

FINAL cut - Ep. 11: Sex, Gender + "God"

McCall: [00:00:00] (Eunuchs, Androgyny, Gender Roles, Gender bending, Mother's Instinct, Women in Faith, Female Fault Creation Myths, Eve to blame for fall, feminine shame - Matthew 19:12, Galatians 4:19, Genesis 1:27, 2:22, 3:15, and 3:16.)

When I was in school, studying sex and gender roles, one of the ideas, that absolutely fascinated me, was how we, as humans, somehow went from a species that *revered* and *worshipped* woman, and cycles, and birth... to a single male deity and even a Trinity of male figures, God, the father, Jesus, the son and the Holy spirit.

[00:00:38] My first inkling that something was wrong with that story, for me personally, was when I recalled the word 'Ruach'. Which I learned when I went to school, at a synagogue, growing up. Ruach, which means spirit or breath, is a very feminine word. Just like Sophia, which means wisdom.

[00:01:05] So I started researching and came across a woman named Karen Garst. She's written several books on how humanity went from goddess to God. We somehow eliminated the feminine divine. So I thought this podcast would be a perfect excuse and opportunity to find her again.

[00:01:29] Now let me tell you, I really don't adhere to the idea that a God that could restore me to sanity, as it says in the 12 steps... could possibly be contained by either a name or a gender. If anything, the God of my understanding is both, and neither. So today on the show, we're going to explore gender, gender expression, gender roles, and faith.

[00:02:04] **INTRODUCTIONS** [00:02:04]

[00:02:04] Hello, I'm McCall.

[00:02:11] **Cassidy:** [00:02:11] I'm Cassidy

[00:02:12] **McCall:** [00:02:12] We're both in 12 step programs

[00:02:14] **Cassidy:** [00:02:14] That ask us to give our lives and wills

[00:02:17] **McCall:** [00:02:17] over to the care of God as we understand Him

[00:02:20] **Cassidy:** [00:02:20] God as we *understand* him"?

[00:02:23] **McCall:** [00:02:23] But we don't - understand. I mean,

[00:02:25] **Cassidy:** [00:02:25] In fact, our understanding has always been that God and religion are tools of the oppressors,

[00:02:30] **McCall:** [00:02:30] that reinforce the structure we'd rather work towards dismantling,

[00:02:34] **Cassidy:** [00:02:34] And those oppressors, admittedly and uncomfortably are oftentimes our white male counterparts

[00:02:41] **McCall:** [00:02:41] Who deepen the division and inequality

[00:02:43] **Cassidy:** [00:02:43] of race

[00:02:45] **McCall:** [00:02:45] sexuality

[00:02:45] **Cassidy:** [00:02:45] and gender expression,

[00:02:47] **McCall:** [00:02:47] Our understanding has served to shove all higher powers into a constructed box,

[00:02:53] **Cassidy:** [00:02:53] or maybe it actually boxed *us* in.

[00:02:56] **McCall:** [00:02:56] But, either way

[00:02:57] **Cassidy:** [00:02:57] we are ready

[00:02:58] **McCall:** [00:02:58] To unwrap our preconceived prejudice

[00:03:01] **Cassidy:** [00:03:01] Toward God

[00:03:01] **McCall:** [00:03:01] and religion

[00:03:03] **Cassidy:** [00:03:03] to take off the boxing gloves

[00:03:04] **McCall:** [00:03:04] (Pun intended)

[00:03:06] **Cassidy:** [00:03:06] and step outside the ring.

[00:03:08] **McCall:** [00:03:08] of Comfort

[00:03:09] **Cassidy:** [00:03:09] The past

[00:03:10] **McCall:** [00:03:10] old traumas

[00:03:11] **Cassidy:** [00:03:11] fake news

[00:03:12] **McCall:** [00:03:12] church hurt

[00:03:13] **Cassidy:** [00:03:13] alter calls gone awry

[00:03:14] **McCall:** [00:03:14] And attempt
[00:03:16] **Cassidy:** [00:03:16] To maybe begin.
[00:03:17] **McCall:** [00:03:17] A lifelong journey
[00:03:19] **BOTH (McCall + Cass):** [00:03:19] of UnBoxing "God".
[00:03:20] (HAHAHAHA)

[00:03:20] **McCall:** [00:03:25] What do religions think about different genders? Is it culture or is it religion, that has somehow put us in this binary mindset? For me, again, it comes back to that shift from goddess to God, where we start seeing dichotomies of good and evil, instead of everything just being part of natural cycles and the way of nature.

[00:03:52] When human beings began writing down stories to explain creation and death, life and pain, I believe we did a great disservice to a power greater than ourselves, by somehow, in some way, trapping divine source energy, in a human shaped box, with human shaped parts, and emotions, and reactions.

[00:04:25] The God of my understanding is so far beyond that, that it's hard to conceive for me. However, I like doing the hard work on this show with you guys. So I thought I would explore how other people imagine God.

[00:04:43] And how society's views of God and gender put human beings into boxes as well.

[00:04:52] A simple Google

McCALL: GENDER VARIETY [00:04:53] search will show you that there are more gender identities than you think - we're all obviously familiar with the traditional male female. Even transgender. You've been hearing more about non binary perhaps, or gender neutral, agender, or Pangender. How about gender queer?

[00:05:18] But there are also things such as two spirit or the third gender, and then there's all of the above. None. Or a combination of all of 'em.

[00:05:31] In my opinion and from my experience, traditional religions and religious texts, tend to enforce gender normativity. And, I'm not a big fan of

CASS & McCALL: ANDROGYNY + BLAKE [00:05:43] normativity.

[00:05:44] **Cassidy:** [00:05:44] yeah, I'm not a big fan of normativity either. That's why I was really glad that we got to speak with Blake this week. I think this conversation was really enlightening for me just because I don't have a lot of experience delving into Judaism. So to hear their experience and the things that they were taught growing up, was really powerful just for me to make sense of my own possibly creation story. The one that I've been denying for so long.

[00:06:13] **McCall:** [00:06:13] I had very little exposure to the idea that Adam was an androgynous person, but it makes a lot of sense. Doesn't it? That God created Adam in God's image and God was a threesome. Right?

[00:06:29] **Cassidy:** [00:06:29] Yeah, it, it makes perfect sense... now, now that I've, I've heard that.

[00:06:34] **McCall:** [00:06:34] And that the androgynous Adam, that God created, was lonely. And that is why another human was made, who exhibited as much of God as Adam did... with different pieces parts.

[00:06:51] **Cassidy:** [00:06:51] yeah, a counterpart.

[00:06:53] **McCall:** [00:06:53] Right. You know, I was thinking, as we've been talking about Jung and kind of the evolution of us as individuals, Jung theorized that first, we spend a good chunk of our lives, building a mask and a shadow self. Then we spend the next part of our lives, integrating those two - with individuation. And it is not until that aspect of ourselves has been fully integrated, that we really start to address our anima and animus - our male and female parts. And I've read recently a lot of scholars who talk about the goal of humanity is that joining of pieces parts, so that we can become more like God... as much like God, in human, as we can. Proposing that even Jesus was non-gendered.

[00:07:52] All throughout scripture, there is talk of... the most obvious one to me is Galatians 3:28, when Paul says, "there is neither male nor female." In Galatians 4:19, God refers to themselves as a woman in labor. All throughout the Bible. God is referred to as a nursing mother, like with breasts even. And a nurse weaning a child, in first Thessalonians... Corinthians talks about the weaning mother. But the one that really stands out to me in the Bible, is Matthew 19:12. There isn't a lot of Christian discussion into Matthew 19:12, but it says: "...for there are Eunuchs who were born that way, and there are Eunuchs who have been made Eunuchs by others. And there are those who chose to live like Eunuchs, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

[00:08:54] That blows my mind because the idea of a Eunuch being a sexless person, in some way, beyond sex and gender. Throughout history, Eunuchs have been servants to... Queens, for instance, I immediately, of course, think of popular culture and I think of game of Thrones.

[00:09:14] **Cassidy:** [00:09:14] I knew you were going to say that.

[00:09:15] **McCall:** [00:09:15] And I do, I do, I think of Daenerys Targaryen, I can't help, but - the idea of Eunuchs being in service, and not a sexual threat to the family, makes a lot of sense. But it also, from a Christian standpoint, or a religious, or spiritual standpoint, the idea of unification of male and female, in spiritual sense, being "ultimate", being even better than the separation... resonates with me.

[00:09:46] **Cassidy:** [00:09:46] Closer to God, perhaps?

[00:09:48] **McCall:** [00:09:48] More like...? More "in their image" because God really in few religions is singular.

[00:09:55] So, that's what we're going to talk about today. And Blake is an androgynous identifying person. They were raised in the Jewish faith and they are still very much a part of the Jewish community in their area.

BLAKE + ANDROGYNOUS ADAM

I do want to ask about the creation story... What were you taught? And what do you believe?

[00:10:22] **AndrogBlake:** [00:10:22] So there's the old myths, the old legends... We know about the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve - Adam, the first human. Before that, there's also the creation of the universe. It takes place over six days. And there's a hierarchy that gets established in that story, of what's important. What needs to exist before other things can exist. And at the very end, we appear, we're here - as humans.

[00:10:54] In those texts, and this is where people have tried - that are not Jewish - have told me one story, and when I listened to my Jewish teachings, they tell us a slightly different version... but that first human was androgynous.

According to what I've been told and what I read when I read those words, the first human was male and female simultaneous, and then that person was split. And there's some speculation as to why that's relevant, but maybe one reason why it's to make us as individuals, maybe a little incomplete. So that we need to depend on each other so that we have to rely on one another. And some people might say, this is a little cruel. Why would a benevolent kind all creating, being, do this to us? Why would this being cause harm to us if they have only love? But, we might not know what love is, if we didn't know, that we needed one another. And that's a lesson that I come away from with the origin story

[00:11:45] **McCall:** [00:11:45] It's astonishing to me, how many people in this country don't realize the first five books of Christian and Hebrew texts are the same five books.

[00:11:59] **AndrogBlake:** [00:11:59] Hm. There's some slight differences there when I read them in Hebrew, again, that first human is androgynous. And even though we talk about God as a masculine, that's really just a product of the way the patriarchal system regards masculine as superior. Which is not something that my family recognizes today.

[00:12:19] Thousands of years later, my family's rabbi - she's a woman, and the Cantor, she's a woman as well. These were prominent important figures and a long time ago that would not have been an acceptable thing.

[00:12:34] And these very strong - my grandmother, my mother, my rabbi, all women - these are very strong, important people in the community, in my life. And they would mix God and goddess. And they would say things that would basically make it very clear that when we say God is a man, that's our own vanity. It's actually the vanity of men to make God into *their* own image. And that's not something I say to a lot of people, actually, cause I just don't want to get into that amount of confrontation.

[00:13:12] McCall: "Thanks God, for Blaming Eve - Not" by Karen Garst

[00:13:12]

[00:13:12] **McCall:** [00:13:12] Remember when I told you about Karen Garst? She has a website called '*Faithless Feminist*'. This year, in April of 2020, she published an essay called 'Thanks God, for blaming Eve... Not.' And when I read it, I felt so seen. Because this is very much how I felt. I'm just going to read it to you. Word for word.

[00:13:41] "Dressed in my cotton print dress with two scratchy Kremfords underneath, I hold my mother's hand, as we enter the gathering area for Sunday school classes. After an opening song, we split up by age group cautiously. I enter the first grade room. Fortunately, I know at least three kids. Thank heaven! The teacher, Mrs. Johnson, informs us, that each week, we'll learn about a different story from the Bible. I'm just learning to read at public school and

love it when someone reads out loud to me. Sunday school sounds like it's going to be great. I shouldn't have worried so much.

[00:14:24] Both my mother and father have shared some stories from the Bible with me, and I've seen my father open his black leather Bible every night, but coming to church seems different. I've been to church before and everyone is quiet when the pastor speaks. I don't understand much of what he says, so I hope Mrs. Johnson will be easier to understand, just like my teacher at school. After she asks us to calm down and sit quietly in our chairs, Mrs. Johnson explains the story of Adam and Eve. She skips over the creation of the earth, and goes right to the garden part. Eve eats from the forbidden tree of knowledge. And, boy, is God mad! She and Adam get kicked out of the garden of Eden and now Eve becomes the cause of all the sin in the world.

[00:15:18] All right. I don't remember this episode exactly, but it probably happened in a similar manner. There I was, an eager young girl, ready to learn about my faith. And what was I hit with? Women are the cause of all evil. Seriously?

[00:15:39] It's hard to underestimate the role that the story of Eve has played in the treatment of women in Western civilization. She comes to symbolize all that's wrong with humankind. She represents disobedience, pride, arrogance, lust, sin - while previous patriarchal societies, even those with female deities, had treated women as subordinate to men, in terms of property ownership, the right to choose a spouse, and access to education. The portrayal of Eve brings that subordination to a whole new level. Prior to Israelite monotheism, women weren't always portrayed as the epitome of evil. Carved clay figurines, dating from 25,000 years ago, may have symbolized the awe and mystery of new birth. These figurines, mostly feminine, often with pregnant torsos and pendulent breasts, were found in the living spaces of our Hunter-gatherer ancestors. These figurines represented, in all likelihood, the regenerative power of the female, who was responsible for giving birth to new members of the clan. These clay representations were probably used also to promote the fertility of the land, when the tribes moved from hunting and gathering to simple agriculture. Referred to as clay pillars, similar female figurines have been found extensively in the area of the Israelite settlement in Canaan, dating to the seventh and eighth centuries BCE . Virtually all religions prior to Judaism also had women in them. Greeks had Aphrodite and Artemis, Romans had Minerva and Venus and Diana.

[00:17:36] The Babylonians had Ishtar and Ninlil, just to name a few. Even the Canaanites worshiped at the goddess, Ashira, along with the male gods, Ba'al and El. But this new Israelite religion, the first strictly monotheist religion, is gonna be different. No women, just one God, for now... and He is male.

[00:18:03] But let's get back to Eve. Banishment from paradise isn't the only punishment for Eve, in addition to putting her under the rule of man from this time forward, God tells Eve that she will also endure great pain in childbirth. Instead of venerating fertility as other religions had done, the Bible equates it with sin.

[00:18:28] In the 1800s, this passage about punishment of pain for women, was used by clerics to attempt to deny women any anesthesia during childbirth. What omniscient, omnipotent God would make the wonderful and amazing event of giving birth a painful punishment?

[00:18:50] But, how about the Christians? Did they carry this story forward? As the followers of Jesus were Jewish, they knew the Tanakh well. Tanakh became what Christians now called the old Testament. Even though Eve is not mentioned anywhere outside of Genesis, early Christian leaders, weren't going to let go of that imagery or the opportunity to further subordinate women - in the priesthood, in her role in the new church, and in virtually all aspects of their lives.

[00:19:22] Tertullian, a prolific Christian writer, was just one of many, to expand upon the biblical account of Eve, to further denigrate women. "And do you not know that you are Eve? God's sentence hangs still over all your sex and his punishment weighs down upon you. You are the devil's gateway. You are she, who first violated the forbidden tree, and broke the law of God. It was you who coaxed your way around him , who the devil had not the force to attack. With what ease you shattered that image of God: man. Because of the death you merited, even the son of God had to die. Woman, you are the gate to hell!"

[00:20:20] Yeah.

[00:20:22] Arenius, Bishop of Lyons and Gall - that's modern day France - in the second century, summed it up well. "Eve, having become disobedient was made the cause of death, both for herself and for all the human race."

[00:20:41] Epiphanius, bishop of Solomus in Cyprus, noted ironically: "...for Eve was called mother of the living. After she had heard the words 'you are dust and to dust, you shall return'. In other words, after the fall. It seems odd that

she should receive such a grand title, after having sinned. Looking at the matter from the outside one notices that Eve is the one from whom the entire human race took its origin on this earth."

[00:21:17] 19th century atheist, and women suffragette, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, commented on the pivotal role this story has played in the subordination of women. Take the snake, the fruit tree, and the woman from the Tableau. And we have no fall. Nor frowning judge. No Inferno. No everlasting punishment. Hence, no need for a savior. Thus, the bottom falls out of the whole Christian theology. Here's the reason why in all the biblical researches, and high criticisms, the scholars never touch the position of women.

[00:22:04] What has been the legacy of this portrayal of the first woman? Women in countries across the globe are still denied access to education, and other rights, based in part on this story. Remember, that each of the three monotheist religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all support the books of the old Testament as divinely inspired. Even in the US, access to education - for girls - was not commonplace until the late 19th century.

[00:22:37] And that still depended on race and class distinctions. Today, the most vocal opponents to women's rights to birth control, abortion, and the passage of the equal rights amendment use the Bible as justification for their views. Maybe it's time for women to say no to religion, and to recognize the Judeo-Christian tradition, not as divinely inspired, but as a means for men to dominate women - for men to secure property and power and for women to keep their place in the private sphere. In the Western world today, women have an opportunity to be equal to men - in the workplace, in the public sphere, and at home. Times have changed. As women, let's acknowledge the role religion played in the patriarchal society of old.

[00:23:34] As we work to create a society that values men and women equally, let's acknowledge it's time to let go of religion. As Sonja Johnson said, after her excommunication by the Mormon church in 1979, "One of my favorite fantasies, is that one Sunday, not one single woman, in any country of the world, will go to church. If women simply stop giving our time and energy to the institutions that oppress, they would have to cease to do so." And that was written by Karen Garst - July 27th, 2015.

[00:24:22] **McCALL: GENDER DISCREPANCY IN CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

[00:24:22]

[00:24:22] The ironic thing about it though... it is exactly women who DO go to church. I mean, the difference between male and female attendance at religious services, specifically in church services, is extraordinary. The gender gap, in religion around the world, shows, without any doubt, that women are generally more religious than men are - particularly amongst Christians. There is a gender difference in attendance at houses of worship. That's statistically proven.

[00:24:57] Standard lists of history's most influential religious leaders among them. Abraham Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, The Buddha... tend to be predominantly, if not exclusively, male. Many religious groups, including Roman Catholics and Orthodox Jews, allow only men to be clergy. While others, including some denominations in the evangelical Protestant tradition, have lifted that restriction, only in recent decades. Yet, it often appears that the ranks of the faithful are dominated by women.

[00:25:34] **HEATHER** [00:25:34]

[00:25:34] **Cassidy:** [00:25:34] Needless to say, coming across this information led McCall and me to more questions, not answers. Luckily for us, we know Heather - a dear mutual friend, who just happens to know all about this subject. Heather's taught Gender and Ethnic Studies at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, plus multiple courses of Intro to Women's Studies. And she has a law degree! So we asked her to fill us in on why, historically, women just haven't been in the picture - the picture of church power, that is. Plus, why women seem to dominate worship service attendance too. Here's Heather to tell us more.

[00:26:16] **Heather:** [00:26:16] One of the important things that happened when the Abrahamic religions took over is they recognize the goddess, as the female divine, as dangerous. And part of the reason why they were trying to squash that out was trying to squash out power in women. And what did they do?

[00:26:37] They killed the midwives. They were druids, and pagans, and Wiccans... not as we view them today, but in their society, they're powerful. People go to them - the ones who are communicating with the goddesses, who

communicate with the earth. And for Christianity, when you wanted to teach a different method, that's something that you want to wipe out.

[00:26:59] In order to get the Abrahamic religions to spread, you had to wipe out that. And in Western culture, that's what happened. And in wiping out the female divine, they also wiped out women having really any power, really any influence, at all. And it's not to say that maybe women had a lot before, but, under the Abrahamic religions, it's taken away completely. It's really interesting how women lose power within the Abrahamic religions when women are responsible for Christianity surviving. Had it not been for women, there's a very good chance that Christianity would just not be around now.

[00:27:45] What I mean, is not even when we're talking Mary had Jesus, and Mary Magdalene and Mary helped Jesus. After Jesus was killed the apostles went into hiding... because nobody else wanted to be nailed to a cross. We look at these and we have to understand that they, with other women, were then continuing to teach what Jesus was teaching in secret... and they were teaching it to other women. And these women were teaching it to their children. And if you think about it, just in our own modern society, mom's the one who's usually getting the kids up on Sunday morning and making everybody go to church. Mom's the ones planning the baptisms, and planning confirmations. And mom's the ones who are making the bar and bat mitzvahs. The women and mothers are the ones who teach their children and usually lead the religion within their own homes.

[00:28:39] And a big part of this also, when you look at the 200 years between when Jesus died and we had Christianity start becoming an official religion, with Constantine, what we see is that women were holding secret meetings.

[00:28:52] So, as Christianity grew, as people were teaching Christianity, an important thing that came out of it is this thing called **domestic proselytization**. So there had to be something that was speaking to them, their inner divine, their inner religion, their inner belief. And domestic proselytization was basically... you go to these towns, and go to the officials and the men who are "no we're followers Roman gods", and what they were doing was they were going to the women and they were teaching the women and talking to the women about the religion. So they may still at home have their temple to Zeus, or their temple to Jupiter whoever, but the women were teaching the children Christianity. The biggest example of this of course is Constantine's mother who converted to Christian. And she was very strong and devout Christian and was constantly pushing and encouraging Constantine to switch religions, not just for him, but for the whole nation. And finally, when Constantine died, he did convert, and it was mother's influence that caused him to convert.

[00:30:04] And then that is then what caused the greater conversion that's how you get a religion to grow. And it's also important to remember that as Christianity was growing, one of the things it was doing was pushing out and killing any belief in goddesses, and the feminine divine, that was around. It was crashing that so that people would come to Christianity and get away from these beliefs.

FEMALE vs MALE INTUITION [00:30:28]

[00:30:28] **Cassidy:** [00:30:28] So, what I took from this is that women are hella powerful.

[00:30:35] **McCall:** [00:30:35] Yeah. And any group of people who can sustain and grow a religion, of all things, especially on the down low, is something to be revered.

[00:30:44] **Cassidy:** [00:30:44] Okay. But this other reason to revere women is their intuition, right? Isn't "women's intuition" a thing?

[00:30:52] **McCall:** [00:30:52] "Mother's intuition"?

[00:30:54] **Cassidy:** [00:30:54] You know, in [Episode 10.5: The Anima and Animus](#), we talked about how one of the characteristics across time and culture is that the male aspect is related to reason and logic,

[00:31:05] **McCall:** [00:31:05] Right.

[00:31:05] **Cassidy:** [00:31:05] And that the female aspects are related to intuition and emotion.

[00:31:10] So it only makes sense that we have these things like "women's intuition" and "mother's instincts".

[00:31:16] **McCall:** [00:31:16] Remember for our '[Archetypes and Woowoo](#)' episode, when I talked to Jennifer Sieck? Before we went off the deep end into chakras and energy and tarot cards and dream analysis, I also asked her about intuition because there's something that's really bugged me here for a while.

[00:31:31] You know, I think of my intuition as a gift to be able to, on occasion, just quiet out the world and tap into something bigger, and deeper, than anything in my logical brain.

[00:31:44] **Cassidy:** [00:31:44] Oh, you knew I'd be interested in this conversation, huh?

[00:31:47] **McCall:** [00:31:47] I figured you'd dig it. Okay. Let's listen in.

[00:31:52] **JENNY + INTUITION** [00:31:52]

[00:31:52]

[00:31:52] The name of your business even has intuitive in it and one of the things I can't avoid is the idea of women's intuition.

[00:32:03] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:32:03] Ummmhmmm... sure.

[00:32:06] **McCall:** [00:32:06] So when I was in college, I studied Sex and Gender for my masters... Evelyn Fox Keller is a philosophy and history teacher at MIT now, but she wrote a book that was extremely pivotal to me.... and it's all about God, nature, life, and feminism, but with history, and philosophy intertwined. And she talks a lot about women's intuition that comes from a female's innate superiority in the skill of reading other people's emotions. So I usually am all for equality, but when it comes to women's intuition, I can actually rationalize that it has something to do with giving birth - the fact that my body can create another human being that relies on my body for sustenance, and definitely protection... the male duck can go hunting, but I need to stay with the duckling... I can imagine... biologically, spiritually... being gifted with a deeper sense of that intuition. So that I can connect with another human being, where we don't speak the same language yet. They don't understand words yet. They don't have memories yet. I can imagine that intuition is the only way a mother and a baby can actually communicate.

[00:33:43] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:33:43] Umhm. Yeah, I think that makes a lot of sense. The idea that women are more intuitive because they need to be. Because they're responding... the energy is receptive. and so they have to open that conduit in that way. Absolutely. That makes a lot of sense.

[00:34:00] **McCall:** [00:34:00] So in your experience with other empaths or intuitives, what's the percentage of men?

[00:34:08] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:34:08] There are a lot of men who are intuitives... I feel like that whole idea that women are innately more intuitive is a really interesting idea - I think in this culture, that probably is true, because I think men and women are geared in different directions, and value different things, in the family, structurally, that kind of thing. I'm not convinced that it's true with a capital T. I think there could be a culture where men were just as intuitive as women. I've had many men take my tarot class, and blow me out of the water with their intuition. You know, I've had men who had dreams that came true, like - actually... I worked with more men than women right now, ironically. And, a lot of very intuitive, very feeling toned, complex, you know, a lot of depth, in their, in their vision and their way of looking at the world.

[00:35:00] **McCall:** [00:35:00] So maybe it's a more cultural, limitation on how men, at least are expected to express themselves. Yeah, sure. We know that that gender tends to be inhibited in expressing emotions.

[00:35:16] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:35:16] Right? Absolutely.

[00:35:17] **McCall:** [00:35:17] So maybe it's there, but not uncovered. And perhaps like the shadow self that is ignored, it actually grows stronger, so that when they open that box...

[00:35:28] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:35:28] yeah.

[00:35:29] **McCall:** [00:35:29] Who knows...? Interesting.

[00:35:31] **Jenny Sieck:** [00:35:31] Yeah. Yeah. I would say a lot of the men who I work with are really wanting to get in touch with the feminine part of the self, and they've been disconnected from it, or they feel that it's been undervalued in their lives, or by their families, or by their culture. And that, that it's hard to express it because it might cost them something, you know, it might be seen in a different way, and they're not sure they want all of that comes along with that. I've seen that a lot.

[00:35:59] **ALISON WHITEACRE + INTUITION** [00:35:59]

[00:35:59] **Cassidy:** [00:35:59] So... that got me thinking maybe it's not a women's intuition after all. Maybe there are some men who can tap into, and feel connected to, a more subconscious intuition. If you remember Alison from Episode 10.5, Alison coaches people through transition and, rightly so, because Allison's been through several life-altering transitions herself between a major career change and her gender. But when Alison identified as Billy, and a musician, Billy had intuition.

[00:36:40] So, I asked Alison back to the show to speak to us about how transitioning has affected her spirituality. And here's what she had to say...

[00:36:49] **Alison WhiteAcre:** [00:36:49] I've always been spiritual. I always feel like there's a connection with forces outside of our dimensional world here. I often feel like I'm getting information that I would not get if it was all just this dimension. So I feel like there's a connection. People talk about their higher self. Maybe it's that, maybe it's just a connection with universal awareness, or... I don't know. But I seem to be able to tap into that. I think I've been blessed with a fair amount of intuition. Gets me into a lot of trouble too, but it's helpful with making... with my first career as a musician and a composer, I don't know where that stuff comes from. Honestly. There's the self-discipline part of practicing, and learning your instrument. But then, once you've got it, and you've got to write all this music for tomorrow... I don't know where that stuff comes from. So, I'm certainly not *consciously* aware of every note that I... that I write, and record. And, you know, I'm not doing that. Now, what I'm doing is, I guess... I'm using that intuition and empathy to work directly with people. So it's not through the medium of music, it's through the medium of coaching.

[00:38:05] So yeah, the intuition, like when I'm talking to somebody, they're talking to me, they're telling me a story. I hear this other energy behind their story. And I say, "So tell me about your uncle." And they were like, "What?" That's not uncommon for that to happen, and it's, like, I don't know how I knew there might have been something with their uncle. That's just an illustration. The idea of asking powerful questions, *empowering* and *powerful* questions, in coaching is really what it's all about.

[00:38:35] **Cassidy:** [00:38:35] So it sounds like Alison's intuitiveness has been lifelong for her, which I believe set the stage - LOL - *no pun intended* - for her creative genius as a musician, not to mention her ability to connect with her clients as a coach now on a deeper level and better able to help them to transition in their own lives.

[00:38:58] Oh, and by the way, if you haven't yet, I strongly recommend you listen to her music... I'll provide one of my favorite links in the show notes.

Okay, McCall. Now that I've talked to Alison, I'm thinking that this women's intuition thing isn't necessarily a woman's thing at all.

[00:39:18] **McCall:** [00:39:18] I don't know Cass... but, I'm starting to think you might be right. However, I do really think there is something that might indicate a feminine quality at least, but maybe people, both male and female have found some way to balance their reasoning side *with* their intuitive side?

[00:39:38] **Cassidy:** [00:39:38] Ooh, you're going to say Blake. Aren't you?

[00:39:40] **McCall:** [00:39:40] Ya' know I am. So, in our talk with Blake this week, they opened up to us about living that yin-yang balance.

[00:39:49] **Cassidy:** [00:39:49] Blake is another beautiful example of balance. I think McCall, Blake has lived their whole life in this duality between masculine and feminine, and honestly was embraced and supported, very early on, by their family in the Jewish faith, no less.

[00:40:06] **McCall:** [00:40:06] Ohhhh Cassidy. We've got an episode all about duality - dualism - balance.... Wait 'til you meet Celia.

[00:40:16] **Cassidy:** [00:40:16] Oh, yeah.

[00:40:18] **McCall:** [00:40:18] She lives her life as a woman, except in her arranged marriage - when she comes home, *to her wife*, she presents fully as a man... because her wife doesn't feel like a lesbian, and she's attracted to her 'husband'.

[00:40:33] But, like I said, another episode - very soon - for now, let's just listen to this clip about how Blake relates to intuition...

[00:40:44] **BLAKE + ANDROGYNY**

[00:40:44] One of the things we've recently explored on our show is the concept of anima and animus - that within every male gender there is an internal feminine that they start wrestling with the feminine and masculine within themselves and within the world.

[00:41:03] As an androgynous person, one of the aspects that we learned is a feminine is intuition tapping into that knowledge beyond ourselves, and we also talked about animus the masculine being based on reason... So, I'm curious, if you aren't in an extraordinary intersection between the anima and the animus - between the intellect and the reason - and the internal sense, the intuition. Does that... relate? Does that suit you?

[00:41:35] **AndrogBlake:** [00:41:35] Yes. I might be blushing a little bit right now, actually. There are some perspectives, among my family, about being an androgynous person and the role that one might serve, some of these thoughts might be... there might be some superstition there that androgynous people do serve a role of bringing both the masculine and the feminine, and sometimes these two modalities, if they are behaviors, if there are ways of engaging ways of being informed, sometimes they don't speak to one another so readily. And so we have to find that bridge and my family would tell me that this balance exists in every one of us. But I think I agree with what you're saying - and my family would agree - that I definitely exemplify the kind of person that seeks that balance and lives, that balance. And as an androgynous person... yes, absolutely!

[00:42:19] **ANDROGYNY WITH CASS + MCCALL** [00:42:19]

[00:42:19] **McCall:** [00:42:19] I want to talk about androgyny.

[00:42:23] **Cassidy:** [00:42:23] Let's talk about androgyny.

[00:42:25] **McCall:** [00:42:25] Several years ago, I think it was like 2014 or something, there's this Australian model named Ruby Rose. If you've seen the video, I'm about to say it's called "Break Free".

[00:42:35] **Cassidy:** [00:42:35] I love her stuff!!!

[00:42:35] **McCall:** [00:42:35] Yes.

[00:42:37] **Cassidy:** [00:42:37] Can we talk about Ruby Rose?

[00:42:38] **McCall:** [00:42:38] We *certainly* can.

[00:42:39] **Cassidy:** [00:42:39] Ruby Rose is my doppelganger! I love her.

[00:42:41] **McCall:** [00:42:41] Me too. I feel the same way.

[00:42:45] And you know, Lady Gaga talks about how-

[00:42:47] **Cassidy:** [00:42:47] yes!

[00:42:47] **McCall:** [00:42:47] -she portrays herself in a very androgynous way.

[00:42:50] **Cassidy:** [00:42:50] Yes.

[00:42:51] **McCall:** [00:42:51] But really, the term 'androgyny' has been around forever... it stems from the Greek word, and it relates to hermaphroditism - like having both male and female reproductive organs. It's really one of the earliest words that people used to describe gender identities outside of the male-female binary.

[00:43:11] Cassidy, are you familiar with *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*?

[00:43:14] **Cassidy:** [00:43:14] No.

[00:43:15] **McCall:** [00:43:15] Well, there's a retelling in that movie in Hedwig, and they say, "It's a sad story, how we became lonely two legged creatures." It's an ancient Greek myth about Hermaphroditus and Salmacus. They're both divinities. And they were fused into one, single, immortal thing. So, in Plato's *Symposium*, the audience is told that people used to be spherical creatures with two bodies attached back to back, and we cart-wheeled around. There were three sexes: the male-male people - who descended from the sun, the female-female people - who descended from the earth, and the male-female people - who came from the moon. The last two, the male-female that came from the moon, represented the androgynous couple.

[00:44:03] So, the circular sphere "people" tried to take over the gods and failed miserably. Zeus decided to cut them all in half, and had Apollo, his homeboy, repair the resulting surfaces, leaving... a belly button, as a reminder, not to fuck with the gods again! 'Cause if we did, they'd have to cut us in half *again*, and we'd hop around on *one leg*... is how the story goes.

[00:44:31] **Cassidy:** [00:44:31] Oh, my gosh.

[00:44:32] **McCall:** [00:44:32] And that's like one of the earliest references to androgyny anywhere.

[00:44:36] **Cassidy:** [00:44:36] I've never heard that. I don't know why.

[00:44:38] **McCall:** [00:44:38] It's also the only place in classical Greek texts. That lesbianism is mentioned. Interesting note.

[00:44:44] **Cassidy:** [00:44:44] Interesting.

[00:44:46] **McCall:** [00:44:46] Virginia Woolf, one of my favorite authors, wrote "In each of us, two powers preside - one male, one female. The androgynous mind is resonant and porous, naturally creative, incandescent, and undivided."

[00:45:03] **Cassidy:** [00:45:03] This makes sense! This all makes sense.

[00:45:05] **McCall:** [00:45:05] In our lifetime, or I guess a little bit before, we see a huge change in the gender roles. Think about Coco Chanel and trousers. Like, women did not wear pants before Coco Chanel came out with trousers. Or that famous Helmut Lang photo, the woman smoking in the tux, that Yves St. Laurent was famous for.

[00:45:27] **Cassidy:** [00:45:27] ...yes...

[00:45:28] **McCall:** [00:45:28] But really a lot of people refer to Elvis Presley as the person who, kind of, broke the mold.

[00:45:36] **Cassidy:** [00:45:36] Really?!?!

[00:45:36] **McCall:** [00:45:36] Because of his feminine face, and his eye makeup, and how sexy women found him. He somehow gave permission to other male figures, especially in the music scene, to break the traditional mold of what a male rock star looks like.

[00:45:54] Fast forward, 1969 - a little bit before either of us were born, but... Mick Jagger played, with the Rolling Stones, at London's Hyde park - in a white man's dress. And it was a *huge* show. And the dresses designed by Mr. Fish. I don't know if you know who he is, but super famous London clothing designer who designed male dresses. Think: Billy Porter.

[00:46:18] **Cassidy:** [00:46:18] Hmm... love.

[00:46:19] **McCall:** [00:46:19] And then, then we go into Hendrix wearing heels. Ziggy Stardust is probably the most significant gender bending role model. But, I mean, the seventies and eighties are *filled* with performers like Michael Jackson, Prince, Boy George, Patty Smith, and Annie Lennox... they all *totally* changed gender norms - just by integrating the looks of male and female, or masculine and feminine.

[00:46:46] The fashion industry played into it, pushing the boundaries through the seventies, eighties, and nineties.

[00:46:51] The thing about the 70s, 80s, and 90s, that occurred to me - I grew up with just my mom. I didn't have really a male masculine role model in my life. Both my grandfather and my male teachers, were pretty 'soft' men. They weren't manly, rugged, tough guys. And I suspect that single-mother household shift, that happened in those years, significantly impacted our whole generation, in terms of gender expression. Just having an absent father, you know, and making up for that with our kind of bravado and masculinity.

[00:47:29] **Cassidy:** [00:47:29] Yeah, I would say the same in my household, too.

[00:47:31] **McCall:** [00:47:31] And then, when I was in school in the eighties and nineties, it was all Leslie Feinberg and Kate Bornstein, and all these other kind of gender-queer activists, who became a role model for nonbinary people in today's youth. And their whole point was that viewing gender as a binary is so restrictive to everyone, including people who identify as completely naturally male or female - Cis gender, right? As we talked about with toxic masculinity and femininity. So, the key is viewing gender on a spectrum.

[00:48:16] **THE VATICAN'S STANCE**

[00:48:16] Are you aware that just over a year ago, in June of 2019, The Vatican released an extensive statement about gender identity and the church? Now they definitely included a call for love and respect, but the document they released clearly rejects the idea that gender is distinct from biological sex.

[00:48:44] And, in fact, very clearly state that a transgender identity, and I quote, "seeks to annihilate the concept of nature". Yikes. That document is called "Male and Female, He created them: towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender theory in education".

[00:49:11] Well, I don't know where their education came from, but, in my experience, Dichotomies aren't part of nature. There's not an us and them. There's gradients and variants, and everything is on a spectrum - from light waves, to sound waves, to colors, to smells.

[00:49:37] Besides, do we really want things to be so pure? In my personal opinion, the most attractive people are blends of all different races, cultures, skin, colors, hair textures.

[00:49:55] Even purebred dogs have problems. Right? My mom raised great Pyrenees and Newfoundlands for a while, and they don't live long, those big dogs. But, because they're purebred, there's even more problems...

[00:50:09] All of the instances I can even think of, throughout history, where anyone wanted to keep things "pure" and "separate", none of them led to any good. And in fact, a lot of 'em led to what we're fighting against right now.

[00:50:26] In Christianity, there's an idea of complimentary - that the genders are different and have *complimentary* roles. Not necessarily *equal*. In fact, I'd guess most Christian scholars would admit that women are called to be subservient to men.

[00:50:45] Just think about the story of creation. And I don't mean just in the Bible. In past episodes, I've shared the myth of Pandora's box. As the first woman created by the gods, Zeus gave two gifts to Pandora, one a box she could never open. And the other: *curiosity*.

[00:51:06] Well, there's a woman named Karen Garst, and she's written several books and given many lectures, on the idea of how humanity went from worshiping divine *feminine* - goddesses, cycles, earth, life, death - to a single God, or Trinity of *MALE* gods. And in my opinion, it was that shift that reinforced these diametrically opposed ideas - good and evil. Right and wrong. Black and white. Man and woman. And unfortunately, as humans, in order to organize ideas and experiences, in our memory and in our brains, we tend to categorize. But we also tend to build into those categories, some sort of hierarchy - a judgment value. And THIS is where the *root* of my problem lies.

[00:52:12] I'm curious, what do you know about the creation stories? There are two parts, in early Genesis... 1:27 and 2:22. If you know the Bible, or have it near you, you might want to check it out.

[00:52:30] The first one, Genesis 1:27. the new revised standard version says, "so God created humankind, in his image, in the image of God, He created them. Male and female, He created them." I mean to me, that sounds like God created two people. One was a dude. One was a chick.

[00:52:54] But... not many paragraphs later, in Genesis 2:22, of that same version of the Bible, it says: "...and the rib, that the Lord God had taken from the man, He made into a woman. And brought her to the man."

[00:53:14] Well... if this is in chronological order, this certainly sounds like God created two people. And then somethin' happened to one of them. Because God had to take a rib out of the guy, to make into a woman, and bring her back to the man. But wasn't the first man already *with* a woman? Made in God's image? Together?

[00:53:47] Yeah. Confusing.

[00:53:50] Well, it's my guess that early Jews had the same issue... because it's an old rabbinical legend that reconciles those two different accounts of the book of Genesis' creation of woman. The first, which represents her is made *with* man. And by implication, co-equal. Then, there's that other one: 2:22. Woman was created *second*, and *FROM* man, and somehow, therefore, subordinate.

[00:54:23] So yeah, this old rabbinical legend is about the *VERY FIRST* woman. The legend talks about Lillith. And she appeared as Adam's *first* wife who was actually created at the same time - Roshashana. And from the same clay as "Adom".

[00:54:42] That early rabbinical literature also contains a lot of occurrences where Eve is accused of various sexual transgressions. In fact, in Genesis 3:16, it says that "her desire shall be for her husband", and she's accused of rabbis, throughout the ages, of having an overdeveloped sex drive, and constantly enticing her husband, Adam.

[00:55:08] In fact, there's a lot of essays, and theories, and papers... on the idea of Eve copulating... Yeah, having sex with... the primeval serpent. So maybe she didn't just *eat* the Apple? Maybe she *slept* with the snake? Yeah.

[00:55:30] But it's the whole creation myth - that Eve ate *FIRST* from the Apple. That's what I have learned. It's what most people have learned. And it explains why, in some churches, and in many cultures, and most temples, women cover their heads. It's almost as if we've done something *wrong* and maybe we should be ashamed of it...? At funerals, women walk in front of corpses, in a lot of cultures and religions... because they brought death to the world?

[00:56:03] **BROTHER MATTHEW PAUL** [00:56:03]

In order to really unbox my prejudice against inherent gender biases in the Bible, and scripture, and many Holy texts... I decided to go back to brother Matthew Paul. He's been on our show a couple of times before. He is a contemplative of brother. So basically, he reads and thinks *a lot* about God, and has access to people with even more knowledge than him, about the historical evolution of scripture - and how the writers, and translators, and scribes, may have influenced the words and the ideas.

[00:56:46] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [00:56:46] Thank you for having me again.

[00:56:52] **McCall:** [00:56:52] The first thing I'm curious about... From the creation story, and Eve eating the Apple and then giving it to Adam, it feels a lot like Christianity - or even God, if you stretch enough - blames women.

[00:57:08] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [00:57:08] I could see how that would be a very prevalent idea, throughout history, especially. And I think a lot of it has to do with the way that the creation account in Genesis has been *applied* through history.

[00:57:22] So, firstly, the original narratives would have been recounted by men... *for* a primarily male dominant society - a male led society. And there is no doubt that there has been an implicit kind of misogyny throughout human

history, especially in a male dominated system. And I think that often *interpretations* of scripture have reflected more of that than the scripture itself. And that comes with the human interpretation, implicit in a human being writing down these stories, and trying to grapple with that understanding. And so it leaves us, for centuries, trying to parse out the human interpretation from what it is that God wanted us to get out of this story in the first place. So with Eve what's important is that through all eternity it God who is timeless gave us this Eve and this Adam figure, and eventually fulfilled a perfection in the mother of Christ and Christ himself, as the new Eve and the new Adam, in the creedal tradition.

[00:58:35] And what's interesting is that, the new Eve figure was actually elevated above all humanity, except for Christ himself. So it's not because he's male, that Christ is elevated, but it's because Christ is seen as God and man perfectly, both. Whereas the blessed Virgin is an elevated creature of human being.

[00:58:57] She was raised above the heavens, the earth, the angels, all humanity. And in a way there's a message there... of God's elevating what should always have been. And so there's a way in which God, by allowing a woman to maybe start in the myth as the one who takes the fruit, he remedies that and then some, and says, no, I'm not going to leave woman the one who *began* a sin, I'm going to allow women to be the one who said the greatest yes, in all of history, and brought salvation into the world. There was a plan to elevate woman above and beyond all that we could have even hoped for.

[00:59:41] **McCall:** [00:59:41] Wait, so in a way, Mother Mary is reparations for Eve's curiosity?

[00:59:47] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [00:59:47] In a way. Yes.

[00:59:49] **McCall:** [00:59:49] So Mother Mary in a way is a kind of social justice for the fall.

[00:59:55] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [00:59:55] Yes, very much. Increasingly throughout the centuries, theology has begun to realize that the male dominated theology has often focused on... Eve was the *first* to take the fruit. And then we bypass the redemption and the glorification of woman. And so yes, in a way, when God says to, to the serpent in Genesis, I will place enmity between my seed and yours, and *she* will crush your head. He pronounces that - 'I have allowed a woman to be the first transgressor in order that I may allow woman to be the absolute destruction of all evil'. Even temporarily, before the coming of Christ. And so we often through history, the interpretation of the scripture overlooked that the fulfillment is that the punishment is taken away.

[01:00:46] **McCall:** [01:00:46] You quoted Genesis. I think it's 3:15.

[01:00:50] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [01:00:50] Yes. The, yes. That she will crush...

[01:00:52] **McCall:** [01:00:52] did you say that SHE will crush?

[01:00:55] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [01:00:55] Yes, the translation is that "*she*" will crush - that woman *herself* - will be the first one to crush the head of Satan.

[01:01:02] **McCall:** [01:01:02] And you will bite HER heel?

[01:01:04] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [01:01:04] Yes.

[01:01:05] **McCall:** [01:01:05] What translation is that? I don't know... I don't think I've ever read that. I always thought it said something 'I'll put strife between you and woman, between you and her seed'... was Jesus. And that HE shall bruise thy head.

[01:01:22] **Brother Matthew Paul:** [01:01:22] Yeah. Rather than Protestant translations, which translate Genesis three 15 as he will crush thy head. The Catholic translation, which compared the Hebrew, and the Greek, and the Latin Vulgate translates rather "*she* will crush thy head". And very definitively places that crushing of the head of Satan firmly with woman - with this archetypal of a woman being foretold. And we see that fulfillment through the blessed Virgin Mary. The tradition of the church is that the blessed Virgin Mary was the *first* fatal blow to evil. And from her crushing of the head - from her "yes", when God asks her if she would bear the Christ. Her perfection and her divine motherhood, uh, her motherhood being divine... whereas she is human. Her motherhood is considered 'divine' - *that* is the 'blow that crushes the head of Satan'. So what we say in the church is that the blessed mother is that enemy of the devil and God allowed a woman to be the one to strike the blow.

[01:02:26] **McCall:** [01:02:26] Love that.

[01:02:29] **Wrap Up**[01:02:29]

[01:02:29] **Cassidy:** [01:02:29] Yeah, I agree - I love that! And, like I said, in the last episode, this conversation with brother Matthew, Paul blew my mind. I can't speak for all women in Christianity everywhere, but I think part of what I learned, from an early age, whether it was explicit or even probably just implicit was that women bear a lot of blame

for... the fall of man, so to speak? I think I have some internal issues with female shame, that might stem from my beliefs that Eve took the fall - that Eve screwed up, and succumbed to the temptation.

[01:03:08] **McCall:** [01:03:08] Yeah, I bet a lot of us share some of that feeling of shame too.

[01:03:13] **Cassidy:** [01:03:13] That's why I also said that it's *life changing*. I mean, for me... I think this gives me hope of redefining my relationship with the higher power of my understanding...

[01:03:23] **McCall:** [01:03:23] Totally.

[01:03:24] **Cassidy:** [01:03:24] ...as we say, in recovery. And to move in the direction of *healing* some of those earlier beliefs that I've carried for so long. And that's powerful.

[01:03:34] **McCall:** [01:03:34] Isn't it? And I'm so glad, because I'm on the same boat. The fact that perhaps the God, of even the Christian Bible, is a hell of a lot more open minded than his followers tend to portray... it gives me a lot of interest in learning more.

[01:03:52] **PATREON and OUTRO** [01:03:52]

[01:03:52] By the way... If you are interested in hearing the *full version* of these interviews, that Cassidy and I have done, with *many* a person. I think we've got nine? 10, now? All of them are *well* over an hour - some of them closer to two. We have edited out *very* little - only extremely personal details, that they've asked us to remove. And a lot of "yada yada" that doesn't take you anywhere - so that they *are* kind of concise, for your listening pleasure. And should you be interested in pleasuring your listening... you can head over to Patreon. Because our Patreon supporters will have *full access to everything* and then some.

[01:04:39] So, yeah, I think that concludes yet another episode.

[01:04:44] **Cassidy:** [01:04:44] I think you're right.

[01:04:45] **McCall:** [01:04:45] So come back next week and get one of *three potential* bonus episodes on... 'TransGender Faith', 'the Feminine Divine', and/or 'India, Transgender & Arranged Marriages'.

[01:05:02] **Cassidy:** [01:05:02] Yes. All of the above.

[01:05:03] **McCall:** [01:05:03] If there's one you're jonesing for, let us know, and we'll get it out fast.

[01:05:08] **Cassidy:** [01:05:08] Heheheh

[01:05:09] **McCall:** [01:05:09] Bye.

[01:05:10] **Cassidy:** [01:05:10] Bye now.

[01:05:11]