

Josh Mangelson 00:17

Welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Carla Long 00:33

Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Project Zion Podcast. I'm your host, Carla Long. And today you're listening to Percolating on Faith, but it's a little bit different Percolating on Faith because we don't have Tony and Charmaine Chvala-Smith, which we usually do. But they have introduced us to this topic of mystics. And I wanted to hear about more mystics, and I hope that you do, too. So, I've invited some very, very special guests to talk to us about what a mystic is and maybe even talk about some of their favorite mystics. So, I have David Brock, uh, on the podcast with me. Hi, Dave. (Good morning, Carla.) Uh, Dave and I have been good friends for a very, very long time, for over 20 years. Well, maybe not quite like that, 18 years or something like that. It's been a long time, Dave. And I'm always happy to talk to him. So, Dave, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself?

David Brock 01:27

Oh, my. Uh, well, uh, I live currently in Central Oregon, uh, the birthplace of my wife, Carolyn. And we love it here. Uh, I've been retired, uh, from full time church employment, uh, since 19, since 2016, oh, my. But a start here. Um, and, uh, worked, worked for the church for almost 40 years, uh, most of it in international assignments, uh, Latin America, Africa, the Pacific, uh, that friendly country of Canada to our north. I'm a farm and ranch kid by birth from, uh, the Midwest, Kansas and Missouri. And I still marvel at the fact that I was able to see so much of the world during my time of employment with the church. Uh, so, I'm, I'm grateful. I'm, uh, the father of Emily and the grandfather of August Ray Belmont. Uh, and, uh, Carolyn and I are happy grandparents recently and enjoying every second of it. So, that's a little bit about me.

Carla Long 02:46

That was perfect. And Dave, I don't know why I always forget that you're a Kansas person just like me. We both are. (That's right.) We definitely have that in common. I love that. (. . . we do.) So, Dave, um, I, I think, I don't know if this is true or not, but I feel like we all might have slightly different definitions of what it means to be a mystic. So, could you tell us what you think of when you think of the word mystic, maybe a definition, what it means to you?

David Brock 03:11

Well, I, uh, I think I'd, I'd like to share, uh, three or four definitions from the people who really know the topic. I, I will say, uh, personally, that when I was in seminary, I read about, uh, the German mystics from, like, the 13th century. And something just resonated really deep within me about them. And in through the years, I think most of us hear about St. John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila and, uh, uh, Meister Eckhart and some of those kind of famous mystics, uh, from the Middle Ages. And, um, I've, I have, I had a certain fascination about that, I think, in part because I believe there's a mystic in, in all of us and, uh, let me just share a, a, a, a couple of definitions. A mystic pursues a life vocation of union

with God, passionately seeking direct encounters with the divine. A mystic is someone who has undergone a transformation from which they emerge in the realized oneness of God, self and all things. A mystic is anyone who has the gnawing suspicion that the apparent discord, brokenness, contradictions, and discontinuities that assault us every day might conceal a hidden unity. And just one last one. I've got, I've got a bunch of them, but it speaks of deep yearning, of burning desire for the contemplation and presence of the Divine Beloved. Um, so, you know, we, we can talk about the famous mystics and we can talk about, uh, definitions that are nuanced and, uh, profound and all that. But basically, it's, a mystic is a person who has the deep desire to be in connection with the Divine. Uh, I think that's, that's just a, a simple one. A heart open to see the extraordinary in the ordinary.

Carla Long 05:24

I really love that. You know, when I was talking with Tony and Charmaine about what it meant to be a mystic, I was pretty much 100% convinced that I wasn't a mystic, that I had no mystic in me at all. And they pretty much convinced me that, like you're saying, everybody has a mystic inside of them. If, if, and, and I definitely, I'm, I'm convinced that there's, because it's not like you have to go out into the woods and sit and like, contemplate nature for hours at a time because I would get way too hungry to do that. But, I mean, it, it, there, that yearning for God is the most important part. So, I have, uh, been appreciating mystics more, um, the more I hear about them. So, I'm really excited to have this conversation with you.

David Brock 06:07

I think part of, yeah, thanks, Carla. Uh, I, I think as, you know, as I read about sort of the, the hero mystics through the ages, you know, the, the A-Team, as, as, as it, as it were, uh, I thought, you know, there, there have to be mystics in our own movement, our own restoration movement, our own 1800s on through. And, so, I began to do some thinking about who, who are the mystics in our community. And, um, I think most, most of the, the mystics in Community of Christ were just ordinary folk, our ordinary folk. Uh, in the early days, it was people whose names we may not know from upstate New York, from Kirtland, from Nauvoo, from Independence, from Lamoni. And then, now it's, it, you know, it's the coal miners in Wales back in the 1830s. It's, uh, people in Sao Paulo, in Lubumbashi, and Chengdu, China, in Horconcity, Honduras. Uh, it's, it's all those places. But I, I thought today, um, that I'd like to single out a, a couple of, uh, mystics who some, some listening would be familiar with them. Uh, one is David Hyrum Smith and the other is Ed Guy and they're from two very different, uh, chronological eras, but they're also two very different people and yet, I would both, I would define both as mystics within our movement.

Carla Long 07:42

Well, that sounds fascinating and I'm really excited. Uh, David Hyrum Smith is definitely someone that our listeners will certainly know. I don't know if everybody knows Ed Guy, so, let's get started. Let's do it.

David Brock 07:52

Okay. Well, let's start with David, uh, Hyrum Smith and I'll just give you a little background. He was born on November 17, 1844, at the homestead in Nauvoo, Illinois. He was the youngest son of Joseph Jr., Joseph the prophet, uh, but, uh, never met his father because his father was killed in, uh, Carthage five

months before he was born. And he was the ninth child of Emma. My goodness. But, uh, David became a, a prominent leader in the church, uh, in the reorganization and, uh, known as a painter, a singer, a philosopher, a theologian, uh, a naturalist, a preacher, a poet, a hymn writer, uh, and he was, uh, given the moniker or the nickname Sweet Singer of Israel primarily related to, to his hymn writing. Uh, Mark Scherer, our church historian for many years, said, his greatest gift may have been his artistic creativity which shaped his worldview. All knew, all who knew him well understood the complexity of his life in sensed their loss when his mental health declined, and we'll get to that a little later. It's, it's a beautiful story, but it's also a tragic story. Um, his family and his neighbors portrayed him in some of the following ways. Uh, a child who gave his mother much comfort, gentle, cautious, reserved, loved pets. At age eight, he was described as seeming to be never so happy as when he has a pencil and paper in his hand. David is the boy of all boys, Joseph III, uh, said. The pet of the family, the very personification of gentleness and goodness, a warm temperament with quick witted powers of perceptions. Charles Derry said, He's all of life. He's all of life full of poetry, a very sensitive nature. He abhorred guns and in sharp contrast to his brother, Alexander, learned to respond to opposition with diplomacy and tact. He, uh, very good with words, uh, obviously, as we'll see, and some, a lot of it had to do with his mom, his mother, Emma, was actually a schoolteacher. And, uh, she had a home library and that's where he began to learn grammar and those kinds of things. And then when there was a group of French socialists called the Ikarians, and German immigrants who came to Nauvoo, uh, during his childhood, it's been, after his dad's death, of course, and, uh, after the divisions in the church and all that, uh, but, but he began to learn French and probably some German and those kinds of things. So, uh, language was very important to him and of very much interest. And then he he loved to roam the woods around Nauvoo. And, uh, some of you who are listening, again will know about David's Chamber, which is, is, uh, we, we still know it as that, uh, but that's a, a place I've been and some of you have been where there's a, a little waterfall and a stream flowing through. And apparently David spent a lot of time there in his more contemplative nature. Jason Briggs said that he could by Spirit, by the Spirit sing off new hymns and in new tunes often when the Spirit rested on him. Uh, Blair, W. David Blair said he sang the songs of Zion, many of them his own compositions, till we all forgot the sorrowful world without and felt that paradise was well nigh regained and we were made to rejoice. So, lots and lots of hymns and we'll get to a couple of those that I'll share, but he also wrote for children, he did a lot of writing for the Herald and other church publications. And I found this, uh, this little writing, a quote, a paragraph from his writing to children, to be, uh, the mind of a mystic who pays so much attention to the little things of life and sees, uh, all the grandeur of the cosmos in those little things. But he's just writing about a simple glass of water. And he says to the children, Let us set it down right here on the corner of the table where this little ray of sunshine may shine into it.

David Brock 12:34

See the little rainbow of colors at the bottom of it, the merry sparkles all through the glass, the shimmering bubbles on the surface, and the bead light drops round the brim. We must loo, learn to use our eyes Jenny for the purest pleasure we shall enjoy in life will be in looking at the works of God in man. And if, you know, if, if you read poetry or you read poetic prose, you'll notice how people, some people are able to see things that many of us just miss. We're just not as attentive and that, I think that was very much the spirit of David and is often very much the spirit of a mystic. So, a little bit about his hymns, uh, you know, hymns I grew up with. Now that I'm an old guy, some of you won't know some of these hymns because they're not in the current hymnals. But one of the, one of the ones I can

remember singing as a child was, Let us shake off the coals from our garments and arise in the strength of the Lord. Let us break off the yoke of our bondage and be free in the joy of the word for the pebble hath dropped in the water and the waves circle round with the shock, shall we anchor our bark in the center or drift out and be wrecked on the rock? Uh, another, uh, a number of hymns, A Calm and Gentle Spirit, Let Us Pray for One Another, Worldly Cares a Moment Leave Us, and You May sing of the beauty of mountain and dale, of the silvery streamlet and flowers of the vale, but the place most delightful this earth can afford is the place of devotion, the house of the Lord. You may boast of the sweetness of days early dawn, of the sky's softening graces where day is just gone. But there's no other season or place can compare with the house of devotion, the season of prayer. And, uh, during that time, he also began to write poetry. Some about, uh, like his, uh, his father and his uncle, martyrs of the church, but a lot of, uh, his poetry was more about his own exploration of, of his own depths. Um, I stand upon the shore of a wide sea whose unknown depths profound I soon must cross when the last sand of life runs out for me. The clouds have fled, I look back on my life and find it brighter than I was aware. So, uh, David began to travel with his brother, Alexander, and sometimes with Joseph III as they went to Utah to combat ideas that Joseph was a polygamist and they tried to win converts to then, the then RLDS church, but they had a lot of, you know, tough times, obviously. And I won't go into the details about that. But, uh, but he became well known and was well loved out there until he began to stand up against Mormon perspectives and, uh, some of the Mormon leadership who were trying to convert. Um, drawing on his ability with words, his genial disposition, his gentle humor and his ability to see beauty and nature, he held his own in the public eye. But for this delicate, political, highly sensitive child of sorrow, the tragic battle with mental illness was about to begin. And some of that, people surmise, is that there was so much tension and struggle in Utah for this sensitive person who also began to realize that maybe his father did indeed practice polygamy. It, it, it was very troubling to him. But in March of 1870, he went back home to, he was living in Plano, uh, Illinois at that time and, uh, continued to court Clara Charlotte Hartshorn of Sandwich, Illinois, uh, with whom he'd fallen in love, fallen in love early. So, they were married in May of 1870 and moved into the Nauvoo Mansion House. And, uh, it was there a year or so later, in March, 1871, that Elbert A. was born and Elbert A., again, many of you will know, uh, had prominent roles in the church including being in the Presidency and also Presiding Patriarch Evangelist for 20 years.

David Brock 17:17

But I, I thought we'd, we'd look at, uh, just, uh, some examples of his connection to nature and what he wrote about that in sermons and speeches or sketches. So, he's, uh, he's in Utah and he writes, The distant mountains, hung on the horizons verge, blue and white, blue with shadowy ravines and white with snow, cloud-like and dim and vast, now sinking below the swell of the vast plain now rising again, the same following us like a phantom. And then he's on the observation deck of a train that's headed west. And, uh, he says this, The expression of the plains is exactly that of the sea--this is for a Kansan like you and me, Carla--vastness, what Ruskin calls infinity and freedom, the mind seems to expand while gazing upon them, thoughts of eternity, of everlasting life swell the heart with grateful praise. This, sometimes in looking upon the far stretches, reaching way to the horizon, is impressed so keenly on the mind as to be almost painful, accompanied as it is, by a sense of loneliness. And then, uh, in 1872, while he's out in Utah, he writes this treatise. Uh, 9,000 word, words called De Profundis or from the depths. And what he's trying to do, which, which, uh, is very much a mystical kind of thing to do, is he integrate, he's trying to integrate science and theology. Uh, and, and here's a paragraph from

that. He says, We need not be troubled in regard to the stability of the planets in their spheres. Neither need we fret as regards the source of the energy of the Sun or Earth nor fear its expenditure for its origin is co-eternal with matter. There is unity in the universe. Man is a tide, a stream flowing over the Earth. Our individuality is only in part. We are finally meant to be in union with God and the lamb. And, uh, you know, that, that's a, a way of writing that, uh, is 1800s kind of writing, but what it, what it points out to me is this common thread among the mystics through the ages, about all, all being unity, uh, or a can, the, everything is connected in, uh, you know, from, in those days the smallest cell to, to what was understood of the cosmos and God in and through all those things uniting us together. So, that, that's all part of David. And then, uh, as, uh, as time goes on his illness, uh, begins and, you know, there's ideas about what, what that was and whether with today's medications a chemical imbalance could have been, uh, improved, uh, all that. But it, it's, it's a tragic story, but he, um, he's out in California doing church work in, uh, this would have been around 18, 1875, 77, or whatever. And, uh, he writes a letter to his mother, uh, in which he says, Mother, this is in 1870 actually, says, Mother, I must tell you, I feel happy sometimes, most always. But today and last night, I feel very sad. And the tears run out of my eyes all the time and I don't know why. I have to work away as tight as I can clip to keep the rest from seeing it. I wonder if something sad is going to happen. Strive as I will, my heart sinks like lead. So, I must go to work or I will make you feel sad, too. I must tell someone my troubles or I should, well, I don't know what. God bless you, mother. From your child. And that one just about tears me apart and, because he, he and his mother had a very close relationship. And the last thing he would want to do is to hurt his mother. But this is a point where he just, he's so desperate that he has to say someone and he entrusts this to her.

David Brock 22:12

And, so, this Sweet Singer of Israel is beginning to descend into a, a deep and dark place. And finally, the family tries to, to keep him at home. But he begins to cause so many problems that Joseph III finally says we, we just, we have to put him in an asylum. And, uh, so, that's what happens. Uh, I think that was an 1877 that, uh, it says on January 19, accompanied by the town constable of Plano, Illinois, Joseph took David the 35 long miles north to the asylum. So, he, uh, he died on August the 29th, 1904, just three months shy of his 60th birthday. And he was buried in Lamoni, uh, in the Rose Hill Cemetery, which again many of us who hear this will know that place. And a, a memorial message, uh, from California from people who loved him said, We note the humble grace and sweet humility that marks his mean. We see the man. We note his calling, but err our hopes were fully born, we saw the shadows gather and blossoms fade, the life long, scarce and sound the, the life song scarce had sounded its once exalted key till notes of melancholy sounding like nell monopolize the strain. The brightest colors of the picture grew dim and somber and our prophecy erased. Well, I, I'm, uh, I'm feeling very sad as I share this, but, uh, just, we'll close out here on, on David by saying, the Sweet Singer of Israel was no more. But the memory of the church's most promising philosopher, public speaker, poet and hymn writer remain. Perhaps the words of a letter from David to Joseph in a, Joseph III, in 1871, expressing his desire to return to Utah, capture best the spirit of this self proclaimed wanderer, outward bound. Here's what he says, Now I have made bold to endeavor to encourage and to tell of a probable journey and it's opening and to speak my inner thoughts to you. My aim is honor. My happiness is love. My destination is Christ's bosom. My hunger is righteousness. My thirst is purity. So, to close I just, uh, reflect on, Why does David H. Smith speak to me? And I think I would summarize it by saying I'm moved by the disciplines of observation and attentiveness in David's drawings, which I didn't mention

he, uh, there's a lot of artwork. In fact, I have a number of images of his artwork, mostly drawings, not paintings, some paintings, of scenes of nature. In his paintings of the landscape of Nauvoo in the West, and if you've ever seen a painting of old Nauvoo, that's David's painting. I'm, I'm moved by the connections between creation and creator, the now and the eternal in his hymnody. I'm moved by the honest struggle and longing in his poetry. I'm moved by his exploration of the relationship between science and religion. Uh, an amazing, amazing person in the life of our movement.

Carla Long 26:03

Wow, that is amazing. I, I mean, I, of course, have known of David Hyrum Smith. I did not know of all of that. I did not realize he spent so much time in Utah, for instance. Um, but I think Utah could maybe even make a poet out of me. I mean, it's so beautiful. And, but, you know, I don't know about you, but when I think about that time in our church history, you know, the, um, 1830s, 40s, 50s, 60s, whatever, I, I think about it more as being a time of turmoil and I rarely think about it as a time of beauty and a time that you can find beautiful things within it. So, it's actually really refreshing to me to hear that David Hyrum Smith saw that beauty, even through his pain, because, oh, my gosh, that letter that you read almost made me cry. So, I, I really enjoyed hearing about that, the, the beautiful words that he found and all of that stuff, too.

David Brock 26:59

Yeah, well, you, you've, you said it well, Carla. And I think that's, that is why his, his voice, uh, his story, uh, merits, uh, being heard many times. Uh, you know, he, he did a lot to, to shape the early movement and that still shapes us today. Uh, and it is an invitation to, uh, encounter with the divine in, in nature in tiny little things. Uh, and even in the, the tragedy and, and struggle of life which we all experience in some ways, as did the, many of the mystics.

Carla Long 27:39

Yeah, they were just very good at saying them. Very good at expressing your feelings. So, thank you so much about, for that trip, um, of, that story about David Hyrum Smith. Um, I think that we have some more time if you want to talk about Ed Guy.

David Brock 27:53

Okay. Uh, yeah, I'll be happy to, to share. And, and as I say, this is a, a, a different personality, a different era. But, a, a, another amazing hero of the faith and in, in, uh, my estimation. So, Ed, uh, actually it's Edward Ellsworth Guy, uh, was born in Santa Monica, California on August 26, 1934. His, uh, his parents, uh, were, uh, Florence and John. And, uh, his dad, his dad was born in England and then grew up in Vancouver and Calgary, Canada, then moved to the US to work as an airplane mechanic and, uh, later became a much sought after engineer and worked for TWA and was assigned during the war years to, uh, to work with the, the military and, or the, you know, federal government. So, because of that, they moved quite a bit. They were in California. They were in Missouri. They were in Washington, DC. They were in Washington. They were in Oregon. So, Ed kind of grew up in all those places. And, um, he had a, interestingly enough, kind of connecting with David Hyrum Smith, he had, he had a really close relationship to his mom who was a very dedicated disciple and very deeply, uh, immersed in, uh, the Reorganization and those kind of things. His dad was not a member and, uh, maybe not a Christian, but, but a good man. Uh, so, Ed went to Graceland College in Iowa. And, uh,

after a year of being at Graceland he just goes, Oh, this is not for me. So, he joined the Army and went to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for a couple of years and then decided to try college again. So, he graduated from Central Washington College. He got his bachelor's degree then and then he went back to, uh, the Kansas City area and, uh, got a, a master's degree in social work from the University of Missouri. But, well, you know, what we, we know Ed most for is that he lived for almost 50 years I would say in, uh, in Latin America or associated with Latin America. He lived in, in Mexico. He lived in Honduras. He lived in Guatemala. He lived in El Salvador. And, uh, any account of his life is a profile of, of a servant ministry. So, he would, you know, give his last peso or limpira or dollar or whatever mon, money it was. He'd throw in a shirt and shoes if necessary. He slept on dirt floors and narrow benches. He accompanied the sick, the dying the imprisoned. He prayed with those who feared for their lives as bullets flew through homes and shops during El Salvador's civil war. He started projects to bring a small income to refugees in tent camps. He saved a drug addicted woman, literally retrieved from a gutter in San Salvador and over many years nurtured her one faltering step at a time back to safety and health. He helped the endangered escape to Canada in an underground railroad of sorts, saving the lives of those marked for murder in the 1980s during the terrible civil war in El Salvador. Um, after the mass killings in El Salvador and Guatemala, he worked tirelessly and at great risk to expose the unspeakable crimes and help families recover the remains of loved ones from unmarked graves. He anointed the heads with the oil and prayed for healing. He walked into family and community conflict as peacemaker and reconciler. He told the stories of the Bible and Book of Mormon. He helped plant churches in mining towns and remote mountain villages amidst the chaos and daily scramble for survival in the urban centers of Mexico and Central America. So, that's all true, but it's also true that the guy, the guy, Ed Guy, he could make you laugh. And he'd tell you stories about, like, he was a smokejumper in Idaho and some of the wildest, scariest tales. Uh, or, and then he worked in fishing vessels off the coast of Alaska for a lot of years. In fact, when he was in Latin America, he'd run out of money because he'd give it all away. So, he'd go work in Alaska to, on a fishing boat, make money and then go back to Latin America. He, uh, in, in the midst of all that he didn't take very good care of himself.

David Brock 32:39

Had congestive heart failure, and he, he died of a heart attack on the streets of Guatemala City on a mission to work with, uh, an organization that was bringing justice for families of the disappeared. Uh, here's, here's some things his, his brother-in-law says about him, which I think capture Ed really well. He says, All you had to do was tell Ed about your cause and it became Ed's cause, too. Ed was passionate about what he believed in, passionate in his desire to help, passionate in his desire to give aid and comfort, and passionate in his desire for justice. Wherever there was suffering, Ed suffered. Wherever there was injustice, Ed agonized, and wherever there was pain, Ed anguished. Ed was always searching for what more he could do to help. He accepted these challenges willingly. But no one can sustain the amount of emotional punishment Ed endured and no one's heart, even filled with as much love as Ed's was, can survive the frustration of living in a world with so much pain, suffering and injustice. Ed had an open mind and an open heart. No pre, preconceived notions, no judgments. He was never condescending, never patronizing. He was a teacher and he was a learner. He was a talker. Oh, man, was he a talker. Actually, Ed was the poster child for the dangers of caffeine. Once he got that motor running, the best thing to do is just hang on or just get out of the way. I thought that, that needs to be in, in this podcast which speaks of those kinds of things. Edward, the cornerstone of Ed's life was his faith. His faith was unyielding, steadfast, resolute, tenacious and absolute. Ed's faith was

what bound him, what motivated him, what inspired him, what gave him joy, and what ultimately gave him the strength to sacrifice his life. Edward Ellsworth Guy literally gave his life in the service of others. He did it willingly, consciously, and without hesitation. He asked for and expect to get, expected nothing in return. So, I, uh, this is more personal, but I, I want to share about a week I spent with Ed, uh, the first time I met him and just, I think it gives a pretty good sense of who he is and what his life was like. And then we'll get more specifically into some things about his, his mystical tendencies, as it were.

David Brock 35:17

So, here we go. I met Ed in January, 1978 when Thad Wilson organized the first Community of Christ youth camp in Honduras. I was living in Mexico City, so flew into San Pedro Sula for the event. At the end of the camp, Ed asked if we, uh, Thad and I, would accompany him to offer ministry in El Corretto on Sunday morning. Eager for adventure, I said, Yes, not knowing what we were in for. We arose early after a night of rain and for three hours, climbed the slippery mountain to the home of the Hernandez family. We arrived to the best cup of coffee, raised, roasted ground and prepared right there, that I had ever tasted, then shared in a memorable worship. Sometimes, Ed rode a horse through the mountains. Occasionally he hitchhiked on the seldom traveled dirt and gravel roads. Mostly he walked, often by whatever moonlight was available, as he arose early enough to get from Saturday night services in one village to morning services up the mountain. Or he would lead a class in San Pedro Sula, finish in time to catch a vehicle to Lake Yojoa, paddle across, often in the agitated waves of late afternoon, and arrive for an evening service at Elconcitos. Then he would o, often sleep on a narrow bench at the church. After worship and a meal and El Corretto in that, on that Sunday of January, 1978, we were able to catch a Land Rover headed down the logging road. We stopped in a small town along the way and learned that there had been a knife fight at a wedding the night before. Because of the conflict, Ed stayed behind to try to bring reconciliation. He sent us back to La Buena Fe promising to catch up later. The next day, we returned to San Pedro Sula, without Ed who was still dealing with, still dealing with the crisis on the mountain, you know, the knife fight. He showed up in the early morning of the following day and along with Seventy Tony Jimenez, we drove to Chimaltenango, Guatemala. We traveled to the village where Ed had worked following the devastating earthquake of 1976. We made our way down a steep logging road into (. . .) to meet Rolando and his family and share with them in conversation and prayer. As the sun moved across the sky, we kept insisting to Ed that we best make le, we best leave the valley while there was still light. Because the road was so steep, Tony's pickup couldn't climb the Valley Road. We climbed out and pushed until exhausted. We were tired and not a little frustrated with Ed for getting us into this mess. He chided us gently by saying this was the Lord's work and we needed to have more faith and pray for God's help. This is what ministry is all about, he told us. We were in no mood to pray there on the mountain, exhausted from pushing the vehicle whose tires were now significantly worn down. So, we made Ed pray. And we pushed and muttered and tried to be more pleasant, faithful and prayerful. Before long, we were on an easier road where Ed had us stop to praise God for protecting us on the way.

David Brock 38:36

That's how my relationship with Ed began. And then we didn't have much interaction until 1940, 1994 when I began a six-year assignment as the Apostle for Latin America. And by that time, Ed was no longer living in, in, uh, Honduras, but he was in El Salvador. As I visited members and friends of the church in El Salvador, I heard story after story of persons whose lives had been saved by Ed during the

war, literally. Persons who were sent to safety on an underground railroad from El Salvador to Canada. Persons to whom Ed delivered much needed food in conflicted neighborhoods by skirting the rebels and or talking his way past government soldiers, sometimes with the benefit of a handkerchief waved as a white flag. He once saw a soldier about to shoot an unarmed rebel. Ed jumped from behind a building, ran into the street and yelled at the soldier, In the name of God, I command you not to kill that man. The shocked soldier turned and ran and Ed thanked God. Ed was a man of the people. He lived with the poor. He lived as the poor. He was a person of adventure and risk in part because of his personality, but more so because of his faith and his values. He was a man of prayer, a man who knew the value of his own personal prayer and meditation time, time alone midst the constant pressing presence of others. He could just as easily pray on a street corner or in a circle of seekers in a noisy market as in a church building. He prayed around countless hospital beds, but also while lying on the floor of a house reciting Psalm 91, I think it is, praying the flying bullets would not kill his friends, You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday. He prayed just as naturally in those circumstances as in congregational worship. The scriptures mattered to Ed. He read them, meditated on them, memorized them, preached and taught them. He knew the stories of Jesus. They were models and guides that shaped his life in ministry. Bible and Book of Mormon stories were his story, woven into the days, nights and decades of his life. He believed deeply in the sacraments, especially baptism and laying on of hands for the sick. As Darryl Mink, appointee minister to Latin America for many years, often said, Ed was a true Christian. A person of faith who made you a person of faith. He believed in answered prayer and if you were around him long enough, you'd be a believer, too. Ed would get you into the wildest, uh, situations, pretty much daily, in fact. Uh, often he had to drag you because it was untimely, inefficient, unplanned, impractical and dangerous. Afterward, you realized what he did was what Jesus would have done and you were a richer person for having participated. He often relied on his intuition to guide him sometimes when he entered a space you could see him subtly uses downturned open hand to feel whether there was good energy or bad in the room. He paid attention to vibes, he called them, that he got in the presence of strangers. He entertained almost every stranger as the Christ. He could always find the good in anyone no matter how hidden. On occasion, however, particularly during the years of civil war, he learned to trust his intuitions regarding whether another person was a danger to him or others. He said he can feel evil. I learned not to question him. He neglected his own self care. He had pills for congestive heart failure which we found rolling freely in plastic bottles in an otherwise empty suitcase. He said they made him feel funny, so he stopped taking them. Doctors, doctors who he rarely saw, recommended a change in eating habits, but he loved his salt and soft drinks and never ate anything but what with, what those around him ate. He often went without. If he bought food, he bought the cheapest. The years of exposure to bacteria and parasites took their toll. He usually laughed it off. Illness slowed him, though. as he aged, he took longer to get started the beginning of the day. But he never lost his drive to get up, to go, to do, to be with--never. He never married. Uh, there's a story of a Honduran woman who loved him and for whom he held considerable affection. She would have welcomed marriage, but he continued his outward bound ways. Gone for seven years, he returned to find that she had married and said he likely would have married her if she had just waited a little longer.

David Brock 43:39

Oh, my. What a guy. Um, well, there, there's so much to tell. But, uh, uh, I'll, I'll begin to draw this to, to a close by saying that the person of the moment was the one who mattered for Ed. There might be a government agency appointment to keep, there might be (. . .) to catch, there might be sermons to preach. But if a person in need arrived or was in his path, all his future plans were of little significance until the present need was attended to. And I will confess that can be very frustrating at times. Uh, but Jesus-like, so how do you, how do you argue with that? Like the mystics of the ages, Ed shared an intimacy with God that most of us don't have, at least not often. He embodied so many of the fruits of the Spirit in his living. He lived out the principles and values that many of us hold up and talk about, but only sporadically demonstrate. I don't think I've met another human being who valued equally the poorest person alongside the rich and famous. No one, absolutely no one was more sensitive to the well being of those wounded by life unacknowledged or unaware of their worth. Ed was savvy, but there was an innocence about him, a naivete, a simple childlike faith in God and humanity. He understood, I think, that God is mystery. God is transcendent in other. Mostly for Ed, however, God was personal, intimate, imminent, Abba. God was engaged in every aspect and detail of life. Ed was, uh, given along with Ed and Melina Ramos de Marino, the Human Rights Award for service to humanity at the 1994 World Conference, and Laureen Hagaman, who was chair of the Human Rights Committee, uh, shared the following, Woven through all his labors are ministries of spiritual comfort and pastoral sensitivity. He demonstrates a powerful faith, high personal values and a boundless love for persons of all stations in life. Perhaps the impact and effectiveness of the ministry and service of Edward Guy are best perceived in the hundreds of persons who call out to him by name and city streets and byways where he has been a force for the highest ideals of Christianity. He's a living paradigm of the Good Samaritan. Lloyd Hurshman summarized Ed's years of service by this, by saying this, Perhaps very few are called to be homeless in order to reach out to the homeless, to be hungry if by that means the hungry might be fed, to sacrifice health and life expectancy that others might live. But to Edward Ellsworth Guy, human being of note, that is the normal course of life. When Ed died in Guatemala on September 21, 2001, church members from El Salvador and Guatemala arranged for a viewing and worship before his body was returned to the United States for burial. They didn't have enough money to buy a casket, so quietly worked out an unofficial arrangement to rent a casket for a few hours. Ed would have been o, quite okay with that and undoubtedly would have found it humorous. He would have been angry if, in fact, he would have been angry, in fact, if his friends had wasted their limited finances to otherwise honor his death. He's buried near his father and mother in Bayview Cemetery near Samish Island, Washington. His tone, tombstone simply reads, Well done, good and faithful servant.

Carla Long 47:43

Wow. Wow. Like, when you said you want to talk about Ed Guy, I'd heard the name before, but I, I literally had no idea. I think I sat here listened to you with my mouth open, like, the whole time when you described his life. Like, I wouldn't, I mean, I don't know him like you did, um, but, I mean, the way you describe him is not how I picture a mystic at all, at all. Like I said, I picture a mistake, someone going out in the trees and looking at trees. This is not that guy.

David Brock 48:19

This Guy is not that guy.

Carla Long 48:22

Literally. I'm, I'm just astounded and how cool that you worked with him. That's very cool.

David Brock 48:31

Yeah, one of the, one of the great privileges and like, like I said, you know, sometimes he could be very frustrating because you'd, you'd have your calendar all worked out and you're going to be there for just a few days and we got to do this, this, this and that. And he would just blow that to pieces because there might be a sick person lying in the street or somebody comes running to say this person is sick and, and that was your agenda.

Carla Long 48:56

Um, I'm sure it would drive me absolutely insane. Like, he, he's someone that I would really, really want to be around and someone I would not want to be around all at the same time. (Yeah.) Well, that is just fascinating. I have learned so much from you today, Dave. That's, it's been a really wonderful podcast. Thank you so much for sharing, especially sharing mystics from Community of Christ slash RLDS history. I think that, um, our people and friends of Community of Christ need to realize that we definitely have lots and lots of mystics in our movement as well. In fact, it helps balance us out from all of the heart people and head people and kingdom people that we have as well.

David Brock 49:36

Yeah, well said. Well said. Yeah, there, there are a lot of heroes in this little community of ours and they, they need to be celebrated.

Carla Long 49:46

They do. We certainly stand on the shoulders of giants. Uh, well, Dave, thank you so much, again, for taking your, taking the time and for, um, delivering your expertise to us, uh, about David Hyrum Smith and about Ed, Edward Ellsworth Guy, I think it was, (Yes.) I only remember it 'cause I have an Uncle Ellsworth, that (Oh, really.) name's (. . .). So, it's a good old fashioned Kansas name. So, thanks again, Dave. You've just been, it's just been wonderful.

David Brock 50:15

Thank you. My privilege, Carla.

Josh Mangelson 50:24

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