

Women at Warp Episode 29: What does GOD Need with a Starship?

Kirk: What does God need with a starship? Jim, what are you doing? I'm asking a question.

Entity: Who is this creature?

Kirk: Who am I? Don't you know? Aren't you God?

Sybok: Hmm. Has his doubt.

Entity: You doubt me?

Kirk: I seek proof.

McCoy: Jim, you don't ask the Almighty for his ID.

Sue: Hi. And welcome to Women at Warp. Join us as our crew of four-women *Star Trek* fans boldly go on our bi-weekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name is Sue. And thanks for tuning in. Today, on the show, we have Andi.

Andi: Hi.

Sue: Grace.

Grace: Hey, everybody.

Sue: And listener and patron, Rumman.

Rumman: Hi, guys.

Sue: So, today's main topic, we're going to be discussing *Star Trek* and religion or what does God need with a starship?

[laughter]

Grace: Excellent.

Sue: I'm the worst at shatnering, everybody. Just FYI. I'm aware of it.

Grace: I'd be more concerned if you were the best at shatnering, honestly.

[laughter]

Sue: So, before we get there, we just, of course, want to talk very quickly about the Women at Warp Patreon. The Patreon is what helps us to do things like travel to conventions. It's getting us all to *Star Trek* Las Vegas this year to have materials printed. And if you'd like to support the show, you can head over to patreon.com/womenatwarp.

Andi: See, Grace is going to get arrested dressed up like Kirk or something, and we're going to get a picture of her getting pulled into the cop car. We're going to put it in our Facebook page for everybody to enjoy.

Grace: It's going to be my file photo for the rest of my life, and I'm okay with that.

Sue: Patreon funds will not be used for bail money.

[laughter]

Sue: I just want to put that out there. [laughs]

Grace: Am I going to start my own separate Patreon for that?

[laughter]

Sue: So, we have a pretty big topic in front of us today. Religion and spirituality and beliefs can become difficult, and sometimes heated and sometimes controversial as [chuckles] we talk about them, especially in the context of *Star Trek*. So, I wanted to, if everybody's cool with it, maybe talk about our own personal, not necessarily beliefs, but history or feelings or whatever identity in terms of religion and spirituality. So, I'll be the first one up, of course.

I was raised by a doctor of divinity in the Baptist church. So, brought up in conservative Christianity. I don't necessarily identify so much with that anymore, but I still consider myself a person of faith, although much less conservative than my personal upbringing.

Grace: Okay. And I was raised Jewish. Am a part time practicing Jew, but really consider myself more of a cultural Jew.

Andi: I was raised by hippie. So, we didn't have any organized religion in my house. So, I grew up pretty nonreligious, very secular. And just in general, I would consider myself basically an agnostic.

Although, fun fact, I did study Islamic history pretty extensively in college. So, I actually know way more about Islam than I do about Christianity, which is actually strange, because I'm from West Michigan, which is one of the most conservative Christian places in America. So, it was always interesting, like, zero background in Christianity and then just randomly learned a lot about Islam in college.

Grace: You were just born to be contrary, weren't you?

[laughter]

Andi: Well, that was the whole point of having a hippie mom. [laughs]

Rumman: I was raised Muslim. Well, actually, so in terms of background, if you read *Ms. Marvel*, Kamala was me at 16, and that was my family. Exactly how I acted, except I'm not inhuman as much as I wished I were at that age. Not an inhuman. [Sue laughs] But that's pretty much my family dynamic.

But what I would say about views on religion, I guess I'm going to come at it with a more academic standpoint because as I was thinking about this podcast and feelings and that all type of thing, what I would say is the way I like to view religion, whether or not you subscribe to it or have a belief in it, is at the very least, we can all agree that it provides a framework of structure for our lives.

It is very comforting to people, especially when thinking about death and the unknown. And that's how I am approaching religion with regards to how I'm understanding the framework of this podcast.

Andi: I look at it anthropologically like stories, right, stories that help us understand our lives and the afterlife and things that we don't understand. When I think of it that way, it makes it

very easy for me to accept everybody's different truths that they come up with through that. So, I've always found religion to be extremely fascinating. I'm not religious myself, but I'm not ever going to tell anybody else, what they have to believe. So, I like to think that if you keep an open mind, there are a lot of different ways that you can view the world, and they're all interesting and they all have some truth to them.

Rumman: Absolutely. I think some people, some of us, like to create our own structure in the world. Some of us feel good with some guidance in having things defined as right or wrong or left or right. Or, if this is what happens when you die or don't worry, you'll see your puppy in heaven. There's no problem with that. I think it is very scary to try to navigate the world even as an adult. It's nice to have something to fall back on and something that you feel gives you control, even if you have control by giving this greater being control.

Sue: Yeah. The one thing I always think of when discussions of religion come up, is that at least in my own head, I make a distinction between what is religion and what is faith. I think of religion as being the institution and the overarching set of rules for a denomination or a sect that distinguishes them as being different from another. Whereas faith is what is personal to an individual person and what they believe themselves. So, I think that is a concept that may come up as well as we get into, I think, especially *DS9*.

Rumman: Yeah.

Sue: So, let's get into the *Star Trek*. I think it is pretty widely known that Gene Roddenberry considered himself a secular humanist.

Grace: Absolutely. And he really wanted that to come through in the *Star Trek* universe.

Sue: He was pretty antireligion. There's one quote I found that "I condemn false prophets, I condemn the effort to take away the power of rational decision, to drain people of their free will and a hell of a lot of money in the bargain. Religions vary in their degree of idiocy, but I reject them all. For most people, religion is nothing more than a substitute for a malfunctioning brain."

Grace: Harsh take, G. Rod.

[laughter]

Rumman: Tell me how you really feel.

Grace: Yeah. By all means, have you said this to the insane amount of Jews working on your show? For reals.

Sue: It's intense, right?

Grace: Yeah. It's very ironic considering the amount of almost religious fervor that can go into some levels of *Star Trek* fandom, isn't it?

Sue: Right. Well--

Grace: So, let us not lose sight of that level of irony.

Rumman: Yeah. When you google *Star Trek* religion, there's actually stuff that comes up about "Is *Star Trek* a religion? i.e., people are fanatic about it."

Grace: Well, you're not entirely wrong-

Rumman: Yeah.

Grace: -in some circles, anyway.

Sue: I knew this about Gene Roddenberry before I actually watched *TOS* all the way through. Knowing that, I was actually surprised by the amount of religion, or specifically Christianity or Christian symbols or references-

Grace: Oh, yeah.

Sue: -that pop up in *TOS*.

Rumman: You're absolutely right. For considering that he has this very strong quote, I find it interesting that there didn't seem to be anybody who didn't have religion or didn't understand what a religion was. I don't think they ever ran across an alien species that's like, "What do you mean?" some higher being. Everybody, even if they didn't necessarily subscribe to it, understood the concept, which would mean that they thought about it or had it at some point at some exposure to it.

Grace: Yeah. It is really funny to see how even if he's trying to draw on this secular humanist philosophy throughout the show and throughout the franchise, just how much of [chuckles] the standard Christian symbolism still gets in there anyway.

Rumman: Yeah, you're so strongly socialized into it, and you don't even see it.

Grace: It's such a big part of Western culture. It's hard to avoid, even if you do go into it saying, "No, this is society beyond religion."

Rumman: I, for one, love my secular Christmas. I love my secular.

[laughter]

Sue: But was it unintentional? Did it just something that just snuck through, because you're socialized to expect Christian symbols in the US, or was it someone else in the writer's room? Was it the network telling them they couldn't say these things? I don't know. I haven't read through *These Are the Voyages* yet. Have you seen anything? I know you have, Andi. Have you seen anything about that?

Andi: I can't think of anything right off the top of my head. I know that they've softened some of the episodes, because we're talking about the Christian symbolism, but some of it is critical. The first one I'm thinking of, is they have the episodes in which we find out that prior gods on Earth turned out to actually be aliens, like, *Who Mourns for Adonais?* is a good example of that, where we get the sense that maybe gods aren't real. And then, we were just worshipping aliens the whole time. We see that story thread throughout. I can't think of anything from *These Are the Voyages*, all right, off the top of my head that says that he was forced to put anything in.

Grace: Every time that episode comes up in a conversation, I'm always super shocked that some nerd doesn't just chime in like, "Real original concept Stargate."

[laughter]

Grace: I'm shocked at how little it has happened.

Sue: Well, I think when I think of these examples in *TOS* of *Bread and Circuses*, which, Andi, you and I just talked about-

Andi: Mm-hmm.

Sue: -from there to here with the “sun worshippers,” there's a time in *The Empath* where they quote “straight out of Psalms.” And even in in *Who Mourns for Adonais?* Kirk says, “Man has no need for gods. We find the One quite sufficient.” I remember hearing that for the first time and, what? [Andi laughs]

Andi: Okay. So, they don't believe in religion, but they believe in monotheism apparently.

Sue: Right.

Grace: Little inconsistent there, Kirk buddy.

Andi: There's also the episode *The Apple*, which is basically Adam and Eve-

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: -allegory.

Grace: Something new and different in Western media.

Andi: *Bread and Circuses* is interesting, because it's basically-- if people don't remember which one that one is, it's the one where Kirk and McCoy and Spock go to a moder-day Rome, like Rome never fell. And they get thrown into the gladiator fights, which is quite amusing. McCoy gladiating is my favorite thing.

Grace: Is gladiating a verb? I love it.

Rumman: [chuckles] It is now.

Andi: I have turned it into a verb. I decided this long ago that gladiating is a new word and I will use it whenever necessary. [Sue laughs]

Grace: Language is ever evolving.

Andi: Exactly. But the point of that episode or the broader theme, is that Christianity was starting to spread throughout the slaves and that's why they were rebelling. So, in that case, you had an episode in which Christianity was a force for social good that was going through this modern-day Rome. I would say that that's a positive interpretation of Christianity.

Sue: I think it's a good point. Yeah, *TOS* in general, when it comes to at least earth religion is inconsistent and weird. We don't really run into much non-earth religion, except maybe you could argue a little bit of Vulcan. But we see more traditions and cultural things than we do any of their spirituality.

But then, I think when we get to *TNG*, that's especially in the early seasons, is where you are really seeing Roddenberry's voice come through, especially through Picard in *Who Watches the Watchers*, where he says things like calling belief in a supernatural being, dark ages of superstition, ignorance and fear.

Andi: Yeah, that definitely lines up more with that quote from Roddenberry than most of *TOS* does. Maybe he just didn't feel like it was the right time. Maybe he felt like, later on, he had more freedom to push that, possibly.

Rumman: Well, there's definitely that he saw himself as Picard, right,-

Grace: Oh, yeah.

Rumman: -instead of wise man dispensing the knowledge upon, in this case, the unwashed masses.

Grace: And being weirdly aggressive to young men.

[laughter]

Grace: Just saying.

Andi: I do think the Vulcans are very interesting though, because we don't get a ton of explanation for say a religion so much. But we do get a lot of sense of their rituals and how-- They have all of these very structured rituals for various things, and then you also know that they had a philosopher that they worship him. I don't know if worship is the right word, but--[crosstalk]

Grace: Something like it.

Andi: Sirach is very much like a philosopher that changed their way of life, which could be considered some prophet, I guess, if you wanted to stretch that a little bit, although I'm not entirely sure the Vulcans would.

Rumman: Yeah, I don't see it as a stretch. I'm going to completely derail the path we're going in right now. [Andi laughs]

Grace: Go for it.

Rumman: One thing that I thought was super interesting is, we get the races that are more human in their approach to religion or even emotion, right? You get the Bajorans, you get the Klingons, you can see how these people with strong traditions would have religion. But then you get these races that are driven by logic or reason or optimization, and I'm really thinking of the Borg and the Vulcan.

When you see these societies have something like religion or religion itself, that's really interesting. Because if we subscribe to Roddenberry's view, we'll logic away or we'll rationalize a way to not have religion. We're just not going to need it anymore, right, because we'll understand there's just this unknown and it is what it is, and we'll calm ourselves down and not need some a guidance to be told that there is a great forest or whatever.

So, what I find really compelling is, when you have religious epiphanies for someone like Seven or these rituals that Spock will subscribe to, when these are cultures and societies that believe in rationality so much and believe in logic and reason and evidence and proof, they don't see that as being at odds with having almost religious beliefs. I find that really compelling.

Sue: That's something that I have always loved about the Vulcans, is that they can be logical and scientific, but they don't exclude the possibility of something they don't know and they don't understand. Yeah, I'm not sure if I would call the Vulcan philosophy religion so much as

spirituality, but I think it's nice to see such a logic minded, both character and race, that can combine the two.

Andi: Spock himself is very open minded to possibilities beyond his knowledge. He is totally okay with saying, "I don't know." Or, something coming out of nowhere that he never thought possible and going, "Okay." Because he is the type of person that is always questioning. Those kinds of people are always open to the fact that they might be wrong or that if they get new information, they might have to change their mind. And to me, that's basically the definition of logic. I don't see how that would be contradictory to a religious perspective at all. It just is a difference in understanding.

Grace: He doesn't find it impossible. He just finds it fascinating.

[laughter]

Andi: Yeah. Always fascinating.

Rumman: Everything's fascinating. I think Data is a good example too to see how an android would approach something like religion.

Grace: Yeah. That would have been really interesting if we'd gotten to see a little more of that. If they had seen that as something worth exploring with Data's character, that would be interesting.

Rumman: I think so. He does so much experimentation with being human. He explores sexuality. He explores all sorts of things. It would have been interesting for him to explore spirituality, because I don't think there's a single human culture that doesn't have some a religious, spiritual, faith-based belief. It would have been interesting to see how his logical Android brain approaches something like spirituality. I think he would probably have some rationalization of why it's necessary.

Andi: Well, the other thing with Data, is that he actually has a creator and he can point to him. That's very different than the human experience in which we don't know. We don't have proof one way or the other, but Data himself is a new life that was created by somebody, although it was a scientist and a person rather than a deity. He does have a creator, which is super interesting to me.

Rumman: I don't know if he ever approached what he thinks happens to himself after he, "dies or is shut off or exploded." Does he just think, "I will just stop. Cease to exist?" And that's that.

Grace: In the episode, we get where there's the time travel shenanigans with Mark Twain, we get to have a brief conversation with him saying, "I find it comforting to know that I could die." And that's one more thing that connects me as human. "I know that I will come to an end, I won't have to just outlive all of humanity." That gives me a little more semblance of humanity. So, that's pretty much as close we get, I think.

Rumman: That's a very interesting perspective on death. Death is what makes us human.

Grace: Yeah, definitely.

Rumman: Essentially is what he's saying, that's-- [crosstalk]

Grace: It seems like a very Data thing to say.

Rumman: It is a very Data thing to say. Thanks, Data. That's very deep. *TNG*, I think, also gives us the most godlike creature of all, Q, right?

Grace: Yeah.

Rumman: What is a God besides omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent and all powerful and immortal? Like, you've just given us God, literally, right there. That is God.

Andi: Yeah. He is more based on a trickster God archetype. We see that also in *TOS* with Trelane. He follows a lot of those stories that we have all over the world in different cultures. Got Anansi, you've got Loki, you've got all these trickster spirits that come and mess things up, [chuckles] then wander away. That's pretty much what Q does all the time. But the extent of his power does mean that-- Say Q showed up on earth in the 1400s. 100% he'd be considered a God.

Rumman: Oh, yeah.

Grace: Absolutely.

Sue: Sorry. It just reminded me of that scene in *Tapestry* right at the beginning where Q is trying to tell Picard, "I'm God." He's like, "No, you're not. I refuse to believe that the afterlife is run by you. The universe is not so badly designed."

[laughter]

Andi: Picard and Q, forever.

[laughter]

Sue: Dream weaver.

Andi: Dream weaver.

Grace: [sings] *I believe you can get me through the night.*

[laughter]

Rumman: Maybe the way the character of Q is built out is poking at views of gods, in the Roddenberry sense, that he's a God, but he's very fallible and he's very human and it's nothing special. Because he's bored. At the end of the day, 99% of what Q does is driven by his extreme boredom which is an interesting take, because we all wonder, if you did have the powers of Q, what would you do if you were Q? Pretty much, you would just be bored. You'd have a lot of fun for a short period of time, then you'd just be really bored.

Andi: I know what Sue would do. She would do another season of *Firefly*.

[laughter]

Grace: I think a lot of people would.

Andi: Okay. [laughs]

Grace: What would you do with omnipotent power? Just real quick segue there. What would you do if you were the God in *Star Trek*?

Andi: All I can think of is I would get tickets to *Hamilton*.

[laughter]

Rumman: Mine probably has something to do with really good chocolate cakes, so it's fine.

Grace: Yeah.

Rumman: I would make a really good piece of chocolate cake.

Andi: I think we'd be good people to give omnipotence to, because [Rumman laughs] none of us are like, "I will take over the world."

Grace: Wow. It would depend on the world, I guess.

[laughter]

Andi: Cake and Hamilton. We're going to put together, the greatest night in New York City ever-

[laughter]

Sue: Oh, my goodness.

Andi: -with our omnipotence.

Grace: I don't know, I can think of some pretty awful stuff I would do, but that might just be me.

Andi: Do tell, Grace. Do tell.

Grace: First of all, I might wreck some havoc with the Ferengi societal system, just the funsies, and/because it sounds like it's a long time coming.

Andi: I would do a lot of time travel. Straight off, I would do a ton on time travel.

Grace: I do a lot of retconning. [Andi laughs] A lot of retconning.

Sue: Mm-hmm

Grace: That's probably mostly what I would do if [Sue laughs] I was a Q from the [laughs] *Star Trek* universe, retconning.

Sue: But bringing up Q, actually, is a great jumping off point for, I think, the problem that you have going into exploring these alien races. Hypothetically, on this starship, the crew is going to run into races that have different abilities. So, we know the Beta Zed or Betazoids, Beta Zed is the planet, [chuckles] Betazoids have this telepathic ability. And another race might have a different ability, and things that humans don't have. So, are they all powerful, godlike beings or are they just a different race? That becomes part of the conversation too like, where is the line? I think that pulls in to the conversation, the wormhole aliens/the prophets.

Grace: Ooh. Yes.

Sue: Are they just another race that has this ability and are not bound by time, or are they the prophets of the Bajoran religion or are they both?

Grace: Honestly, *Deep Space Nine* gives us probably the most intensive, what am I saying, religious content in *Star Trek*.

Sue: Absolutely.

Grace: So, this is a very good starting off point.

Andi: From the pilot, the very, very beginning, where you have Sisko, who's our new commander being set up as this important figure in Bajoran religion.

Rumman: Yeah. How do you deal with that? Suddenly, they're like-- [crosstalk]

Andi: I would deal with it poorly. I would deal with it poorly. Sisko does a much better job than I do. I would right away-- [crosstalk]

Grace: As we can see, Sisko just deals with it very cautiously.

Andi: It's like, Jean-Ralphio like, "This is too much responsibility. I got to get out of this."

[laughter]

Grace: Oh, God. Oh, God. That's a crossover that someone has done out there. You know it. Now that we have said it out loud, we have willed it into the universe.

Rumman: There's this Earth show called Hamilton.

[laughter]

Grace: I was wondering.

Rumman: Yeah, it's a pretty big thing to deal with. He has so much power and responsibility handed to him. It's scary.

Andi: I also like seeing Kira, because Kira is religious. It's really interesting to see that side of her be explored on *DS9* and have her be so invested in this religion, because I think in a lot of sci-fi, they do subscribe to that Gene Roddenberry idea that-- [crosstalk].

Grace: Religious foolishness, like that.

Andi: Exactly.

Grace: We are going to outgrow religion.

Andi: Right. Religion and science are not compatible or logic and religion are not compatible. Here's Kira, straightforward as they come, still having a very strong spiritual side and encompassing those ideas together at the same time.

Sue: At least, at the beginning of the show, she considers herself most aligned with Vedek Winn, who is the leader of an orthodox order.

Grace: Which is a very interesting changeover to see happen with Kira. Just the way that plays out.

Rumman: One thing I will say, especially with the Bajorans, Vedek, later, Kai Winn is one of the main antagonists. She's one of the baddies. I think it's a critique of hyper organized or dogmatic religion, where they do show the Bajorans religion in this positive light, but at the same time, you do have Kai Winn, who is one of their big enemies. So, it's about power and corruption, a not so veiled criticism of hyper organized religion.

Grace: Yeah. There are even multiple times where Louise Fletcher, the actress that plays Winn, referred to her as-- I play the Space Pope, like old medieval style pope.

Rumman: Yeah. Because she had the hat and everything. Space pope hat.

Grace: She had the pope hat. She had the addiction to power. She had the corruption.

Sue: Yeah. The Space Pope is reptilian, okay?

[laughter]

Rumman: Is there a Space Pope mobile? [Sue laughs]

Grace: Yes, I really hope so.

Sue: No, the wind thing, watching it struck me, because with being raised by a pastor, and seeing the politics behind some of the denominations and the associations in the churches, you see the power struggle and you can see people who are not out to serve their congregation, but are out for themselves. This character of Vedek and later Kai Winn was really hit home for me in a lot of ways. Like, I could see people that I knew acting this way, and it reflected a lot of what I was seeing growing up in that situation.

Andi: She really represents the dangers of institutions.

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: So, institutions can be corrupted and they might have high ideals. But as soon as you have people within them-- The Catholic Church is a great example of this, in that, becomes an actual money-making organization. It becomes a place where people have jobs and careers and they want to get ahead in their career. How do you balance those things? How do you make sure that it doesn't become corrupt? Any institution can become corrupt. Not just religious, but literally any group of people can become corrupt.

Sue: But it's a danger too of are you following the leader or are you following the faith.

Grace: I got to have a pretty wild experience with my first watch through of *Deep Space Nine*, because I started it when I left home for college and was on my own and finally away from pretty much the religious community I had grown up with. At a point, I was like, "Well, if this isn't for me, I can just shrug it off right now. I'm away from all this."

It was especially driven home based on the fact that the Bajorans are culturally in a lot of stories in *Deep Space Nine* used, as in not allegory, a stand in for the Jews in a lot of ways. That made it a very interesting situation for me, because it was like, "Well, what part of this religion do I stick with and examine? What do I keep with me culturally and spiritually and what do I need to let go of, because I don't have to keep that as an integral part of my faith," which was especially fun, because I was at a school with a lot of antisemitic issues.

Rumman: Hey.

Grace: So, I got to actually have this really great experience while watching through the show, watching Kira's transition through her faith and her just have this incredible character arc that her faith is very heavily ingrained into while I was trying to grow into it in my own way. So, that's part of why I think I'm pretty attached to her as a character, because I would have never thought that alien terrorist from space would make me a better Jew.

[laughter]

Andi: It just goes to show the power of storytelling, you know? If they do it right, you can really connect to it on a personal level and it makes a difference in how you see your own life.

Grace: Oh, absolutely.

Rumman: What must it be like to have your boss be the emissary though? Can you imagine?

Andi: [laughs]

Grace: Oh, dude. Although I like how that's such an initial factor in her, Kira and Sisko's relationship, him being just like, "No, no, I'm Your boss. That's it. Okay, let's not make this a thing. Please, dear God. Dear me."

Sue: [laughs] Well, that's part of Sisko's growth too, right?

Grace: Yeah. Absolutely.

Sue: When he first gets to the station, he doesn't want anything to do with this. He's like, "This is thrust upon me and I am not into it." By the end of the series, Andi, cover your ears.

[laughter]

Grace: Cover your ears and hum. Hum, I say.

Andi: I'm good at humming. Go with the pope word?

Sue: I'm not saying he's into it, but he's definitely-- It's almost like he's becoming one of them. He's embraced it and he's taken on this role and he's not dissenting from it anymore. He's learned more about the Bajorans and learned more about himself because of how they see him.

Grace: I think he sees that he has a position to be the figure that they need at this point for their people, and he realizes how far he needs to go with that.

Rumman: One thing I really always admired about Sisko, is he was very good at putting himself in somebody else's shoes.

Grace: Oh, yeah.

Rumman: So, while he may not subscribe to their religion or their spirituality or their faith, and while he saw the wormhole "gods" as aliens, which is the whole debate in the hands of the Prophets. He understood--

Grace: Oh, that's [crosstalk]

Rumman: --like I said, his role and responsibility as emissary in terms of what he represented to them. So, while he may think a certain thing, he respected their faith. And he was always very good at them. That's why, as a boss, as a leader, as somebody who's in charge of something, I think that's one of his strongest suits.

Andi: So, they have that episode where Keiko goes up against Winn on how they're going to be teaching Bajorans spiritual beliefs in her classroom. And that whole episode is super interesting to me, but it does set up this great moment between Sisko and Jake in which Jake is like, "This is stupid." And he's like, "It's not stupid. It's just different."

Grace: It's important to them. It's not stupid to them.

Andi: Exactly.

Grace: So, we have to respect that it's important.

Andi: Yeah. And that moment just really encapsulates what it means to be open minded to me, just being able to respectfully understand how other people see things differently than you do, and that doesn't make them stupid or wrong.

Grace: Not to mention how many questions that episode raises with the whole possible analogy of Starfleet just coming in here and the whole benevolent white people trope that gets used in.

Rumman: The White Savior Complex.

Grace: Exactly. The Starfleet Savior complex that they've got.

Rumman: Yeah. Absolutely.

Andi: [laughs]

Grace: It's like, "Keiko, is this really within your right to be teaching these people about their own religion?" Just saying.

Andi: I think that episode is so strong, because there's no easy answers and everybody's position is represented as a valid one. I really enjoy that. That's a good example of an episode in which you see Kira struggling with her beliefs there and seeing the strong spirituality that she has. Great episode.

Grace: Again, we get to see the start of her dealing with Winn as going from, "Okay, this is someone I get behind to," "Oh, wow, I'm slowly realizing that you and I's faiths do not align, and I have some stuff to question here."

Rumman: [chuckles] Should we talk Pah-wraiths?

Grace: Why not? They got a whole religion with demons and everything, except their wraiths for some reason, because that's a more interesting word. I don't know.

Rumman: It's very interesting to see the good guys and the bad guys. You get the wormhole gods and you got the Pah-wraiths.

Grace: Yeah. It is really cool to see them adding on to their religious structure of the Bajorans. I want to say, to give them something analogous to our understanding of the Abrahamic faiths, because there are these good creatures that live up in the sky and there

are these bad ones that live trapped in the Earth. It is cool just to see it expanded upon and given more shape as a full religion, not just we believe in nice things.

Sue: And as a full culture too,-

Grace: Yeah. Exactly.

Sue: -because we're finally seeing diversity among a planet.

Rumman: I think also it's very hard to separate religion and culture and society. Knowing what the Bajorans had to go through, it would be hard to swallow that the religion is all sunshine and ponies and rainbows.

Grace: Right.

Rumman: Because they had a pretty rough time, say the least. You would think that spiritually or in terms of faith, they would want to be able to explain these bad things that happened to them and befell them.

Grace: Right. It's like, the stance of Joseph Campbell in his talk about the power of myth. Myth is the initial way we receive the Earth, and I'm paraphrasing, and it's the foundation on which we build our faith. So, why wouldn't we have that in alien cultures? It's really cool to see that explored.

Rumman: And in terms of *DS9* and having IRL gods-- What about the founders? What do you guys think about that whole dynamic they've got going on?

Grace: I really like the fact that in the same show, we get to have the juxtaposition of faith with the Bajoran gods and the founders in the same spit and distance of each other. I like the fact that we get to see two juxtaposing faiths in the same series. I really like that [chuckles] You can see them as Old Testament religion and New Testament religion, if you think about it. Just the one faith that just requires absolute subservience and obedience versus the one that's like, "Love your neighbors. Believe in each other. Respect the wormhole." [Sue laughs] I really do like that in a single series we get that breadth of religious creativity.

Rumman: It's also the more meddling gods versus the benevolent caretaker god.

Grace: Yeah. We get benevolent god versus [crosstalk] god.

Rumman: It is that Old Testament, I will smite you. Yeah, it is very much. But they exploit it. They're very intelligent creatures. They absolutely exploit.

Grace: Oh, yeah.

Rumman: Have the Jem'Hadar be literally addicted to a substance and have a whole-- some of the best episodes, in my opinion, with these Jem'Hadar episodes. That is dogma. That is not even religion. That is just blind dogma.

Grace: The interactions between the founders, the Jem Hadar and the Vorta, you get some really interesting dynamics based entirely on faith and subservience.

Rumman: Yeah. And Weyoun is just everyone's favorite guy you love to hate. Oh, God--[crosstalk]

Grace: He totally is.

Rumman: Oh, God. I love Weyoun, because I love to hate Weyoun. You just need him. You need him.

Grace: In every incarnation of him, there's something new to take away.

Rumman: [laughs] But it's amazing that they have this highly, highly structured religion really. Their society is their religion. Tearing it apart, and it's a religion based on war and dominance and conquest and-- [crosstalk].

Grace: It is a religion, but it's all the front for this entire Machiavellian power structure for their culture.

Rumman: Absolutely. If any of you guys watch *The Borgias*, it's pretty much like that super corrupt [audio cut]

Grace: Oh, man.

Sue: And it's another take on that question of how more advanced does a race have to be considered godlike.

Grace: Yeah.

Sue: But let's take a total left turn and talk about *Voyager* for half a second.

Grace: Left turn at the Delta Quadrant.

Sue: I think the biggest thing that sticks out in my mind thinking of *Voyager* in terms of this discussion is Chakotay, and how unfortunate it is that you've got this character who is spiritual in an Earth religion way.

Grace: In a very Earth connected way and then he-- [crosstalk]

Sue: He's a human from Earth that actually has spirituality. But the spirituality that he's practicing is just this half made up, half conglomerated idea of what native peoples actually believe.

Rumman: It's hand wavy woo-woo. [crosstalk]

Sue: Yeah.

Grace: *Voyager* could have benefited so much from some native consultation on it of any kind, really. Any kind at all.

Andi: Well, they had someone. He just turned out to be a fraud.

Sue: [chuckles] It's the only time in *Star Trek* thus far that I can think of a human, a main caste human, practicing a faith of any kind. It is disappointing in almost every way. [chuckles]

Grace: It's disappointing that we were given such a great opportunity with Chakotay to see not only an underrepresented religion, but to see a human practicing religion in *Star Trek*. We get the hand wavy just, "Oh, mysterious natives." [Sue laughs] This isn't an actual tribe. We're just making shit up here. We wanted to go on a spiritual journey. We got the USS make some shit up.

Rumman: Yeah. It was definitely a very unnuanced view of Native American culture. One thing I did love though was B'Elanna. It's interesting, because I always love comparing B'Elanna and Worf in their half human-- not really half human, but they're half humanness even though Worf is full blooded Klingon. You know what I mean? Their cultural struggles of which one they would want to identify with, and Worf starts off in one direction, B'Elanna goes the other and her embracing of religion when she has to go find her mother in *Barge of the Dead*.

Grace: Right. I love that we get to see B'Elanna as someone who very much has her own level of commitment to her Klingon heritage and is like, "No, this is what I'm keeping at arm's length. This is what I'm holding on to." It's very great to see someone who comes from especially such a strong culture like the Klingons that can be very easily just written off as Space Vikings. Although the *Barge of the Dead* seals that a little bit, doesn't it?

But anyway, someone who's making her own definition of her faith. It will never cease to bother me that specifically in *Barge of the Dead*, we get all these humans and non-Klingons around her, telling her how to define her Klingon culture, how she needs to be doing it. It is unhappy making.

Sue: But you know what I really appreciate about *Star Trek* and these alien characters that do have a faith of any kind, is that none of them are brushed off. We see in the Vulcan spirituality faith, we see katra's being transferred. We see *Barge of the Dead*, we see the wormhole aliens. It's almost as if what's being put forth, is that there is some truth in every belief, which is-- [crosstalk]

Grace: Unless you are T'Pol, in which case your faith is just a running gag to the humans.

Sue: [laughs] Well, no, in late *Enterprise*, there's some real Vulcan religion stuff that happens.

Grace: It takes a little while to get there though [Sue laughs] [crosstalk]

Rumman: Are you talking about enduring Incident?

Grace: I'm talking about a lot of things. [Rumman laughs] From day one, they're like, "Oh, she's doing her weird alien thing again."

Sue: Well, that's *Enterprise*. It takes *Enterprise* a while to get anywhere.

Grace: [laughs] Right.

Sue: But this idea of whatever you believe is true for you is a concept that I think was really first solidified for me by the Discworld series of books by Terry Pratchett. It's just that concept of whatever you believe is what happens to you when you die. That's how he takes it. I think that's actually a really beautiful concept.

Grace: It's a very positive concept.

Sue: Yeah.

Grace: And I really wish we could see that used more in--

Sue: Whatever you believe will happen is what will happen.

Rumman: It's interesting to see how cultures are shaped by how their religion defines what happens when you die. Like, you mentioned Klingons, the Space Vikings. That's one very big thing in their religion and culture, is that if you die in war, this noble, honorable death, you will go to Sto-vo-kor versus having a dishonorable death, in which case you will go to basically purgatory.

Grace: Or, if the Ferengis, if you led a competent and profitable life, you'll go to a great treasury in the afterlife.

Rumman: Right. It definitely shapes how they act as people. With Vikings, Viking invasion of England was so frightening to the English, because they did not fear death. They would just go and be like, "Bro, kill me. [chuckles] I'm going to be drinking with the gods. It's awesome."

Grace: "I'm ready, buddy."

Rumman: Whereas the English were just so scared, because they had this very punishment-based death. Christianity was very, very different. So, they feared death in a way that the Vikings did not. That made their war dynamic very different. Whether or not it's true or not or good or bad is irrelevant. My point really here, is that it made the dynamic different. If you're going into war saying it's cool if I die, that's very different from being worried about your wife and kids back home.

Grace: Right.

Rumman: I think Klingons are very much like that. And so, what happens when that gets challenged, I think Neelix is a good one [crosstalk] to *Mortal Coil*, which is actually one of my favorite episodes of *Voyager*. The more I thought about it, where he dies and there's nothing. In the context of Neelix and Talaxians, he's the last of his kind. He watched everybody get killed. Well, he's not actually the last of his kind, but thought he was the last of his kind. Everybody get killed around him. And the only thing that helps him go keep going is his faith that when he dies, he'll be with his family again. When he "dies" and there was nothing and he comes back, he's suicidal.

Grace: It is really an incredible performance that's given also with Ethan Phillips in that episode. I think if they were going to do any standalone story about the comedy character becoming unhinged that that was a really good way to go. It was hard to watch. It was one of those things--

And I think it's really interesting that we get to see that in juxtaposition to-- I want to say it was Season 1 or 2, where they visit a planet where there's a group of aliens who believe that when they die, they will go essentially to heaven. And then, they find out really that when they die, they just get teleported to a meteorite floating out in space. One of them gets brought back from the dead has this big-- But what does it mean then? My faith has been a lie. I'm not sure if I'm remembering correctly. Isn't it Neelix who gives solace to them in that one and then we get to see Neelix lose that in this, which makes it all the more cruel.

Rumman: Yeah, Neelix's character evolution has always been one of my favorites, actually like you pointed out as a comic character. To realize that, how some happy people and if you're not a perpetually happy person [unintelligible [00:46:03] those happy people ignorance is bliss kind of, but then you realize that some of those people, like Neelix, do that in spite of where they've come from or what they've seen. He is a happy being, because he's chosen to be happy. That's very compelling about his character. He is a comfort to people. Not just because he was raised all happy and everything is always grand for him. It hasn't been. He's had a harder time than most people. He chooses his happiness. I think that that depth of Neelix's character makes him very compelling.

Andi: Which is funny, because that's his faith right there outside of his religion.

Sue: Ah. [laughs] So, I do want to talk about *Enterprise* real quick. But actually, the stories about the Vulcan reawakening reformation, whatever term you want to use, the *Kir'Shara* arc is actually one of my favorite parts of *Enterprise*, where they're finding the writings of Sirak and they're reexamining how their culture has built up over the last several decades or even centuries to reestablish the logic and the underpinning philosophy that we know from Spock and from Tuvok and from the Vulcans of earlier series that were farther in the future.

I think that's a really interesting arc of episodes, especially when you think about some of the movements in some Earth religions about, "Go back to the text. Don't let it get corrupted. Look at what your holy writings actually say." But other than T'Pol, we really only hear about investigations from Dr. Phlox. He says he has visited a Tibetan monastery and attended a mass at St. Peter's Square.

Andi: I do really appreciate the fact that Phlox has been super like, "Oh, this is what humans are about. I'm going to look into that" versus how all of the humans are like aliens, am I right?

Sue: Yeah. It's really cool that Phlox is interesting in human culture, but I think it's also showing us that at least at the time of *Enterprise*, religion is still playing at least a cultural part on Earth, because there is still a Tibetan monastery and there is still mass being held at St. Peter's Square. So, religion still plays a role at least in the 22nd century.

Andi: We're left way wondering, what happened there.

Sue: Or, does it still. Because in *TNG*, we have references to festivals in *Data's Day*. He makes a note about the Hindu festival of lights, is what he calls it. In *TOS*, we have references to a Christmas party. In *Voyager*, the doctor dresses up as a Roman Catholic priest.

Grace: Like he do, apparently.

Rumman: [chuckles] He would.

Grace: Yeah, he would.

Rumman: He [chuckles] would.

Sue: It was in the holodeck, but it's still a cultural symbol.

Grace: Yeah. Religion isn't dead entirely.

Sue: Right.

Andi: It is very interesting how much *Star Trek* forces us to think about how religion will evolve into the future, because *Star Trek* is future based. It makes us wonder, looking back on how much religion on Earth has evolved, how is it going to evolve in the future? That's really part of the fun for me in examining the cultures and religions of *Star Trek*, how much it makes you question what's going to happen for us next.

Rumman: Yeah. There's the Arthur C. Clarke quote about how any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic. Even if we think about ourselves as the future from when all of our religions were founded, we have advanced so much technologically,

societally and yet, we still subscribe to or believe in, or at least use as guidance these books that were around when people scratched in the dirt to grow plants, and had horses, and the idea of getting in a metal tube and flying somewhere.

Andi: That would have been witchcraft.

Rumman: Yeah, that would have been witchcraft. It's very compelling that we still have these religions that they're so salient and they're so lasting. There must be a reason. Then maybe if we're in another 2,000 or so years in the future or more, they may still be around in a different format, or maybe as Roddenberry would say, "We'd all just grow out of it." I don't know.

[laughter]

Andi: I'm just using my self-control not to start singing that Jews in space ditty.

Sue: Oh, no. [laughs] Is there any aspect of this that you guys want to explore that we haven't talked about yet?

Rumman: I want to talk about the Borg.

Sue: Let's talk about the Borg.

Rumman: One of my favorite episodes. So, this is a bit of a stretch, because they're not religious but their religion is perfection. They go out-- [crosstalk]

Grace: They have faith in perfection.

Rumman: They do. They have faith in pure optimism. As a data scientist, I can appreciate there is something about a purely optimized something, anything. And anybody who is type A having a super organized anything, it brings so much joy. [chuckles]

Grace: It is divine.

Rumman: Yeah. I can't remember the name of the episode. Oh, *Omega Directive*, where seven witnesses' perfection. The omega molecules are stabilized, and she just has this moment where she just sees it in that that is-- She's just done, that's she just sits back and is like, "Oh my God, I just saw perfection." I find that so interesting about the Borg. Yes, what they're doing is a terrible thing, but that's what they are doing is trying to make themselves perfect. They're acquiring technology from other races and talents, intelligence, ideas. And that is almost calming in a sense, because it makes them immortal. So, I guess going back to the whole death-- [crosstalk]

Grace: Their goals are good. Their methods, not so much.

Rumman: Yeah. Like, I see what you're trying to do there.

Grace: [laughs] I respect that.

Rumman: Maybe you should ask people for assimilating. See if they want to assimilate. But if you knew that when your physical being died, you live on in this collective and you would actually mentally stimulated, you would learn things. You could contact other people. That's comforting that even if your mortal being is gone, most religions believe in a soul. We try to make ourselves immortal, if not physically, then this astro-physically. That's really the same thing, you live on in the collective.

Grace: So, yeah, again, even if it isn't a religion, per se, they've definitely got a value of faiths there. Yeah.

Andi: Very strong one.

Grace: That still doesn't explain why they suddenly have a queen out of nowhere.

Sue: Because they're bees, Grace.

Rumman: Yeah, I was going to say, Rome's Queen, get it? Get it?

Grace: They're not a true hive mind if they've got a leader though.

Sue: [laughs] Because they needed a sexy villain.

Grace: I sat on my screen dipping that. I get it. We needed a sexy lady. [Sue laughs] Never thought I'd sound defeated saying that. [Sue laughs]

Rumman: Anybody who can pull up being sexy balls with wires coming out of themselves, thumbs up. Two thumbs up.

Grace: Skills.

Andi: What's skills? Right there.

Grace: Skills.

Andi: The only thing that I would say that we haven't touched on and I'm not even sure if we need to be honest, is Vulcan Jesus.

Grace: Vesus?

Andi: Jesus. Vulcan Jesus.

Grace: If he is Vulcan, it's Vesus.

Andi: Vejus [onomatopoeia].

Sue: Do you mean Cirroc?

Andi: No, I mean Sybok.

Grace: We pretend Sybok didn't happen.

Andi: That's fine with me.

Grace: I'm speaking of myself I guess.

Sue: Yeah. That was weird.

Andi: I never understood that story, and I was like, "Why is this happening to me?"

Grace: They wanted a space televangelist, apparently. So, they went with Sybok? Why does God need a spaceship?

[laughter]

Rumman: Sybok looks like a space Salman Rushdie, just looking at his face.

[laughter]

Andi: He totally does.

Grace: Oh, my God, he-- [crosstalk]

Andi: Totally does.

Grace: So, are we now going to start saying, oh, my gosh, Sybok totally dumped Padma Lakshmi and was a total schmuck about it?

[laughter]

Grace: If any single phrase of good comes from today, I want it to be that.

Sue: So, I have a thing. We talked about where's the line between advanced alien race and godlike being. But there are several examples in the *Star Trek* universe of an advanced culture taking advantage of a not so advanced culture and pretending to be their gods.

Grace: Chicanery and Humbug, if you will.

[laughter]

Sue: We've got-- Top of my head. What's her name In *Devil's Due*?

Andi: I was thinking about her anyway, because I was thinking about-- So, we've talked a lot about God and we've talked a lot about creations. But *Devil's Due* is an episode in which we get to see different cultures and their version of the devil.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Grace: Which is neat. We get to briefly see the Klingon devil.

Sue: Right.

Grace: Pretty metal looking.

Sue: Ardra, by the way, is her name.

Andi: Yeah. I've always found that to be interesting. I think what a culture fears is, at least, as interesting as what they worship. I wish that we had a little bit more of that, I guess. But it is an interesting glimpse at the various cultures and what they fear.

Grace: An interesting reminder that a lot of different religions and cultures do have a lot of base beliefs that show up in a lot of them, like a devil.

Andi: Yeah. There tends to be some similar ideas that show themselves in most religions. And that makes total sense to me. There are, obviously, sometimes cultural differences. But for the most part, I think people fear death. They fear temptation. I think that a lot of our fears can be universal, therefore, a lot of these concepts can be universal.

Grace: Mm-hmm. Definitely.

Sue: Yeah. We see this trope a lot in *TOS* too, which you brought up at the very beginning, Andi, with the aliens that humans previously worshipped as gods now on other planets.

Andi: Yeah.

Sue: But it also comes up, actually, a lot in *Voyager*. We see it with the Ferengi that we run across in the Delta Quadrant, who were holdover from *TNG*. We see it in the *Voyager* episode *Blink of an Eye*, when *Voyager* winds up visible in the sky of this planet for centuries. But it's just a short amount of time to them, and they become a religious icon. And even B'Elanna becomes a mythical figure for an alien planet in an episode of *Voyager*.

Grace: Very begrudging figure. [chuckles]

Sue: Well, but it still happens. [laughs]

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: It goes back to what we were talking before about it's a way to explain the unknown.

Sue: Mm-hmm.

Grace: Yeah.

Rumman: Clearly, they thought about if that's why you have the Prime Directive. That is literally what they're worried about happening.

Sue: And it happens in *Who Watches the Watchers?*

Rumman: I loved the episode. Actually, you refer to the one with the Ferengi, because we were just playing the game earlier of what would we do if we were gods. That's what they would do. They're like, "Give me all your money. I'm going to tax you some more. I'm going to tax you more and more above my ears."

Grace: The great taxator from the sky.

[laughter]

Rumman: Pretty much. So, I'm like, "I wanted cake, you wanted Hamilton, they wanted their ears rubbed." That's it.

Grace: There are people of simple needs. [Rumman laughs] They're not the gods we want, but damn it, they're the gods we deserve.

[laughter]

Sue: I'm not sure anybody deserves them.

Rumman: No.

Grace: No, they don't.

Andi: I can think of a few writers who could. [chuckles]

Sue: So, I think that just about does it for today. Thank you for joining us for this awesome conversation about religion in the *Star Trek* universe. But this is just one of the many topics being discussed on the Trek.fm network recently. So, here's a quick look at some of the other things you may have missed elsewhere on Trek.fm.

Ken: Previously on Trek.fm, standard orbit.

Male Speaker: You've heard, Chief, Tripp sign on. I'm serious, Ken, actually, out of the chair, please.

Ken: Okay. Okay. God, I guess the Commodore has the con.

[laughter]

Male Speaker: Earl Grey.

Earl Grey: Did you really rip down Groppler Zorn on this list?

[laughter]

Earl Grey: I was just kidding. [laughs]

Ken: This is before he achieved Groppler rank. He was only a [unintelligible [00:59:31]]. He wasn't a Groppler.

Earl Grey: What fruit did he like before he got to Apples? [chuckles]

Male Speaker: The Worf.

Male Speaker: I want to hear Worf give a command sometime, like, one quarter ramming speed. And then, someone says, "Captain, regulation specifically states that we cannot go at one quarter ramming speed while we are in orbit of a planet."

[laughter]

Male Speaker: The Ready Room.

Zachary: To what extent is this episode the writers and producers of *Deep Space Nine* turning the mirror back at the fans? I think all of us *Star Trek* fans at one point or another probably retreat into this universe. We love *Star Trek*. It's a fictional world.

Male Speaker: What are you talking about, Zachary?

Zachary: Even it's not real?

Male Speaker: Are you suggesting that fans might decide to buy microphones and talk about it, like it's real for hours on end.

Male Speaker: To the journey.

Female Speaker: Next one in line is spirit folk. We already agree that that is just not necessary for anybody. And let's not torture them with it. Good, let's move on.

Male Speaker: The characters in the Fairhaven Hollow program begin to suspect the Voyager crew after they witness several supernatural occurrences. Commentary: Trek Stars

Male Speaker: Tokyo Drift really is the perfect subtitle. Like you could literally put Tokyo Drift onto the end of any movie, and it would instantaneously become a movie that you would have to see. Citizen Kane, Tokyo Drift.

Male Speaker: The 602 Club.

Female Speaker: I hate it when shows that are grounded in reality, but obviously, they're not. They have their characters go through socially important experiences.

Male Speaker: Literary Treks.

Male Speaker: It is very much every one of the characters who finds themselves pulled into the conflict that's part of this story. They are reacting to a fear of the other.

Male Speaker: Meta Treks.

Male Speaker: I'd love to answer your question, but I can't get the visual image out of my mind of Bea Arthur and Betty White in Starfleet miniskirts and go-go boots.

Male Speaker: I can totally pick *The Golden Girls* as Klingons

Male Speaker: Melodic Treks.

Male Speaker: What I decided to do was not only would I pick a six degree of separation, not only would I do it musically, but I was only going to do movies that were composed by people who had composed for *Star Trek*.

Male Speaker: Saturday Morning Trek.

Male Speaker: Dorothy had a little bit of a fit with the animators. They had said, over and over again, there is no moon in the Vulcan sky.

Male Speaker: But I think it was like the first episode that aired of the original series when they mentioned this, because Uhura walks up to Spock and she's like, "Tell me I'm beautiful. Tell me that I would look good in your moon." And he's like, "Vulcan has no moon." "I'm not surprised." That is an uncanny Uhura.

Male Speaker: Continuing mission.

Male Speaker: Yeah. And of course, another great thing is when it's all finished and you look at it and go, "Yeah, we made that together." Yeah, that's one of the greatest moments. And people respond to it and say, "Oh, that's pretty well made. The effects are great, the actors are great, even though they're Dutch trying to speak English," right?

Male Speaker: That's what else is happening on Trek.fm.

Sue: We also wanted to let you know about the Trek.fm Patreon. Trek.fm is a listener supported network. You can help us keep the *Star Trek* discussion coming by pledging a donation at patreon.com/trekfm. That's P-A-T-R-E-O-N dotcom slash Trekfm. Every little bit helps keep Women at Warp and the other Trek.fm podcasts up and running. So, once you're done with the show, again, please consider hopping on over to patreon.com/trekfm.

So, Rumman, where can people find you on the internet?

Rumman: You can talk to me in Babel Conference or the Women at Warp Facebook page.

Sue: Andi?

Andi: Easiest way is Twitter. I'm [@firsttimetrek](#).

Sue: Grace?

Grace: You can find me on Twitter, [@bonecrusherjenk](#), and in your nightmares.

Sue: [laughs] It's true. And I'm Sue. You can find me on Twitter, [@spaltor](#). That's S-P-A-L-T-O-R. Thanks so much everybody, and we'll talk to you soon.

[Transcript provided by [SpeechDocs Podcast Transcription](#)]