,350
a more scientific view of these or your

356
00:16:08,370 --> 00:16:05,589
experience is just so specifically

357
00:16:11,309 --> 00:16:08,380
Christian in a way that I gotta tell you

358
00:16:13,379 --> 00:16:11,319
I cannot tell you one near-death

359
00:16:16,139 --> 00:16:13,389
experience researcher that I've

360
00:16:19,439 --> 00:16:16,149
encountered that would be onboard with

361
00:16:21,840 --> 00:16:19,449
your interpretation of this experience

362
00:16:24,689 --> 00:16:21,850
in terms of it being singularly a

363
00:16:27,179 --> 00:16:24,699

Christian kind of thing how do you

364

00:16:30,379 --> 00:16:27,189

square with that I certainly believe

365

00:16:33,300 --> 00:16:30,389

that all near-death experiences are

366

00:16:35,970 --> 00:16:33,310

idiosyncratic and that people are I

367

00:16:38,400 --> 00:16:35,980

believe that these experiences are gifts

368

00:16:40,769 --> 00:16:38,410

and everybody is given a different gift

369

00:16:41,850 --> 00:16:40,779

just as everybody is different in this

370

00:16:44,069 --> 00:16:41,860

world they're all going

371

00:16:45,870 --> 00:16:44,079

have somewhat different experiences as

372

00:16:49,380 --> 00:16:45,880

Brendan moody who came up with the the

373

00:16:51,600 --> 00:16:49,390

first study of this and said and he

374

00:16:54,930 --> 00:16:51,610

found 10 similarities in what he called

375

00:16:57,420 --> 00:16:54,940

core experiences on and that was pretty

376

00:17:00,810 --> 00:16:57,430

good stuff because people that it had

377

00:17:02,220 --> 00:17:00,820

core experiences were out there before

378

00:17:05,549 --> 00:17:02,230

him and moody wondering if they were

379

00:17:07,799 --> 00:17:05,559

crazy and when I read moody stuff and

380

00:17:10,289 --> 00:17:07,809

went through the checklist of like yeah

381

00:17:11,640 --> 00:17:10,299

yeah yeah I've had these things then I

382

00:17:13,169 --> 00:17:11,650

am like other than your death

383

00:17:15,059 --> 00:17:13,179

experiences but it doesn't mean that any

384

00:17:21,419 --> 00:17:15,069

of us have similar experiences might

385

00:17:26,270 --> 00:17:21,429

experience why why was it so Christian I

386

00:17:30,870 --> 00:17:26,280

can only speculate because I quit church

387

00:17:33,060 --> 00:17:30,880

when I was 14 15 years old I didn't have

388

00:17:34,049 --> 00:17:33,070

any theological background the things

389

00:17:36,630 --> 00:17:34,059

that I learned of my near-death

390

00:17:39,360 --> 00:17:36,640

experience were not recollections of

391

00:17:42,690 --> 00:17:39,370

things that I had learned as a child in

392

00:17:45,930 --> 00:17:42,700

Sunday school um I had never read the

393

00:17:49,590 --> 00:17:45,940

Bible in my adult life ever and I didn't

394

00:17:52,710 --> 00:17:49,600

read any theology so I was given a lot

395

00:17:54,960 --> 00:17:52,720

of information that was not implanted in

396

00:17:57,450 --> 00:17:54,970

me in my youth I believed that what I

397

00:18:00,180 --> 00:17:57,460

was given was a gift and I think part of

398

00:18:03,840 --> 00:18:00,190

the reason why I was given this gift was

399

00:18:07,370 --> 00:18:03,850

in order to assert the truth the

400

00:18:09,720 --> 00:18:07,380

validity of the Christian tradition

401
00:18:14,760 --> 00:18:09,730
that's been an interesting journey

402
00:18:15,810 --> 00:18:14,770
because I pursued trying to integrate

403
00:18:20,730 --> 00:18:15,820
what I learned in my near-death

404
00:18:25,740 --> 00:18:20,740
experience with my own readings I went

405
00:18:28,260 --> 00:18:25,750
to seminary took surprisingly rigorous

406
00:18:32,039 --> 00:18:28,270
academic classes to graduate classes in

407
00:18:34,500 --> 00:18:32,049
theology and then as a pastor had to try

408
00:18:39,780 --> 00:18:34,510
and transmit this information over time

409
00:18:43,110 --> 00:18:39,790
to people and I have wanted to express

410
00:18:46,020 --> 00:18:43,120
myself because I found that that's where

411
00:18:49,169 --> 00:18:46,030
what I learned and what Christian

412
00:18:51,390 --> 00:18:49,179
orthodoxy teaches where they come

413
00:18:53,100 --> 00:18:51,400

together and support one another I've my

414

00:18:55,169 --> 00:18:53,110

near-death experience I thought well

415

00:18:57,690 --> 00:18:55,179

since Christianity is so

416

00:19:00,269 --> 00:18:57,700

corrupted by people and I don't want to

417

00:19:01,829 --> 00:19:00,279

go into a big critique of the church but

418

00:19:04,709 --> 00:19:01,839

we all know the church has some problems

419

00:19:07,379 --> 00:19:04,719

some serious problems I thought about

420

00:19:09,299 --> 00:19:07,389

the idea of starting a new religion and

421

00:19:12,680 --> 00:19:09,309

you can call it howard ism or whatever

422

00:19:15,779 --> 00:19:12,690

you know i'll start my own church and I

423

00:19:18,810 --> 00:19:15,789

very quickly realized what an absolutely

424

00:19:22,739 --> 00:19:18,820

pathetic idea that was because that was

425

00:19:26,339 --> 00:19:22,749

I mean it smacked of narcissism it it

426

00:19:29,489 --> 00:19:26,349

smacked of going off and some editor

427

00:19:32,190 --> 00:19:29,499

place setting myself up as a guru and I

428

00:19:34,619 --> 00:19:32,200

didn't want to do that I want um I want

429

00:19:36,029 --> 00:19:34,629

to be part of this supposedly 2 billion

430

00:19:39,419 --> 00:19:36,039

Christians in the world I wanted to be

431

00:19:41,159 --> 00:19:39,429

part of that body of knowledge which is

432

00:19:44,159 --> 00:19:41,169

a interesting body of knowledge because

433

00:19:46,649 --> 00:19:44,169

it says but I know that's been trying to

434

00:19:48,810 --> 00:19:46,659

work itself up for 5,000 years

435

00:19:51,659 --> 00:19:48,820

you can't think of many other examples

436

00:19:53,759 --> 00:19:51,669

of you nobody knows trying to refine

437

00:19:56,159 --> 00:19:53,769

itself over 5,000 years of human history

438

00:19:57,989 --> 00:19:56,169

um there are there are some other

439

00:20:01,099 --> 00:19:57,999

examples but you know this is a really

440

00:20:03,839 --> 00:20:01,109

major one and I wanted to express myself

441

00:20:05,369 --> 00:20:03,849

articulate what I understood in that and

442

00:20:09,060 --> 00:20:05,379

went on the more I understood

443

00:20:11,279 --> 00:20:09,070

Christianity the more I realized that it

444

00:20:14,519 --> 00:20:11,289

was absolutely consistent with what I've

445

00:20:18,749 --> 00:20:14,529

experienced so it's not um so what I

446

00:20:22,919 --> 00:20:18,759

have done is I have merged myself with

447

00:20:25,259 --> 00:20:22,929

this huge ancient tradition and body of

448

00:20:27,719 --> 00:20:25,269

knowledge with two but two billion other

449

00:20:29,909 --> 00:20:27,729

people on this planet yeah but a lot of

450

00:20:31,560 --> 00:20:29,919

those two billion people don't exactly

451

00:20:33,629 --> 00:20:31,570

agree with you as a matter of fact if

452

00:20:36,570 --> 00:20:33,639

you go onto Amazon and look at your book

453

00:20:38,279 --> 00:20:36,580

the most vocal critics and on the

454

00:20:40,799 --> 00:20:38,289

internet in general the most vocal

455

00:20:44,659 --> 00:20:40,809

critics of your book are Christians who

456

00:20:49,469 --> 00:20:44,669

will cite you passage after passage of

457

00:20:51,839 --> 00:20:49,479

where your views conflict with Christian

458

00:20:53,729 --> 00:20:51,849

doctrine and I don't want to get too far

459

00:20:56,579 --> 00:20:53,739

into that because I don't put a lot of

460

00:20:59,820 --> 00:20:56,589

stake in Christian doctrine but at the

461

00:21:03,299 --> 00:20:59,830

same time I guess I'd say you know where

462

00:21:06,089 --> 00:21:03,309

does your Christian interpretation of

463

00:21:08,669 --> 00:21:06,099

the near-death experience fit in with

464

00:21:11,359 --> 00:21:08,679

this broader body of near

465

00:21:14,460 --> 00:21:11,369

death experience literature and really

466

00:21:16,799 --> 00:21:14,470

transformative spiritual experiences

467

00:21:20,070 --> 00:21:16,809

because you know one of the people that

468

00:21:22,889 --> 00:21:20,080

that I appreciated it came on the show

469

00:21:24,690 --> 00:21:22,899

is dr. Evan Alexandra best-selling book

470

00:21:27,720 --> 00:21:24,700

Harvard neurosurgeon has this near-death

471

00:21:30,419 --> 00:21:27,730

experience emphatic about two things one

472

00:21:31,919 --> 00:21:30,429

that it's not religious there is no

473

00:21:33,720 --> 00:21:31,929

religious connection to the

474

00:21:35,580 --> 00:21:33,730

transformative spiritual experience this

475

00:21:38,879 --> 00:21:35,590

is his interpretation not mine all

476
00:21:41,820 --> 00:21:38,889
religions are a mere pathway or

477
00:21:44,159 --> 00:21:41,830
reflection of this God consciousness

478
00:21:46,169 --> 00:21:44,169
that is out there the light that

479
00:21:48,239 --> 00:21:46,179
everyone talks about and that is

480
00:21:49,680 --> 00:21:48,249
repeated over and over again by every

481
00:21:51,690 --> 00:21:49,690
near-death experience or yoga

482
00:21:53,190 --> 00:21:51,700
it's not about religion there's no right

483
00:21:54,659 --> 00:21:53,200
religion it's just there's these

484
00:21:57,210 --> 00:21:54,669
cultural differences that people get

485
00:21:59,430 --> 00:21:57,220
interpreted down and the second thing

486
00:22:01,549 --> 00:21:59,440
that he's emphatic about is that we

487
00:22:04,889 --> 00:22:01,559
shouldn't just be looking at near-death

488
00:22:08,129 --> 00:22:04,899

experiences as the only way that this

489

00:22:10,919 --> 00:22:08,139

God consciousness gets transmitted that

490

00:22:12,720 --> 00:22:10,929

there's a broader body of transformative

491

00:22:15,029 --> 00:22:12,730

spiritual experiences people of

492

00:22:17,430 --> 00:22:15,039

Kundalini experiences people have just

493

00:22:18,930 --> 00:22:17,440

spontaneous prayer experiences or

494

00:22:21,810 --> 00:22:18,940

they're doing the rosary or something

495

00:22:23,909 --> 00:22:21,820

like that so two points then don't we

496

00:22:26,249 --> 00:22:23,919

have to look at this in terms of a

497

00:22:28,320 --> 00:22:26,259

broader transformative spiritual

498

00:22:29,970 --> 00:22:28,330

experience and don't we have to pull

499

00:22:31,859 --> 00:22:29,980

religion out of this doesn't it just

500

00:22:33,629 --> 00:22:31,869

really kind of muck it up because as

501
00:22:35,879 --> 00:22:33,639
soon as you put it in there like that

502
00:22:38,430 --> 00:22:35,889
then you're will sounding like a lot of

503
00:22:41,960 --> 00:22:38,440
other people that are very dogmatic

504
00:22:44,519 --> 00:22:41,970
about their perspective about their

505
00:22:46,859 --> 00:22:44,529
connection with the the higher source

506
00:22:49,830 --> 00:22:46,869
and it's the my way or the highway kind

507
00:22:51,239 --> 00:22:49,840
of thing I agree with almost everything

508
00:22:53,820 --> 00:22:51,249
you said that it's not about religion

509
00:22:57,480 --> 00:22:53,830
and that absolutely near-death

510
00:22:59,009 --> 00:22:57,490
experiences are only a subcategory of

511
00:23:01,649 --> 00:22:59,019
what I would refer to as mystical

512
00:23:03,389 --> 00:23:01,659
experiences or transformative

513
00:23:05,369 --> 00:23:03,399

experiences whatever you want to call so

514

00:23:08,330 --> 00:23:05,379

there's a whole lot more to

515

00:23:11,159 --> 00:23:08,340

transformative experiences than the NDE

516

00:23:14,129 --> 00:23:11,169

now back to religion for so the one

517

00:23:16,169 --> 00:23:14,139

thing that took exception to is that our

518

00:23:20,340 --> 00:23:16,179

religions are not the same you know

519

00:23:22,470 --> 00:23:20,350

religions are not equally good and there

520

00:23:26,400 --> 00:23:22,480

are religions

521

00:23:29,280 --> 00:23:26,410

that teach hate and destruction and

522

00:23:32,840 --> 00:23:29,290

there are religions that promote love

523

00:23:36,110 --> 00:23:32,850

and there are tremendous abuses of

524

00:23:38,010 --> 00:23:36,120

religions within religion so

525

00:23:40,980 --> 00:23:38,020

Christianity which is the majority

526

00:23:43,580 --> 00:23:40,990

religion on this planet where two

527

00:23:47,010 --> 00:23:43,590

billion inherence

528

00:23:50,100 --> 00:23:47,020

sociopaths and narcissists and every

529

00:23:53,120 --> 00:23:50,110

every kind of human disorder personality

530

00:23:56,850 --> 00:23:53,130

disorder that's imaginable in it and

531

00:24:00,630 --> 00:23:56,860

some of those people are very vocal but

532

00:24:04,110 --> 00:24:00,640

the teaching of the essential

533

00:24:07,950 --> 00:24:04,120

Christianity and I'm not trying to bring

534

00:24:12,080 --> 00:24:07,960

this up is in my opinion absolutely

535

00:24:14,840 --> 00:24:12,090

consistent with the love ethic and

536

00:24:17,850 --> 00:24:14,850

cosmology of the near-death experience

537

00:24:20,820 --> 00:24:17,860

I'll wouldn't argue with you so let's say

538

00:24:23,730 --> 00:24:20,830

that it is but I think that the the

539

00:24:26,640 --> 00:24:23,740

problem comes in that we bring along

540

00:24:29,159 --> 00:24:26,650

with that the baggage of the main

541

00:24:31,409 --> 00:24:29,169

baggage is just that the primacy you

542

00:24:34,620 --> 00:24:31,419

know Christianity is it baby

543

00:24:38,820 --> 00:24:34,630

it is the way to go it is the only way

544

00:24:41,730 --> 00:24:38,830

to go that is consistently what we hear

545

00:24:45,450 --> 00:24:41,740

in the United States in the West

546

00:24:46,710 --> 00:24:45,460

up from the Christian group and and I

547

00:24:48,570 --> 00:24:46,720

don't think you'd back away from that

548

00:24:50,640 --> 00:24:48,580

either I mean I've listened I've watched

549

00:24:52,470 --> 00:24:50,650

some of you things and it's like through

550

00:24:54,659 --> 00:24:52,480

Jesus only through Jesus only through

551
00:24:56,820 --> 00:24:54,669
Jesus hey that's not what this broader

552
00:24:58,830 --> 00:24:56,830
near-death experience is says it's not

553
00:25:00,570 --> 00:24:58,840
saying consistently and that's one I

554
00:25:02,430 --> 00:25:00,580
think we have to do rely on science and

555
00:25:04,049 --> 00:25:02,440
we say okay what percentage of people

556
00:25:05,970 --> 00:25:04,059
say that that's it what presented people

557
00:25:07,140 --> 00:25:05,980
don't and that we can measure it a bunch

558
00:25:09,150 --> 00:25:07,150
of different ways we can say are they

559
00:25:11,640 --> 00:25:09,160
transformed are they living are they

560
00:25:13,860 --> 00:25:11,650
living the right life and we would have

561
00:25:15,150 --> 00:25:13,870
to conclude and again you know we were

562
00:25:17,010 --> 00:25:15,160
at the beginning of this argue and I

563
00:25:19,890 --> 00:25:17,020

were just chatting about the absurdity

564

00:25:20,370 --> 00:25:19,900

of atheism and how it doesn't make any

565

00:25:22,140 --> 00:25:20,380

sense

566

00:25:23,820 --> 00:25:22,150

and yet it's jammed down our throat and

567

00:25:25,530 --> 00:25:23,830

it's almost like it's programmed in and

568

00:25:27,120 --> 00:25:25,540

you mentioned being in academia and

569

00:25:28,620 --> 00:25:27,130

having it everyone's just kind of in the

570

00:25:30,240 --> 00:25:28,630

club and going oh yeah that's the way it

571

00:25:33,539 --> 00:25:30,250

is we're all meaningless robots we don't

572

00:25:35,100 --> 00:25:33,549

have any our love for life our love for

573

00:25:35,750 --> 00:25:35,110

our family all that's just an illusion

574

00:25:37,730 --> 00:25:35,760

of course

575

00:25:40,430 --> 00:25:37,740

I'm a biological robot aren't you and

576

00:25:42,230 --> 00:25:40,440

everyone nods yeah I am too it's absurd

577

00:25:44,990 --> 00:25:42,240

well I gotta tell you from my

578

00:25:48,760 --> 00:25:45,000

perspective it's equally absurd to say

579

00:25:51,020 --> 00:25:48,770

that all these people that I see who are

580

00:25:53,450 --> 00:25:51,030

spiritually developed who have these

581

00:25:57,530 --> 00:25:53,460

wonderful gifts that they bring of of

582

00:26:00,980 --> 00:25:57,540

love and insights are somehow in some

583

00:26:03,380 --> 00:26:00,990

way lesser because they don't have a

584

00:26:06,740 --> 00:26:03,390

Christian orientation or that they don't

585

00:26:09,700 --> 00:26:06,750

believe that that's necessary I think

586

00:26:12,650 --> 00:26:09,710

that's a fundamental problem with

587

00:26:15,500 --> 00:26:12,660

Christianity that is very hard for

588

00:26:18,050 --> 00:26:15,510

people who are not Christian but are

589

00:26:20,750 --> 00:26:18,060

still spiritually inclined to get past

590

00:26:23,030 --> 00:26:20,760

is this primacy of Christianity that

591

00:26:24,650 --> 00:26:23,040

yeah well you'll talk really nice but at

592

00:26:28,970 --> 00:26:24,660

the end of the day baby it better come

593

00:26:31,040 --> 00:26:28,980

through Jesus or it's not real I got a

594

00:26:33,680 --> 00:26:31,050

couple responses one is I found the

595

00:26:35,780 --> 00:26:33,690

perfect response to all this from Mother

596

00:26:37,040 --> 00:26:35,790

Teresa she was asked by reporters in

597

00:26:39,140 --> 00:26:37,050

India what she thought of all the

598

00:26:41,240 --> 00:26:39,150

religions in India and she said and this

599

00:26:43,430 --> 00:26:41,250

is a quote from other trace I love all

600

00:26:45,710 --> 00:26:43,440

religions but I love my own the best and

601
00:26:48,430 --> 00:26:45,720
I have used that many many many times I

602
00:26:51,410 --> 00:26:48,440
have also tried to practice it so that

603
00:26:54,440 --> 00:26:51,420
for example a couple years ago I was in

604
00:26:58,070 --> 00:26:54,450
China with a absolutely lovely

605
00:27:00,350 --> 00:26:58,080
clearly spiritually developed woman who

606
00:27:02,120 --> 00:27:00,360
said I'm a Buddhist I'm not a Christian

607
00:27:04,850 --> 00:27:02,130
and I'm interested in Christianity and I

608
00:27:08,360 --> 00:27:04,860
said to her you're doing just fine and

609
00:27:11,920 --> 00:27:08,370
I'm not here to change you know I have

610
00:27:14,240 --> 00:27:11,930
found comfort and guidance and truth

611
00:27:19,280 --> 00:27:14,250
I've found everything I've been looking

612
00:27:21,560 --> 00:27:19,290
for in Christianity and I want to share

613
00:27:25,930 --> 00:27:21,570

that with people and I have read

614

00:27:29,240 --> 00:27:25,940

Hinduism Buddhism you know Baha'i faith

615

00:27:32,870 --> 00:27:29,250

I've looked at other religions and I

616

00:27:35,570 --> 00:27:32,880

find some good or a lot of good in many

617

00:27:37,940 --> 00:27:35,580

and all of them and to me there's two

618

00:27:40,340 --> 00:27:37,950

kinds of people in the world one is

619

00:27:42,620 --> 00:27:40,350

people who love religion and the other

620

00:27:44,540 --> 00:27:42,630

group is people who love God I love

621

00:27:46,550 --> 00:27:44,550

people who love God and I don't care

622

00:27:48,850 --> 00:27:46,560

what religion they belong to and I don't

623

00:27:51,549 --> 00:27:48,860

really like people who love real

624

00:27:53,380 --> 00:27:51,559

hmm that's an interest I've never heard

625

00:27:55,530 --> 00:27:53,390

that for I love that that's great it's

626

00:27:59,530 --> 00:27:55,540

not like the like the mother Teresa

627

00:28:03,070 --> 00:27:59,540

quote to and I respect that we can have

628

00:28:06,760 --> 00:28:03,080

preferences it's okay to say I love my

629

00:28:09,520 --> 00:28:06,770

religion best I love how that makes me

630

00:28:12,070 --> 00:28:09,530

feel how that makes me interact with the

631

00:28:16,020 --> 00:28:12,080

world I'm totally in sync with with

632

00:28:18,220 --> 00:28:16,030

those ideas so yeah I'm promoting

633

00:28:20,620 --> 00:28:18,230

Christianity because that's what I know

634

00:28:23,830 --> 00:28:20,630

and that's what works for me and um I

635

00:28:28,600 --> 00:28:23,840

can't really I mean to go around and

636

00:28:30,370 --> 00:28:28,610

promote universal religion because there

637

00:28:32,590 --> 00:28:30,380

is no such thing you know it

638

00:28:35,200 --> 00:28:32,600

there isn't I'm you know I believe that

639

00:28:37,090 --> 00:28:35,210

the the essence of seeking God that is

640

00:28:40,030 --> 00:28:37,100

the universal religion but it's kind of

641

00:28:42,909 --> 00:28:40,040

big you know I meant to the guy that

642

00:28:44,350 --> 00:28:42,919

says love your enemies that's that's the

643

00:28:49,030 --> 00:28:44,360

religion I don't want to promote you

644

00:28:51,580 --> 00:28:49,040

know right so your work then from the

645

00:28:52,840 --> 00:28:51,590

point of having this transformation and

646

00:28:56,919 --> 00:28:52,850

then as you mentioned going through

647

00:28:59,980 --> 00:28:56,929

seminary becoming a pastor has also

648

00:29:02,560 --> 00:28:59,990

again made you somewhat of a lightning

649

00:29:05,980 --> 00:29:02,570

rod I mean you say some things that are

650

00:29:10,240 --> 00:29:05,990

pretty provocative to a lot of people on

651
00:29:13,350 --> 00:29:10,250
you said that God is disappointed in the

652
00:29:15,970 --> 00:29:13,360
United States or disappointed in some

653
00:29:17,770 --> 00:29:15,980
aspects of our culture I mean these are

654
00:29:20,260 --> 00:29:17,780
the kind of things that you understand

655
00:29:24,220 --> 00:29:20,270
that they that they one they rob people

656
00:29:27,130 --> 00:29:24,230
up and number two they go against what a

657
00:29:29,320 --> 00:29:27,140
lot of other spiritual people are saying

658
00:29:31,360 --> 00:29:29,330
in terms of how we're supposed to

659
00:29:34,419 --> 00:29:31,370
understand our relationship with God how

660
00:29:37,960 --> 00:29:34,429
do you feel about being this kind of a

661
00:29:41,020 --> 00:29:37,970
lightning rod in some ways I really have

662
00:29:45,039 --> 00:29:41,030
not expired or made any conscious effort

663
00:29:47,620 --> 00:29:45,049

to be that I am really kind of surprised

664

00:29:50,169 --> 00:29:47,630

when people take issue with me because

665

00:29:53,169 --> 00:29:50,179

anything important that I have to say I

666

00:29:55,360 --> 00:29:53,179

believe is based on my near-death

667

00:29:57,250 --> 00:29:55,370

experience and I have said to people

668

00:29:58,780 --> 00:29:57,260

when they've taken exception we won't if

669

00:30:00,460 --> 00:29:58,790

you don't like it don't you go argue

670

00:30:01,900 --> 00:30:00,470

with Jesus because that's what he told

671

00:30:03,790 --> 00:30:01,910

me I'm just

672

00:30:07,270 --> 00:30:03,800

reporting don't beat up the messenger

673

00:30:09,760 --> 00:30:07,280

and people of course find that very glib

674

00:30:12,760 --> 00:30:09,770

and evasive and it's not at all Jesus

675

00:30:15,490 --> 00:30:12,770

told me things very clearly and

676

00:30:20,110 --> 00:30:15,500

straightforwardly that were very

677

00:30:22,170 --> 00:30:20,120

surprising and apparently upset people I

678

00:30:25,690 --> 00:30:22,180

would like one of the things that I get

679

00:30:27,730 --> 00:30:25,700

taken to task for is about a life on

680

00:30:29,350 --> 00:30:27,740

other planets Jesus and I talked a lot

681

00:30:30,760 --> 00:30:29,360

about life on other planets so what not

682

00:30:32,110 --> 00:30:30,770

only did he affirm it but he showed me

683

00:30:33,820 --> 00:30:32,120

about life in other planets and told me

684

00:30:35,140 --> 00:30:33,830

the role of life on other planets and

685

00:30:37,690 --> 00:30:35,150

our relationship to other planets etc

686

00:30:39,760 --> 00:30:37,700

etc we talked about NZ with a lot of

687

00:30:41,680 --> 00:30:39,770

conversation about and there's so many

688

00:30:43,600 --> 00:30:41,690

people that there's no life on other

689

00:30:46,630 --> 00:30:43,610

planets that's not in the Bible well

690

00:30:47,770 --> 00:30:46,640

Mike countered that is they didn't know

691

00:30:50,800 --> 00:30:47,780

about that then they didn't know about

692

00:30:52,570 --> 00:30:50,810

telephones or TV or automobiles then

693

00:30:55,450 --> 00:30:52,580

either but now we know and

694

00:30:56,740 --> 00:30:55,460

of course science is recently in the

695

00:30:58,540 --> 00:30:56,750

last few years

696

00:31:02,640 --> 00:30:58,550

I'm beginning to discover that this

697

00:31:05,130 --> 00:31:02,650

earth-like planets lots of them actually

698

00:31:08,260 --> 00:31:05,140

millions of them more than they even

699

00:31:11,680 --> 00:31:08,270

imagine there were no in the universe in

700

00:31:14,200 --> 00:31:11,690

there in there being proven by science

701
00:31:18,490 --> 00:31:14,210
of course this life on other planets God

702
00:31:21,250 --> 00:31:18,500
is a creative mad scientist making you

703
00:31:23,140 --> 00:31:21,260
know lots of life all over the universe

704
00:31:26,170 --> 00:31:23,150
sub you know one of the one of the

705
00:31:30,220 --> 00:31:26,180
things that people get upset with said I

706
00:31:32,470 --> 00:31:30,230
I want to affirm people's love and

707
00:31:36,760 --> 00:31:32,480
pursuit of God in whatever culture

708
00:31:39,790 --> 00:31:36,770
they've grown up in and Christians say

709
00:31:41,710 --> 00:31:39,800
we shouldn't do that most o so it's

710
00:31:43,090 --> 00:31:41,720
better to go around beat up people for

711
00:31:46,510 --> 00:31:43,100
their love of God that's crazy

712
00:31:50,160 --> 00:31:46,520
Jesus didn't do that you know Jesus when

713
00:31:53,080 --> 00:31:50,170

he met people from different cultures

714

00:31:54,760 --> 00:31:53,090

loved them and affirmed them where they

715

00:31:57,720 --> 00:31:54,770

were for example a syrophenician woman

716

00:32:02,230 --> 00:31:57,730

a Samaritan woman the Roman centurion

717

00:32:03,970 --> 00:32:02,240

and he he certainly loved and affirmed

718

00:32:07,000 --> 00:32:03,980

people in his sculpture who were

719

00:32:08,710 --> 00:32:07,010

condemned to death for example the woman

720

00:32:11,380 --> 00:32:08,720

caught in adultery the thief on the

721

00:32:14,710 --> 00:32:11,390

cross I mean Jesus loved and affirmed

722

00:32:15,700 --> 00:32:14,720

people where they were at and said

723

00:32:17,500 --> 00:32:15,710

you've got to do this you

724

00:32:21,159 --> 00:32:17,510

we better subscribe to this set of

725

00:32:24,669 --> 00:32:21,169

dogmas and I might consider you my this

726

00:32:29,320 --> 00:32:24,679

is this judgmental nature of Christians

727

00:32:31,240 --> 00:32:29,330

and this need to make people conform to

728

00:32:34,450 --> 00:32:31,250

their understanding before they can

729

00:32:38,110 --> 00:32:34,460

accept them is contrary to the example

730

00:32:39,789 --> 00:32:38,120

of what I see in the Gospels so it's

731

00:32:43,750 --> 00:32:39,799

interesting it's also interesting what

732

00:32:46,450 --> 00:32:43,760

you say about the existence of conscious

733

00:32:48,639 --> 00:32:46,460

beings on other planets because I've

734

00:32:51,100 --> 00:32:48,649

I've heard that from other near-death

735

00:32:53,649 --> 00:32:51,110

experience or is independently just

736

00:32:55,570 --> 00:32:53,659

saying that they've brought that back so

737

00:32:57,190 --> 00:32:55,580

it's interesting when we can kind of

738

00:33:00,340 --> 00:32:57,200

make those connections and say wow that

739

00:33:02,230 --> 00:33:00,350

matches up someone else's but not

740

00:33:04,659 --> 00:33:02,240

everything matches up from everyone's

741

00:33:06,820 --> 00:33:04,669

near-death experience or a spiritual

742

00:33:09,430 --> 00:33:06,830

experience and that's I guess part of

743

00:33:11,740 --> 00:33:09,440

the the challenge and the fun of why

744

00:33:15,039 --> 00:33:11,750

we're here trying to figure all this out

745

00:33:17,590 --> 00:33:15,049

so tell me this pastors from where do

746

00:33:20,320 --> 00:33:17,600

you see I want to say I guess your

747

00:33:22,149 --> 00:33:20,330

ministry or your work with this where is

748

00:33:24,690 --> 00:33:22,159

it taking you now you've been at it for

749

00:33:27,430 --> 00:33:24,700

a while where do you go from here well

750

00:33:31,810 --> 00:33:27,440

honestly I'm just totally winging it I

751

00:33:36,669 --> 00:33:31,820

don't know what I am about to put two

752

00:33:38,950 --> 00:33:36,679

books on Amazon as ebooks because I've

753

00:33:41,350 --> 00:33:38,960

been working on these two books for a

754

00:33:43,510 --> 00:33:41,360

few years and just felt that that

755

00:33:45,310 --> 00:33:43,520

wouldn't make them the least expensive

756

00:33:46,690 --> 00:33:45,320

and most accessible going that route so

757

00:33:48,310 --> 00:33:46,700

hopefully that's going to happen in a

758

00:33:50,279 --> 00:33:48,320

week or two tell us a little bit about

759

00:33:53,169 --> 00:33:50,289

what you're putting out there in Amazon

760

00:33:57,190 --> 00:33:53,179

one is a novel that I wrote to try and

761

00:33:59,230 --> 00:33:57,200

illustrate how people in the struggles

762

00:34:02,380 --> 00:33:59,240

and difficulties of life can find

763

00:34:04,090 --> 00:34:02,390

solutions through the help of faith

764

00:34:08,649 --> 00:34:04,100

community and through the help of God

765

00:34:11,440 --> 00:34:08,659

that we can overcome every difficulty so

766

00:34:13,889 --> 00:34:11,450

that and I wrote that as a novel and all

767

00:34:17,139 --> 00:34:13,899

the experiences in the book are actually

768

00:34:19,359 --> 00:34:17,149

based on factual experiences mine and

769

00:34:21,490 --> 00:34:19,369

other people's that I've done so it's

770

00:34:23,550 --> 00:34:21,500

really a book of like small miracles and

771

00:34:26,079 --> 00:34:23,560

big miracles but trying to make it as

772

00:34:29,440 --> 00:34:26,089

compelling and realistic as possible the

773

00:34:33,099 --> 00:34:29,450

other book is in my book

774

00:34:35,050 --> 00:34:33,109

to death I wrote from I wrote it begins

775

00:34:37,300 --> 00:34:35,060

with my near-death experience and and

776

00:34:39,250 --> 00:34:37,310

then goes through some of the things

777

00:34:42,280 --> 00:34:39,260

that happened afterwards and I wrote

778

00:34:44,649 --> 00:34:42,290

that book to a as broad an audience as

779

00:34:48,069 --> 00:34:44,659

possible so it's not a very Christian

780

00:34:51,339 --> 00:34:48,079

book I decided that I needed to put a

781

00:34:54,419 --> 00:34:51,349

book out there that one gave a lot of

782

00:34:57,790 --> 00:34:54,429

background personal background and also

783

00:35:00,160 --> 00:34:57,800

talked about how it developed in my

784

00:35:03,790 --> 00:35:00,170

Christian or standing and furthermore

785

00:35:06,190 --> 00:35:03,800

how I tried to successfully an

786

00:35:11,020 --> 00:35:06,200

unsuccessful to lift out in my life so

787

00:35:13,240 --> 00:35:11,030

that you know this a lot about the hills

788

00:35:16,870 --> 00:35:13,250

and valleys of pastoring churches and

789

00:35:18,670 --> 00:35:16,880

family life and you know divorce and

790

00:35:20,470 --> 00:35:18,680

remarriage and stuff like that sure

791

00:35:23,250 --> 00:35:20,480

degree so it's it's very personal and

792

00:35:26,050 --> 00:35:23,260

I've tried to become really transparent

793

00:35:28,030 --> 00:35:26,060

by writing that I'm sort of spiritual

794

00:35:29,680 --> 00:35:28,040

journey down I'm working on a third book

795

00:35:32,200 --> 00:35:29,690

I want to write a book I am writing a

796

00:35:34,000 --> 00:35:32,210

book about Jesus but I don't know when

797

00:35:37,510 --> 00:35:34,010

I'll ever get that time because every

798

00:35:40,750 --> 00:35:37,520

time I read another book about Jesus I

799

00:35:42,880 --> 00:35:40,760

get more insights from other people just

800

00:35:46,620 --> 00:35:42,890

keep growing in my understanding

801
00:35:48,940 --> 00:35:46,630
appreciation for who and what Jesus is

802
00:35:52,559 --> 00:35:48,950
you know one thing you just touched on

803
00:35:57,069 --> 00:35:52,569
there is this aspect of the near-death

804
00:35:58,780 --> 00:35:57,079
experience or continuing life after the

805
00:36:01,599 --> 00:35:58,790
experience you know and I remember

806
00:36:03,430 --> 00:36:01,609
interviewing PMH Atwater who is a

807
00:36:06,579 --> 00:36:03,440
near-death experience researcher who's

808
00:36:08,530 --> 00:36:06,589
really looked at that quite extensively

809
00:36:11,020 --> 00:36:08,540
and maybe you want to talk about a

810
00:36:12,390 --> 00:36:11,030
little bit about that that just because

811
00:36:15,400 --> 00:36:12,400
you've had a near-death experience

812
00:36:17,710 --> 00:36:15,410
doesn't mean all your problems are over

813
00:36:19,300 --> 00:36:17,720

just like if you've had some kind of

814

00:36:21,010 --> 00:36:19,310

religious conversion doesn't mean all

815

00:36:23,559 --> 00:36:21,020

your problems are over as a matter of

816

00:36:26,109 --> 00:36:23,569

fact it's with the near-death experience

817

00:36:29,260 --> 00:36:26,119

it sometimes can be more upsetting

818

00:36:32,950 --> 00:36:29,270

because it puts you at odds with a lot

819

00:36:35,230 --> 00:36:32,960

of your former friends and family

820

00:36:38,230 --> 00:36:35,240

members but also just puts you up at

821

00:36:41,380 --> 00:36:38,240

odds with your former life so what's

822

00:36:42,210 --> 00:36:41,390

that like well I guess there are several

823

00:36:43,860 --> 00:36:42,220

and

824

00:36:46,080 --> 00:36:43,870

big disappointments that I had to

825

00:36:50,220 --> 00:36:46,090

struggle with one is that after a

826
00:36:52,140 --> 00:36:50,230
near-death experience I wrongly assumed

827
00:36:55,910 --> 00:36:52,150
that I was going to be a saint and that

828
00:36:58,620 --> 00:36:55,920
I would not have temper anger lust

829
00:37:00,660 --> 00:36:58,630
delusions you know make mistakes at all

830
00:37:03,120 --> 00:37:00,670
that I would be somehow I had been

831
00:37:05,820 --> 00:37:03,130
elevated to the superior person and to

832
00:37:08,760 --> 00:37:05,830
my horror I found out that that wasn't

833
00:37:11,010 --> 00:37:08,770
the case at all that I was right just

834
00:37:13,590 --> 00:37:11,020
another human being no better or worse

835
00:37:15,600 --> 00:37:13,600
than anybody else death Howard still oh

836
00:37:18,960 --> 00:37:15,610
yeah so that was a shocker the other one

837
00:37:22,560 --> 00:37:18,970
was is that when I came back because of

838
00:37:25,410 --> 00:37:22,570

the physical problems that I was having

839

00:37:28,250 --> 00:37:25,420

which were life-threatening and went on

840

00:37:33,660 --> 00:37:28,260

for very long time and because of all

841

00:37:35,640 --> 00:37:33,670

losses of friends and family there was a

842

00:37:38,280 --> 00:37:35,650

large apartment said this this just

843

00:37:41,160 --> 00:37:38,290

isn't worth it I just assumed die and go

844

00:37:45,590 --> 00:37:41,170

to heaven and get out of here and it was

845

00:37:49,110 --> 00:37:45,600

very difficult to overcome the desire to

846

00:37:50,640 --> 00:37:49,120

detach myself from world for example one

847

00:37:53,600 --> 00:37:50,650

of the solutions I found was I decided

848

00:37:56,490 --> 00:37:53,610

that it would be really good to become a

849

00:37:59,160 --> 00:37:56,500

contemplative monk so I went to a

850

00:38:01,830 --> 00:37:59,170

monastery with the intention of becoming

851
00:38:03,060 --> 00:38:01,840
a monk and of course they wouldn't have

852
00:38:04,230 --> 00:38:03,070
anything to do with me one and they

853
00:38:07,850 --> 00:38:04,240
found out that was married and had

854
00:38:12,000 --> 00:38:07,860
children like go home what are you doing

855
00:38:16,050 --> 00:38:12,010
does another big disappointment so

856
00:38:18,930 --> 00:38:16,060
trying to Missoula near-death experience

857
00:38:21,750 --> 00:38:18,940
our sensibilities our compassion is

858
00:38:23,580 --> 00:38:21,760
greatly increased and when one sees

859
00:38:25,620 --> 00:38:23,590
what's going on in the world both in the

860
00:38:28,380 --> 00:38:25,630
micro level of our personal

861
00:38:31,410 --> 00:38:28,390
relationships and in the macro level of

862
00:38:34,230 --> 00:38:31,420
what's happening in the world it can be

863
00:38:37,160 --> 00:38:34,240

quite discouraging and that's a constant

864

00:38:41,430 --> 00:38:37,170

battle to not let that discouragement

865

00:38:45,300 --> 00:38:41,440

overwhelm you and become hopeless I have

866

00:38:48,750 --> 00:38:45,310

tried to stay in the stay in the world

867

00:38:51,300 --> 00:38:48,760

and be an active participate in the

868

00:38:54,030 --> 00:38:51,310

world and it has it has and it's really

869

00:38:55,990 --> 00:38:54,040

discouraging that my brothers and

870

00:39:00,520 --> 00:38:56,000

sisters in the Christian faith

871

00:39:02,680 --> 00:39:00,530

I want to tear me apart when I thought

872

00:39:04,540 --> 00:39:02,690

we were all on the same page promoting

873

00:39:07,270 --> 00:39:04,550

the same stuff but apparently I'm not

874

00:39:08,710 --> 00:39:07,280

good enough for them sounds like an

875

00:39:11,620 --> 00:39:08,720

important work that you're doing

876

00:39:13,600 --> 00:39:11,630

I appreciate the book my descent into

877

00:39:15,520 --> 00:39:13,610

death and we're certainly going to look

878

00:39:16,900 --> 00:39:15,530

forward for these couple of new books

879

00:39:19,680 --> 00:39:16,910

that you're going to be putting out on

880

00:39:22,540 --> 00:39:19,690

Amazon we'll keep an eye out for those

881

00:39:24,580 --> 00:39:22,550

thanks so much for joining me today our

882

00:39:27,670 --> 00:39:24,590

guest has been pastor Howard storm

883

00:39:29,850 --> 00:39:27,680

author of my descent into death thank

884

00:39:32,230 --> 00:39:29,860

you thank you Alex it was a pleasure

885

00:39:34,450 --> 00:39:32,240

thanks again to Howard Stern for joining

886

00:39:36,880 --> 00:39:34,460

me today on skeptic oh I guess I'd have

887

00:39:40,210 --> 00:39:36,890

one question to tee up from this

888

00:39:44,970 --> 00:39:40,220

interview and that is how much do you

889

00:39:47,200 --> 00:39:44,980

trust your experience when it comes to

890

00:39:50,680 --> 00:39:47,210

spiritual matters spiritual

891

00:39:53,280 --> 00:39:50,690

transformation spiritual decisions for

892

00:39:56,050 --> 00:39:53,290

me that turns out to be a lot bigger

893

00:39:58,960 --> 00:39:56,060

question than it might at first seem I

894

00:40:02,380 --> 00:39:58,970

mean I think we're in a position now to

895

00:40:06,070 --> 00:40:02,390

be a little bit more discerning of how

896

00:40:09,010 --> 00:40:06,080

our experience might fit into the

897

00:40:12,310 --> 00:40:09,020

broader phenomena that's being reported

898

00:40:15,100 --> 00:40:12,320

by a bunch of other people and I happen

899

00:40:16,990 --> 00:40:15,110

to think that's very important but I

900

00:40:19,300 --> 00:40:17,000

want to hear your opinion and I hope you

901
00:40:21,580 --> 00:40:19,310
share with me there are several ways to

902
00:40:26,380 --> 00:40:21,590
do so they're all available through the

903
00:40:29,140 --> 00:40:26,390
Skeptical website at ske pti k Oh calm

904
00:40:31,660 --> 00:40:29,150
you can bounce over to reforms drop me

905
00:40:33,790 --> 00:40:31,670
an email or leave a comment right there

906
00:40:35,680 --> 00:40:33,800
on the website while you're there of

907
00:40:38,320 --> 00:40:35,690
course be sure to check out all our

908
00:40:40,690 --> 00:40:38,330
previous shows you can download them

909
00:40:44,560 --> 00:40:40,700
from the website or you can subscribe

910
00:40:47,290 --> 00:40:44,570
through iTunes or other podcast grabbing

911
00:40:49,840 --> 00:40:47,300
kind of thingies I hope you'll do that I

912
00:40:52,120 --> 00:40:49,850
have a number of interesting shows

913
00:40:53,770 --> 00:40:52,130

coming up they're kind of piling up and

914

00:40:55,900 --> 00:40:53,780

I'm tempted to get them out more than

915

00:40:57,940 --> 00:40:55,910

once every two weeks but we'll have to

916

00:41:00,010 --> 00:40:57,950

see how scheduling and everything else

917

00:41:02,800 --> 00:41:00,020

goes but I have some good ones in there

918

00:41:04,930 --> 00:41:02,810

and some more good ones to come many

919

00:41:06,730 --> 00:41:04,940

many interesting topics to cover I'll

920

00:41:09,609 --> 00:41:06,740

never get around to covering them all

921

00:41:12,460 --> 00:41:09,619

but I'm just going to continue to follow

922

00:41:14,380 --> 00:41:12,470

and also follow your suggestions more

923

00:41:16,960 --> 00:41:14,390

and more these shows are coming from you

924

00:41:19,029 --> 00:41:16,970

skeptical listeners suggesting where we

925

00:41:21,670 --> 00:41:19,039

might go and that's really a neat part

926

00:41:23,799 --> 00:41:21,680

of this process as well so that's going