

# Holy Grounds|National Donut Day '23|Donuts and Spirituality

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

spiritual practices, donuts, doughnuts, God, spirituality, biscuits, national donut day, coffee **SPEAKERS**  
Blake Smith, Tyler Marz, Robin Linkhart

### **Robin Linkhart** 00:27

Hello and welcome to holy grounds, a Project Zion Podcast series, where we explore the many dimensions and facets of spirituality, and learn about diverse spiritual practices that bring connection and meaning to life. I'm your host, Robin Linkhart. And I'm here today with Blake Smith and Tyler Mars, to talk about donuts and spirituality. That's right, June 2 is National Donut Day in the USA. What a great opportunity to explore the vast landscape of spirituality and awakening to God's presence. As we connect every day elements and the human senses of see hearing, taste, touch and smell to our journey with the divine. First, let's say hello to our guests, Blake and Tyler. It's a joy to have you with us on today's episode of holy grounds. Please take a minute to introduce yourselves, Blake.

### **Blake Smith** 01:35

Well, hi, Robin. I am Blake Smith. I'm originally from Pittsburgh to Florida, and I am currently living in Elgin, Illinois. For the last eight years I've been making the mistake of saying that I'm from Chicago. As very clear. If you ask anybody who actually lives in Chicago that I am not from Chicago, I actually live about 40 miles outside of Chicago. But people don't know where Elgin is. So in my time here at Chicago, I'm serving as the Chicago Mission Center president and financial officer for the Chicago Mission Center. And I also have the pleasure of serving as the project manager for Project Zion Podcast. My wife and I have two daughters and they are both living and working in the Chicagoland area as well. So we are very, very happy things are good.

### **Robin Linkhart** 02:23

Thanks so much Blake. Tyler.

### **Tyler Marz** 02:26

Well, hi, Robin. I'm Tyler Mars. I originally I'm from Washington State, but I've called Salt Lake City on for the last several years. I currently work for the church as an expansion minister, primarily helping Latter-day Seekers, folks in faith transition to find this spiritual home. I also serve as the pastor of Utah mission ministries, and to help support our mission center with various needs, supporting congregations and that sort of thing.

### **Robin Linkhart** 02:57

Wonderful. Okay, let's start at the top National Donut Day. Blake, I think this hits pretty close to home for you. So please tell us all about it.

**Blake Smith 03:11**

Actually, it does hit really close to home on a couple of levels so far, because donuts are my kryptonite. I love doughnuts, but also because National Donut Day started in Chicago, and I didn't know that until doing some research for today. The origin of donuts is a little less clear, but it's most often credited to the Dutch immigrants in the 1700s, who brought Ali cakes to New York, which was then New Amsterdam. The actual origin of donuts is not clear does archeologists have apparently found what they believe to be something similar to donuts in Native American prehistoric settlements. There are some fascinating stories about how all the cakes transition to donuts, how the donut holes came to be, etc. So if you're interested, I encourage you to look that up because we could spend days talking about the origins and make up of donuts. But let's fast forward to 1918 in World War One, a group of women from the Salvation Army went to France to serve treats and provide assistance to the soldiers. These ladies were affectionately known as the donut lassies that probably wouldn't go over well today, but they were the donut lassies and they were very popular on the front of the war. Rumor has it that they even use the helmets of the soldiers to fry the doughnuts. Whatever the case, they were very popular and the donuts and the donut lassies remain popular too. Today. In 1938 The Salvation Army in Chicago began National Donut d o n u t day on the first Friday of June. It was actually started as a fundraiser for the solving and army, but its focus was to honor the donut lassies there are actually two National Donut Day. So that's why I make the distinction of the d o n u t day which is the one we're celebrating here. There is also the d o UGHNUT. De, which is celebrated in November. And that is a day that actually honors the food, not anybody who has served it. So that's a recognition of donuts. And really quickly, there are a couple of other donut celebrations around the world that weren't mentioning. The UK actually celebrates National Donut week. They do it for a whole week and it's the last week of May. And it serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Trust. And that trust is where youth is UK is leading charity for children with brain injuries. And then I want to finish my little bit on doughnuts by bringing it into the spiritual. The last two I want to mention are on ski day and last night de Pon skis are doughnuts originating in Poland and they are pronounced a million different ways. But I have my good authority because I'm married into a Polish family that is punchy, and they originated in Poland and fosse knots are of German origin and made their way to the US with the Pennsylvania Dutch community. And the connection to spirituality is this both of these days are celebrated on Shrove Tuesday, also known in the US as Fat Tuesday, or Pancake Day, which is the day before Ash Wednesday. Both originated out of the need to use up the flour and butter and other ingredients that couldn't be eaten during live. So all that is to say at least some donuts obviously have a spiritual foundation.

**Robin Linkhart 06:55**

Well, I love this boss, not Pinsky, Donut lassies. I mean, we're all embedded with servant ministry and fundraising for good causes, I mean abolish poverty and end suffering. And then we're all over the Christian calendar, the liturgical seasons with Fat Tuesday. This is amazing. Amazing. Thank you, Blake,

**Blake Smith 07:23**

who knew doughnuts had their own liturgical calendar?

**Robin Linkhart** 07:25

I know seriously, if Karin Peter finds out about this, we'll have a whole whole new episode for common ground. Okay, so let's get a little more focused on the spiritual part. And I want us to spend some time talking about spirituality and how keeping ourselves aware and awake to God's presence, and developing daily practices flows out of a basic essence of life through the language and symbols of context and culture. And more Tyler, why don't you jump in first,

**Tyler Marz** 08:04

sir. So I think just start spiritual practices and making time for God can really feel daunting for some folks, especially if it's something new or something they don't, or haven't done regularly. So there's a lot of things going on in our lives, we have a lot of demands. And I think sometimes when we think about spiritual practices, we have built up an idea in our head that they have to be really profound or a long length of time or things like that. But I think what is most important when doing spiritual spiritual practices, or getting involved in different forms of spirituality, to connect with the divine is that it's important to find something that resonates with you. That's authentic. It doesn't have to be a long period of time. But it should be intentional. And so some examples of that, that aren't necessarily inherently spiritual, can be our daily, our daily ritual in the morning of making coffee. So we might choose to unplug a bit from our technology, set down our phones, or put those aside and go and make a cup of coffee and sit there and enjoy it for a moment as long as it takes you to drink that cup. You know, and you can fill that time with whatever is meaningful for you, whatever you want to think about. For some going for a walk can be really helpful, or listening to a meditation or journaling or some more traditional practices like Lectio Divina are even listening to him. But the key is finding something that fits with you and speaks to your soul. So for me personally, when I do spiritual practices. In any sort of regularity in my everyday life, I generally have three areas that I start with. So depending on how I'm feeling that morning, I might start with simply making a list. Often when I do spiritual practices, my brain is really full of lots of thoughts and things. And so making a list, first of all the things I have to do for the day, helps me purge my mind of all the things, and then I can have a moment of peace after that, whether that's making a cup of coffee, or listening to a hymn or a song that's really meaningful to me. Or, you know, I might even try and go for a walk that morning. I don't do necessarily any of these things in the same order or every day, but I do try to incorporate something. And I found those things to be really meaningful for me. When I do spiritual practices, I'm someone who can get distracted really easily. Or sometimes simply just sitting in silence can be a bit overwhelming. And so often doing something helps me not feel so overwhelmed or anxious. So that task of making the coffee or going for a walk and looking at the animals and the birds in the tree, or what the clouds look like in the sky, gives my mind something to do while also gently focusing on what's happening inside and how God is moving and my life.

**Robin Linkhart** 11:33

Thanks, Tyler. Like

**Blake Smith** 11:36

those it fair for me to just say ditto, I love all that. And now actually, I know why I get along with Tyler so well. And so immediately, I didn't realize it when we met face to face a couple of weeks ago. But the fact that he calls having coffee in the morning, a spiritual practice, we are now very tight close friends very quickly. But I have a little problem, Tyler because my you said unplugging from technology, I actually have an ember mug. So it charges and it keeps my coffee hot for an hour and a half so that I can have a really in depth spiritual practice. So I wonder if that's a conflict of interest. Anyway, thanks for all that Tyler. I found that God shows up in some really interesting and unexpected places, which is really helpful for me because I'm one of those, like Tyler talked about where the quiet sometimes can be a little cumbersome. i My mind goes a million miles an hour, and I want to be involved in doing things so. So finding that God shows up in those really interesting places. Now, when I say God shows up, most often I mean that something ordinary triggers a thought, a feeling a memory, or an awareness of God's presence, a sense for me that God has come near or that God is near. I was thinking about this and I our Mission Center, the Chicago Mission Center has been using the percolating on faith series of Project Zion Podcast as a foundation for our adult Christian education. And we've been having conversations about the ways that people experience God. And the answers have been all over the board, from sounds and smells some of the things that Tyler talked about walks in nature, to Coffee with friends, where deep conversation takes place. And we even had someone say that they experienced God when they're washing dishes. So anyway, for me, and this may sound weird, I find God at a table. And not just in the community that forms over the meal, but also in the food itself. I can't speak for everyone, but I would guess that most people have at least one food item or dish that they consider comfort food. Notice I didn't say healthy food. I said comfort food. When you've had a long, hard day, maybe you've been out in the cold and rain, there's nothing better than coming home to a warm bowl of your favorite food. For me, the same is true when we're feeling lost or alone when something is missing. And we have just that deep need for a friend or companion. God's presence through the Holy Spirit can be that comfort food that feeds our soul. I think when we limit God we limit the presence of God to certain buildings and certain ways of worshipping. We were doing just that we're limiting the the experience of God because God is more than that. And God is bigger than that. So I just seek find God in some amazing places, which is helpful for me as as a guy that's seems to be always on the go.

**Robin Linkhart 14:52**

I love all the tangible images and experiences that you both have Share. erudite really helps this topic come alive for lots of different types of people. And I think spirituality in general is taking on new forms and ways of understanding, that's meeting a lot of people and in ways that maybe they hadn't even realized that they could connect with the divine presence. And at the same time, it rests on this long, rich tradition, this of spiritual practice, and discipline. I love where you're taking us on this journey together today. And Tyler, I'm aware that you have facilitated the spiritual practice of biscuit making. Tell us a little bit about that. How did you come up with that practice? And what does it involve? Yeah,

**Tyler Marz 15:51**

that's a great question. So I'm gonna go back a few years, that spiritual practice was born out of what I would call a rather sacred and holy moment with myself in Salt Lake City one morning, when I was craving biscuits myself. So I have learned from a family friend, a secret of making biscuits, that makes them particularly delicious. And it didn't, I'll give away the secret, it involves freezing your butter, which

then when you mix it into the dough produces a particularly crispy bottom of the biscuit and a very tender, inside crumb. And so this morning, that I was making these biscuits, I used this method, I didn't have anything particularly going on. So I just took the morning to make them. So I got out all of my ingredients. I had frozen my butter that evening before, and I made my biscuits. And I took time to feel the flour, the texture, the frozen butter, and how cold it is. To think about the ingredients and where they came from. And I had at the house that I was staying living in, I had a large window outside my kitchen that opened onto a lot of green space. And it was an early, early in the summer season. And so as I was making my biscuits and looking out the window, and just thinking about creation, it was a very beautiful, beautiful morning. I then baked my biscuits, waited for them to cool just a moment. And then I spread salted butter and homemade berry jam that I had made earlier in the season. And I just had a moment where I ate that biscuit. I savored the textures, and the flavor and everything about it while looking out the window. And this might sound a bit corny, but it actually got me a bit emotional. Just all of that combined, having something that truly fed my soul that I was craving. Having it turn out, all right. But then also just thinking about the beauty of the whole experience the talent, that I had to make those the nature that was performing out the window, thinking about where the ingredients came from. It was a particularly sacred moment. And so I decided that I was going to hold on to that and potentially recreate that experience that I had for folks. And so the way that this practice works, I've done it a couple and a couple different modes, either in person or over Facebook live in zoom is that I have everyone else I've given them a recipe and had them gather all their ingredients. And then we make these biscuits together. We tend to not use tools to make them we try to use our hands so that we can have a tactile experience with the ingredients. I talk a bit about the culture of breadmaking and the religious culture of breadmaking particularly in Judaism, how that is a very prayerful practice when they make the holla for every Shabbat every week, and how we can potentially have a similar mindset when we prepare food or biscuits. So we'll go through we will make those biscuits. And then I provide them time afterwards to eat a biscuit in silence for a moment to think about the textures and flavors and the memories that might come up. So for some people, they recall memories with their their parents or their grandmother, who made this gets from scratch one time or several times and the kinds of memories that that brought back and it but they're particularly meaningful for them. So that's a bit about where that practice came from. And how I have used that with folks throughout the nation and the world.

**Robin Linkhart 20:05**

Thank you, Tyler. I knew that you had facilitated this practice before online. But I did not know the origin story of how you came into realizing this could be so deeply spiritual, and connecting for folks. And I'm hearing a theme from both of you as you talk about your experiences of mindfulness and how that just takes us on a journey with things in our life elements, tangible things, the least expected places, scenarios, and everything you said, just kind of leads into this next part of our exploration. spiritual practices do take all kinds of shapes and forms. And we've already touched on the fact that they can be individual, they can be corporate, a group of people participating together, and they can even be a mix some of both with an individual component and a group component all wrapped into one spiritual practice. So in that regard, Blake, can you share how spiritual practices include aspects? We may not think of first like hospitality, feeding the hungry acts of justice, generosity, I mean, any number of things.

**Blake Smith 21:30**

First, I want to say I think that if we have any listeners of the podcast, who are wondering whether or not they should do spiritual practices, after hearing about coffee and Tyler's biscuits, I think the numbers are going to go through the roof. That's an amazing storyteller. Thanks for sharing that. And the question, Robin, it's a great question. I think that a lot of times spiritual practice and spiritual discipline are associated primarily with prayer and solitude and meditation. I know, that's the way I looked at it early on. And that might be if folks like me, at least a reason why people are intimidated by that. But what we have to remember is that everyone doesn't experience God in the same way. Everyone doesn't experience the world in the same way. There's not just one spiritual type. So there can't be just one way of being spiritual or connecting with God. Some folks are more drawn to Mystic spirituality, while others live out their spirituality through intellectual engagement, what we might refer to as head spirituality, or through emotional connection and personal relationships, what we might refer to as heart spirituality, or spirituality might be experienced through action, or what we might call kingdom, spirituality. I personally fall primarily into the Kingdom Builder, spirituality type, I find God in the presence of people, especially people serving other people. I know that prayer and quiet is good for my spiritual journey. But I also know that meeting the physical needs of others, is a spiritual practice, at least for me. Prayer is essential, but telling someone who is hungry, that you'll pray for them will not fill their stomachs. We need people of all spiritual types, experiencing God in a variety of ways through a variety of practices in order to capture the fullness of who God is. So hospitality and service and just listening to someone is a spiritual practice, hearing their story is not only a gift to them, but a gift to the world, if we could get all engaged in a variety of practices and bring those things as, as Tyler mentioned, that are just authentic to ourselves. That we can begin, I think, to capture the fullness of God's authentic self.

**Robin Linkhart 24:05**

Thanks so much, Blake, I really appreciate the reminder that as human beings, we have different spirituality types. Just like we have different personalities. And that's so important. And stretching the dimensions of what shape and form it can take really is exciting because it connects with so many ways of being in the world that we uphold. Tyler in the last eight years or so you have explored and experienced spirituality and spiritual practices and disciplines in some very different ways. I would say your faith journey brought you to a place of doing a kind of deep dive in the topic. What are some key things you have learned along this new path and how Has your perspective on spirituality changed?

**Tyler Marz 25:03**

Sort of? And this is a great question. So I kind of wanted to start by saying that there are traditional and even ancient forms of spiritual practices that have been done for centuries or even over 1000 years. That's a long time. But some of those practices, we actually are still familiar with things like Lectio Divina, or, as we call it, in Community of Christ dwelling in the word practices like centering prayer, or the prayer of examine or contemplative practices where we're silent. Many of these have roots in what's called Ignatian, spirituality or the early Christian church. But that being said, there's lots of modern ways of being spiritual and engaging in spiritual practices. And I learned early on that everything can be spiritual things like we've already talked about walking in nature, simply just being observant to what's around us, cooking or baking, listening to music or looking at art. And, you know, initially in my journey, I was worried that these weren't authentic to what spiritual practices are. But I also learned that that way of thinking isn't really in line with what spiritual practices, our spiritual practices are about building

an authentic relationship with ourselves and, and the divine and God, finding a deeper way of making that connection, and that relationship. So there is no right way to do that, as long as it's being authentic to you. And so, several years ago, when I was exploring my faith and learning about spiritual practices, I explored them in a bunch of different ways. And what they helped me do is understand God more deeply, and how God moves in my life. Prior to that, God moved in some very specific ways. And I realized that there were so many more ways that God moved and worked. And engaging in spiritual practices helped me work, and reframe some of those things in a way that just opened up sort of a rainbow of possibilities of how God moves. And one instance of that was, I was able to attend a spiritual retreat in Kirtland, the Kirtland Temple. And for me, that time, that weekend that I spent there, helped me understand the sacredness of space. And that places buildings, whether they're historic or not, can be very sacred and very moving and very spiritual. And the intentional time that I took of slowing down that weekend to ask certain questions, to dig deep within myself, and try to listen to how God was moving and, and communicating with me, was a really pivotal and transformative time in my life. It's it helped me contemplates my relationship with God. And it opened up the ways in which God speaks to me. So, in many ways, I describe that experience as sort of like a paradigm shift. I learned that God moved in ways that I hadn't experienced before. And to this day, God continues to move in similar ways. And so it was very transformative for me to understand my personal theology and belief in God.

**Robin Linkhart 28:56**

Thanks, Tyler, as I'm listening to you, share a little bit I can't help but think about how you walk with so many people who are having, I would say in a sense of a faith crisis and how understanding spirituality up to that point in their life, and finding some kind of bridge to help them move into a different understanding is so vital. How do you how do you walk with people and help them frame a new experience? Because it seems like it would have so many challenges?

**Tyler Marz 29:38**

Yeah, that that's a good question. Because I do encounter people like that every day. And I think one of the big things I've learned is that it looks different for every single person. The the ways in which God moves and their lives and the ways that they're unsure of how God moves And so sometimes just simply being present with them. And letting them know that it's okay that they don't have it all figured out just yet. I certainly didn't overnight in my own faith journey. It took months and years to work through some things. So reassuring them that they will sort things out in time, and they will make peace with things in time. But having gone through, it allows a level of empathy for these folks also having experienced spirituality in a variety of ways. And seeing ways in which God can move and speak and work in people's lives, I'm able to share some of those, because often they're looking for something, you know, they might have only known prayer to be a very specific form. And so I'm able to share some different ways of perhaps experiencing God or working through prayer via spiritual practices that help them rekindle a relationship with God or with prayer in a new way that they haven't considered before.

**Robin Linkhart 31:07**

Thank you so much, Blake, in the past several years, you have intentionally engaged and disciplined yourself toward learning about other cultures. From my perspective, I'd say you've humbled yourself, and you've opened yourself in vulnerable and very transparent ways. What can you tell us about that

journey and, and how it has also impacted your understanding of the vast diversity of spirituality and the human experience.

**Blake Smith 31:42**

You know, Robin, I look back over my life, and I cringe at the times that I stood firm believing that I had the truth that I, you know, I had it down, I figured it out or whatever. And I like, again, I just cringe because I've learned so much on a daily basis. You know, when I was writing the final paper for my seminary studies, I finished with a statement, I may have to change my mind. But based on what I know, now, this is what I believe. I wrote that statement, because in my time at seminary, that's when I began to really understand how much I didn't know, and how the things that I had been so sure about, were based on a very limited perspective. And that as I got to know people, and engaged and encountered others and other walks of life, as God, put those people in my life, for for whatever reason, my mind would have to change, I could no longer see the world from the same perspective. And I can't tell you how many times over the years since writing that statement, I have in fact, had to change my mind and it still happens. You know, we don't live in a culture that encourages vulnerability. No one wants to admit that they, they could have been swayed into a way of thinking based on a limited worldview. And a person can actually go through life with blinders on refusing to see other perspectives, are refusing to accept culpability for participating in things like racism, or ageism, or homophobia. We sometimes think that if we're not engaging in harmful actions, we're not doing harm. But sometimes our denial and our inaction is more harmful in the long run, than some blatantly harmful act. I, I have been so blessed in the last 20 or so years, especially, to be put in places where I've had the opportunity and the need, quite honestly, to be influenced and enriched by other cultures, racial, socio economic, religious, we're etc. Before moving to Chicago, I was engaged in a new expression of the church on the west side of Cleveland. And during that time, I had the benefit of Walking With and listening to the stories of those who struggled with poverty and race, people who were on the streets most of their lives. And I learned things from them about how to be in relationship with God and with others that I have not learned in churches and other places. I've had the honor, and I have the honor now of serving a congregation on the south side of Chicago where members of the Black community have pushed me and prodded me, and also encouraged me and been patient with me which is necessary, as I seek to do the hard work of overcoming my own prejudices and racism. I grew up in a racist environment. I'm from the southeast in the United States, and it was very prevalent at that time. I didn't meet the First Person of Color caller in person until I was in middle school. And I would have said that I was not a racist. But in the last three years, I have learned so much about how I even have participated in that. And in that journey with these people, I have experience, spiritual practice, not as a time slot on the daily schedule, but as a way of life. The black community that I serve, are just incredible teachers of spiritual discipline, and practice, which again, is not a lot of time for them, but is every day of their life. I've also been blessed by the addition of a son in law, whose family is from Peru. And some of those family members don't speak any English. It's become a spiritual practice of mine to learn Spanish, not only for my ministry, but also so that I can connect and communicate with and offer hospitality to the non English speaking members of my son in law's family. Being able to meet someone else where they are isn't always easy, but that too, can become a spiritual practice.

**Robin Linkhart 36:17**



So powerful Blake, thank you so much. Okay, I think it's time to share all the creative ways that donuts can be part of spiritual practice. So biscuit maker Tyler, I think you should start us up.

**Tyler Marz 36:35**

All right, so I'm just gonna ramble off some things that come to mind, I think, first and foremost in line with making biscuits would be making donuts. Of course, eating donuts, sharing donuts with people around you. And then I think we can get a little bit more meta, as the kids call it these days in thinking about the shape of the doughnuts. So things coming full circle, as many donuts around and have a hole in them. Or those doughnuts that are filled or have a filling. It's it's about what's inside that counts getting to the heart of the matter. So those are just a few that came to mind.

**Robin Linkhart 37:18**

I cannot believe that level of diversity you came up with there. That's so that is awesome. Okay, Blake,

**Blake Smith 37:27**

one of the things that Tyler mentioned earlier, the spiritual practice of the making of the doughnuts and taking time to thank God for each of the ingredients, and the people who made it possible. To get those ingredients from farm to table, I think we take for granted, often I just get sit down and eat that favorite meal. And don't think about all of the people and all of the conditions and circumstances etc, that that go into getting that from its beginning to my table. And so. So that's, that's one of the things that I just really appreciated that practices, Tyler was talking about, you know, feeling the coldness of the butter, and just all of the steps and I think to take that practice and allow our food to be a spiritual practice in a way of practicing appreciation as well. So I think, of course, as a Kingdom Builder, I would say we all need to serve as donate laughs and lassies in some way, providing food and support to those without homes. I heard a story, just from World Conference recently about a blessing that was given by one of the apostles at the harmony worship where she looked each one in the eye and said, You are a beloved child of God. And I think, I don't know that it would have the same impact. But I believe if if we were to go around to the to the community of folks who are lost and alone and without homes, and hand the Madona and look them in the eye and say you are a beloved child of God, it might make a difference.

**Robin Linkhart 39:03**

I love that. And I love the way you each bring in your own spiritual type into what you express and how doughnuts can be part of a spiritual practice. And from the sidelines I just want to say as you all have been chatting and sharing stories and possibilities throughout our time together that I keep thinking about what would it look like if biscuit making or donut making was like the spiritual practice we did together and community and then the part about eating them we saved for the next thing where we share communion together. So after we've made the doughnut we cut it up and prepare the emblems May and maybe even the liquid beverage instead of grape juice or water could be coffee or there could be a variety right There's just no end no end to how we can experience the presence of God. I'm pretty sure that our listeners have creative thoughts of their own running through their minds right now about how they can integrate things from their daily life and to spiritual practices. So you all have been on this road for a while? Do you have any tips you could share to help someone who might be exploring new and creative practices for the first time, Tyler?

**Tyler Marz 40:33**

Yeah. So I think my first my first tip would be, don't be afraid to try something new. Because spiritual practices are all about intention and connecting with God. So there isn't a rule about how much time you should spend or what your outcome should be. Simply that you're giving space to focus on God and your relationship, during whatever task it is, and see where the Spirit takes you. Like,

**Blake Smith 41:03**

I would just say to that, when I was thinking about this, I was thinking about how so often we're told to try and try again and try and don't be afraid to fail. The great thing about spiritual practices that you can try and try and try there is no fail. In spiritual practice, you might not get the outcome you're looking for, as Tyler is talking about. But anytime we try to increase our relationship or deepen our relationship with God, there is no failure in that. Couple of things I wrote, were to find an object or a place that brings you peace, and incorporate that into your spiritual practice. I have a little quick story. My place is the red light district. Now, before your imaginations go wild, that's kind of an inside family secret. You see, my family has an affinity, especially for hot Krispy Kreme Doughnuts. And so every Sunday growing up, we would go over across town to my grandparents house, spend the day have lunch, spend the afternoon and then in the evening, on our way home, we would always make our way past the infamous Krispy Kreme Doughnuts. And where the large red light saying hot donuts now was blinking in the window and my dad called that the red light district where we would leave a family of five would leave with at least two dozen hot doughnuts. I mean, that's just how much doughnuts were part of our family. But finding an object or place again, that brings you peace might be a place that might just be an object, maybe you have that secret blanket that you've had, since you were a child that brings you comfort that that you have with you, that brings you closer to God. And I would just also reiterate, in conclusion, what Tyler said, to be honest with yourself, and be authentic to yourself, celebrate the small triumphs and just think about how you win and how and where you experience God and don't try to force someone else's spiritual practices onto yourself. Sure, try them. But don't feel like oh, if I don't do it this way. I'm not being spiritual.

**Robin Linkhart 43:12**

Thank you both for your very wise counsel. We are going to close with a brief spiritual practice somehow connected with doughnuts today. But before we do that, is there anything else you would like to share with our listeners today? How about you, Blake?

**Blake Smith 43:32**

I think I'm good. This has been a great question.

**Tyler Marz 43:35**

Tyler. You know, I don't think I have anything else. I think I've shared pretty in depth about doughnuts and how spiritual they can be.

**Robin Linkhart 43:43**

Well, I just want to share that I've been salivating on and off and there might be a donut in my near future. Okay, so let's turn things over to Tyler. And he will take us through a closing meditation practice before we sign off.

**Tyler Marz 44:00**

All right, fellow listeners. So this spiritual practice, I invite you into, you're welcome to tune back into later in time, because it's going to involve eating a doughnut. So this practice is a contemplative one that you can do while you're eating a doughnut or if all you have is a bagel, I guess that'll have to do but we're celebrating donuts today.

Often in life, we have full circle moments, times where we start doing something or stop doing something. Or we're introduced to something new, but don't fully understand why. It isn't until a certain point in that journey that we understand exactly why we're prompted into such a space. And so I invite you as you eat your doughnut to ponder a moment in your life and your past where you've had a full circle moment. And I'll give you just a bit of time to think of one.

So as you savor each bite, I invite you to savor that moment or moments that you've found. And I'll ask a few questions for you to reflect on.

What was significant about this full circle moment that you're thinking?

How did you grow closer to God or your inner self through that moment?

What was transformed or what new insight was gained.

And in closing to this brief practice, I invite you to hold this moment lightly, sweetly, tenderly, just as a donut is, however, this moment you're recalling transformed view, might you do so similarly? And may we do this, as Paul says in Philippians, two, with tender affection and sympathy that our joy might be complete.

**Robin Linkhart 47:28**

Thank you so much, Tyler, for that meditation. And thanks to both of you for being with us today. Blake and Tyler was just great. And a very special thanks to all of you, our listeners. To hear more from people who actively practice spirituality in their lives. Look for holy grounds in the categories list on our website, Project Zion podcast.org. To hear more from Blake Smith check out Coffee to Go on Project Zion and to hear more from Tyler. Stop in for a few meditations with Awaken to God's Presence. This is your host Robin Linkhart. And you are listening to Project Zion Podcast. Go out and make the world a better place. Take care. Bye bye.