

The Lovelight Stories

PODCAST

Ep: 18 | Adoption Story + Right to Life with Zemmie Fleck | SHOW TRANSCRIPT

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00:02.98

lovelightstories

Ze me welcome to the Love light stories Podcast I am so excited for people to hear from you today. It is just lovely to be able to reconnect with you and um, help you share your story.

00:15.76

zemmie_grtl_org

Yes, and thank you so much Stephanie for having me today and for highlighting this adoption story of course to me. It's a very special story and lots of people that I've told it to over the years they definitely have gravitated towards it. It. Said wow, it's such a unique story. So.

00:36.95

lovelightstories

It really is and I'm just so excited for everyone to be able to hear that and why don't We just start right? there. Let's dive into your story tell us about bring us back to those moments when you were a little baby and. Were adopted by your parents.

00:55.92

zemmie_grtl_org

Certainly so my story begins in November of 1964 when I was born and even my birth is actually. Amazing and I'm very grateful that the lord spared my life because one of the things about my birth mother is that she actually had sepsis. She had gotten very sick and in March of 1965 when I was five months old my mother passed away from lock jaw and lots of people don't know about locked Jaw. It's a form of tetanus but the tetanus has gotten so severe that the person is left. Like just stiff as a board and um, that's something that's very unique even for 1965 because there were ways of ah of resolving tetanus and of treating it. But um. That really tells you how foreign destitute my family was and that my mother did not seek medical. Its attention. So um, i.

02:19.92

zemmie_grtl_org

Lord took her life at that point and I was five months old and I had 4 older siblings. My oldest sibling was 14 at the time and so we were left with a father who was um. An alcoholic he from stories that I've heard. He was very abusive and so the children were basically left on their own. Um for a short period of time and then that's when my adoptive parent too for. For the listeners of your podcast I will refer to them throughout this story as my mother and my father or my mom

and my dad because those are the people that I grew up knowing as my parents and. So they entered that picture about I believe it was two days after my mother's death and um, my father who knew my older siblings. He knew my 2 older siblings at the time. Because periodically they would go to the same church that my mom and dad were at and my father worked with the youth at the church. My mother served as the church secretary at the time and so when he found out that the Miller Children

03:43.76

lovelightstories

So.

03:50.89

zemmie_grtl_org

Ah, their mother had died and he called up his wife who was at the church office and said.

04:01.46

zemmie_grtl_org

You're going to have to tell them that you're not going to be back to work tomorrow because I'm going to pick up the Miller Children and bring them to live with us now. Let's back up just a minute to.

04:09.16

lovelightstories

Her.

04:16.82

zemmie_grtl_org

July the second of 1964 about five months before I was born that is when my mother and father actually got married so they had been married for less than a year and. Here are 5 children not their own not related to them 5 children from the ages of five months to 2 then fourteen years old um without basically a home.

04:36.13

lovelightstories

Yeah.

04:54.80

zemmie_grtl_org

And they brought us to live with them and they lived 1 block over from petach tree street in Atlanta Georgia where I've grown up all my life actually in de indicator Georgia but they lived 1 block over from peach tree street in downtown Atlanta and they had a 1 bedroom. Ah.

05:12.23

lovelightstories

He.

05:13.11

zemmie_grtl_org

Apartment. So the arrangement was that my 2 brothers slept on the screened in porch in Bunk Beds and my 2 sisters slept on the divided live marine sofa and I slept in a baby crib in the hallway.

05:31.73

lovelightstories

Yes, and the fact that this essentially took place overnight I think you said two days after your birth mother died your your dad called up your mom and said this is this is what we're doing and I think I mean that says so much.

05:32.52

zemmie_grtl_org

And.

05:36.79

zemmie_grtl_org

It is.

05:50.88

lovelightstories

About your parents number one that your your mom was like okay like just all right, You're saying we're doing this. Let's let's do that and they weren't necessarily prepared in a way that a lot of people would say they would need to be prepared as far as a living situations yet they did it. Tell us about your parents like like tell us more about that because I think that really does say a lot but but give us insight.

06:21.12

zemmie_grtl_org

Well I will say that the example that was lived out by my parents time and time again while I grew up and as I got older and as I saw them approaching their own physical deaths. Um, it was one of the.

06:38.43

zemmie_grtl_org

Just an incredible trust in the Lord Jesus and an incredible trust that he would make away no matter what the circumstance is and they lived that out for all of us. Um, they taught me. How to trust him for everything and it hasn't been until I've had my own children and grandchildren and walked some of this path through later life that I have realized just how much faith they actually. Exhibited in so many things that they did and I do remember a story that my mother would share with me that really touched my heart this kind of brought to me the realness of what it meant for her to become. A mother of 5 children I mean I can't even myself imagine it. Um, but to to become the mother of a five month old child instantly not knowing really what the child needs and.

07:34.78

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

07:49.25

zemmie_grtl_org

You know, just but those instincts ah kicking in but her story that she told me was that when I first came to live with them. She was so concerned that um. I would cry and she wouldn't hear me in the night she wouldn't wake up I would just you know something would be wrong and she wouldn't know that it was wrong and she said so what I did was I prayed to the lord and asked

him to give me mother's. Ears and that story has just touched my life immensely. Um that she has the deepness of the care that she wanted so much to take care of us and to to.

08:24.18

lovelightstories

Ah.

08:29.24

lovelightstories

Hey.

08:40.96

zemmie_grtL_org

Just be a wonderful mother which she absolutely was but that's just 1 example of stories that she's told but but just over and over the the trust that they had in the Lord Jesus and in every circumstance and.

08:41.21

lovelightstories

Yeah, yes.

08:58.97

zemmie_grtL_org

And that was not that our adoption was not the only story that that happened with.

09:03.10

lovelightstories

Yeah, yeah, Wow, Just incredible I'm still trying to place myself in the shoes of your parents which I think is nearly impossible I mean it to be that. Devoted to the Lord and what he's calling you to do and um, just that complete trust in faith. Um, it's It's huge. It's huge.. It's really indescribable you you mentioned to me that and this was surprising I thought that um. You didn't know you were adopted because you were so young and I don't remember when when did you when were you told that you were adopted and like bring us back to that moment.

09:48.34

zemmie_grtL_org

Sure that moment is very alive and vibrant in my mind even now today I remember exactly the time when my father told me about our adoption.

09:58.80

lovelightstories

Yeah.

10:06.19

zemmie_grtL_org

And that was when I was thirteen years old and I don't know why he chose to wait until that time to talk to me about it. Um, unless it was because you know I was getting older and probably there were things in the house I remember books that had. My siblings names in them but they had Miller They didn't have far and you know things like that. But I really didn't you know it just never really affected me to the point where I really asked the questions but I remember the day at 13 years old when he. When he told me about our adoption and the impact that it had on me but I

have to say that I had no clue beyond before that time because they treated us all so much the same because the rest of the story is that they actually had. 2 children biologically their own um following my birth at in in 1 64 and then I had a sister that was born in 68 a brother that was born in 73 so you know we were all. Such a family unit and I never I never experienced a difference in how they treated me and how they treated their own children so that to me speaks a lot to to how they just knew this was. We're taking people into our family.

11:42.21

zemmie_grtl_org

And we are a family.

11:44.30

lovelightstories

Yeah, and to be 13 years old and and finally learn that it it does me and like that they had to have treated you so well and so similar to all of this rest of the siblings and the biosiblings as well. And um. I can imagine like what were some of the thoughts that went through your mind when you first learned that this wasn't your biological parents.

12:11.50

zemmie_grtl_org

I think it wasn't so much that um I thought about the fact that I biologically didn't belong to them I think really what? what impacted me the most was here are people who. Really didn't even know us and they certainly didn't know me they I don't even know if they had seen me before that five months but they they did not know us well and yet they were willing to just.

12:32.57

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

12:46.75

zemmie_grtl_org

Just take us in and to love us and do care for us because honestly in speaking with my older sister regarding some of the circumstances when my mother died my. The family members did not want to take all of the children they wanted to divide us up and they only wanted the older children. They didn't want the younger ones and so that to me is a feeling of very great sadness.

13:13.97

lovelightstories

He.

13:21.57

lovelightstories

Yeah.

13:23.15

zemmie_grtl_org

Even now because I think you know what would make you not want to help your family members. But that's just the way The lord had it because I often tell people I don't know where I would be if I.

13:36.25

lovelightstories

Yeah.

13:40.00

zemmie_grtl_org

My mom and dad had not adopted us I don't know where I would be and I certainly wouldn't have the experiences of such a wonderful childhood that I have and of having my younger siblings as well because they are just.

13:56.78

lovelightstories

3

13:58.32

zemmie_grtl_org

They are my siblings. It does not matter whether it's blood or otherwise they are my siblings as well. So.

14:04.99

lovelightstories

Yeah,, that's so precious. Yeah, so your older siblings I'm assuming did know they were adopted because they were old enough to go through that and understand what was happening. Um, but they apparently hadn't said anything to you either. Which I think is interesting. Um, but based on what they have told you what? Ah what? if they said to you about like or have they said too about what life was like at home early on when you were still too little to remember.

14:38.21

zemmie_grtl_org

Ah, my older sister who I've spoken with probably the most about our pre-adoptive days and to some degree my older brother but to my older sister. She.

14:52.22

zemmie_grtl_org

Remembers So many times being very hungry, not having anything to eat, not having things that other young people had at her age and but but the hunger is what she.

14:57.34

lovelightstories

Um.

15:11.66

zemmie_grtl_org

Really was impressed by the most was was just the feeling of being hungry and and she shared many many stories about um, there's ah, there's a story that I'll share here that pertains to butter soup and.

15:27.56

lovelightstories

Oh.

15:30.78

zemmie_grtL_org

Butter soup was melted butter in a bowl because there was nothing else to eat and she remembers she she has related to me stories of ah her and my older brother and my parents.

15:37.63

lovelightstories

Um, ah.

15:51.40

zemmie_grtL_org

My biological parents actually hitchhiking and um, you know it was a different day and time. But even so I think ah parents taking their children do hitchhike this doesn't really.

16:06.92

lovelightstories

Yeah.

16:09.85

zemmie_grtL_org

Strike me as being a very good or smart thing. Um and and just you know different scenarios but but particularly them being very poor, very destitute very ah, very hungry. So.

16:25.68

lovelightstories

Yeah, wow yeah, it's it's a sad picture because I'm sure your mom probably your biological mother probably wanted to provide a better life but just couldn't I don't know that but you know it's ah. Um, sad, but thankfully your your parents adopted you and your siblings. So. There's a beautiful story there after as well. Um, what did what was it first based on what you were told. When your parents first brought all of you home. What was it like and help us kind of get an understanding I guess of their truth faith I guess you have shared you know some about their faith and the circumstances when they first brought you home but is there anything else. That you have been told about by your older siblings of what it was first like when they came home to your mother and father.

17:24.21

zemmie_grtL_org

Um, well I'll share this and this will give you kind of an idea of their approach to things that being my older siblings. My mother did tell me that when it. They had brought us home to live with them and maybe it was about two weeks after we had all been with them and she said that my oldest brother and sister came. And talked to her and my dad and said we would really like to call you mom and dad so that you know that to me also indicates that there was.

18:05.70

lovelightstories

Oh wow.

18:17.39

zemmie_grtL_org

This feeling of acceptance. There was this feeling of love. There was a feeling of genuine kindness that here are people who care are for us and um and that we trust them.

18:23.70
lovelightstories
Yeah.

18:36.36
lovelightstories
Yes, ah.

18:36.49
zemmie_grtl_org
And so we'll call them mom and dad and it wasn't until we we had to actually live with my parents for 4 years before the adoption went through and um because because backing up to the day that i. Left in my old house and moved into my new house. My dad just came and picked us up in a car and he told my older siblings from what I've heard in the stories that basically said.

19:01.96
lovelightstories
And.

19:13.28
zemmie_grtl_org
Take whatever you're taking from the apartment right now because you're not coming back here to live and so I'm assuming they gathered up what little things they had and what they wanted to take and then we you know. As far as I know no one ever even went back. There. Um, there was no all the ties were broken. So.

19:37.10
lovelightstories
Yes, wow yeah, it was it was an overnight thing for both of both your parents and you as a children. Wow. Okay, so we've talked a lot about your parents but I would love to highlight 1 more thing that you. Mentioned to me about bringing home a lady in need and you remember that um, can you just share share that story with us.

20:05.46
zemmie_grtl_org
In between my seventh and eighth grade year of school my dad and mom came home one evening and they sat down with us as a family. The ones the siblings that were still at home and they said we want to let you know that we are bringing home someone to live with us and they explained that this was a lady who they knew through some church friends. She was in a nursing home in Atlanta she had multiple sclerosis and she was given about six months to live at the time when she came to live with us. She could move her head and she could still lift her right arm to feed herself but she had no she had paralysis basically from the waist down and much on her left side. At the time so we we so lovingly called her aunt Gwen and so aunt gwen.

21:25.21
lovelightstories
Si.

21:34.90
zemmie_grtl_org

As I said she was given about six months to live. Well it ended up that she lived with my parents for 15 years

21:44.36

lovelightstories

Wow 15 years

21:48.47

zemmie_grtl_org

So when people say that someone has a particular lifespan left I have to say well let's leave that to the lord because I'm not so sure that you know exactly that. That's the limit of time they have left. But what I gain from that today and the work that I do which we'll get into I'm sure. But um, what I gain from that is that when you have people who have an in. And infirmity or they have some type of physical issue and you put them in an environment with a loving family that cares about them and brings. So much into their life which you know imagine coming into a home where you were all by yourself and now you're coming into this home and there's about 6 or 7 people surrounding you every day and.

23:00.11

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

23:02.45

zemmie_grtl_org

Some of them being young children. So you know I'm sure that her life totally totally changed by being in that environment but the way that people can thrive.

23:05.78

lovelightstories

He.

23:16.94

lovelightstories

Yeah.

23:18.95

zemmie_grtl_org

Doesn't even have to be a whole family It can be 1 person or 2 people you know, but to have that um level of care and that level of connection with people I believe makes all the difference in the world. Even when somebody is suffering from something like multiple sclerosis and it ended up that Aunt Gwen actually ended up being paralyzed completely even her vocal chords. So that's.

23:52.46

lovelightstories

Wow.

23:55.79

zemmie_grtl_org

And and she did have cancer. Ah which they had to amputate one of her legs but I mean she lived for 15 years and I haven't so many wonderful memories of.

24:08.59

lovelightstories

Ah.

24:13.00

zemmie_grtl_org

Of taking care of her and of talking to her and you know I mean you you just and and 1 thing about her. She loved the lord jesus so much and she had this bulletin board that was hung on the wall across from her hospital bed and. She had pictures at the bulletin board was probably about five and a half feet wide by three and a half feet tall and it was completely covered like layered. With pictures of people that she knew people and and she told me she said I just sit here and I look at their faces and I pray for each one of them. She said that's what I do with my time so there is somebody who.

25:00.20

lovelightstories

Wow! oh.

25:08.37

zemmie_grtl_org

Really understood what it meant to have purpose in life and this is my purpose I'm going to pray for these people. So.

25:15.90

lovelightstories

Yes, yes, oh that's beautiful and she took what she she could have because like you said she had multiple sclerosis and and couldn't um, move well and even speak like you said affecting her vocal cords. So um. She found such great purpose in praying for people and then I feel like your family reciprocated that so well like she was giving and serving in her own way and and then you were able to serve and support her and then of course that added to your family so much as well. And. Um, just just so incredible too of your parents again to just take someone in not knowing and it turning out to be 15 beautiful years together. Um, it really is a testimony of how someone can thrive when they're sha surrounded by love and and support of a family It's just. Amazing and so let's get into your work. You are the executive director of Georgia right to life and um, it's it's about life the right to life right? Um tell. Ah. Tell us about what you stand for at Georgia right to life and what you believe in.

26:27.34

zemmie_grtl_org

Absolutely so Georgia right? to life was founded in 1971 and today we operate Georgia right to life as a christian organization and here at Georgia right to life. Our mission and goal is to protect all innocent human life from fertilization to natural death without compromise and with no exception and the reason that we believe that there should not be a compromise on. The right to life is because we believe as the bible indicates that we are created in god's image and as Jeremiah one five is a very familiar passage to many people. But. When you think about before I formed you in the womb I knew you so that means that in god's mind we already exist even before we are being conceived in our mother's womb and so to me that means that we are that. That his creation and his creatures are so important and so um, so loved by him and so that is that is why we um.

27:49.59

lovelightstories

Um, yes.

27:56.64

zemmie_grtl_org

Believe what as we do at Georgia right? to life is just based on god's word and our understanding of the sanctity of human life. Yes.

28:05.65

lovelightstories

Right? right? and and I'm sure like you said your experiences of being adopted yourself and giving that right to life like you said you probably wouldn't have um, survived because of the situation that you were in. Um, and and also just that experience of welcoming Aunt Gwen into your into your home and and seeing how she thrived because of that love and so it. Am I overstepping and saying that those experiences have led you to Georgia right to life or what? What really called you to work there and become the executive director.

28:52.62

zemmie_grtl_org

Well prior to Georgia right to life I worked as a church administrator for ah, just 17 years at a church and um I knew that my time there was coming to an end just because of different circumstances and i. Ask the lord to guide me into work that was a ministry I did not want just a 9 to 5 job and I say just a 9 to 5 job and I don't mean that in any way to diminish. Anybody's. Ah, purpose and calling in life because there are people who work 9 to 5 jobs but I wanted something that would have an impact on people and I have always I think always in my heart wanted to help people I have such a burden to help people.

29:28.90

lovelightstories

Yeah.

29:42.58

lovelightstories

Yeah.

29:44.41

zemmie_grtl_org

And you see people in so many different circumstances and yes we can't help all of them but we can help those. Ah all it takes is us just reaching out or just speaking to them and many times people in situations will open up and talk. But um I I had just asked the Lord for Ministry and so he's all fit to put me into a ministry. It was not nearly what I anticipated because this this work is something that is very unique.

30:07.19

lovelightstories

And.

30:23.39

zemmie_grtl_org

I Think it takes unique people to be engaged in the right to life and in any respect and whatever level that is whether it be volunteers whether it be staff whether it be leadership. Um, this is something that is.

30:23.65

lovelightstories

Um.

30:29.44

lovelightstories

Yeah.

30:42.95

zemmie_grtL_org

Very special that God calls people into.

30:47.22

lovelightstories

Yes, yeah, that's beautiful I love that he called you into that and um, it takes like you said special people in special circumstances. Um, and I would say even more so today in in recent. Years. We've had ah uprising around pro-life and abortion specifically which is 1 aspect of this but full spectrum of life and um so I would love to today to try to better understand the pro-life perspective. While also digging into some of the other side of the story some common debates and discussions and and just understand from your perspective personally but also from Georgia right to life's perspective. Um, what. What that looks like in some of the context and some of the issues that um, we've been hearing being brought up around this topic and we I'm sure won't cover all of it but we can dig into a little bit of that. Um, so um.

31:57.73

lovelightstories

I guess the the first part maybe is to say you've you've touched on this a little bit but you've um mentioned about like what you believe at Georgia right to life but is there anything more you want to first say about why you are pro-life.

32:13.91

zemmie_grtL_org

I Personally am pro-life because of what the scripture teaches me about life and again that God is the creator of life and he has the ability to create that life and to take that life. And um, I Just truly believe again that as the creator who envisions as before we're even conceived he he has He knew us. He knew us He loved us and we are his creation and that does not stop at any point in our life because as um as the scripture also points out.

33:09.79

zemmie_grtL_org

We are his workmanship and and that word workmanship actually means poem in Greek and so we are his workmanship he is writing a poem through what is happening in our lives and I think to me that.

33:13.18

lovelightstories

Ah.

33:28.51

zemmie_grtl_org

Such a beautiful picture of just what how much he cares for me and and and I truly believe that every person has that right to to understand that. That's. That's what life is and that God gives us life and we are to protect it in every way that we can as individuals because everybody's path here's here's the thing.

33:58.10

lovelightstories

Yes, yes, and I.

34:07.36

zemmie_grtl_org

Everybody's path is unique. None of us live the same exact life and it's so wonderful because as as unique as our fingerprints are to each 1 of us. That's how unique our paths are and we're all at different points in our path.

34:24.91

lovelightstories

Yeah.

34:36.92

lovelightstories

Very very true and I have to say too that um I myself believe that as well and I um believe in God and that he has created life and he has the right to take life and I believe only he has that right? Um, but. What about people who don't place their belief in God Um, and just don't have that in their hearts and that does not mean that they're bad people not in any way. But for those who maybe don't have that. Rootedness in that belief. What else can they look to like what other evidence or belief can they stand on Beyond God's word in a pro-life capacity.

35:22.31

zemmie_grtl_org

Well, certainly so I just want to say this because I am a christian and my first response is that I pray that if any of those people are listening to your podcast today. That the lord would reveal himself to them that someone would come into their lives who has that wonderful liberating grace that god gives us no matter what. Kind of background. We have no matter what is in our past we serve a god that loves to save people. That's what Jesus came to this earth to do was to seek and to save those here are lost so that's the first response I have but further than that. As far as the life issue goes there in in our time of history. There is so much evidence scientifically that is out there that you know. I mean we have four d ultra cells that are incredible. You see this child in the room and you can see this is life.

36:46.32

zemmie_grtl_org

We we can see the face The the facial features and you know you've seen these and I'm sure most people have you've seen these postcards that have the face of the child in the womb in the face of the child after it's born and you know this is still me. You know? so.

37:01.15

lovelightstories

Who.

37:05.15

zemmie_grtl_org

So I say that there's just so much evidence of that life being formed in the womb that it's very very difficult to understand um and how that could be denied. However. I also say this that a lot of times. First of all, what is happening in our culture is that women are being told a lot of lies about abortion. And that is well you know it's just a 1 time thing that you're going to get past It's oh it's just you're not going to have any detrimental effects from this It's not going. You know it's just going to be a procedure and then you're done and then. It's all over with and another fascinating thing to me about the time that we live in is that we are living because because roe v wade was in a wade was in effect for so long 50 years it was in effect and. We are now living in a time when women who had abortions are now testifying to the fact of what effects it did have on their life right.

38:35.72

lovelightstories

Ah.

38:35.76

zemmie_grtl_org

And how damaging it was to the life either physical or mental emotional spiritual. Whatever those effects were and not just not just women but we're hearing from men too because the men oftentimes.

38:48.90

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

38:52.83

zemmie_grtl_org

Just kind of get pushed off into the background nobody really thinks about them as part of this process but they they are a huge if they're a huge part I mean there's there's there's 3 people that are affected by abortion one way or another that's the man the woman and the child.

39:09.74

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

39:11.91

zemmie_grtl_org

So no matter what those relationships are so you know that's something that we have to really take into consideration now. So.

39:18.29

lovelightstories

Right? You're You're also just advocating on Behalf of human life even just beyond the womb. But just the the men and women who go through this because like you said, of course it's.. It's our woman body that goes through the changes and grows the baby and all of those things but men are just as much of a part of creating and making that baby and ultimately fathering that child if they do have the baby and so. Um I like that you mentioned that and I asked that question of you

know what do you say for those who don't place their belief in God because I want to include them in this discussion because we are approaching this from a faith perspective. But um I don't want anyone to feel excluded in that and like this is not a conversation that they're welcome to um and so um, thank you for sharing those examples. Do You have any other like. Specific examples that you are able to share about the types of things that um, people have gone through because like you're saying you're you're trying to advocate on behalf of the women and the men and in those stories that are coming back of that remorse later On. Um.

40:39.97

lovelightstories

What were some of the after effects or what are some of the after effects that they're going through.

40:47.82

zemmie_grtL_org

So many ah women and men are now testifying to how this broke them emotionally and we have statistics which um, which. Are evidence of the fact that there's so much either attempted suicide or suicide that um, that has come about as a result of abortion. And we see that not just with abortion. We see it with all types of assault on life and and different aspects that we're dealing with in our society today. But. When we're talking about abortion itself. There's just this there. There is a I believe a huge burden on women particularly that you know I've had them say to me. You know Jimmy my child would be 40 years old now you know I think what would they be doing. You know we had 1 lady particularly that I can give an example of she.

42:10.12

zemmie_grtL_org

We we have at Georgia orient life. We have a March and rally every January and across the street from the state capitol in Atlanta and it was. 2021 so it was the fiftieth anniversary of Georgia right to life that year and we had a banner that was up at that March and rally it was up on the stage. This was the first time that this lady had ever joined us for this event and later she testified. To me. She said I saw that banner and she said I realized that it was 1971 and that my child would have been fifty years old that year um

42:56.61

lovelightstories

Um.

42:59.67

zemmie_grtL_org

So There is this lie that's being told in our society that abortion is nothing really.. It's a treatment. It's a procedure and so many women are just caught up in that lie and so many of them regret it. And we've had speakers with georgiaright life who have talked about the regret that they have after abortion and that's why I am very very thankful for post abortive counseling and we seem.

43:45.89

lovelightstories

A.

43:48.66

zemmie_grtL_org

We see many organizations in Georgia that have counselors that deal with this matter because I'm sure that they can certainly testify much more than I can to the fact that you know these people are. That have gone through abortion and they're suffering. They're suffering silently most of them because you know what here's another aspect of it and a lot of them have never told 1 ne's soul.

44:09.70

lovelightstories

Yeah.

44:23.22

lovelightstories

Oh yeah, yeah, and that eats away at you? Yeah yeah I can Also yes I can also see too.

44:24.91

zemmie_grtl_org

That they had an abortion and they have never mentioned it to anyone so they are suffering in silence.

44:41.29

lovelightstories

Um, when you say like they're being told a lie and um, what my mind goes to is just my own personal experiences of health care. Um, luckily we are pretty fortunate. Fortunate in the United States to have pretty good health care. But I think the last couple of years, especially we've started to see that there are flaws in our system. Um and um, becoming a mother myself and having this pregnancy currently I've realized too like there is a lot. As a mother and a parent you have to advocate on behalf of your own health and that of your babies because there are so many different perspectives in the medical field and um, this life spectrum we're talking about. Is so controversial and there are so many viewpoints on it that um you really have to like be rooted in what you believe and I can imagine when you're going through a tumultuous moment in your life where you are considering abortion for whatever reason. And it could be really good like significant reasons that um it could like in your mind you can rationalize and make sense of um, perhaps trying you know going through with an abortion and so when you're vulnerable in that place.

46:09.80

lovelightstories

And we'll get into some of those like rationalizations and and things um that really are like it does take a moment to pause and reflect on but when you're in that vulnerable place I can see how having the advice from a medical professional or what you consider to be. And if they're pushing for an abortion or they're offering it as no big deal and um, it's just one and done where you could be persuaded and um, yeah, it's it's it's sad because. For some people they may go through it and never think about it Again. We do not know um and it may not affect them. But there are people as you're saying that are affected and it's it's almost like having this fire in you to want to like I said advocate for these people. Because they may not understand the magnitude of the decision that they're making in that moment.

47:10.77

zemmie_grtl_org

Well and I think that you're you're very correct when you talk about the medical field and there is this very philosophy I'll call it. There's this ideal that um, we we have all of these tests and we can

do all of these tests and if a woman is at a certain age in her life. We have to perform these tests and we have to give her all this information. In order to let her know all the risk that might be involved with her pregnancy and I don't know if some of that really stems from the issue of lawsuits I really don't know where it. Exactly stems from that our medical profession really sometimes pushes towards the abortion for women particularly when they're older women and and when I'm talking older women. Um. I'm talking about like even 35 years old but I have my own personal perspective I am my own personal experience.

48:31.11

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

48:39.99

zemmie_grtl_org

Of something that happened in my family. My oldest son and his wife were expecting their son um in 2016 and um.

49:00.52

zemmie_grtl_org

He was thirty seven weeks in utero and ah his mom was having blood pressure issues and he was in distress and so they.

49:04.32

lovelightstories

Ah.

49:17.64

zemmie_grtl_org

Did go to the hospital and the doctor said you know? Well we're going to need to perform a c-section and you know and and then they came to my son and I remember so many conversations that I had with my oldest son. At that time and they would the doctors would come and they would talk to the parents and they would say you know now before we perform this C-section. We Want to let you know that. A B C D on down the list could be wrong with your child and they looked at my son and said you know, but there are options.

49:59.91

lovelightstories

Ah.

50:09.70

lovelightstories

Ah.

50:09.21

zemmie_grtl_org

At Thirty seven weeks and and yes my grandson was born with some difficulties physically. He had a lot of issues with his breathing and with his lungs and that sort of thing. He was in Nick you for I believe it was about two and a half weeks um and you know every day they would come. The doctors would come and say okay now here's where we're at and you know and and actually to begin with. Ah, the first 2 days of my grandson's life. He had a 20% chance of survival because

he was not getting any oxygen into his blood and so he was born in Asheville North Carolina and they lifeighted him to Winston Salem and honestly.

50:47.69

lovelightstories

Oh wow.

51:01.49

zemmie_grtl_org

Ah, believe that the lord just touched his little body when he was in that in that plane coming over to Winston Salem because once he got to Winston Hallem he was just turning every corner and and making every mark that they were looking for.

51:14.88

lovelightstories

Um.

51:18.21

zemmie_grtl_org

Um, and you know he he does he He is a ah lively young boy and so I think we can you know, just just our personal experiences anymore we can see that there's so much that um.

51:28.59

lovelightstories

Um, and.

51:37.86

zemmie_grtl_org

The medical profession. You know we we look at the medical profession as um, somewhat a God with a little G because we think oh they're medically trained for these things. What they're saying is true. What I need to listen to this. And you know sometimes we forget to kind of go back and and assess everything before making decisions. So um, so we have to be very ourselves I think we have to be very educated on some things these days. But.

52:01.50

lovelightstories

Yes.

52:08.87

lovelightstories

Yes, yeah, Thank you for sharing that story and it does highlight how vigilant and how like you said we have to be able to reflect and assess on things ourselves. Um, because I think it is true I think we we do look up to the medical profession because they are the professional experts in that instance, but yet that does not mean that all of their recommendations should be taken at Face value. Um without Considering. What's best for ourselves and I think I think we've learned that more I have as I've said um, but it's a good reminder and um, you know that story reminded me of my brother who was born with down syndrome and um. I Know there's a perspective out there that like like even the doctors said here like he might have issues. We do have options. Um, especially with a child with down syndrome or some other child with a different disability. Um, that perspective that they might not have a full life because of that disability. Um, and so therefore perhaps we should end their suffering before it begins and that is ah a perspective that

I think begins with a noble thought but then becomes something that is at the end of it is not not right? Um, in my.

53:40.14

lovelightstories

And my um perspective anyway. So what? What do you say to that perspective I guess.

53:46.32

zemmie_grtl_org

Well I want to say this I think that much of what we deal with as far as the issues of wife whether that be. Preborn child or whether that is when people are reaching their natural death I think that what we have to remember is that we are persons first and foremost we are a person who is created in the image of god we have a right. Life as a person created in god's image because he has given us that right? And ah so we have to remember that these are persons and that's why it's it. You know it's It's a lot different when we're dealing with persons than when we're dealing with other you know the the be outside the window or something you know it's it's it's a lot different. We're we're dealing with persons and we're dealing with their lives.

54:47.28

lovelightstories

E.

54:55.70

zemmie_grtl_org

And um, so we have to we have to look at it from that perspective first and foremost and um and once we do that I believe we can realize then the value.

55:13.38

lovelightstories

Yeah.

55:14.57

zemmie_grtl_org

That that person holds because how can I ah assess or give a level um to the value that your brother holds.

55:32.10

lovelightstories

Right.

55:32.25

zemmie_grtl_org

In life. How can we say that he's suffering more than we are. You know when you see down syndr people I know you're witness to this when you see them. They're smiling. They're happy. They're loving their.

55:45.81

lovelightstories

Ah.

55:49.23

lovelightstories

Yes.

55:51.73

zemmie_grtL_org

Compassionate and they're and they're very passionate too. Um, you know these are you know sometimes I think that what we what we think is that people don't have all their functionality of maybe their senses or maybe their.

55:56.78

lovelightstories

Um.

56:09.45

zemmie_grtL_org

Abilities to walk or to run or to whatever and um, and so that makes them somehow less than we are and that's not that is not true because what happens is you know you hear blind people or deaf people what they say is no. Those other senses that are still working. They become even more acute and they become more sensitive but sensitive to to what's going on so our bodies god created them so amazingly and wonderfully in the first place. But.

56:32.28

lovelightstories

Yeah. Yes.

56:47.92

zemmie_grtL_org

Our bodies have such a tendency and ah and a wonder to them to be able to rise above some of those um ah some of those incapacities.

56:54.50

lovelightstories

Right? Yes and and like you said they they can overcompensate in some areas. I mean there's so many inspiring stories of people that have some ailment or something that. Can make life harder for them yet. They've somehow found a way to actually find more beauty out of that in life and it's almost as though I mean I believe God you know, uses darkness and difficulty to bring about that light and to. Show more of himself and allow and glorify allow us to glorify him through um what we do with those difficulties and I mean when you talk about down syndrome. That's like in my mind the epitome of that because my brother. Is literally an angel like I literally think he was I mean I know he's not an angel but like I really believe his purpose was to come here and to be a light to the world because that is exactly what he is and um. You know I couldn't imagine someone more happier more patient more loving or anything he has something special that none of the rest of us have and I I believe that's true for a lot of people with down syndrome in their own unique way I mean I would say everybody with doubt syndrome in their own unique way.

58:23.11

lovelightstories

Um, and and so it's hard like you said for us to assess that make an assessment that they are going to have a life that is less than so we should just end it but I want to ask because another perspective or opposition or debate or discussion. Which these all make me pods and think as Well. So I am not bringing these up to try to just rebuttal them truly trying to dig into um these um

but one that's similar is in the cases of like incest or rape. Or extreme poverty again. The assessment could be made that life like they would suffer or have such a difficulty um through that that maybe we should just pause that you know not. Not allow them to have to go through that suffering. Um, what about those types of cases.

59:27.34

zemmie_grtl_org

Well again I believe that we in our history are um to the point where we have the testimonies of so many people who have been in those situations. Rape or incest or poverty and their testimonies are you know I ah we've we've had speakers at Georgia write to life when young lady in particular sticks out in my mind right now and she. Was raped and she gave birth to her child and but all along while she was pregnant. You know people would say oh you know you're going to have to look at your rapist face every day or you know how are you going to love this child because you. Know that this child was conceived in rape and she's like this is my child. This is my child and I think sometimes in in our ah I'll say in our um.

01:00:20.61

lovelightstories

Yeah.

01:00:35.85

zemmie_grtl_org

Ideal of what the perfect life is um, we and I'm saying we in general. Um, we tend to think that you know well that's an. Less than ideal situation for someone to find themselves in so you know oh why? Why would we put that person through such torment and my question on the other side of that is that. Why would we possibly? um, submit that woman to a lifetime of complete sadness. Or emotional detachment or any psychological or physiological situation by saying you must have an abortion. You know what you know because because to me you know lives are amazing.

01:01:33.75

lovelightstories

Ah.

01:01:42.14

zemmie_grtl_org

You know we're so resilient to many many things. Children are amazingly resilient to things and so I think we just have to give people a chance to to.

01:01:55.13

lovelightstories

Yeah.

01:02:01.96

zemmie_grtl_org

Understand that life is life is going to be full of difficulties. No matter who we are no matter how much money we have I mean we see all the time in our society people with lots of money. They have lots of problems that they're dealing with.

01:02:16.34

lovelightstories

Yeah.

01:02:18.23

zemmie_grtl_org

So It's not this idea you know it's just like the poverty now I'm going to say this personally that you know I have women who would say well I mean what about the woman who is so poor. What about the woman who already has 4 children and she's going to have another child and. She is dying because she has sepsis and she knows she's going to die I mean there's my story. There is my story and I will tell you.

01:02:47.81

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

01:02:55.24

zemmie_grtl_org

My life is my life has been impacted by that but it has been impacted because other wonderful people were willing to stand up and say hey we will help you. We will love you. So. Your mother's not here, but we'll love you. We'll take care of you. You know and I think that a lot of times because we rush to make very final decisions many times it robs.

01:03:17.12

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

01:03:33.72

zemmie_grtl_org

Others of the ability to say hey I'm here I'm here to help you through your time of need I'm here to be there for you.

01:03:50.20

lovelightstories

Yeah, and not to mention um, allowing God to work through those people like he has a plan like this child was created with a purpose and a plan and for us to step in and think that we are helping.

01:04:07.83

lovelightstories

While essentially playing God in that way is is not that doesn't that takes away God's ability to do the work that he has set out to do in this child's life. Family's life. Whatever it may be.

00:00.64

zemmie_grtl_org

But I have to say that that any time that I speak for Georgia right to life. There is a message that I want everyone to hear and I want them to hear it very clearly and that is. That if they are post-abortive if they have participated in taking someone to have an abortion if they have forced someone to have an abortion sometime in their life that. There is forgiveness that comes from god that is amazing forgiveness and that there are people whose life work. And their purpose has been to help people like themselves to work through whatever it is that they need to work through as a result of their actions in previous years of their life and I always want that to be a.

Point to know that there everybody again, everybody's path is unique. Everybody's path is different and god uses lots of different things in our lives to open our eyes and to.

01:29.26

lovelightstories

Hannah.

01:34.30

zemmie_grtl_org

To learn about him and to understand who he is and I always want that to be a message that is very clearly given from me particularly.

01:50.55

lovelightstories

Um, yeah, yeah, I'm glad you you mentioned that and because God forgives too. We are to be gracious and loving and forgiving as well. And um, we are fallen as humanity and we make.

01:52.29

zemmie_grtl_org

When we talk about these issues.

02:07.86

lovelightstories

Choices that are less than at times and we live in a world that is less than and we have those influences all around us and so it is very true and um, I'm really happy you you mentioned that? um. I want before we wrap up I want to ask 1 or 2 more questions just again this next one is really um I think interesting to think about and it does like I said the other one gave me pause but this one gives me even more pause. Um. Is. What do you do in a situation where either the child or the mother can live but not both or like when a girl is actually raped at such a young age which I think happened here not too long ago. It was in the media. Such a young age that it would be unsafe for her to carry the child to full term. Um, what do you do in those instances.

03:10.19

zemmie_grtl_org

Well, it's a very good question and thank you for asking it I as part of our ministry here at Georgia right to life and our understanding of the word of god of course. Ah, again, all life is. Value valued and all life should be protected what we say in the instance of the mother's life being in danger and that would be any of these scenarios that you set forward? Um, even with the youngest victim. Um, the. Approach that we would make to that is okay, a doctor then has 2 patients. He has a mother and he has a child those are are his 2 patients now what we have to think about is what abortion actually is abortion.

03:50.57

lovelightstories

For.

04:06.34

zemmie_grtl_org

Is the intentional taking of life and from a medical standpoint if a physician is serving 2 patients a mother and a child one of those patients dies. Even even as they're being treated. They die that is a natural death that is not an abortion even if it is the child and so the doctor is you know we

would say the doctor just takes care of his patient and medically provides what he can. For both the mother and the child and there's you know in our day and time again we're we're so far into the history of you know we're ah the advancement of things medically and scientifically that now it's very. Difficult to I think find cases where there is not some type of medical intervention that can be made somewhere you know so um, again, it's just a matter of I believe understanding that.

05:13.35

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

05:22.63

zemmie_grtl_org

All lives are to be valued no matter what or how they are conceived and um, what whatever those circumstances are and just to work to protect them as well as can be without intentionally killing someone.

05:41.82

lovelightstories

Right? right? Yeah, thank you for that that that adds a lot of understanding in. Um I guess you could say perspective is bringing it back to.

05:42.30

zemmie_grtl_org

That.

05:53.53

lovelightstories

Is this an intentional situation or is this something we are doing our best at and having 2 patients in the room. Essentially so yeah.

06:02.63

zemmie_grtl_org

Yeah, and and I think medically now you know we're seeing that women can be treated for things like breast cancer. They can be. They can be pregnant. They can be on the chemo. Ah you know and and there's not the effects of of that on their preborn child. Ah. You know there's There's numerous examples that we're seeing now medically where we've We're so advanced with it. So we.

06:29.26

lovelightstories

Wow Wow! That's interesting. Okay, so last question Um, what would you say to someone who's considering abortion or isn't sure what to do with an unexpected pregnancy and um, are there. But particular resources. You would point them to or what would you say.

06:47.36

zemmie_grtl_org

Um, first of all I would want to know you know where they are located and if it's in Georgia and it's a place where we know of someone that can help them to be able to.

07:02.74

zemmie_grtl_org

Get resources that they need either with a pregnancy or you know financial resources or physical resources. Whatever those are if they need counseling. You know, um I would. I would direct them to as many resources as possible that that I could and um I will say this. Ah Georgia right? to life does operate as a resource for people in the community and in the state of Georgia. In that we connect with pregnancy centers. We connect with maternity homes. We connect with adoption of foster care centers. We ah connect with I just recently made a connection with someone who deals with special needs. Resources.

07:44.52

lovelightstories

M.

07:59.90

zemmie_grtL_org

Um, we I have an organization that I call if we get a call about someone who may possibly be engaged in human trafficking and then of course the post abor of counseling.

08:15.67

zemmie_grtL_org

We We just have many many resources around the state that we can point people to and I you know and and I will say that when I have those conversations with people on the phone I Do tell them that I will be praying for them. And the decision that they make and that they will um, consider all of their options aside from abortion. Um, because there are resources out there and there's again, there's so many people.

08:47.90

lovelightstories

Yeah.

08:53.26

zemmie_grtL_org

Whose hearts are open to God just bringing people into their lives so they can help them they really just want to help them. Um I mean I've seen it in my own life I've seen people just reach out to me and say we're here to help you.

09:06.82

lovelightstories

Um, yeah.

09:12.57

zemmie_grtL_org

Um, and and I'm very grateful for their help and I'm very grateful and.

09:16.81

lovelightstories

Right? right? Yeah I I think it's helpful to know that you aren't so alone in this because I could see how it would be so isolating and um, again when you're in distress and in that vulnerable place of feeling. Like oh my gosh. What am I going to do and and um, not necessarily feeling like it's something you want to reach out to for help. Perhaps um, it's nice to know that there are resources like you at Georgia right to life and others like those you've connected with and then some.

09:41.35
zemmie_grtl_org
And.

09:52.74
lovelightstories
Um, that they're there and there's ah, a lot of like wide range. There's a wide range.

09:58.39
zemmie_grtl_org
There there is there is and and the other thing that I always try to remind everyone including myself and that is the circumstances that you were in today. They're not going to be the same. Next week next year ten years from now you will not be in these same circumstances. So there is always tomorrow so to speak. There's always an option.

10:23.66
lovelightstories
Right. A.

10:34.41
lovelightstories
Yes.

10:36.29
zemmie_grtl_org
And there's always hope and I think that's what as christians I think that's what our story has to be to people is that there's hope no matter what your circumstances look like today are. There's always something better that you're looking forward to.

10:58.85
lovelightstories
Yeah, yeah, beautiful. What a beautiful note to end on Zemy Thank you so much for taking the time to share this with all of us through the lovelight stories podcast and it was just wonderful to reconnect with you again today.

11:15.15
zemmie_grtl_org
Absolutely thank you so much again. Stephanie I've really enjoyed being with you and your audience today. Thank you.