



Dan Steiner: ([00:00](#))

I think God's just simply saying, be faithful to me wherever you land. Love me, love my people, love others. That's what it means to be faithful to that calling that we have in Christ.

Joanna Meyer: ([00:16](#))

You're listening to The Faith & Work Podcast, where we explore what it means to of God, neighbor and society through our daily work.

Joanna Meyer: ([00:26](#))

Hi, and welcome to The Faith & Work Podcast. I'm Joanna Meyer, Denver institute's, Director of Public Engagement. And I'm joined today by Brian Gray. One of my colleagues here at the Institute, Brian serves as our VP of Formation and directs the 5280 Fellowship. How's it going, Brian?

Brian Gray: ([00:42](#))

Overall doing well. I have immensely less thing to complain about than a lot of other people. So keeping that perspective, but excited about the conversation today with some friends and on a topic that's pretty near and dear to my heart.

Joanna Meyer: ([00:54](#))

Yeah, I have a ton of questions about today's topic. One of the goals we have for the podcast is to provide practical theologically informed insight to help you navigate the real world challenges you face in your work. And over the years, a consistent struggle that we see is the pressure that you may feel regarding how you pursue the work you believe God intends for you to do. Or to put it more simply, what does it mean to be called? Brian, you encounter this a lot in your role. How do you see the tension people feel around their callings express itself?

Brian Gray: ([01:27](#))

This could be a real sacred cow issue for people, there's a deep, personal longing, and a high desire for people to honor the Lord with the whole of their lives. And so I've seen this work out with disappointment, when people say, "I don't have a sense of calling." Or belief or theology that we might talk about that only certain people in certain roles are called. Then I've seen people who are looking at times for the needle in the haystack version of God's will. "And God told me to, and God told me to." And there's frustrations left and right, that people come them up with. And a lot of them might stem from a sense of, in the words of Inigo Montoya, "This may not mean what you think it means." Right? As a paraphrase.

Brian Gray: ([02:12](#))

And so I think that'll be the theme of where we'll go today. My hope would be at the end that listeners might have a sense of, there could be greater freedom for me in having a Biblical understanding of calling



that will inform some of the ways I think about that language, use that language, listen to it and even pursue the way I steward the whole of my life in the world. So let's see.

Joanna Meyer: ([02:36](#))

Yeah, good thing we have some experts to help us unravel this complex topic. Our guest today, our Bill Klein, who is Professor Emeritus of New Testament Interpretation at Denver Seminary, where he also served as an assistant Dean. He's a member of the Society of Biblical Literature, he Evangelical Theological Society in the Institute for Biblical Research. And he's joined by Dan Steiner, a leadership coach with Trailhead Coaching. Dan has nearly 20 years of experience as a pastor, mentor and speaker. He served as a professor in Denver Seminary's Training and Mentoring Department, and has led cohorts for Denver Institute's 5280 Fellowship, and together they wrote the book. What Is My Calling?: A Biblical and Theological Exploration of Christian Identity, which will go on sale April 12th. Congratulations on the book, gentlemen.

Dan Steiner: ([03:22](#))

Thanks Joanna.

William Klein: ([03:23](#))

Thank you. Thank you very much. Yeah.

Brian Gray: ([03:25](#))

Yeah, I mentioned I'm excited about the subject. I found the book to be incredibly thoughtful, but just to own my sources, much of my thinking about calling, particularly around the biblical foundations came from formerly [Dr. Kline 00:03:44] to me as one of my professors [inaudible 00:03:47], and then a colleague when we worked together. And so I've been in essence and I've told Bill this, I've been stealing and using his material for a while and some of the biblical foundations, but I'd love to hear Dan from you and from Bill both, what is it that got you interested in this subject, biblically, and then in terms of how you were hearing and seeing it used in the Christian subculture, what is it that interested you to make you want to write this book?

William Klein: ([04:14](#))

My interest actually goes all the way back to my doctoral research on Paul's election vocabulary. And I subsequently published an article growing out of that thesis on the words for calling that Paul uses in his letters. And subsequent to that, I wrote a book called The New Chosen People, which deals with the entire Bible's concept of election. And of course, calling language features very prominently in that big topic as well. So that kind of happened decades ago and that's been fomenting in my mind for years and years. But more recently, one of my former colleagues at Denver Seminary, Laura Flanders realized how confused students were and some of the things that Brian has just said, about the whole topic of calling. So she recruited me to develop a seminar that I delivered to graduating students on the whole topic of



calling. And I'd led that for years and it eventually was turned into video, which I think they still use. And then Dan came into the picture. So I'll let him take it from here.

Dan Steiner: ([05:32](#))

Yeah, for me, my interest in the topic came very practically as I felt and sensed a calling to become a youth pastor and went down that road and then became a youth pastor at a particular church because I felt called to that church. Didn't realize it at the time. But my use of that language was just simply being adopted by the Christian subculture that I grew up in. No one ever taught me anything specific about calling. I just adopted that language and used it as it related to my pursuit of going into pastoral ministry. And then one day I found myself not in that job as a youth pastor and at that particular church and went through a pretty significant identity crisis because I didn't realize it until that moment that so much of my personal sense of identity was wrapped up in that, what I believed was my calling.

Dan Steiner: ([06:24](#))

And fast forward, I ended up moving to Denver, went to Denver Seminary and met a guy named Brian Gray, who became my mentor in the training and mentoring program as I was a student. And a lot of our conversations revolved around the topic of calling. Along with him, and Bill, you just mentioned Laura Flanders and her husband, [Dale 00:06:43]. They continued to come alongside me. And so I began to look back on my story and untangle myself from some bad theology. What I believe was bad theology and rebuild something different, and calling was a really significant part of that. And then as I graduated as a student, became a professor at the seminary, this was a topic that I was asked to teach on and worked with students around and then in the fellows program. So it just gradually became something not just very personally oriented around my own story, but I was watching others be impacted in a similar way that I was, by untangling ourselves from unhealthy perspectives around calling and rebuilding something different. That was more freeing.

Dan Steiner: ([07:23](#))

And then as Bill and I were then colleagues, and we would meet once or twice a semester to talk about professorship because I was new and he was not as new. And one day I described it as I proposed to him. I said, "Hey Bill, would you want to write a book to get other on this topic?" And he said, "Yes." And that began a three plus year endeavor together to write this book.

Brian Gray: ([07:47](#))

One of the strengths that I found from this book is actually connected to the way you both just answered that question. So it combines a biblical theological foundation, but takes really seriously the experience of people along the way in their Christian journey and Christian spirituality. So I want to ask a question connected to Dan's response a second ago, there's a section in your book called the Landscape of Calling, which exploring all the ways that people use this term or talk about it in our faith communities, walk us through a few of the different ways that people use the phrase calling.



Dan Steiner: ([08:27](#))

Yeah, definitely. As we peruse through a myriad of books and articles and then sat with people and their stories, we really picked up on some patterns and some typical ways in which calling language is used and most often it's used pertaining to a job or a task or a role, God calls me, or calls somebody to be a pastor or to move to a particular location or be in relationship with someone. It's also very individualized. It's my calling, my personal calling, as opposed to our collective calling, which we expand more on in the book and argue for a more proper biblical way of understanding calling.

Dan Steiner: ([09:07](#))

But then in another common, I believe misperception, but very often used way of talk about calling, Brian, you already alluded it to it with a needle in a haystack metaphor. Calling is often something that is very hidden and needs to be discovered. It's very elusive out there and somebody has to go on a journey of sorts to find their calling, as opposed to settling down and being content with what we see already in front of us described as our calling in Christ. Those are typically some of the main ways in which we popularly hear and read about and understand calling at a popular level these days.

William Klein: ([09:46](#))

Well, I was going to add to that, what Dan just said, and that is that the way the landscape plays out is that people understand calling in a very subjective way. People perhaps have some idea what they think it means or what it's supposed to mean. And so they try to match up their own language or their own experience to those kind of popular perceptions, but there's no objective way to nail it down for them. So I think when you just use it in a kind of a free floating way, as many people do, it's subject to a lot of misuse and manipulation, either manipulated by the person who's using it, or they are subject to be manipulated by other people who are telling them they do have a calling, or they don't have a calling. And so often this popular use, which is very pervasive sets up unrealistic expectations of how God should work or what it might mean to be called by God.

William Klein: ([10:55](#))

And this largely subjective feeling about whether you're called or not may lead someone to take a job for which they're really not suited, but for some reason, maybe they had some kind of subjective experience or they had some dramatic event in their life. And they kind of interpreted that, "Well, maybe God's calling me." It may not be as blatant as a burning bush, but something akin to that kind of leads somebody to say, "Well, maybe I should become a youth pastor or whatever it happens to be."

William Klein: ([11:29](#))

And then as Dan said, what if that doesn't pan out, did they miss God's calling or did they misinterpret the circumstances? And maybe it leaves them very often frustrated and maybe just walk away from the whole situation or the whole ministry, or the whole idea that they're going to be called by God ever again.



Joanna Meyer: ([11:58](#))

What makes me laugh? I'm just sitting here chuckling is, I can think of two experiences where I have well, many more than two but experiences where I've heard calling used in wildly unbiblical ways. I there's a whole category in the Christian evangelical a woman's experience for guys that come from out of the blue and say, "I think it's God's will, God is calling me to marry you." That's not an uncommon experience. I had a guy say that to me over Facebook that I hadn't seen in more than 20 years. And I was like, "What?"

William Klein: ([12:26](#))

Oh, wow,

Joanna Meyer: ([12:28](#))

This is just unwise. Or people using this sense of a link to almost create a level of spiritual persuasion to a decision they're making, like someone will say, "I don't feel called to work in children's ministry." And I think somehow that justifies your answer because you're lacking this voice from heaven saying, "It's okay Joanna, you don't have to work in children's ministry." It's crazy how manipulative conversations around calling can get.

William Klein: ([12:55](#))

Yeah. Can I give one personal example as well?

Joanna Meyer: ([12:58](#))

Yes, please do.

William Klein: ([13:02](#))

Before I did my doctoral work, I was on the pastoral staff of a fairly large church in California and the ministry that I was eventually involved in grew to be quite extensive and quite successful. And so when I decided that I needed to resign and then take up doctoral studies in Scotland, I was part of the process of securing my successor. And we went through all these resumes and came up with a final candidate that we thought was very suitable for the job. And so we had a final meeting with him and the senior pastor and several other staff and people around the table. And the questions were very free floating. And the interview went very well until we came near the end, and the senior pastor pointedly asked this candidate, "Do you think God has called you to this ministry?"

William Klein: ([14:01](#))

Well, if you step back and think about that, there's absolutely no good answer. If you say, "Yes, God has called me." Then the interview's over. Are we going to say, "Well, sorry God, we're not going to show after all." And if the guy says, "No, I'm not called." "Well, then why did you come for the interview? We've just had a waste of time." So as long as you adopt that popular understanding of calling, you're left kind of



with an untenable situation. And people don't actually think about it in those terms, but that's where you really come out.

Joanna Meyer: ([14:44](#))

It can get messy really, really fast. So help us start sorting this out. Bill will start with you, tell us as a biblical scholar, how you see calling describe in scripture.

William Klein: ([14:56](#))

Yeah, that of course is a large question. So I'll try to summarize it as briefly as I can. But there needs to be a preliminary issue, and that is, when we read the Bible, we have to distinguish between what the Bible describes or narrates and what the Bible prescribes or presents as normative. So for example, when Ananias and Sapphira lied to the church, God judged them with death. That's descriptive. This incident does not prescribe how God will always judge dishonesty. God doesn't strike dead all liars, though the incident illustrates that God hates lying and hypocrisy, and that's a normative principle.

William Klein: ([15:46](#))

So when God appeared to Joseph in a dream or gave of Paul a vision, these examples describe what happened, but they don't prescribe how God will communicate his will to all people. We can't expect visions or dreams or burning bushes. They describe what happened, but they're not normative for Christians for all time. And the lack of such dramatic interventions doesn't mean that God is not directing us, but of course that's another discussion. And by the way, this is an error that so many commit who discuss the issue of calling in books and articles. They single out a description in the Bible of how God called someone. And then they assert that these incidents are somehow normative for people today, without any defense or even any recognition that there's a question of normativity when you read something in the Bible, not everything that happened is normative.

William Klein: ([16:53](#))

So anyway, that's just a simple introduction, but I think it's crucial because when you read the Old Testament, for example, and here's where I'll answer your question, you see that God calls certain people like patriarchs. He calls Israel's leaders, Moses, Joshua, David, some of the prophets. There's no indication in the Bible that those are to be normative. In other words, the common people in Israel didn't have any sense that they were also called, like these leaders were. These were people who were instrumental in the kind of foundational narrative of Israel's coming into exist as the people of God. And God calls Israel into existence as his corporate people. And that underscores a crucial point. And that is identity. God called Israel to be people who love him, who serve him, who obey him and there to be a light to the nations. And that's what's normative about calling.

William Klein: ([18:01](#))

In the New Testament, the actual evidence, somewhat parallels the Old Testament, Jesus calls the 12 of apostles to follow him. He calls the 70 on a missions trip. And then in Acts, we find Jesus calling Matthias



to replace Judas, Paul, to be an apostle, Barnabas, to accompany Paul on their first missionary journey. So these are foundational leaders again for this new Jesus movement, but calling language is not used for other key leaders in the emerging Christian movement. The writers don't use calling language for pastors or elders, or for jobs or vocations that believers engage in. Christians serve because they're gifted and because they aspire to their ministries or tasks, and the New Testament never uses calling language for any of the other roles or tasks that people do. People are not called to jobs in the New Testament.

William Klein: ([19:00](#))

So where calling language predominates is actually in describing the corporate body of Christ. What individuals are called to be and to do is because they are members of that body. It's the body that determines their role and their actions. So again, individuals are not called to jobs or tasks or roles. Individuals have an identity in Christ and God calls them to make every effort to live out that identity. So we can say that every Christian has a calling because they're in Christ, but then the question is what they are called to, and a calling exists, not in a person's job or ministry or station or marital status or an office in the church or government or any other circumstance. It's not hidden. It doesn't require concerted effort to discover, Christians are called to embrace their identity in Christ. And that means a pursuit of hope and love and peace and all those other godly virtues that are to characterize those in Christ. We need to embrace this calling no matter what job or function or station we might occupy. That's too long a winded answer, but you get a sense of, what I think the Bible is doing.

Jeff Haanen: ([20:25](#))

Hi, I'm Jeff Haanen, Founder of Denver Institute for Faith & Work. And I would like to invite you to become a part of our new monthly partner community, whether it's a monthly commitment of \$25, \$50 or any amount. Your generosity will support Denver Institute's ongoing efforts to help men and women love God, their neighbors and society through their daily work, including this podcast. To say, thank you as a monthly partner, you will receive a welcome box. You'll have exclusive access to private digital content, personalized vocational coaching and discounts for Denver Institute content and experiences. To become monthly partners, simply visit denverinstitute.org/give or see the show notes in today's episode. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Joanna Meyer: ([21:10](#))

Dan, I have a question for you, as you have interacted with Bill on this, how have you seen calling reflected in scripture that may be different from our popular usage of it?

Dan Steiner: ([21:21](#))

Yeah, just piggybacking on Bill, there's two particular examples that for me personally were very important in reshaping and framing my own understanding of calling, the first is in Paul's introduction to 1st Corinthians his first chapter. He uses calling terminology multiple times. And in many ways, I believe he's setting up the chastisement that he's about to give them, because as the Corinthian church was dysfunctional, they were divided. They were doing all sorts of things that were not faithful. And rather



than starting there, he started with their common calling in Christ. "This is who you are, and it isn't distinguished by and by any way in which we might divide ourselves in an earthly manner." And then he goes on to chat and I think point out things that need to be corrected, but he started with this idea of you are all called in Christ. So you need to start acting like it.

Dan Steiner: ([22:15](#))

The second passage is in Ephesians 4, when Paul tells the Ephesians church to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which they all have been called. And we read that passage very, very easily in an individualistic way, "Walk in a manner which you, me, you have been called." But it really is, he's talking to the corporate church, the body as a whole, "You all walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you all have been called." If we use a Texas translation. You all, Brian, I know you've spent some time in Texas, the you all rather than just the individual you, but then he goes on to say, "What does that look like? Walk in a manner worthy." What is worthy of this calling? With all peace and gentleness kindness, showing tolerance from one another in love, being diligent to preserve the union of the spirit and the bond of peace. That's what it looks like to fulfill this calling, regardless of what you're doing or where you're at, be this sort of person. And that's what it means to be faithful to your calling. And it's all the same calling. You all have the same one. You don't have the individualized specified distinct calling. So those are two passages that really helped me understand it for myself, but also frame this in a more biblically oriented way, rather than a culturally framed way.

Joanna Meyer: ([23:23](#))

So are you saying God doesn't have a special plan for my life?

Dan Steiner: ([23:29](#))

No. just to be simple, does he think you are special? Yes. Does he have a desire for your life? Yes. Is it pertaining to moving to a particular city or taking a particular job? I think the vast majority of the time is no. If we're given two different decisions, should I go here? Should I go there? Lord, which is your will for my life. Where am I called? He's just basically saying, "Pick one and be faithful to me wherever you go." Now, the idea of discernment, the idea of desire, we don't sit with those realities enough. We would rather have a rubber stamp divine appointment to give us confidence rather than wrestling with some of the murkiness and messiness that comes with life. Picking between the better of two options or even having to sit with a hard op, not everything is good. We're sitting between the better of two evils sometimes, or two things that are challenging and difficult. And I think God's just simply saying, "Be faithful to me, wherever you land. Love me, love my people, love others. That's what it means to be faithful to that calling that we have in Christ.

Brian Gray: ([24:29](#))

I think people using this language of "calling" in the way you have unpacked it -not biblically- but experientially; I think it's pretty well intended. I think it's coming from their hopes and their piety. Why do you think it is that the Christian community has developed these types of not biblical ways of using



the word calling? What is the motivation? And what is the potential impact of people's faith experience of doing that?

William Klein: ([24:32](#))

Well, I can start briefly and let Dan flesh this out a little, but I think the idea of doing, doing is the arena in which people find significance, not being. And so it's understandable why people would want to validate what they do with special language. And to be able to give it a divine adjective, this is a divine calling is about as high commendation as you can get. And then as Dan said earlier, and we all know, individualism is a prime value in Western culture. And I think people want to embrace an idea that God has called them individually. They're special. God has a special role picked out just for them. And all they have to do is discover it.

William Klein: ([25:32](#))

And Frederick Buechner, is often quoted at this point. And he's so seductive because where my passion and the world's needs come together is the precise place of God odds calling. And who wouldn't want to pursue that, who wouldn't want to pursue a passion and make a difference in the world. And again, I don't think we're trying to say, it's not good to have a passion or to pursue something great, but let's just not give that the word calling, let's describe it the way it really is, and not kind of put a divine stamp on it, which then raises a lot of the problems, which we mentioned earlier.

Dan Steiner: ([26:18](#))

Yeah. I think to piggyback on that, Bill, a good example of how and why we tend to swing in this direction is because we are so swayed by the culture we swim in, fish doesn't know it's wet. And I don't think we realize just how much we are swimming in the cultural waters that are all around us of individualism and this desire to do something great and grand and accomplish something, change the world, and even think about how we ask kids about their future occupational endeavors. We ask them with the words, "What do you want to be when you grow up? What do you want to be?" And we know that we're conditioned to answer that question, or we're expecting an answer related to some gainfully employed occupation. And as a kid, who doesn't want to be an astronaut or a professional baseball player or something really cool.

Dan Steiner: ([27:05](#))

And then the realities might set in some day that I couldn't be what I want it to be. But even from a young age, we framed this sense of identity around doing something. And then even later on, as an adult, I'm a card carrying introvert. So when I go into a social setting of people that I don't know, I'm armed with at least two questions that I know I can ask anybody, "What is your name and what do you do?" And when I ask somebody, what do they do? Or if I'm asked that question, I'm conditioned they're conditioned, we're all conditioned to answer with something related to our gainfully employed situation. And then in different settings, there then is a value gradation of depending on what job you have or



don't have. I was once unemployed for a season. And when I was asked that question, I came face to face with the shameful reality that I carried with me that I didn't have a job.

Dan Steiner: ([27:51](#))

And I didn't realize just how much, my own personal sense of worth, not just identity, but my worth was tied to my gainfully employed situation, which at that time I didn't have. So if I'm just a fill in the blank, I'm just a stay at home parent, or I'm just an accountant, or I'm just a... And I'm not trying to denigrate stay at home parenting or accounting or any other occupation, but depending on the circles we run in, or the people we run into, there are some occupations that when that is put alongside someone else, we have a value and a worth grade that we start applying. And I think that's just part of our cultural and we, as believers need to be a little more reflective in unpacking that and saying, "No, there is no value difference between these occupations. If we are in Christ, we have the same value and worth."

Dan Steiner: ([28:34](#))

Are we willing to embrace that confidently and own that and lean into that regardless of what our situation or station in life might be. But I think we're just so conditioned by the culture we're in. And we haven't taken enough time to unpack that. And that's kind of one of the goals we're hoping with our book is to have these conversations and for people to start unpacking and untangling some of these things. So they can find freedom and value and worth and who they are in Christ first and foremost.

William Klein: ([29:02](#))

And what often happens is that these distortions or this popular understanding effectively rules out calling for many people who are not fortunate enough to control their destiny-

Dan Steiner: ([29:17](#))

Good point.

William Klein: ([29:18](#))

... their occupations. They turn out to be in some ways, very elitist, the way we use us and the way [Bekner 00:29:27] uses it and the way [Osgenis 00:29:28] uses it. Because in fact, what about the uneducated or those experiencing homelessness? What about those who are in low level jobs, who are struggling to put food on the table or Christians in developing countries, or those living in lands hostile to Christianity? Don't they have a calling as Christians? Well, we say yes, of course they do. But if you frame it in terms of your own personal passion and connecting with the world's needs, just think of how few people in the world have the luxury to think of calling in those kinds of terms.

Joanna Meyer: ([30:07](#))

Or how dangerous it can be to apply calling to a situation that doesn't really have a clear indication from God that that's what it should be. I think to people in my life who've said, maybe singleness is a calling, or they'll apply that language of gift towards singleness. And I think, "Wow, are you speaking with the



voice of God?" Because if you say that is somebody's calling, you're saying you're speaking with the authority of the Lord, that is an unchanging truth for their life. And we have to be so careful about it. What are some other harms that you guys can see that come from a distorted view of calling?

Dan Steiner: ([30:42](#))

I think picking backing on that Joanna, when we attach calling to any aspect of life that has the potential to change or to be upended, that's where we run into those really sticky situations. As I shared earlier, for me, I attached calling to a particular job at a particular church. And then I didn't have that job at that church. And I didn't know what to do with that. It's not as though the realities of a global pandemic and COVID, they've upended a lot of things, but one of the things is reminded us of and implanted even more so is the ungivenness of life ungivenness of work, how many jobs have been completely done away with, industries even potentially are going away or have gone away. And if we attach calling to something that is changing or shifting like that, we run the risk, then questioning is God really who we believe he is, or did I miss something?

Dan Steiner: ([31:42](#))

Or we're all of a sudden left with these confusing, discouraging, and even depressing situations that I don't believe reflect the freedom that we were supposed to experience in Christ. If we anchor our calling to that, which is unchanging, Christ himself, that brings freedom when life does change, when somebody passes away or a relationship status changes, or a job goes away, or we move from one location to another, the calling doesn't change. If my calling is anchored in Christ, as opposed to one of those changing realities.

William Klein: ([32:12](#))

And another perhaps distortion, or why this is harmful. If you focus on one thing, inevitably you minimize or fail to focus on something else. So when people are thinking about calling in the popular sense, that means they're not thinking about what the Bible, what the New Testament says is our calling. And some of those things kind of get drowned out, kind of almost by default, because we're focusing on listening to that still small voice, or trying to find out where, or how God is called. And so people are looking for extraordinary signs or maybe a person to speak into the life who will tell them, this is God's calling. And all the while the Bible clearly defines calling. But if we're not focusing on and trying to achieve those things, we may miss out on what God really has empowered us to become.

Brian Gray: ([33:24](#))

Joanna, I think we have created an itch that we want to scratch with some followup questions? Which we may jump into in part two of this conversation? Is that right?

Joanna Meyer: ([33:26](#))

Yes. I think we have probably kicked the hornet's nest for a lot of people in the sense that we have upended, maybe traditional ways they think about God's purpose in their lives, or challenged some of



the common assumptions or language that they've heard, even from wonderful godly sources. And so we'll follow up a second part to this conversational era in two weeks. And I look forward to digging deeper in a real practical sense of, okay, how do we understand what God wants us to do? But before we close this episode, I'd love to give both Bill and Dan an opportunity. We've talked about all the ways we talk about calling wrong, and I would love to shift and end our conversation on a positive note, because I think God has invited us into something glorious and it's big and broad. It's universal for anyone that follows him. And we want to remember that. So would you give us a charge? What has God called every Christian to?

Dan Steiner: ([34:23](#))

That's a great reminder, Joanna, because yeah, it is easy to just pick on something that we may not agree with. At least that's the perception that what we could be doing, but the freedom and unity that comes from settling in, into one's calling in Christ is so giving, you are not what you do. That's a narrative that we see, not just in faith communities, but we see that wrestled with outside of the faith community, this reality of what I do, needs to be who I am. And that's just the furthest from the truth. And when we untangle that, I think there's life, there's freedom that comes on the other side of that.

William Klein: ([35:00](#))

The other idea that I think I would like to leave us with is an attempt, I know it's virtually extremely difficult, but it's an attempt. Our calling in Christ gives us the opportunity to think in terms of our corporate identity. As I think we've said earlier, it's so prominent and prevalent in our world to think about the focus being on me. And it's very, in some ways narcissistic and yet what I think the New Testament points us to is a sense of our corporate identity. And that's where our being resides in who we are in Christ. And so if we think about God's vision and Jesus's plan for the church and what it's supposed to be in the world old, this gives us a rally and cry to make that our tribe rather than all kinds of other competing pulls on our life, to take us in one direction or the other. So this, I think focuses our attention and brings us back to who we are in Christ and what that means as we move forward in our Christian identity.

Joanna Meyer: ([36:21](#))

Thanks gentlemen, we'll see you in two weeks as we explore this conversation further. Okay, this is a fascinating conversation and we are not done. I encourage you to tune in two weeks for the second part of this conversation on calling. We'll focus on practical implications for our work and faith.

Joanna Meyer: ([36:40](#))

But before we go, I want to leave you with a few links. The first is we will link to Bill and Dan's book again, that's *What Is My Calling?: A Biblical and Theological Exploration of Christian Identity*, out April 12th. Also, we will link to a free download of Denver Institute's ebook, a study of calling, new thoughts for an old idea that explore some of these concepts more.



Joanna Meyer: ([37:00](#))

And finally, if you're intrigued by this conversation, a natural next step for Denver residents would be to apply for the 5280 Fellowship, which is a nine month intensive program for people in the first half of their career. It focuses on understanding the integration of our faith and our work and culture. Applications are open until May 2nd and details are at 5280fellows.com.

Joanna Meyer: ([37:25](#))

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