



EPISODE 2 | GODLY EVIDENCE

Programmanus

Intro Music

NARRATOR

This show was recorded when the world was a bit different.

Sound of plane flying

NARRATOR

You could easily fly to the US, hug strangers and you didn't hesitate to share a can of soda.

Sound of a can of soda being opened

NARRATOR

You're listening to Preach Shorts, with Linda Ulfhielm.

Doorbell ringing

MARISSA

Hi! How are you?

LINDA

I'm good! How are you?

MARISSA

Nice to meet you.



LINDA

You, too!

MARISSA

Come in!

NARRATOR

Over the course of eight episodes, Linda is in L.A. talking to people from different faith-based backgrounds about the big questions in life. You're listening to Preach Shorts, snackable edits from the podcast Preach.

MARISSA

I'm Marissa, officially.

LINDA

Yeah, I get that.

MARISSA

...leaving the door open for them or what's going on.

LINDA

In this episode, I'm trying to understand how someone can believe in God, without any proof. So, I'm meeting with Marissa, a bubbly churchgoer from Alabama. She's 22 and works in show business. When I arrive at her house, she rushes to the door to say hi. She's wearing a high-necked sweater. I think it's like, maroon or burgundy colored. And a pair of blue jeans.

LINDA

This house...

MARISSA

We're moving, so...

LINDA

Moving? From here?

MARISSA

No, we're moving in, so it's kind of a mess.

LINDA

No, it's... I love this house.

MARISSA

It's like a neat mess right now.

LINDA

I'm like, "Can I move in?"

LINDA

Marissa lives with a couple of friends from her church.



MARISSA

It's interesting, like, living with three other people of the same faith. Like my friends will text me, and be like, "I'm going through blah-blah-blah. Like, will you pray for me about it?" Which is like, a beautiful thing, but sometimes I'm like, "I'm going through stuff, too." You know what I mean? Like in my head, and I'm like, "No one knows." Or like, I'm the one kind of encouraging people.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

Which I love to do, but it's so interesting to have people that are like, "This is why this is happening," or, "We're going to pray for this."

Music

MARISSA

Like, I feel like, earth is just a place like, I am for a short amount of time, obviously. And so it's like, I'm going to spend 70 years here versus eternity. That's like a...a vapor.

LINDA

But you...you actually like, feel that? So... I get so jealous because I want...

MARISSA

Oh, no!

LINDA

Yeah, I get jealous because I want to be able to feel that, because I'm so scared of death, you know? That's my biggest fear, you know? But what has made you so sure? Have you always been this, like, sure of what's going to happen?

MARISSA

That's a good question.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

Let's just say... Peacefully live this full life and I just doze off one night. Um... And it's like, I find out that it's never been true.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

For me... I used to think when I was little that would be devastating.

LINDA

Yeah.



MARISSA

But now I'm like, I would rather have spent my whole life... I'm sorry I'm getting emotional. I'd rather have spent my whole life with hope. I would rather... What have I lost? If I get to the end, and there is no pearly gate, essentially, there is no, you know what I mean, savior? So I lived my days hoping for something better. So I lived my days, like, thinking of something beyond myself. It's like, okay, so I tried to live a life to be good to people and to leave a good legacy. So if I die, and it wasn't true, then what did I lose?

MARISSA

Madison!

LINDA

Madison, one of Marissa's roommates, has just come home.

MARISSA

Madison, come sit with us!

LINDA

Yeah, welcome! Take a seat!

LINDA

Madison studies art history, which you can clearly tell from her super-well-curated Instagram profile. She brings up her own fear of death, and how her faith helps her deal with it.

MADISON

I'm also terrified of death. It's my biggest fear still.

MARISSA

You are?

MADISON

Yes! It's lack of control.

MARISSA

How it's going to happen, sure.

MADISON

And I'm also just like, there's so much I want to do. But also like, I know the Lord will... The Lord has like, my days counted. He's not going to take me before my time is fulfilled.

LINDA

It's meant to be, yeah.

MADISON

Yeah. Which, that's where my peace comes from. Everyone has their different fears.

LINDA

Yeah.



MADISON

And so it's not like every single Christian is like, "I'm ready." Like, because like again, like, I'm terrified of dying, but at the same time, like, I know where I'm going, so it... I'm scared of it, but I have a peace about it.

Music

MARISSA

I think you're going to hear like, a lot of perspectives this week. And I think that... That's going to be a really cool... Like, that's something *I've* never even done, so... But I think that...the peace factor... Like, you're going to hear that and... You know, I know Buddhists believe that and Hinduism and all those things, and I think like... To me, I'm not like, "Oh, that religion is ugh," because A, like, I'm not religion, and that's not what I'm bogged down to, but I also don't believe in like, putting other people's belief systems down. But for me, it's like, they're all saying like, you know, "Be a kind person," you know, "Put out good vibes," like we were saying. "Believe in a better thing than yourself," etc.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

Um, so I think that that overall message is going to be great for you to hear this week.

LINDA

Yeah, I feel like everything...yeah.

MARISSA

It's going to like, come together.

LINDA

It's more similar than people think.

MARISSA

But the main kicker for me, is why I'm not a Buddhist, why I'm not like, whatever else, um, is that this is the only "religion," quote, unquote, where someone literally died to save me. Or someone gave their life. And so for me, it's like, I can get the whole like, "Be good to people" and "Be kind," and all those things. But then, I have someone who loves me beyond anything I could ever deserve, ever imagine. Anything I could... Any way I could ever love myself, A. No matter what I do, no matter where I go, he's *always* going to be there rooting for me. Whether you believe him or whether you don't. You know what I mean? If I wake up tomorrow and I'm like, "I'm done," he's not going to be done with me.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

And so, that is why we say like, Jesus. And that's why we say that's the one...that's the God.

LINDA

Yeah.

MARISSA

Because there is no other one that's willing to offer us that.



Music

LINDA

I meet up with Kashi, my spiritual, I don't know, "guide," here in L.A. We meet at one of his favorite spots. It's on one of L.A.'s scenic hiking trails. We climb up to the top, find ourselves a comfy spot to sit, and we watch the sun set.

LINDA

When did it get dark?

KASHI

Yeah, no, it sneaks up on you.

LINDA

It went like this...

KASHI

Yeah. Yeah, because we are behind the mountain, so it gets darker in this area.

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

You can still see the cars moving individually.

LINDA

Yeah, it's not that dark.

KASHI

Like, you can see the lights...

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

...like ants.

LINDA

So, I met Marissa.

KASHI

Wow.

LINDA

Yeah.

KASHI

How was that?



LINDA

Uh, it was, uh, interesting. Really interesting. Uh... She was uh, more religious than I thought. I was nervous in the beginning, because I didn't want to say anything wrong.

KASHI

That makes sense, yeah.

LINDA

Yeah. Because she believes so hard, so... It just felt like she really wanted me to uh, feel what she feels. Uh, and I didn't want to disappoint her, and I was like... I tried to ask questions, because I was there to ask questions about how she can believe, and how she's able to believe when she doesn't have any proof, you know?

KASHI

Uh, was there anything she said that stood out to you, that resonated with you? Or like, that you're still thinking about?

LINDA

When she said that, "What if it's not true? And yeah, when I die, nothing happens?" "But I still lived my life with this belief." "And I'm just safe. I feel secure and I feel happy with that. So, what do you have to lose?"

Music

LINDA

You've just heard snippets from my conversation with Marissa. It struck me how confident she is in her beliefs. But at the same time, recognizes that there's no way of really knowing. She would rather live her life with hope, purpose, and a community that supports her, than without it.

So I guess I'm wondering: How do you believe in something that you can't prove? And how do you think believing in something bigger than yourself makes life different?

Music

NARRATOR

You've just finished Preach Shorts, with Linda Ulfhielm. Preach is a production from the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company, by Daniel Persson Mora, Nanna

Olasdotter Hallberg, Ludvig Widman, Tove Jonstoj, Karin Winther and Martina Magorin Borg, with host Linda Ulfhielm.

Music

NARRATOR

This was a program from the Swedish Educational Broadcasting Company.

You'll find more at UR Play.