

Praise for *The Weather's Fine*

"In The Weather's Fine, Arch has declared the truth of his life's work, and more specifically a helpful method for overcoming many of life's challenges. With honest transparency and vulnerability, he shares some gripping personal stories that are difficult to comprehend.

"If you're going through a battle right now, I encourage you to get this book and learn from his experiences. You'll be glad you did."

**- Peter Schweizer, American political consultant and author
of the best-selling book, 'Red-Handed: How American
Elites Get Rich Helping China Win'**

"Families are complicated. Rarely do we get to see inside them. Arch Kennedy takes the reader inside his world. We see the highs and lows of the life of a man not afraid to allow others to learn from his experiences—a truly profound and sensitive book."

- Carol Pocklington, Behavioral Analyst and Author

"I met Arch several years ago when he was in a very dark place. Watching him change his life by incorporating the principles in this book has given me such joy. He is a different man today."

**- Amber Goldberg, Atlanta Sales Leader
and Personal Mentor to Arch**

“Arch’s book is heartbreaking, inspirational, and riveting! His openness about his own struggles and challenges gives us valuable lessons that we can all use to be better people.”

**- Ray Bell, Political Activist, Financial Services
Executive - The Wealth Consulting Group**

THE
WEATHER'S
FINE

My Method for Navigating Life's Challenges

ARCH KENNEDY

ArchKennedy.com

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Foreword

In the early 90s, I was a morning show host at a local radio station in Dallas, Texas. I remember one of the TV stations announcing a new TV anchor was joining their team. A beautiful woman named Kimberley Kennedy was now on the air in town. I thought it would be a fun radio stunt to profess my love to her on the air and ask her on a date live on the radio. She agreed, and we went on a single date. It was good for publicity, and we had a nice, fun time. But there was no love connection.

Not that long after, I got a job offer and moved to Kimberley's hometown Atlanta, Georgia. She suggested I reach out to her sister Kathleen Kennedy who was also in the television business.

I got to Atlanta, met Kathleen, instantly fell in love, and got shot down faster than I could eat a Chick-fil-A sandwich. But we became good friends after that. She introduced me to her brother, Arch, also in the television business, and I have remained friends with them over the years.

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All three of these people were smart, attractive, successful, and just seemed to have everything going for them. It would be easy to be envious of a family like this.

But what you're about to read, confirms that just because someone on the surface appears like they have it all together, most often there's a backstory. Arch Kennedy tells that story in a real, heartfelt, transparent manner that I'm sure was very difficult.

As Christians, it seems like a lot of us are far too quick in our judgment of others. However, it's not our place—that's God's place alone. Those judgments are too often used as a weapon against us by non-believers, in the news, in social media, debates etc.

Being a Christian doesn't mean that we are perfect, or that we have all the answers, or that we do everything the right way. It certainly doesn't mean that we are without sin (only one guy was able to pull that off).

I believe one of the things about being a Christian means we acknowledge that we aren't perfect, but we seek to be better human beings in God's eyes. Those that throw around the spear "hypocrisy" on Christians are usually those who have given up on trying to better themselves. That's sad and doesn't make the world a better place.

Like the rest of us, Arch Kennedy is not a perfect person. In these pages, you can see how he has sinned, grown, repented, and is now spending his life trying to improve on the mistakes he's made in the past. Arch is helping others find the path that he has so thankfully found.

Introduction

What a necessary labor of love and sacrifice this book has been for me because it has two main goals: to help me continue exploring my place and purpose in this world and to offer my life, stories, and lessons learned to help and inspire you.

With those goals in mind, I chose to share my experiences in a topical format instead of chronological order—that is, it's intentionally organized to help you read and apply what I've learned. Some of the intimate and vulnerable experiences I share with you are almost impossible to comprehend, but it is required to fulfill my purpose in writing this book.

You'll also discover very early that the common thread through these challenges and successes is my faith and spiritual journey. As the essence of a spiritual existence should do, it permeates everything—specifically, searching for God's truth for our lives. By digging deep for God's truth in every aspect of my life, I was able to overcome tremendous obstacles, some of which you may be all too familiar with and may be struggling with right now. But hang in there. Whether

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you've explored the spiritual part of your life or not, it's a vital part of the ongoing restoration process.

When I think back to some of my lowest points, I certainly got there by my own doing. Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher, once said: "But the worst enemy you can meet will always be yourself; you lie in wait for yourself in caverns and forests." Oh, how true that is. I have heard from others all my life that I am too hard on myself. By far, this has been the culprit behind the extreme anxiety and full-throttle addiction I have experienced in the past. Never feeling like I was good enough or feeling worthy of anything good were common emotions that inhibited me from experiencing a life full of contentment.

Would you like to know how to live a life of contentment despite the storms that pummel us along the journey? With God's guidance and wisdom, I'll tell you how I learned that my past pain has not been in vain but can be used for good. When dark, cloudy seasons come, rest assured—God is right there with you.

I'm continuing a path forward that is both fulfilling and (I hope) pleasing to our Creator, and I want you to find that tangible reality of hope and purpose, too. We are not meant to go this road alone, but instead, receive the love of Christ and others. If our lives deviate in some way, we can quickly get back in the saddle. That, to me, is a grace-filled, purposeful life in Christ.

In the moments of the book where I share some very personal, thought-provoking and controversial subject matter, I know I am opening myself up for criticism. If, however, it helps you and others identify and find peace, comfort and wisdom, then it's worth it.

ARCH KENNEDY

I'll state it plainly that the stories I share are from my personal perspective. My family and others mentioned may see these experiences through a different lens. Despite some very tumultuous times in my family's past, I'm thankful today that I have always had strong relationships with my sister, Kathleen, and my father, Arch Jr. As of this writing, though, I'm waiting on God's restoration with my oldest sister, Kimberley. The events you'll read about put a rift in our relationship so much that we have not spoken in many years. The challenges continue in life, don't they? But I choose to keep hope alive that reconciliation and healing are possible.

Get ready for some rocky moments in this book but know that there is victory on the other side of them.

CHAPTER 1

My Most Important Decision

“God aims first to renew man’s darkened spirit by imparting life to it, because it is this spirit which God originally designed to receive His life and to commune with Him. God’s intent after that is to work out from the spirit to permeate man’s soul and body.”

– Watchman Nee

The most important thing to me is my faith in Jesus Christ, and the love of Christ was ingrained in my being from childhood.

We went to church in my small little Georgia town every Sunday, and I was always dressed in a coat and tie to show respect for our Creator. I’ll never forget my little clip-on ties since I was still too young to tie one myself. As many sermons went over my head, Mom would let me draw on my church bulletin to pass the time. I can remember always being excited after church because we would get a trip to McDonald’s for lunch.

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My parents laid a wonderful foundation for me that I will always be grateful for, and even though I strayed away from church and God in my twenties, that foundation thankfully led me back years later. When I got older, I would hear so many horror stories from other gay people about how bad the church had been to them and why they will never go back. With huge resentment, they would describe how many times they were told they were going to hell for being gay, that God did not love them, and neither did the people in the congregation—nor were they welcome there. It has always saddened me to this day, as I did not have that experience in my younger years. It would not be until fifty-one years old that I would experience my first and only time being actually rejected from a church.¹

Small Town and Big City Experiences

My little Central Georgia town had a population of about 9,000 people, and you knew everybody, and everybody knew your business. Oddly, after hearing the horror stories from others in the gay community, I never once heard my small town preacher even mention the word homosexuality in his Sunday sermons. I never even heard other friends talk about gay people. When I got older, I lived in several fairly small cities, including Macon, GA, Athens, GA, and Tallahassee, FL. My career also took me to bigger cities like Orlando, Nashville and Atlanta. In each of those cities, I tried a church or two, and in none of those places did I ever hear a preacher say that gay people were going to hell, and I was never made to feel that I was not welcome as a gay man. Granted, I did not vocalize my sexuality, but the topic was never brought up in church sermons nor with other churchgoers.

1 archkennedy.com/2021/10/04/what-would-jesus-do

The one account I can remember where homosexuality was mentioned in church was ironically at a very large Presbyterian church in Atlanta. At this time, the Presbyterian church on a national level was divided between a more conservative branch and a more liberal branch. That day the preacher said he did not like to do any politics in church. Still, he had to tell the congregation that this particular Atlanta Presbyterian church was siding with the conservative branch, which did not believe in gay marriage. That was all he said. Still, I heard nothing about gay people going to hell or not being welcome in the congregation, but many gay people on the liberal side would have walked out immediately.

My Faith Is Put to the Test

Growing up in a southern, Christian, conservative family, I was not excited about the thought of telling my family that I was gay. The double life was still going on with respect to my mother, father, and two sisters. Hiding this major aspect of my life grew very tiresome, as I was always having to lie about what I was doing and where I was going. At age twenty-one, I could not take it any longer, and I reached out to my more “open-minded” sister, Kathleen. My oldest sister, Kimberley, was very judgmental and religious in my eyes at the time. Later, I would find out that my fears were validated. The thought of telling her terrified me, but the middle child, my second older sister Kathleen, was a bit more of a free spirit. She had been an acting major and danced in Six Flags shows, so she had often been exposed to quite a few gay men. I knew this and had a sense of security in telling her first. My intuition was correct, and Kathleen kept my dirty little secret from the rest of the family for three years.

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I believe faith is a personal journey, and my God tells me none of us are allowed to judge another human being. Only God Himself can judge mankind.



This parable from the Gospel of Luke in the Bible is a cornerstone for this statement:

“Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, ‘This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.’

“Then Jesus told them this parable: ‘Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, “Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.” I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent’” (Luke 15:1-7).

The reason I’m making a clear statement about judging others is because what I am about to say tends to anger people on both sides of the spiritual aisle. Granted, the topic of the sin of homosexuality seems always to get the most spotlight in political discussions, but there are plenty more sins illustrated in the Bible. We are all sinners.

I have battled with my faith and sexuality all of my life and still do today, but I am beginning to develop a hypothesis on why I have had to go through the pain of being gay and a Christian at the same time. I tried for many years to pray the gay away. I did therapy and tried to date girls to be attracted to them—but to no avail. After a decade of fighting it, I finally dealt with the reality that I could not change my same-sex attraction. I pushed it to the back of my mind and tried to live my life as a gay man searching for a healthy monogamous relationship.

I'm reminded of a quote from a former Australian evangelist in the Assemblies of God, Anthony Venn-Brown, that says, "My faith is a choice. My morality is a choice. My sexual orientation however isn't."

My Controversial Conclusions

As my faith and wisdom have grown, I have come to some controversial conclusions depending on one's personal and spiritual worldview. What if my homosexuality is my arthritis? Let me explain. My mother suffered more than any human being I have ever witnessed with severe rheumatoid arthritis. She started having pain in her joints as early as in her twenties, was using a wheelchair by her forties and was bedridden, having to be bathed and fed for the last thirteen years of her life. Anyone who knew her could tell you they have never seen another person suffer as long and hard as my mother.

Despite this, she never lost her faith and had a will to live like no one you have ever met. Her pain was not in vain, as she was an inspiration to many who knew her. What if my homosexuality and alcoholism are my arthritis? In other words, what if I am to use this pain to help

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others fight these same demons like my mother helped so many with her will to live?

One thing I will not do is change God's word to suit my needs and my sinful nature. There are certainly passages in the Bible that discuss this topic of homosexuality:

“Do not have sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman; that is detestable” (Leviticus 18:22).

“If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They are to be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.” (Leviticus 20:13).

“In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed shameful acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their error” (Romans 1:27).

“Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

“We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for the sexually immoral, for those

practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

I choose to keep this life challenge between God and me and not to make it a political or personal debate with another person. Also, with regards to men and women, 1 Corinthians 7:1-2 states: “*Now for the matters you wrote about: ‘It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.’ But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband.*”

We are all on our own journey and at different places in our growth as children of God. From the above passages and more, I believe scripture is telling me that God wants me to remain celebrate and has put this trial in my life for me to grow closer to Him. I plan to keep reading scripture and searching for God’s truth, not mine or anyone else’s. This dichotomy infuriates both the liberal and conservative gay community and even some straight people, too. I understand because the question arises: “Why would a just God produce a child this way and then tell them they are sinners for what they can’t control?” Great question. But, then I would ask, “Why did He create a woman like my mother to suffer most of her life with a debilitating disease?”



The answer? We are not in heaven.
We are all sinners living in a broken world,
and this is why we need Christ.



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He died for our sins. What an incredible gift. When I concentrate on this above all else, the sexuality dilemma kind of loses its punch. When I concentrate on Christ, all of my sins lose their punch. In other words, my sins become less and less the closer my relationship grows with Jesus. This has been an evolution that has taken fifty years to come to fruition.

Even though I left God in my twenties, I know God never left me. Alcohol and my sexuality took me away from Him for a decade. I know now that my alcoholism put a block between God and me. I could never have a relationship with Christ while drinking.

When you study addiction, you understand that the drug of choice becomes the most important thing in your life—more than anything else. Once addicted, the brain actually “needs” the drug to feel normal. This is when it is no longer a “choice.” The addict is “hooked.”

The great news is that while you can't be cured, addiction can be treated with detox and rehabilitation and luckily, I made that positive choice. I attribute finding Christ again later in life to the wonderful early spiritual foundation my loving parents instilled in me—Christian values that were deeply imprinted on my heart and soul. I am thoroughly grateful for that. What is also great news is that you don't have to have that foundation to find Christ at any point in life. He is always waiting for us. We just have to look for Him and have that desire to do so. Another incredible gift.

Spiritual Brokenness in the Gay Community

I came out as a gay man at 18 years old. I found the gay scene and encountered some gay men who were treated very badly by their fami-

lies and church when coming out. Some actually were abandoned by their family for being gay. Many young men did not have the same experience as me as a child, so I understand the hurt and pain that some have gone through. Luckily, I did not.

But through my twenties, I heard a few different stories from gay men who were told they could never have a relationship with Jesus Christ and were going to hell, and they developed a deep hatred for church and for God. I would find out later that the number of churches spewing this hate and judgment was not nearly as many as the liberal gay population portrayed.

To be quite blunt, there is a huge sense of victim mentality in general with left-leaning people politically, especially with the gay left. It is understandable that one would be hurt and resentful, to an extent. But I never believed that one should wallow in these resentments forever. Also, I was lucky enough to know that these hateful words came from people and not from God. So some gay people are very mad at God. And I get it.



But I agree with Pakistani-American Christian apologist Nabeel Qureshi who says, “All suffering is worth it to follow Jesus. He is that amazing.”





My Method for Dealing with This Life Challenge:

Understanding that this type of hatred comes from people and not God Himself is crucial. And everyone is responsible for recognizing and accepting this fact if they ever want to feel the fullness of Christ in their hearts. Will gay people get to heaven? If they accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, yes. But, there is way more to it than that. My pastor said something so simple to me and yet so profound. He said, “Your answers will come from reading Scripture. All of our answers are there. We just have to open our hearts and souls to what God is telling us.” In my early fifties, I am finally doing it. I feel completely confident that much more will be revealed as I continue to read the Bible and ask God for an understanding of His truth in every word I read. Today, I am also finding as I read and understand more of God’s Word, the more I desire to be more like Christ.

As it stands for me today, I think I will struggle with my sexuality until I develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Yes, there are various passages in the Bible that reference homosexuality as an unacceptable practice and an abomination.

How do I cope with this? With constant prayer for God’s truth to be revealed to me. It is a personal journey and struggle, and I certainly will never make it political. Right-leaning or left-leaning church pastors will undoubtedly have differing opinions on whether one can have a healthy and loving gay relationship with God’s approval. What I do know is that my seeking Jesus Christ is the main purpose of my

life, and through this, the truth will be revealed to me through reading the Word. And as those truths are revealed, I will have more and more of a desire to do God's will.



Here's the Truth:

Jesus welcomed all to follow Him and told us He is the way to heaven. As long as I continue to pursue Him, I will strive to be more like Him and eventually be with Him when I finally leave this physical body. That gives me comfort and peace.



Inspirational Speaker and Storyteller

If you've connected with the experiences in this book and want to take the next step with Arch, there are a couple of in-person opportunities to hear more.

Invite Arch to speak at your event or gathering as a thought leader or keynote presenter. Share his stories and experiences with your audience, and identify the inspirational key points in Arch's methods for overcoming challenges that you'd like them to hear. Other speaking passions include addiction, politics, and health and nutrition.

Learn More at ArchKennedy.com