

Archuleta

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Archuleta has directly addressed his coming out experience through his music.

In the past, like at Utah's LoveLoud Festival, he has remarked about his sexuality and his journey. At last year's LoveLoud, he changed a lyric from his hit song "Crush" from "girl" to "boy."

"It's interesting because I was introduced to America and millions of other people as a 16-year-old and then 17, while I was on 'Idol,'" Archuleta reflected. "To not know who I was yet, but still have to show people who I was, and then having to grow up in front of an audience."

Growing up in front of an audience has also had other effects in his life.

"A lot more people know me than I know them personally in Utah, so they were invested in how my personal life was going to unfold," Archuleta said. "Like,



DAVID ARCHULETA | @graphicsontheroad
David Archuleta says his goal with his music is to be authentic to who he is, in all stages and eras of his life.

random strangers would come up to me and be, like, 'So, who are you dating?' ... They feel like I am their son, nephew, grandson or cousin ..."

It was especially difficult, Archuleta said, getting to where he is now from being a "conservative boy who was very religious and devout to his faith."

Archuleta also said he tried to do what he was "supposed to do" by trying to get married — breaking off three engagements in the process.

"When it didn't work, I was really starting to get scared," he said. "Because I was realizing this isn't going to fix the thing that I know about myself. And I'm terrified that people are not going to see me for what I really am. Because I couldn't fix it."

'Sharing who I am'

One thing that hasn't changed, Archuleta said, is his goal with his music: To be authentic to who he is, in all stages and eras of his life.

"I'm doing what I've always done, and that is sharing who I am," Archuleta said. "It's part of my journey. I used to talk about my faith all the time."

Archuleta said he is aware of the comments left on his social media posts about his music and identity — many written by members of the Latter-day Saint faith, and objecting to his decision to live authentically. He has often shared such comments, explaining himself further to the people writing them.

"People are upset about that," he said. "Why is that so upsetting to you that I'm learning to be OK with who I've always been?"

While promoting "Hell Together" he's been even more vocal on his social media platforms. Archuleta has participated in TikTok trends, like a video that repeats the theme "I'm an ex-Mormon," and another that recreates a discussion trend with his mother, who eventually left the church.

When he served a mission in Chile from 2012 to 2014, Archuleta said he was proud to share that experience. "As a public figure, I'm going to share the things that are meaningful in my life. And whoever comes

across it, I'm not going to control what comes into your face or not," he said.

One part of "Hell Together" that people have been particularly vocal about, he said, is the title lyric — "We'll go to hell together" — which came directly from his mother. People made disparaging comments before the song even came out, he said just because of the title.

"That's just what my mom said. It's my story. It's my life. As songwriters, and artists you can talk about your life," Archuleta said.

In the Latter-day Saint faith Archuleta noted, family is the "first and most important thing."

Latter-day Saints believe Archuleta said, "Families can be together forever. And so my mom was just, like, 'OK, what's the point of me living forever if I can't have my children who are everything for me?' ... If that upsets people, that's fine, but it's my story, and I can say whatever I want and tell my story."

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