



- Joanna: [00:12](#) Neil, welcome to the Faith and Word podcast. We would love to know a little bit more about what your day to day life looks like.
- Neil: [00:18](#) Well, my professional life, as it were, sort of falls into two parts. I'm employed four days a week by the London Institute for Christian Contemporary, LICC. That involves me being in London some of the time, that involves me working with church leaders, developing resources, et cetera, and speaking.
- Neil: [00:37](#) And the rest of my time I'm a church leader. I live in a place called Manchester, which is 200 miles north of London. And I'm part of a regular church with a leadership team here and together we lead that church. And I think the significant thing of that, for me, has been over the 13 years I've worked with LICC, I've been trying to do all of that I'm talking about in my own local church. So it kind of goes beyond just that dreaded expert who says, "This is what I would do if I were in that position", to hopefully something that's a little bit more like, "Yeah, actually it's more difficult than we think." So, that's how my life works out, four days a week working with the LICC and the rest of my time just a regular church leader.
- Brian: [01:21](#) Neil, that's great. So as I've picked up a lot of your work and writing, really the work of LICC since John Stott. It's attempted to move churches towards this idea of whole life discipleship. Can you tell us a little bit about what you mean by that? What's that look like?
- Neil: [01:38](#) It's a tragedy really that we have to use the word whole life, isn't it?
- Brian: [01:42](#) Yeah. Yeah, talk about that.
- Neil: [01:44](#) We could just sort of call ourselves disciples of Jesus. But what I think a number of years ago, we recognized is that when you started to talk about discipleship, at least then, people imagined it was about your personal, private life. The way you prayed, the way you read scripture, sort of the spiritual disciplines which you need, but that was it. And then there was the rest of life. What we were wanting to say to people were, that this life, the life that begins with surrender to the Lordship of Jesus and it continues by His working out what it means to live as agents of the kingdom of God has to be worked out in the whole of our life, for the whole of our life.
- Neil: [02:21](#) So in other words, it's about context specific. What's it mean at this stage? What does it mean to be a disciple at this point of

my life, in this particular context? And how do I live that through? And how will I live that for the whole of my life, however long I may live? So that's kind of what we mean by whole life discipleship. What does it mean to follow Jesus in my context, at this particular moment, with my joys, my challenges, my limitations, and my possibilities, for the sake of the kingdom of God?

- Brian: [02:50](#) Yeah, Neil, as you were just talking, we have the context that you're referring to, people who are listening to the podcast are coming from all types of industries, careers, walks of life. And one of the phrases I hear people use, tell me if this is a little bit of what you'd experience, people will talk about my spiritual life. As if that's almost a... They might not intend it this way, that's a segment of their life, and they're just missing out on this life, this concept of whole life discipleship. Do you get that feel at times when people talk about spirituality?
- Neil: [03:20](#) Absolutely, and I think in a sense it keeps it in a very safe place. One of the interesting things about secularization is that in our wider societies, that in one sense people don't mind what you believe or indeed what you practice, as long as it's private. I think where it becomes more unsettling to people is when you're trying to bring the gospel and a life and gospel into the public space through our own experience it becomes a lot more potentially difficult and destabilizing for people.
- Brian: [03:52](#) Yeah. Brilliant. That's a great observation.
- Joanna: [03:55](#) Yeah, I imagine that this concept of whole life discipleship shapes the way that Christians relate to their local church. It may be a little different or reorienting. Tell us a little bit about the role that you see the church playing in this process of discipleship.
- Neil: [04:10](#) I think that I want to begin by affirming the absolute centrality of the local church. I think for people in the faith and work movements, I think for people in the disciple making movements sometimes there's been implicit and sometimes explicit criticism of the gathered church. And I want to say I think the gathered church is absolutely crucial.
- Neil: [04:35](#) Yeah, because it's made up of people like me and you. But it's absolutely central. But it's the nature of this gathering, this community of God's people. And it's kind of like, "Well, why do we gather? For what purpose?" For we can worship on our own, we can read scripture on our own, we can listen to the best of

the podcasts all around the world on our own. But what does belonging to this group of people mean?

- Neil: [04:57](#) And I think for us what we're saying is that the life of the gathered church, the times when we're together at least in part, equip us, enable us, empower us for the lives when we're scattered. We're not actually often we're living our lives as Christians in a culture that increasingly looks alien for many Christians. And so it's the extent to which our life together enables us to live for the glory of God when we're separated and scattered.
- Brian: [05:33](#) That's really... A way that I've seen you represent this before. Visually, and again we're having a verbal conversation, but visually I've seen you use a diagram with a hundred dots that are gray, several that are red to show the gathering and then showing them spread out. Could you describe that a little bit? I think it's an easy one for people to imagine as you talk about it and what are the assumptions you around that make that powerful?
- Neil: [06:01](#) Yeah, it's better visually, obviously. But we've got... So, imagine a hundred dots in a square, 10 by 10. What we wanted to do is try and help people in the UK understand why life felt like it did for them. And so what we did was we in the corner of that grid of a hundred dots, six of them are colored red. And that represents approximately the number of people who worship together in a Christian context once a month or more, 6% roughly. 90-
- Brian: [06:39](#) That's in the UK. Is that, yeah, that's the case?
- Neil: [06:42](#) And when you show people that it's a quite sobering moment because people recognize statistically, visually what they feel, which is that they're in a minority, that people don't really get it, but the 94% are not against church on the whole.
- Neil: [06:59](#) Indeed, many of those people may well have vestiges of the Christian message and indeed practice [the night prayer 00:07:08], etc. it's not all against us. But they just don't get why church is significant. When we look at that as in the corner, people will say, well, it feels like that. Sometimes it feels like we're in a corner. It feels like we're up against it. It feels like the culture is sort of rejecting sort of classic Christianity.
- Neil: [07:28](#) And then we use a different... We move to a different slide which is the same six dots, but now simply scattered amongst

the hundred gray dots and we ask people to imagine that and to identify themselves. What are the possibilities then? Well not least they're in touch with so many more people. They're scattered into those places that if we were simply talking about gathered church, we might call them hard to reach areas.

Neil: [07:55](#) You might imagine in some of your towns and cities, you'd think about some of the, some of your young people who are really hard to reach for local gathered church. But some of your people will be teachers. They are teaching the very same hard to reach people group that your gathered church might be really concerned about. Then we begin to ask, "Well actually what would they need to be able to minister there?"

Neil: [08:19](#) And I think it's, it's a different way of looking at the same question really. In the UK context, 6% to 10% of people would identify themselves as worshipping Christians. Where are they most of the time? They're scattered. They're scattered around our towns and cities and they have the potential for seeing the reality of the kingdom of God in those places.

Brian: [08:43](#) Yeah, that's good. I think the gathered, scattered language is just helpful to think of the context in which we are a about Christian life, public worship and then a public mission and ministry in the everyday life. I'm curious what are, specifically, as these, if we will, to keep the metaphors, these red dots are scattered amongst the hundred. Or that 6% is about daily public life. What are some of the characteristics or natures of what it means to be a disciple that make them effectively scattered there?

Neil: [09:20](#) Yeah, I mean one of the things I would use and talk about would be, well, when we scattered the rest of those red dots, the two things that need to happen are, firstly you need to stay red. If you gray out, then actually all of this language of gathered, scattered or gathered means nothing because actually we just fade into... We become cultural chameleons. We're just the same as everybody else.

Neil: [09:45](#) And that's actually the interplay between mission and discipleship. For it to be sent into a context, means you needs to be disciplined for context and given wisdom and support to know actually what does it mean to be willing to stand up and stand out as a follower of Jesus. So the first thing is you have to stay [erect 00:10:06].

- Neil: [10:04](#) And the second thing is you need to own the place where you are. You know, it's kind of intriguing for me often when we're talking about this, often I might ask "How many of you wish would wish you were in a different context?" And lots of people's hands go up because the workplace isn't the greatest place they ever imagined it would be, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.
- Neil: [10:23](#) The biblically most of the Bible is written by foreign to people who were in the wrong place or they felt they were in the wrong place with the wrong people at the wrong time. And that's the context in which which the epistles are written. Paul's writing the epistles to enable them to work out how do you live as a follower of a Jewish Messiah and the Greek or Roman empire. Because this, this Greco Roman empire just thinks you're nuts. And how'd you do it at the marketplace and how'd you do it when you're with your neighbors who worship other gods and how'd you do it ethically in a sexually charged society that have different standards than you would have.
- Neil: [11:12](#) So I think once you see it's like, "Oh yeah, of course we got to stay red." And we got to own these places, this is the place where God has called us. I think that's where it needs to be discipling these scattered places.
- Joanna: [11:24](#) I've heard he used the phrase that Christian should be the most human alive people in our unique context, wherever that is. Tell us more about what it looks like to be more human, more alive?
- Neil: [11:38](#) I think where it comes from biblically for me is the letter to Galatians. I'm kind of intrigued by the whole letter in some ways. In some ways the letter of Galatians feels so alien to our concerns. You know, most of us are not tempted to go back to the culture of circumcision and the rest of it. And so the law element of that is-
- Brian: [12:02](#) That because shrimp is so good though.
- Neil: [12:04](#) There's a whole stack of reasons aren't there?
- Joanna: [12:05](#) You must not be a shrimp fan.
- Neil: [12:10](#) But I think that one of the things that I think the relation the churches in Galicia were facing was that they felt they weren't good enough. And someone had come along and said, "There's more. You should do more." And they were attracting them to the law and saying, "If you did the law, then you'd really be

good enough." Whereas actually what Paul is doing is pointing them to this life of the spirit. And the spirit who, as you know only too well, in Galatians five develops this fruit, this spirit. I know I was kind of imagining this and reflecting on this idea that the spirit who was there at creation, the spirit who hovered over creation, the spirit that was breathed into Adam and into Eve to create new life. The spirit of Pentecost is the spirit that breathes into us and the fruit of that love, joy, peace, patience, the rest of them must mean that that's what it means to be human. Fully Human.

Neil: [13:06](#) And I think that, when I was a younger, sort of like coming up through church, I imagine that these were good qualities for church, but they wouldn't ever be tested in the real world. Does it work? But I actually I think that is what it means to be fully human. That actually gentleness and self control and kindness is part of what it means to be human. So it's not "Will you be a Christian but would you want to follow Jesus in becoming fully human?" Which I think is an interesting, for me at least, an interesting way of thinking about what this Christian life's are about.

Brian: [13:38](#) Yeah. And it ties in, it makes so much sense of the imago dei of the image bearing capacity. That's always been about the people of God. You're just touching on such a beautiful central biblical theme. You know, obviously heightened in the incarnation, but it's just part of our mandate to be more fully human. That's actually a really wonderful incarnational way to honor the human experience. But then to see it as sanctified and being sanctified.

Neil: [14:07](#) Right. And I think it takes the pressure off some of us that we might feel that somehow we've got to go out into our workplaces or into a wider context and somehow pass this message of Christianity around as though we are salespeople. Whereas actually God is doing something in us that will reflect him in those contexts. And I think it makes the gospel attractive.

Brian: [14:36](#) You know Neil, we mentioned earlier your book Gathered and Scattered and one of the things that I think is really fantastic because at the end of every chapter you have these sections where you talk about practices to embody the idea you've talked about. So as you're talking about this idea that Joanna brought of being more fully human, being this affectively scattered follower of Christ. Can you talk about a few practices? How do we become these sort of people?

- Neil: [15:06](#) There are some absolutely standard practices that in a sense everybody who's engaged with this have acknowledged are the kind of one on one practices. The practices of when people in churches interact with communities. When they change a position at work or they change from work to retirement, et cetera, that the church body pray for them as though they were going to be a new missionary overseas and you [inaudible 00:15:39].
- Neil: [15:38](#) I think if we're not doing that, then we're not actually taking ourselves seriously as the missional people of God. If we're not saying, "We recognize that you now have new responsibilities at work because you're obviously in a new team of people and we want to pray for you that you do that leadership role in the spirit of Jesus, for the cause of the kingdom. And we're going to lay hands on you as the body of Christ and send you out to that place." If we don't do that, we will never make sense of what it means to engage faith and work, I believe. And of course what that means is that someone needs to be taking notice of the changes that are happening in the lives of our congregation.
- Neil: [16:23](#) And for that to happen, we need to be alert to more than we have been alert to in the past. I've been in ordained ministry now for 32 odd years. But when I was being trained for that, I was trained to being engaged with people at the crisis points in their lives. Marriage difficulties, health difficulties, et cetera, et cetera. I was not trained to ask the questions of "Have you got a new position in work and what does that mean for you?" I wasn't, I wasn't trying to disciple people in that context. So I think the first thing is, do you pray?
- Neil: [16:57](#) Secondly, do you invite testimonies from people in the workplace? Do you invite people to share their life with the whole community? I think the third thing is these are standard. Who do you visit and where do you see them if you never enter in or around someone else's workplace context then it's very difficult for them to believe that you take it seriously. And then simply do you know where people are. So I think there's some very basic things that from a leadership position and from a ministry position, you can do that give legs to your values that you espouse.
- Joanna: [17:39](#) So fascinating. I love in your book you have the phrase that work is the context in which many people are living out the realities of faith. It's not a topic, it's the context. And if I can take a second to speak to any pastors who are listening to us today, there's such a difference. One of the things that's been

so thrilling in engaging the churches of the Denver Metro area is that many pastors have expressed a willingness to begin to speak about work occasionally and in their sermons. And I have a sermon series on work and that's a great start, so encouraging.

- Joanna: [18:11](#) But there's such a huge shift from teaching about work like it's one of many topics to realizing it's the dominant context in which most Christians live. And so it shouldn't just be an occasional thing, but it's fundamental fabric of how we think of living as a Christian in the world, and I love that you're teaching us how to do that.
- Joanna: [18:30](#) Okay. I want to ask you to be a bit of a cultural observer for our entire audience, both lay people and pastors alike. As someone who's living in the UK-
- Neil: [18:38](#) No pressure.
- Joanna: [18:39](#) No pressure, yeah. As somebody who's living in the UK. I would love to know, since I think you guys are a few years down the path from us of being a more secularized country. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about how has culture shifted in England in the last 50 to 100 years in the spiritual sense, and what does that mean for Christians living as scattered believers in that context?
- Neil: [19:02](#) I think one of the things that's changed is that the accepted of norms have moved. I think in terms of personal identity, I think certainly in in the area of sexual ethic. I think in the sense of how we project ourselves and our understanding of who we are. I think we're more distracted people than we were because of the brilliance of the internet and social media and all of that came with that. I think it's left us distracted. I think we are less certain of ourselves than we were. I think therefore what that means is for Christians who are trying to live out the consequences of what they believe their faith and Jesus and the revelation of scripture to be. I think Christians look stranger. I think that's the sort of the question that we have to ask ourselves is how different are we prepared to appear?
- Neil: [20:08](#) And that's not easy as it because it's not really us and them. We're all in this mix of societal change and cultural challenge. But the reality is, for example, in the UK, if you suggest Jesus is the way to salvation, actually, that makes you appear very intolerant. Bigoted. And it's kind of like how do you express that so that you don't get shut down at the first hearing.



Neil:

[20:47](#)

I think there's something about being the missionary in this context. How do you, do you communicate in a way that buys yourself a hearing. Not changes your message, but allows you to be heard. How do you find a voice when you recognize that you're out of step with the rest of society? I heard the Archbishop of Canterbury being interviewed on the radio probably a couple years ago and he was talking about some of the issues that the church was facing at the time. And the interview said, "You realize that you are out of step with most of society at this point in the UK." And the Archbishop of Canterbury says, "Yeah we know that. And that's why we're taking our time to work out how to respond." And I thought "Good on you," because you kind of named it for us.

Neil:

[21:37](#)

And I think the danger is sometimes when we feel that we're out of step, we then get angry with society around us and want to sort of stamp our feet and try and get it back to the way it was. Whereas actually, I think the New Testament helps us to a greater degree to lift this this out then we might imagine.

Brian:

[23:15](#)

So Neil, those were... You just gave a couple of suggestions that are really rich and vibrant for a congregational life. And certainly those who are leading parishes or communities can consider incorporating these and it would be really important for their people. Could you then speak pastorally if you would to the butchers, the bakers, the candlestick makers, the accountants, the teachers who might be listening to this? What are the types of practices you would commend to them to be the types of scattered Christians who are owning their context? Being winsome Christians who stay red and don't gray out in the workplace?

Neil:

[23:54](#)

Yeah, and I think it starts with a sense of believing that you have been placed in your context by the Lord. So it's that sort of, it's almost a [inaudible 00:24:09] orientation says "Whether or not it's a great place? Whether or not will be the place for life? Whether or not it's something you've chosen or it just feels like it's happened to you?" It's that central orientation that says, "I believe I am here through at least through the Providence of God, if not the actual direction of the Lord and I will choose to be a blessing here." There's almost like that it begins there. If it's not there, everything else will build like a gimmick or an adoption or somehow something that's not quite natural. However, that's the first thing.

Neil:

[24:46](#)

The second thing I would encourage someone to do in that context is there anyone else around you who shares your faith?

Is there anybody else who holds to what you hold? I was with a teacher, not a teacher, actually, what we would call a teaching assistant. It doesn't matter but he works in a school. And I was out for a meal with them just last week and he was telling me about his school and saying during the holidays, the staff stay in touch with one another through a WhatsApp group. And I was just making the observation that that's a blessing because lots of schools that doesn't happen. The staff leave and then just not in touch with one of them. I said, there's something good about the culture of your school. And he kind of looks at me sideways and said, "Well of course there are three of us who have been praying for the culture of our school in our school for the last 18 to 24 months."

Neil: [25:47](#) And he told me about when he went to the school, the first thing he did was pray that you might find another Christian. And then on a Monday evening when the rest of the staff have gone, he, together with two of us stayed together and weekly they pray for the culture of their own school. Now he's not saying we've single handedly done this, but he says we see the hand of God in this. And I think there's that sort of sense, although we are scattered, the first thing you do is "Where our allies? Where people who shared on faith?" That's the first thing.

Neil: [26:19](#) And the third thing, I mean there's lots of things you can do, but the third thing I'd probably suggest is that back at home base in your own church. You find someone else that you know can be your support.

Neil: [26:30](#) And these people may or may not be in the workplace. They may or may not understand your situation. But for example, I know a teacher again, so it so happens it was a teacher. But this would work in any industry. And she's got two or three people who are retired, who are her prayer partners for her situation. And she shares on a monthly basis the situation she's in and they pray for her. She knows that she's supported by that. And I think as part of that, if you were part of a regular sized church, it might not work so well. If you're in a massive church. If you're a regular sized church, tell your ministry leaders what's happening. Be proactive. Don't wait for them to ask. Explain to them what's going on. Explain to them the things you've seen-

Brian: [27:13](#) Yes.

Neil: [27:15](#) In a sense... In the UK at least what we find is that some pastors and ministry leaders, they feel awkward about thinking, "Well, I've got nothing to offer. I don't... I think people would be

embarrassed if I were to ask." And I think people in our congregation would say, "I'd love it if you came to have lunch, would you come and have lunch with me?" There's not many people to go, "No, I'd rather not." Most people would say, "Yeah. I'd love to come." Particularly if you say, "I've not got a problem." That's quite brilliant. Come have lunch with me. Simply so you might understand where I am. I'd love to introduce you to some people. So I think we can actually help one another with this. So it's not all on the shoulders of one party, but both of us together recognizing we're in it together.

- Joanna: [27:57](#) Yeah. I think with those lunchtime visits, the goal is not that a clergy member roll in and be an expert about financial management or you know oil and gas engineering here in Colorado. But that sense of eagerness to celebrate and affirm the gifts of that person working in oil and gas and gracious curiosity. That's my philosophy is be willing to ask questions and have a spirit of learning and you'll be amazed at how that employee will respond.
- Neil: [28:22](#) I love that phrase you just used, gracious curiosity. I think that's a great phrase because one of the questions we get asked in UK is, "Well, how do you sustain this over long term." And actually, that's the answer you maintain gracious curiosity because people's lives keeps changing. Even in the same workplace, their experience will change. And the question for those ministers is, are you graciously curious? Or have you actually lost the curiosity about the people you're serving?
- Brian: [28:50](#) Yeah, that's really good. And what I appreciate as you were speaking on that issue... You know Neil us Yanks have this phrase managing up. And people do it all the time in the workplace, which is actually helping your direct report to be aware of the thing that's really important. And that's a great... The word you just gave also, it's the flip side to what Joanna was just speaking about was as parishioners or congregants, we need to invite staff into and help them to experience our world. It's a managing up way to actually ask them to be curious with us so that they're imagining the work world. They're imagining the everyday life of parenting and neighboring. And then that begins to continue to infuse their own discipleship or preaching or pastoral care or leadership. So I love the managing up philosophy. It is not completely about clergy.
- Neil: [29:39](#) No, it's this partnership [life 00:29:43], isn't it? It's the partnership that we recognize that we may have different roles

in life, but actually together something remarkable could happen.

- Joanna: [29:50](#) Oh, and I love sitting across from person and saying, "it is such a treat to get to see you in your natural environment." Suddenly you're seeing them as a whole person, not merely what they bring to church on Sunday. The ways that the value they volunteer, the small group that they lead. But you're really taking the time to know your parishioners as whole people. It's so fun. I want to ask one more question. I'm going to put you on the spot. In your book *Scattered and Gathered* you talk about six M's that are a posture that we can adopt and kind of living our faith in our context. In whatever is our front line, whether it's paid employment or our place of influence. Would you tell us a little bit more about what those six M's are?
- Brian: [30:29](#) Yeah, or highlight a couple of the ones that feel really critical to you as well.
- Neil: [30:32](#) Okay. One of the ways I sort of look at the six, of course because the problem with six is that, you know, I remember what they are but that can be quite a lot too to remember. There's something actually about living consistently well for the kingdom. So that's where making good work. That's where modeling the godly character of the fruit and spirit. That's where ministering grace and love really counts. It's kind of like that day to showing up and people knowing you're reliable, your good to work with, you're good to work for. That you are offering your work for the glory of God. And in a sense it's that prayer at the beginning of the day. Here we go again, lord. It's the same place, the same people, the same kind of stuff I'm doing. Lord, make me consistent in this life with you.
- Neil: [31:23](#) And I think there's that sense of learned, consistent godly responses and reactions that are really helpful. And then the other side of it is there are moments where you need to be courageous. There's moments where if you know you're in a culture that isn't helping people to thrive, that you are willing to make the changes that will enable your organization to thrive. Or the people involved with it to thrive.
- Neil: [31:54](#) And it may not be the whole, but it's the bit when you've got control over. Molding culture, being a mouthpiece for truth and justice, standing up when you know things aren't right. And using your influencing, using a position or recognizing there might be a cost to that, but being willing to take a stand. And then finally knowing how to explain gospel. Knowing what it

means to be a messenger of the gospel. And I think that those aspects take courage.

- Neil: [32:25](#) So you've got the sort of twin life, this whole life of consistency and courage. And maybe actually in the midst of all that is wisdom for knowing when. When do I take a stand? And how do I make a change? What do I say? To whom do I say it? But actually for me it's a whole perspective. And that means on the days that feel a little bit more mundane, where you have just turned up. Where you've just done your work to the best of your ability to the glory of God. Where you've tried to be a blessing to those around you. Those haven't been wasted days.
- Brian: [32:59](#) That's great. What I love about these six kind of postures that start with an M, the six M's... And by the way, we'll just maybe include a link, just listing those six M's in the show notes as a [inaudible 00:33:13] to consider a Neil's book. But what's really great about those is they make really tangible, if we take them out and we apply them to our context, they make really tangible this idea of integrating our faith and our work. And they don't just idolize the big hero stories of, "Oh, well look, this CEO created an incredible workforce development plan and significantly is blessing and shaping culture through these quantities and quantities of people they're serving."
- Brian: [33:43](#) It takes really seriously what you started this from. Which is, you know, the idea of a disciple is following the way of Jesus in their context. And it allows any individual to take their context regardless of agency or power or position or company or scope or size. It allows them to actually integrate faith and work as missional practice. It's just brilliant.
- Joanna: [34:06](#) You're brilliant, Neil.
- Neil: [34:07](#) Well, I know it's [crosstalk 00:34:11].
- Brian: [34:10](#) Even for a Tottenham Hotspur fan, we would say that.
- Neil: [34:13](#) You know it's... Thank you, I love you.
- Joanna: [34:19](#) You're the first podcast who has ever said, I love you. That's awesome. We always end our podcast with kind of an action plan. What do we want our listeners to do? So I'd love to hear from Brian and then we'll hear from you Neil. Like what do you think is one proactive thing our listeners can do based on this discussion?

- Brian: [34:36](#) Yeah, I'm going to make it really easy. I just I think so highly of these six M concepts. I would love for everyone to click the show notes. Just find those six phrase concepts and just think about what does this mean for me in my context. I think that would be an wonderful, spiritually formative and missionally energizing.
- Joanna: [35:00](#) Yeah. My action point would be, you had said earlier the idea that feeling not at home in the culture. Feeling a little bit alien should be the norm of our experience as Christians and that changes our expectations. Instead of digging in our heels and getting angry or trying to make life the way that we think it should be, it changes our response to figuring out how can I be winsomely engaged? How can I gain a hearing? It just changes the attitude of our heart and trusting God to empower us for that alien environment. And I think that's a wonderful attitude, a mindset to bring into our daily work.
- Neil: [35:35](#) I think those are great points. I think what I would suggest to somebody. One of the under utilized times in the UK churches is the coffee time at the end of worship. Most of the churches offer some sort of beverage at the end because they want people to stay and they think that a badly made cup of tea will do it. And on the whole it does. During that time I think if you, whether you're a leader or whether you're a worshiper, part of a worshipping community.
- Neil: [36:08](#) If you chose to go and have a different conversation with someone. To ask them, where will you be this time tomorrow, this is Sunday morning, 11 o'clockish. Where will he be his time tomorrow? How can I pray for you? What will you be doing? How can I pray for you? And to do that. One of the practices I do from time to time is I have that sort of conversation with somebody. And I will say to them, "I will pray for you every day this week." And then in order to remind myself to do it I send them a text at the beginning of each day for five days. And it's a text that simply says, this is what I prayed for you today. And I think it's a way of us trying to say, "We're going to take one another really seriously." I reckon everybody could do that.
- Joanna: [36:52](#) Yeah.
- Brian: [36:53](#) That's great.
- Joanna: [36:56](#) I love it. I love it. Well, we have a couple of call to actions as we wrap up the podcast today. The first is if you have enjoyed our podcast conversations, subscribe, leave a review, share it with a



friend. We were so amazed when you're looking at our podcast statistics recently that our biggest body of viewers outside of Colorado's in Texas. So if you're a Texan listening to us today, hurray, we're very glad you're here. We'd love for you to share this with a friend.

- Joanna: [37:22](#) We also want to encourage any ministry leaders that are listening to... If you want to hear more of Neil on Thursday, October 24th he will be one of the keynote speakers at our Thriving Churches, Thriving Cities event, which is going to be amazing. So we'll also include information about that in our show notes and we would invite them to come. So Neil, thanks for joining us at the end of your work day, the beginning of ours, and we're thrilled to get to hear more from you soon.
- Brian: [37:47](#) Yeah, Neil. Thanks so much. And as we'd say over in Liverpool, you'll never walk alone.
- Neil: [37:53](#) I'll look for you. Thanks for the opportunity to be part of the podcast. I've really enjoyed it. Thank you.
- Brian: [37:59](#) Cheers.
- Joanna: [38:03](#) Awesome. Thanks Neil.
- Neil: [38:05](#) Is that okay?
- Joanna: [38:06](#) Yeah, that's great.
- Brian: [38:06](#) That was great.
- Joanna: [38:07](#) I should listen to you all day.