



Joanna Meyer: ([00:02](#))

You're listening to the Faith and Word Podcast, where we explore what it means to serve God, neighbor, and society through our daily work.

Joanna Meyer: ([00:12](#))

Welcome to the Faith and Word Podcast. I'm Joanna Meyer, and I am delighted to welcome you to our 100th episode. When we started this conversation in 2018, we had no idea where it would lead, and the way our faith has been stretched, challenged, and encouraged through a wide range of guests. And to share a curated selection of some of our favorite conversations, I'm joined today by Dustin Moody, our founding producer and editor, and Catherine Sandgren who currently produces the podcast, who've both played an instrumental role in shaping the podcast. Welcome, you two.

Dustin Moody: ([00:45](#))

Hi, Joanna. Thanks for having us.

Catherine Sandgren: ([00:47](#))

Hello.

Joanna Meyer: ([00:47](#))

So we are 100 episodes into this podcasting adventure, and it wouldn't be possible without the two of you. Thank you so much for the hard work and excellence that you have brought to this podcast.

Dustin Moody: ([01:00](#))

Thanks. It's been a fun project, Joanna.

Catherine Sandgren: ([01:02](#))

Yeah, you're welcome.

Joanna Meyer: ([01:04](#))

You two are some of my favorite people to host conversations with, so it's a delight to be with you today. So we have curated some of the best excerpts from the last 100 episodes, but I'd like to know, from the two of you, what do you think has been some of your favorite moments on the Faith and Word Podcast, and why were they so meaningful?

Catherine Sandgren: ([01:22](#))

Yeah, I can go first here. I'll just start by saying I really loved when we interviewed artists such as Sandra McCracken and Jill Baraka. Sandra McCracken was actually one of my first podcast episodes, so I think it'll always hold a special place in my heart. What about you, Dustin?

Dustin Moody: ([01:38](#))



Yeah, one that comes to mind is a conversation we did with Philip Yancey, right as the pandemic was starting. We were all working from home. It was still a little awkward trying to figure out how to kind of re-engage and work in pandemic life. I had just finished reading Philip's book with Dr. Brand, *Fearfully and Wonderfully*, and I thought there were a lot of tie-ins between what we were experiencing collectively as a society working through the pandemic at the time. And Dr. Brand's work with people with leprosy, and how he used Paul's analogy of the body of Christ kind of throughout that publication. I thought it was a great conversation.

Dustin Moody: ([02:16](#))

I was also kind of in the fog of new parenthood at the time. My firstborn was born in March of 2020, so there was just a lot happening, but I just remember that conversation sticking out as really full of wisdom in a sea of lots of unwisdom going around at the time.

Joanna Meyer: ([02:33](#))

Dustin, it's kind of crazy to realize that in the life of this podcast, you have added four children to your family. Now, to be fair-

Dustin Moody: ([02:41](#))

Yeah, I don't recommend it.

Joanna Meyer: ([02:41](#))

... three of them came all at once, in the form of triplets, but it's just mind-boggling.

Dustin Moody: ([02:46](#))

Thanks, Joanna. For those considering a similar route, I do not recommend it.

Joanna Meyer: ([02:51](#))

I think for me, it's the sum total of the many times I had to learn along with our guests as I was interviewing speakers. I think there have been many, many people who just humbled me with their godliness, as our listeners should know, challenged my thinking with some... They just challenged my assumptions. Unfortunately, our listeners get to hear me learning as we go, but that's really a gift, really, really a gift to be a guest and a host, to have a front row seat to those people.

Joanna Meyer: ([03:18](#))

So, as many of our listeners know, any program we do at Denver Institute is shaped by what we call our Five Guiding Principles. So whether you're listening to a podcast, attending an event in the Fellows Program, if you scratch below the surface, you will run smack dab into those Five Guiding Principles, and they will help shape the format of our Greatest Hits episode today. But I'm going to put you guys on the spot. What are Denver Institute's Five Guiding Principles?



Catherine Sandgren: ([03:41](#))

I'm definitely going to admit to cheating, because I knew this question was coming. So I'm going to list the first two, and then I'm going to let Dustin fill in the rest. The first two, the one is Thinking Theologically, and the second one is Embrace Relationships.

Dustin Moody: ([03:56](#))

And then we have Create Good Work, Seek Deep Spiritual Health, and Serve Others Sacrificially.

Joanna Meyer: ([04:03](#))

We're all, as a staff team, going to get these tattooed on our backsides after this episode. So let's just jump in. We've curated content according to these guiding principles, so we'll start with Thinking Theologically. And Dustin, tell us a little bit more about what this principle means and the excerpt we've chosen to reflect it.

Dustin Moody: ([04:19](#))

Sure. Our first highlight is from Rich Villodas. Rich is the pastor of New Life Church in Brooklyn, and he's the author of *The Deeply Formed Life*. In our conversation with Rich a couple years ago, he presented just a really clear theological framework for thinking about our work, along with the vital role that it plays in our spiritual formation.

Rich Villodas: ([04:37](#))

Yeah, I think for me, it starts with the theological claim that work is good, that work was created before the fall. And some people who are listening are probably saying, "Not my job. My job definitely came after sin." But I think for us, at New Life for me, it's this understanding that work is a gift, that God is a worker. And God creates us in God's image, gives us the holy task of creating and shaping, of establishing order out of chaos, of creating community, of stewarding the gifts. So for me, work is in itself a good thing.

Rich Villodas: ([05:18](#))

Moreover, work is the place where we spend most of our lives. And so, the reason why it must become a place of formation is because we spend most of our adult waking hours at work, either traveling to work, being at work, traveling home from work, and then working from home. Whatever it is, we spend a lot of time in work. So I think that's the reason why it's a primary formational space, because we spend so much of our time there.

Rich Villodas: ([05:48](#))

But because work is something that was created before sin, and because we're made in the image of God, and because... I love that Jesus, three of His years were preaching, traveling, healing. But He spent much more of His years as a carpenter, working with His father, making chairs and tables or whatever



else He was making, working with His hands. And these things are good. We're offering something to the world.

Dustin Moody: ([06:18](#))

Rich, connected to what you were just suggesting, you said this in your book, "The workplace is often where our identities are shaped. For many, what you do is an expression of who you are. This is a dangerous approach, because our identities are rooted in something that can't give us what only God can." I love that. It is an appropriate distillation, and it's a practical tension that a lot of us are sitting with.

Dustin Moody: ([06:44](#))

So I'm thinking here of the first and the fifth rhythms in your book, Contemplative Practices for the exhaustive life, and the idea of practicing Missional Presence. Help us to try to hold these together. How do we balance work as part of our missional posture to the world, without it taking up an outsized portion of who we are and how we define ourselves?

Rich Villodas: ([07:05](#))

That's a great question, and my response would be one, in a theological truth, and secondly, in a formation practice. In terms of the theological truth, I think our fundamental identity is that we are loved by God, and there's nothing we can do to earn the love of God. This is Jesus getting baptized, and before He healed the multitudes, before He multiplied bread and fish, and the Father says, "You are my Son in whom I am well pleased." And that's the gospel of grace. It's beautiful. And I think that's the place where we are to live out of. And so, that's the theological truth.

Rich Villodas: ([07:55](#))

I think the way that that gets embodied in a formation practice is through the Sabbath. And what Sabbath does, is it roots us in that truth because, as I have written, Sabbath might be the greatest sign of the gospel of grace, because it is while we are intentionally doing nothing that God loves us. It is while we are intentionally not producing or performing that God loves us. And the goal of Sabbath, one of the benefits of Sabbath is that it makes us more productive. It makes us more efficient. But that's not why we do it. The reason why we do it is because we are called to be released and rescued from the idol of efficiency and the idol of productivity. And I think if we can be released from the idols of productivity and efficiency, I think we can live without the kind of paralyzing burden of having to be something that our work can never make us to be, that our accomplishments will never make us out to be.

Rich Villodas: ([09:04](#))

So I think, "How do we balance this?" I think we hold on to that truth. I think this is a counter-instinctual way of doing it. I think we need to begin from a place of rest, and it is in that place within, I think we can offer our best selves to the world in terms of what we're creating, what we're shaping, what we're putting out in the world, how we're seeking to serve people. But I think it begins out of that gospel of



grace and out of that formation practice, where we seek to truly wrestle with and embody that truth. And I think everything else flows out of there.

Joanna Meyer: ([09:38](#))

So Dustin, how did Rich's comments about work expand the way that you think about your own role?

Dustin Moody: ([09:45](#))

Yeah. I think one of the things that I appreciated about Rich's talk there, was the way that he incorporated Sabbath along with work. I think a lot of times we think of Sabbath as an add-on, or something that we can do if we have everything else in the week or our lives together. But that's not how scripture sees it. That's not how Rich talked about it. And I think it's helpful to constantly remind ourselves that work is not our way of earning accolades, particularly, work is not our way of earning love from God. And the Sabbath kind of forces us to stop, so that our productivity or our activity is not what we're aiming for, that it's really just sitting with God in that time. So I really appreciated Rick kind of bringing both of those things to light.

Joanna Meyer: ([10:25](#))

The next principle is to Embrace Relationships, and we've chosen two excerpts that challenged our thinking in this area. And the first is from John Marsh, who's an entrepreneur and real estate developer in Opelika, Alabama. He's a pretty amazing guy. Catherine, tell us a bit more about this particular excerpt.

Catherine Sandgren: ([10:41](#))

Yeah, I'd be happy to. John is one of our favorite business leaders. He joined us at Business for the Common Good in 2019, and was one of our earliest podcast guests, which is really fun. In this excerpt, John shares how God has led him to work on behalf of the people of a specific 10-block area of his Southern town. And in this clip, you'll hear Joanna and Dustin's voice in addition to John's.

Joanna Meyer: ([11:06](#))

John, I have another question for you. I think about how you have grown in your capacity as an entrepreneur, it would be very easy to sit where you are now and say, "Look at this. I got my act together. I'm successful, and I am moving past the needs of my neighbors." But one thing that always strikes me about you is that you still stay in touch in a very personal way with the people of your community. And I wonder if you could tell us a little bit more about what that looks like in the context of your daily life.

John Marsh: ([11:34](#))

It is loving the people in the neighborhood, and being willing to live in that messy middle. I feel often like I'm in a tug of war and I'm the rope. It's just tough. Whether it's the neighbor that has a problem that she doesn't have much to eat because her check didn't come in this month, or the other lady, an older lady, that had her hot water heater not working and it wasn't working. We go in and look at it and pop



the panel off, and the contacts can't make contact because there's too many roaches in there, and they've cooked into a cake to keep it from contacting.

John Marsh: ([12:15](#))

And just to try to be hands and feet in our community and know the people, it gives us tremendous empathy to go right along with our authority. It just makes us... It hurts. It still hurts to see our community, and to know what's going on and to live with that. And I can just tell you, it's always ever before me. It's in the shower with me, when I go to bed, when I get up, I'm always thinking about the people. So, I'm afraid if I ever stop doing the work, I maybe could lose touch with some of that. But suffering through doing the work keeps you adequately aligned.

Dustin Moody: ([12:57](#))

Yeah, John, in addition to the people though, it's also the place. And having spent some time with you in Alabama, I know that you and Ashley have a heart for Opelika. So, most of our work is in Denver. Most of our friends are in Denver, but podcasts go everywhere. So I'm curious, what's the importance of loving the place and loving where God has put you, that you and you and Ashley are motivated by?

John Marsh: ([13:20](#))

It came slowly by slowly. I'm looking back now and seeing it more clearly, that what God was working out is this idea that if He'd send people to Babylon and tell them to help it flourish, in the flourishing of that city, they would flourish. I'm looking at human flourishing in our city. And so, it's a love relationship, and the boundaries are like boundaries of favor.

John Marsh: ([13:42](#))

Now, I didn't understand this in the beginning easily, but when I go over the lines that I think are drawn in the sand, stuff stops working. I step back over the line, starts working. I can't explain it, but I know this. I have favor to do work in the region I'm in. And favor is like breadcrumbs on a trail to me. When I'm doing stuff better than I should do, and I know I'm not this good, but it works anyway, I go to myself, "Hmm. Self, I need to stay right here and do this." It works. And so, I've been called entrepreneurially promiscuous, but I want to be entrepreneurially promiscuous within these 10 square blocks.

Dustin Moody: ([14:22](#))

Tempo, tempo.

John Marsh: ([14:22](#))

And then everything else, add value to others.

Joanna Meyer: ([14:26](#))



So, Catherine, like John, you are a resident of a very specific community. You're part of the Denver Metro area known as Englewood. And how does John's example shape how you think about engaging your community?

Catherine Sandgren: ([14:40](#))

Yeah, that's a good question, Joanna. I guess I would start by saying that I really have come to enjoy and appreciate my small and quirky city of Englewood. Then to answer your question, from John's example, I'm reminded of a couple of things. The first is that it is important to lean into your community, even when it's messy. As well as the second point, would be to enter into spaces that allow you to see not only the big picture of what's happening around you and in your community, but to also allow yourself to enter into spaces where you're able to know and interact with people who share the same almost public resources as you.

Catherine Sandgren: ([15:20](#))

And a few examples of that that came to mind was for me personally, I've been able to engage locally through my local church, and have been able to interact with my homeless neighbors and impoverished neighbors, as well as I've been able to get involved with Community Work Days here in Englewood. And through that, I've just been able to see my elderly neighbors, and even in some cases next door neighbors, as well as the third category would probably be public city council meetings. I've actually taken time to attend a few of those. And so, through those experiences, I've been able to see local and city concerns come out, as well as them plan and address those concerns. So I guess I would just wrap up by saying that it is deeply beneficial to be involved in your local community.

Joanna Meyer: ([16:13](#))

Gold star for you, my friend. It's been fun to see your husband Mike transition from a role of running community ministries at one of the Englewood churches, to actually serving the city of Englewood in addressing homeless concerns in town. So you guys really embody that in such vivid ways.

Joanna Meyer: ([16:30](#))

Dustin, you and I have had the privilege of speaking to psychologist, Curt Thompson twice. How lucky are we? I know we both have been deeply impacted by those conversations. We've come away from any interaction we have with him challenged, inspired, humbled. And in the excerpt that we've chosen, Dr. Thompson highlights the highly relational and biblical nature of work. Would you set us up for what we're about to hear?

Dustin Moody: ([16:56](#))

Certainly. Yeah, like most of our speakers, Dr. Thompson kind of weaves in and out of these five guiding principles, even though he may not use the same terminology that we do at Denver Institute. And as you mentioned, you'll hear how relational interconnectedness is essential to the work that we do, as well as the ways that our souls are shaped by our work.



Dustin Moody: ([17:16](#))

Yeah, Curt, I want to take the conversation a little more practically. We're recording this in mid-July. It'll come out around mid-August, and I think it's fair to recognize that it seems like the context that everyone is working in has changed in some fashion. If you're a frontline worker, the stresses you have on going to work every day, checking out at the grocery store, are different than they were in February and March. If you are a professional context, where you work looks different. If you're a healthcare provider, that looks different.

Dustin Moody: ([17:41](#))

So I want to take some of the themes from the book and talk about actually the ways that we're all navigating work in this season.

Curt Thompson: ([17:45](#))

Sure.

Dustin Moody: ([17:45](#))

And you open the book by talking about the importance of being known. And you write that, "You cannot know God if you do not experience being known by Him. The degree to which you know God is directly reflected in your experiences of being known by Him. And the degree that you are known by Him will be reflected in the way in which you are known by other people. In other words, your relationship with God is a direct reflection of the depth of your relationship with others." I'm curious, in the context of work, what does being known look like?

Curt Thompson: ([18:14](#))

So, it's a great question, and this gets to the heart of this idea that we are known for the purpose of creating beauty, that those two things are inseparable. And I would say that at the time that I wrote Anatomy of the Soul, which oddly enough has been 10 years now, I don't think that I would have then said what I just said, that we are being known on the way to creating beauty. But I believe that with all my heart now.

Curt Thompson: ([18:47](#))

And I would say that when you look at... I'll answer your question directly here in just a moment. When you look at the end of Genesis chapter two, you have the first couple, where there are three features that, at least to me, stand out. One is that you have a couple that is naked. Right? They are vulnerable. It's in our vulnerability. They are differentiated. They are husband and wife. They're male and female. They're differentiated. And this doesn't mean it has to be with all with men and women, but it means that they are different, that we come together to create with others, with whom we have difference. And there is the absence of shame.



Curt Thompson: ([19:26](#))

You have differentiation, you have vulnerability, and you have the absence of shame. And it is that, that is the hard deck, this kind of three-part pie, hard deck on which they stand on the precipice of great creativity. And I would say that then part of what happens in Genesis chapter three is not just that sin enters the world. All those things are true. All those theological things are true. But one of the things that doesn't get named explicitly, but this is why Genesis is such a great piece of literature. They don't name and tell, they show, is that the capacity for us as humans to create robustly is diminished. It's not wiped out, but it's diminished.

Curt Thompson: ([20:13](#))

And so, shame plays the role of keeping us from being known. And if I am not known, what I'm going to do is end up, I'm going to burn energy managing my shame, not telling you who I am. And that will then be energy that is not accessible to me to make the next new beautiful thing I am supposed to be making.

Curt Thompson: ([20:37](#))

We ask people this question, "If you could not be ashamed, if you could, if it was not possible." And by this, I don't mean ashamed of things that we should be ashamed of. "If we could not be ashamed of the things for which God says you're not to be ashamed, what's the next thing that you would make?" "What's the next conversation you would have? What's the next repair of a ruptured relationship you would make?" The list just goes on and on, because you'd have, it would be unbelievable how much energy you would suddenly find that you have and confidence that you have.

Curt Thompson: ([21:08](#))

When it comes to the workplace, being known, in these confessional communities that we talk about that we run, we say that there is a model in these communities for any system that we have as human beings. And the model is that no matter what the system is around which we gather, right? If I run a software engineering company, if I run a law practice, if I'm a teacher, if I'm a sculptor, if I'm an artist, I'm a painter, whatever this is that I'm doing, if I'm a pastor, if I'm a stay-at-home mom, it doesn't matter what we're doing. We long to be known in the context of our profession. So there are things that I bring to the table. If I'm a software engineer and I'm working at this company, there are things that I bring to the table that I'm being asked to do. And we like to say, right, that evil does its best work in the middle of good work being done.

Curt Thompson: ([22:01](#))

And so, when beauty is about to be launched, about to be created, what happens? I want to start a new nonprofit, and then I get anxious about all the things that are going to go wrong. And so, evil is at the ready to do what it can do to interfere, to sully, to sheer off what it means for us to create beauty in the world.

Curt Thompson: ([22:19](#))



But if I'm in that software engineering company, and it's run by a group of people who are intent upon making sure that as it has anything to do with the work that we do here, I want to make sure that you are known as well as you possibly could be. I want to know what you want here in this practice, and I want to know what you're afraid of. I want to know when it comes to the deadline that you have, where is shame creeping up in the back of your head saying that, "If I don't do this right, my boss is going to throw me out on my ear." What are the stories that you're being told, that you're telling yourself about yourself, that get evoked by the very work that we're doing here? Because what we would want to say is that if we're really serious about our work, on the way to creating beauty, that very endeavor, that very venture in and of itself becomes a spiritual formation enterprise.

Jeff Haanen: ([23:19](#))

Hi, I'm Jeff Haanen, founder of Denver Institute for Faith and 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.

Jeff Haanen: ([23:41](#))

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Joanna Meyer: ([24:06](#))

Okay. So Dustin, unpack this for me. What makes this excerpt so impactful for you?

Dustin Moody: ([24:15](#))

Yeah. Thanks, Joanna. Two things come to mind. One is the way that Dr. Thompson discusses and situates beauty in our work. Based on his definition, beauty is not something that's only for the arts or only for "creative endeavors." Beauty is anything that we are creating in our work and in our kind of ways of being. A spreadsheet can be beautiful. And for those of you that are down with Excel and Google Sheets, you know how that works. An event can be beautiful. Anything that we do as believers can be executed well in the creation of beauty.

Dustin Moody: ([24:46](#))

The other thing that I appreciated from Dr. Thompson was just sort of his focus on how nothing of beauty comes in isolation. We don't create in our own. As Joanna mentioned earlier, I was initially responsible for some of the leg work around the podcast, but none of this was ever a solo endeavor. The work that we do at Denver Institute, the work that our listeners do in their communities and in their organizations, it all comes with our relationships. And I think that presents a challenge for us in how we view our colleagues and how we view the image of God in the people that we work with. So, from Dr.



Thompson, I've really appreciated his focus in that area. And it's actually a theme that he expanded on in his most recent book, *The Soul of Desire*, which came out after our initial conversation with him.

Joanna Meyer: ([25:30](#))

Yeah. Speaking of beautiful and good work, I had lunch today with my friend Marie, who is a registered nurse in one of the hospitals here in the Denver Metro area, and her specialty is what they would call vascular access, which means those high intensity IVs that are put in to deliver heavy antibiotics or nutrition or chemotherapy to people. And it's very high risk, high specialization, and she was describing the way that she has redesigned the patient experience that helps her do a better job, but also calms their fears about these intensive medical procedures, and how it took negotiating with all of the higher-ups, the Chief Nursing Officer at the hospital, to redesign the way they approach this process. And she goes, "I want every patient. Every patient is the image of God in my treatment room, and I want them to have a peaceful and a calm and as fear-free an experience as possible." And I thought, "Ooh, that's beauty in the midst of inserting high-level IVs." And so, it's just an invitation to all of us.

Joanna Meyer: ([26:34](#))

As we continue this process, we want to talk more about this idea of Creating Good Work. And this may mean examining our work like Marie did at the hospital, and asking how we would approach it from a distinctly Christian perspective, or identifying areas of brokenness or idolatry in an industry, and intentionally applying a redemptive influence there. And we have two short excerpts from a songwriter and a scientist that expand how we have thought about our own work. And Catherine, I know that you loved a particular excerpt from singer/songwriter, Sandra McCracken. And so, I wondered if you could tell us a little bit more about it. What grabbed you about this conversation?

Catherine Sandgren: ([27:14](#))

Yeah. I really loved what is said in this excerpt from Sandra McCracken. As a self-professed creative and artist, I think because it touches on what I believe most, if not all creatives are drawn to, and that is beauty, similar to what Dustin was pointing out in his excerpt. I do think beauty in its truest form can be thought of as truth, Shalom, justice, as well as rightness in the world, and so on and so forth. But as Sandra McCracken says in her excerpt here, you'll hear her say, "I want to uphold God's light in the world." And I think that's a beautiful way to enter into what she's talking about, is creating good work and also pointing back to God and all of His examples that He set for us. So, you will hear that in this next excerpt.

Sandra McCracken: ([28:08](#))

What a great question. I think when I think about that question, I think about a lot of the old hymns. And there's one that comes to mind by a pastor from upstate New York named Maltbie Babcock, who has this hymn that is called *This is my Father's World*. And there's a line in there that's been said many times in other places too, but "He shines in all that's fair."



Sandra McCracken: ([28:30](#))

And when I think about songwriting, I think about trying to look at the world, just walking around and making observations of what I see and how I feel and how I relate to others and how I see their stories. When I approach songwriting, I just really want to uphold God's light in the world, and the way that we see it go out. So sometimes that's a country song, sometimes that's a worship song. It could be all kinds of things. But when I think about the craft of songwriting, it's looking for the illumination of God in the world.

Joanna Meyer: ([29:05](#))

So, I chose our next excerpt as one of my favorites, because it's from my favorite scientist, Praveen Sethupathi. How many of us get to have a favorite scientist? I'm willing to loan him to you guys because he's so thoughtful and challenges my thinking about the integration of faith and scientist. Praveen is one of the nation's leading genomics researchers. He runs a lab at Cornell University, and he's a frequent speaker on the integration of faith and work in the scientist. And I always come away from conversations with him with a broader sense of God's majesty in the intricacies of the world that God created. And in this excerpt, Praveen responds to a question that many of us may wrestle with in our work. "How do we maintain perspective when it feels like our contribution to a project or an industry is so small?"

Praveen Sethupathi: ([29:52](#))

Yeah, that's a great question, Joanna. It's something I do think about a lot. I think it has to do with realizing that you are working towards something that's bigger than yourself. So I actually think it's a lot like the way that authors and writers talk about their work. Oftentimes, when a really wonderful piece of literature that comes into view, we don't usually think about how long it took, maybe even a lifetime, for the author to really construct this in a manner that they were pleased with and that they felt would really have the largest impact on their fellow humans. All of those details are usually obscure to us.

Praveen Sethupathi: ([30:35](#))

This is the way that it is with scientists, too. There is a writer that once said that, "As writers, we are all feeding a large lake. Each one of us is just a tributary. Some of us may be a bit larger in terms of our rivers. Maybe there are some of us whose rivers are more of a trickle. But at the end of the day, we are all actually flowing into this large lake that we call literature that impacts human culture."

Praveen Sethupathi: ([31:05](#))

I think about it the same way in science. Right? That I'm just feeding a lake. That lake is scientific knowledge, but there's something really humbling and calming and peaceful about this idea that it doesn't all rest on my shoulders. I don't have to all come up with it tomorrow, but that I am working methodically toward flowing a tributary toward this lake. And there is a wonder, and even a luxury in the opportunity to be able to do that. And so, when I put it into perspective that way, you realize that this is a long game. There are things that you are doing now that may impact science and humanity decades



from now. But you're not so worried about why that isn't happening tomorrow, because you know that you are contributing to this lake.

Joanna Meyer: ([31:56](#))

If you're curious to hear more from Praveen Sethupathi, we will link to two interviews that we have done with him on the Faith and Work Podcast. He's so intriguing and so fun to listen to.

Joanna Meyer: ([32:06](#))

But as we move on our next guiding principle, the idea of Seeking Deep Spiritual Health, Dustin, I want to hear from you, because you and I had an opportunity to interview Dr. Russell Moore. And I know I was humbled by the level of impact that he has had culturally here in the United States. And I think we both agree that was one of our most favorite conversations. Dr. Moore leads Christianity Today's Public Theology Process. And we interviewed him about a book that he's written in the last few years called *Courage to Stand*. Dustin, tell me a little bit more, what was it about this conversation that intrigued you?

Dustin Moody: ([32:42](#))

Yeah. As you mentioned, Joanna, we talked with Dr. Moore about having courage in our work. And I think if there's anyone who has exemplified courage in their work over the last several years, it's Dr. Moore. For those of you who may not be familiar with Dr. Moore's work, he was a leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, and over the last several years, took a lot of public heat for principled stands that he was taking that ended up moving him and resigning from his position. He's no longer in that denomination.

Dustin Moody: ([33:08](#))

I think one of the things I took away from our conversation was just the example of a life dedicated to scripture, and how closely he has walked with the Lord, and how evident that is in the things that he's doing and the things that he's saying. So I just really appreciated his time with us, and the way that he just encouraged us in our own work, but also situated courage in work for everyone else.

Dr. Russell Moore: ([33:31](#))

I would define courage as moving forward in trust in spite of fear. And so, it's not just that I would say the presence of fear does not mean an absence of courage. It's also that fear, I think, is often necessary and even revelatory. So if you think about, for instance, the shepherds in Luke 2. I grew up in the old King James Version of this, "and the glory of the Lord shown roundabout them. And they were sore afraid."

Dr. Russell Moore: ([34:06](#))

Well, that fear, this actually is a necessary stage toward receiving revelation. Or when Simon Peter is walking on the water and starts to sink beneath the water, there's an initial confidence, but that confidence isn't where he gets the revelation. It's when he realizes, "I can't do this. Lord, save me," and he's pulled up.



Dr. Russell Moore: [\(34:32\)](#)

So I think that that's an essential part of courage. So sometimes I think when people get scared, they start to think, "Well, this means that God's absent, or it means that I'm doing the wrong thing." When actually, many times the fear that's there is a sign of God's presence, and a sign that something new is happening in your life. And I think that's a pattern we see throughout the scriptures.

Joanna Meyer: [\(34:59\)](#)

How is the cross central to dealing with fear?

Dr. Russell Moore: [\(35:05\)](#)

Well, because I think one of the false ways that people tend to deal with fear is by trying to imagine all sorts of positive aspects, and to say, "This isn't going to... I am going to meet my quota this month, and I'm going to imagine myself meeting that quota, and I'm going to do it." That doesn't tend to work. Instead, what tends to work is to say, "What's the worst thing that could happen here?" And once you get to the worst possible scenario, then asking, "Can I survive that? Can I deal with that? Yes. Okay." So I don't have this just unnamed fear out there, I recognize, "I have a fear that I can name and I can actually face."

Dr. Russell Moore: [\(35:58\)](#)

When it comes to the cross, the worst thing that can possibly happen to us, for those of us who are followers of Christ, has already happened. Because we're united to Christ, and I no longer live, Jesus Christ now lives in me, Christ in and in crucified. So the worst possible thing that can happen to me has happened. And the best possible thing that can happen to me has happened, because the resurrection from the dead has already happened in the person of Jesus Christ. We will experience it fully later, but His life is our life, and we're hidden in Him.

Dr. Russell Moore: [\(36:34\)](#)

So, what that tends to do is to put things in the right priority. Because if you don't have that, if you don't recognize that you've already been through the worst, then you're going to fear all sorts of things. And if you don't recognize the joy that is awaiting you in something that's already accomplished, then you're going to try to find that sort of ultimate joy in all kinds of things. Some people it's their family, some people it's their work, but any time that any even good thing is turned ultimate apart from God, it's not just that it disappoints us, ultimately in the end, it's that we start to change. And we can't even succeed at what we're trying to do, because these things they can't bear the weight of all of those expectations. So if you reorder those joys and those fears, I think the way that we do that is centered on the cross.

Joanna Meyer: [\(37:45\)](#)



Gosh, I echo what Dustin had to say. Dr. Russell Moore, it was humbling to interview him, because I just could see how he was a man who knew scripture so deeply, and was able to wisely apply it to practical situations in daily life.

Joanna Meyer: ([37:59](#))

Rounding out our highlight reel today is an excerpt that represents our final guiding principle, the idea of Sacrificial Service. And this principle challenges us to follow Christ's example in servant leadership. It also invites us to use our work in public life to care for those who may be disadvantaged in our communities.

Joanna Meyer: ([38:18](#))

And Dustin and I were in agreement about the next excerpt from venture capitalist and entrepreneur, Donna Harris, because it has had a profoundly shaping role in the life of Denver Institute, in our Women & Vocation Initiative. And early in the life of Denver Institute, we realized that Christian women were often left out of conversations about leadership in the workplace. But it was the following discussion with Donna that opened our eyes to how significant the discipleship gap is for women in this area. And in this excerpt, she discusses the challenges of navigating her diverse roles.

Donna Harris: ([38:54](#))

As a woman, an entrepreneur, a CEO, and a Christian, my sort of Venn Diagram of all those things intersecting, and I look for who else fits that same profile, isn't a lot of us.

Joanna Meyer: ([39:10](#))

It's tiny.

Donna Harris: ([39:12](#))

It's a small pool, growing, but a small pool. And that presents challenges, because I don't fully fit in any one of those circles. And so, I'm only fully myself when I'm all of those circles, which makes it hard to be sort of the peer and fully sort of present in any one of those places.

Donna Harris: ([39:33](#))

And so, I think about in the Christian realm, we have oftentimes, a certain expectation of what a Christian woman looks like, sounds like, acts like, how she gets involved in her ministry. I participate in a Saturday morning Bible study. I can tell you, we never talk about things like how to behave when you meet a world leader. But I do that regularly.

Donna Harris: ([39:58](#))

So it's very hard to find a peer group, and it also often feels like the entrepreneur and the CEO part of me gets minimized to make the Christian woman part of me fit. And then vice versa in the entrepreneurial world. Oftentimes, we're pattern matching against what looks like a young white male, which makes a number of people not sort of fit the pattern.



Donna Harris: [\(40:23\)](#)

So I do think that until we sort of grapple with the fact that we are all created in God's image, we all have a whole diversity of colleagues which don't potentially look like what we might have historically thought they looked like, and that means I play a different role. My husband plays a different type of role in our relationship. We have a very sort of marriage of equals, and it's an important part of who I am. We're fully together in this marriage. We're fully together in our faith, all those things. It's a lot that doesn't fit with some historical models of how we imagine these things today.

Joanna Meyer: [\(41:03\)](#)

I'm curious to know, too, how churches could better support Christian women who have significant careers they're juggling?

Donna Harris: [\(41:09\)](#)

Yeah. I actually find this one to be more vexing. I'll be frank, I've been a Christian for a couple of decades. I've been an entrepreneur for those same couple of decades. I've met presidents, kings, queens. I influence entrepreneurs and literally country leaders around the world. I have never had someone in a pastoral role or a leadership role in my church ask if they could pray over my influence. I've never been invited to bring that skillset into a church environment. I have offered and been rebuffed, so we have a lot of work to do, I think, in the Christian Church.

Donna Harris: [\(41:49\)](#)

I think that if we truly believe we are all created in God's image, that means men and women. And I'm not seeking to usurp anybody's authority, but why would God gift me with all these tremendous gifts and talents, and not want me to use those things? And I am more than happy to volunteer in the nursery if you would like me to, but I'm sure I could probably also be useful in other ways as well. I do think that we have to reckon with that as a church. And I do think that we're not unleashing many of the wonderful gifts that God has clearly placed in Christian women around the world. And I will say, in the last three years in my journey with Builders + Backers to do this research, hands down, the majority of the people I've met who are focused on, "How do we mobilize entrepreneurship to actually solve the problems that matter in the world?" They're women.

Donna Harris: [\(42:39\)](#)

And almost all of them are believers as well. So God's doing something beautiful with this world of entrepreneurship, and women have just as an important role to play as men. So I would encourage any church leader, whether they're the pastor or they're lay leaders, to understand who in your church operates in this world. Because it's a unique gift that can be used to really help the church move beyond just serving to solving the problems. And that's really, if we can do both of those things, it's just a beautiful place for us to be as a church, because that's where we can really bring Christ into places that we wouldn't ordinarily be able to bring Him.



Joanna Meyer: ([43:17](#))

Donna Harris speaks so prophetically and passionately about building workplaces that support the gifts of all their employees. And Dustin and Catherine, thanks for joining me for this Greatest Hits episode. The podcast wouldn't exist without your gifts, your passion, and your excellence. I'm so grateful to work together on this project.

Dustin Moody: ([43:34](#))

Thanks, Joanna.

Catherine Sandgren: ([43:34](#))

Thank you, Joanna. It was fun.

Joanna Meyer: ([43:40](#))

Thanks for joining us for our Greatest Hits episode. We will link to the full episodes for each of these excerpts. And actually, I encourage you to dig a little bit deeper. We have a number of amazing conversations. Actually, we have a hundred amazing conversations for you to listen to, and I hope you'll take advantage to them. Thanks again for joining us over a hundred episodes of the Faith and Work Podcast.

Joanna Meyer: ([44:02](#))

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