



Joanna Meyer:

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

Hi, and welcome to the Faith & Work Podcast. I'm Joanna Meyer, Denver Institute's Director of Public Engagement and Founder of Women, Work & Calling. And I'm joined today by Brian Gray, our Vice President of Formation.

Hi, Brian.

Brian Gray:

Hey, Joanna. Good to be with you, riding shotgun on this call today.

Joanna Meyer:

Yeah, it's fun and we have a fascinating conversation today because we're being joined by our dear friend Jeff Haanen. Jeff's the Founder of Denver Institute for Faith & Work, and Brian and I worked with Jeff for 10 to 12 years and we had the opportunity to grow both the as friends and as colleagues, but they weren't always easy days. We'll be the first to admit that we learned together what it looked like to truly be an effective team. And often that came through just the journey of knowing each other and how we work together. And that actually is part of what we're talking about today. We're going to be exploring Jeff's new book.



Brian, I'd love to hear from you as you've had a chance to read Jeff's book called, *Working From the Inside Out*. What have been your thoughts and what are you thinking about as we prepare to have this conversation with Jeff Haanen?

Brian Gray:

Well, it's a bit of a meta experience in that I've worked inside this organization that gave birth to or gave life to a lot of the reflections in Jeff's book, which were also shaping the organization at the same time. So it's interesting. I've enjoyed working at Denver Institute more than any other place in my career. I'm 51 at this point.

And to your point earlier, it was also, it was a hard-won organizational health. We've had important conversations that involved good healthy conflict and we worked through some things. An organizational culture just doesn't happen accidentally, and it's not mandated from on high. It's the set of beliefs and practices that we have that are governing our workplace. And so what's fun about the conversation that we'll get to have with Jeff here is that I've been shaped by it for almost eight years of my career here.

Joanna Meyer:

Yeah, and what's cool is that we both had a front-row seat to watching Jeff grow from his days of starting Denver Institute in his little townhouse in Littleton, sitting in his garage, literally, doing some brainstorming out these ideas. We've known Jeff since that time, and so we got to see him grow both as an organizational leader, but we also got to see his insights grow as he matured as a person, as his presence, as his spiritual leadership. All of that just bloomed over his years at Denver Institute, which



is what we'll be talking about in this episode. And also what he explores in the book we're discussing today called, *Working from the Inside Out*.

So Brian, tell us a little bit more for listeners who may not be familiar with Jeff Haanen, tell us a little bit about his work and why we should listen to him today.

Brian Gray:

Well, for those who have listened to the Faith & Work podcast for a while, they may be familiar with Jeff and his personality. He's appeared a few times on this podcast, but he was the founder of the Denver Institute for Faith & Work about 10 years ago and now writes on Faith, Business Entrepreneurship and has published a number of essays in Christianity Today and Comment magazine, other places. He's written in the past and has a forthcoming book, which intrigued me because they explore under-discussed spaces in the faith and work world.

The first is an *Uncommon Guide to Retirement*, finding God's purpose for the next season of life. And he has a new book coming out in next year, which will be called *God of the Second Shift*, exploring how faith and work applies towards the really critical work in the trades, blue-collar, no-collar kind of work.

But today we're going to take our conversation... is about this book that's just come out in December. And as we were just alluding to a second ago, Joanna, it really came out of and describes Denver Institute, the host of this podcast. It's called *Working from the Inside Out: A Brief Guide to Inner Work That Transforms Our Outer World*.

And so with that, we are going to welcome Jeff into this. Well, Jeff, my friend, and now formerly my boss, welcome to the Faith & Work Podcast. Thanks for joining us today.



Jeff Haanen:

It's great to be back home.

Brian Gray:

Hey, start us off. Give us a bit of an idea of what you have been up to in the past year since you've been at Denver Institute.

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, so the update on what I've been up to, well firstly I've mostly been driving girls to soccer and volleyball practice, so I am a father of four girls and I've been driving them all over the place. It's been a sweet season, obviously professional transition since I stepped down from the role at Denver Institute professionally, at least in the last oh, year or so. I've been a little all over the map. I've split my time in a few different ways. So I'm working on projects right now, one for my church for Wellspring Church in Englewood. I'm working on a project for Miami University at Miami of Ohio on faith and entrepreneurship. And then I'm working on a project for my good friend and coworker, Bob Larkin, who is also the chair at Denver Institute at Treatment Technology, which is a small business in the water, wastewater treatment industry. So I'm splitting my time, hopefully just contributing and lifting up good people and good missions that I believe in.

Joanna Meyer:

Yeah, I see your fingerprints all over the place, so I think you're definitely spreading the good word through your work. As I read your book, I recognize themes that I was very familiar with from our years working together at Denver Institute, and I know our listeners who are familiar with our



programming would recognize them, but you also pulled back the curtain to reveal what was going on emotionally and spiritually during your years in leadership. And I'm just wondering what motivated you to be so vulnerable in writing?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, I mean, it's a good question. I think in the process of, I wouldn't say I was a public figure, but I suppose every leader of an organization, whatever size is somewhat public. It feels hard to be emotionally vulnerable, though I should have probably done a little bit better when I was leading Denver Institute. As I was thinking about my time at Denver Institute, there is of course a story of our programs. There's a story of people in our organization, the people we've served, and those are good stories. But I just did a lot of reflecting myself and the reflecting that I did was who did I become in the process of building and growing this organization?

And as we'll talk about even I'm sure on this podcast, some of it was more like Christ and some of it was very hard and deformative and difficult. And I think that's probably a lot of people's work. It was really a process of reflection. As I was writing up, I finished the book in the three months after stepping down from Denver Institute. It was just a good time to reflect on what are the things that I want to take with me and where are areas where I need additional healing. And healing really is, I would say, a subtext to the book.

Brian Gray:

Well, Jeff, on that theme that comes through this concept, not just the title, but even the way in which you described a number of the key themes that we're going to talk about today, this idea of working the interior journey, working from the interior and then out into the world comes through. So that's



not just for you, but it's a bit of a philosophy with how you're encouraging the rest of us to view our work. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, *Working from the Inside Out*. Well, it was a real process and of course, you, Brian, were a critical role in my own journey, making that interior journey. So how that happened, of course, faith and work conversations, they've always been about our work itself, particularly in reformed communities. They've been about how can we influence our communities and our societies through our work. So there's always questions about public impact as well. And for I would say Denver Institute, that also means justice. But those are sort of exterior things. And as I even took a look at, gosh, what happened to me in the process of Denver Institute, I realized that the most pertinent or obvious or daily reality was relational and interior. Those are the two big things.

And so how even that came about in terms of some of our guiding principles at Denver Institute, I mean, Brian, it was you, Brian, that brought up, we really need something on the interior journey. And this was years ago. This was gosh, eight, nine years ago because we had some of the work and the cultural impact stuff in there, but we didn't have as much in the interior journey. And gosh, even in the last three or four years, I have come to believe that that interior journey aspect is the root. It is the foundation, it is what it ultimately means to live out the gospel in work.

So we can talk more about that, but I just think that that was a part of my own journey and it came from both realizations about myself, about my childhood, about why I was doing things, why I would erupt or have emotional outbursts in different times. That interior journey was something that was really nascent in and has become now, I would say an increasing area of curiosity for my life and



potentially for listeners too, that are wanting to say, what does it really mean to live with God in the moment by moment of my life and my work?

Joanna Meyer:

Jeff, you are such an elegant writer that we stole a few quotes from your book and I just wanted to share one that really reflects what you just shared with us. It said, "I've come to the conclusion that faith and work is not first about impact, success or even a way to advance the gospel in the world. It's about who we're becoming in the process of our working lives." And that's apparent both in the way that you have lived and the words that you shared in this book.

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, I do think it's about who we're becoming, the process. And it's not that it's not about social impact, it's not that it's not about an impact for the gospel. Actually, I have one chapter in the book that's also about essentially workplace evangelism. Those are incredibly important, I would say. But I actually, and this is maybe just my own personal journey, I took impact or I took my role in God's mission as the ultimate thing, and I really set myself up for some significant pain points in my life when I did that. And I think when people are involved in Christian ministry, that's very easy to happen. My work is the big part of God's mission, but I actually think it can happen in other industries as well. But I just over and over, when I didn't do well or when the organization didn't do well, then I felt bad or I felt that something was wrong inside of me.

And I thought, why am I so connected to my success? I could sometimes baptize that with Christian language of, well, our mission or our part of God's mission in the world, right? Why was I so connected to that? And I realized I was on a really old sort of journey, not in a good way old, but I am



what I do. I am the success that I have. And that led me to some, honestly, pretty dark and difficult places.

And so when I stepped down from Denver Institute and I even didn't have the title and I didn't have the things that I was used to, I also went through some difficult times of sort of letting go and releasing, but also a wandering, I would say, in some of my own work life. So the question is not only about interior, sorry, exterior impact. It really has to be about who we're becoming in the process because as you say, Brian, as well as you both say Joanne in your work, who we become is ultimately what we bring to every single situation.

And so paying attention to what's going on inside of us and what the Lord's saying, whether we feel close to him or not close to him in a day-to-day moment-to-moment basis, that's the impact. And I should also say too, I've been in a lot of situations, both in my life as well as seeing it in others, that when you don't have that interior journey part and we're expecting, gosh, we're expecting to make a big impact on it, could be a lot of things. It could be poverty in our city for instance, and if we don't have that interior journey part, oftentimes we end up creating more broken systems that other people then have to go fix because it's not coming from a root of health.

So in one part of the book I said there's a real connection between soul and system. I think that's right between leadership, between our work as well as what's happening inside of ourselves and in a relationship, I think they're all deeply connected in one vision of holistic discipleship.

Brian Gray:

Jeff, I want to jump right into this for this idea of these guiding principles. Now this is going to be as a tribute to you and the board because you at the time in Denver Institute's history crafted and gave



some language to them. But we've operationalized these things significantly in our organization. You spend the whole middle part of the book describing five concepts. We should seek deep spiritual health, think theologically about our work, embrace relationships in our work, create good work, and then serve others sacrificially.

So these are these five principles and we're going to encourage people who want to dive into them with greater depth, this I think is the best, maybe the singular place in print or in writing that gives some unpacking or description of those. But I want to be bigger picture. Can you tell us what was the question that you were trying to answer for us organizationally? What was the question you were trying to answer for people in this book when you provided the answer of those five principles?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, I think the question was what does it mean to live out our Christian faith in all areas of life and particularly our work? I mean, that was really it. And so we had some of the theology of work stuff that you'd see. You're going to see a lot of that in the create good work chapter of the book in our serve other sacrificially in terms of our work making impact on our community. You're going to see some of those aspects as well there. But I also think as we added and we grew as an organization that the day-to-day relationship we have with our coworkers in an organization, in an institution that has a particular culture, that's the embrace relationships aspect and living out faith through work... if we're not living in the depth of the kingdom in our core relationships, you just see a lot of systems of unhealth in very Christian organizations.

That's just a major red flag. And I also think on that seek deep spiritual health aspect, that is core. I mean, it's really critical to what it means to live out gospel in our work. So I think that's to just briefly answer your question, the question we're asking, what does it mean to do holistic Christian



discipleship, particularly with a vision of our work? And that's our answer. It's this interior to exterior journey that is rooted in interior life, that is expressed in our work and in our core relationships and in a particular time and place in our organization that then does ultimately influence community, particularly the poor and issues of biblical justice. So that's what I'd say, it means what does it mean to live out gospel and work? And I think that's how we'd respond.

Joanna Meyer:

I wanted to ask about some of the other themes that were running underneath that framework of the five guiding principles. You touch on some of the deeper emotional drives and longings that shape our work. And that word longing, it's evocative. I mean that's what longing is, but you talk about how our work can lead us to connect with our deeper longings. And I would love to know because you're someone who really watches people at work, you're a student of the economy and broader forces at work. What do you think today's workers are looking for in their jobs?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, that's a good question. I think a lot of us are looking for significance that we're doing something important and that we're making an impact. I would say maybe in a previous generation, it was more about stability or provision. And I do think stability and provision for ourselves and for our loved ones is an important aspect. But I think the majority of people are looking for some sort of a deeper impact. And that could be a social or cultural impact. But I would also say that's a real two-edged sword, at least in my view. The good part of that is it's not only maybe about just getting ahead, but the two-edged sword of that is oftentimes we've traded maybe the previous generation's, "I'm going to be successful," for "Now I'm going to be impactful." But it's still a narrative about me.



And I think that's the drawback of some of those narratives is what about when your work isn't impactful? What about when you have a negative impact on your work or those around you? What about those contexts? And I do think Christian faith gives good answers to that. And I think that we really have to hold that lightly because there will be days when we make an impact and there'll be days when, boy, I need to shut my screen 'cause I'm so distracted and I can't get anything done, and I feel like I haven't accomplished anything and the spirit actually may be speaking to me in that moment as well. So again, that comes back a little bit to the interior journey, but hope that answers some of that question.

Joanna Meyer:

Yeah, I mean it's guaranteed that our longings cannot be met through work, but the question that I have is what do you do with unmet longings?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, that's a very good question.

Joanna Meyer:

That's the million-dollar question?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, and I don't know if I have a great answer for that. I think work can help us to see them, right? It could be a relational longing, it could be an impact longing. I think it helps to see them. But we do have to acknowledge that work will ultimately not satisfy us. It will not actually meet any of those



ultimate longings, but I think it can reveal them in important ways for hearts that are open to Christ and what he's doing for us.

So I think, I mean, I'll share a little bit of my personal story to make it less abstract. I grew up, I was a very lonely kid, didn't have very many friends. I came to faith when I was 18, but for me, the description that really stuck with me was a light in the darkness. I remember coming to faith when I was 18 years old, looking up at the sky, the night sky, looking up at the stars, and I'm from Minnesota, so I saw the North Star and I'm like, "Yeah, that makes sense. The world is dark and there is a star shining the way."

And that's actually how I saw Christian faith. But there was sort of a loneliness and a feeling of insignificance that I had as a kid and that when I became a person of faith, when Christ met me and I realized about God's mission in this broadened sense of the gospel that we talk about with Denver Institute, I very much clung onto that, right? Because that answered my question for my deepest longing, Joanna, right, is that I wanted to be somebody. I wanted to be important. And I realized that I overlaid that oftentimes in my own work at Denver Institute as I wanted to be somebody because I felt like I was nobody.

I felt that from a time was a young kid, and that led to some just unhealthy habits of heart, I would say, over the years that were very, very difficult and I had to sort of uncover from those. But I do think there is that. That was one of my longings is I want significance. I wanted to have an impact, I wanted to, and then have this part of God's mission. But at the end of the day, I do think just it can't be answered through our work. Only the life of Christ himself can answer our deepest longings. So that's my two cents on that.



Brian Gray:

Jeff, you're describing being, in essence, a product of maybe cultural narratives or the messages we hear around us about ambition or importance or how we're valued. And a theme that runs through the book is how a biblical narrative in essence responds to or contradicts the world's narrative around work. And this is a problem that we see at Denver Institute that we're hoping to address, just to look at an anemic vision of work and offer something that's more robust. How does a biblical vision of work help to counter some of the prevailing cultural messages that you're alluding to about work and meaning?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, that's a great question. I think you are what you do. Those types of things are pretty prevalent in our culture. Americans work way more than, for instance, their European counterparts. That's very typical in our culture. To bring it to the biblical narrative, do you think people in the faith, the work movement ourselves, we've done a good job of emphasizing Genesis 1, that work can be good and be a part of cultivating God's world.

I think maybe we need to keep on hammering home that it's also a part of Genesis 3, that we are actually east of Eden, that the world is broken and our work and ourselves and the systems that we're in are deeply broken as well. And I think, as I think about both sides of the biblical narrative about work, Genesis 1 and Genesis 3, I think it's a really needed balance. It both gives hope to those that don't have their work, and it really humbles those that need humbling, that you're not your life, you're not your work.



And so I do think, well, it has this, as we're thinking about this in Christmas terms, the Magnificat, it raises up the humble and casts down the rulers from their thrones. That's what a biblical vision of work does. And that is good news. That is good news, indeed.

Joanna Meyer:

Jeff, I appreciate how you captured some nuance in how we think about work. And I think there are some significant generational differences and how we think about work. I think of maybe more of, I was going to say this gently, more of a boomer generation might have a focus on individual success. And I'm a Gen Xer, so I'll throw myself in the mix there. But that how we look at work has changed, but maybe the desire for significance hasn't. So now we might have more of an emphasis in younger generations on having a social impact, of having a certain kind of lifestyle that we achieve through work, whether it's work-life balance, or being able to call the shots on your own schedule, but they still center on comfort or self-satisfaction. And you really draw in the book, you draw out three foundational principles that characterize people that have a different kind of impact in their vocational lives. What are those three qualities that really distinguish a person's work when it has deep impact?

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, in the book, I wrote three things that were sort of setting below our gutting principles as it were, and it was gospel, vocation, culture. The gospel is the good news. Vocation is our response to God's voice in the moment by moment. And the culture is just recognizing the culture is not neutral. So I'll go over each of those briefly.

Gospel is of course good news, Jesus' life, death and resurrection that changes not only me, but changes the world as well.



I think that vocation one is really central. I know we talked a lot about that a lot at Denver Institute, but listening to God's voice in a moment by moment way, that part of vocation, which is really a category of spiritual formation of the posture of listening and being guided by the spirit, not so much driven maybe by our work, by actually guided by the spirit. When I see people make an impact, it's because they're kind. They're gentle, they're joyful, they're loving. They're actually living the fruit of the spirit because they're in that moment to moment relationship.

And then the last thing I would say is culture is not neutral. We think about our work, oftentimes not everybody, but I think a lot of folks think that you have a religious perspective on Sunday. The rest of the week is sort of this neutral territory that then religious people bring their perspectives on. But I talk about this more in the book, culture is very secular. It has its own... If you were a religious set of principles that needed to be understood, called out and then challenged in light of the gospel. And I think all of us, whether we're looking at news, whether we're in a big company or a small company or a school or a clinic, we just have to be thoughtful and evaluative about the type of system that we're in. So I think each of those gospel, vocation and culture are really important to how we live out our faith in the world.

Jeff Hoffmeyer:

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Brian Gray:

Jeff, you're offering reflections that are really thoughtful and they're really mature, and they're also in the after of the before and after transformation journey. You read a chapter and you talked about a number of different aspects of innocence. Addressing the question, how do people actually change? I'm wondering if you could give us a couple of high points from your thinking. You said that people have been pretty interested in that section of the book, particularly. Give us a couple of some of the key ideas around how people change so that others might consider the process by which you got to and they might get to some renewed integration of vocation and faith.

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, so I included that chapter, how do we change, because of time and time again, I was so frustrated that I wasn't changing. So I wrote this little brief story in the book of me looking in the mirror and seeing crow's feet in my eyes and getting gray hair and thinking of all of the church services and all of the things... I mean, I led a Christian nonprofit and here I can still be relationally clueless. Here, I can still erupt in anger. Here, I can still be filled with shame over something that I shouldn't feel shame about. I just, in the book, I wanted to ask the question, "How do I change, honestly?"



And I had a supposition behind that. It's not just through reading a book or listening to a podcast, unfortunately. I don't think we change that way, and that's bad news for those folks listening to a podcast. Yeah, this isn't going to do it. I'm sorry. You're just not going to change after this podcast. Though, it could potentially be a part of it.

So I broke it up into three sort of big categories, at least in that chapter. And I actually think the beginning of change is pain. It's pain and suffering, and it's when we choose to look at our pain and suffering, rather than away from it. So I think all of us have pain or difficulties, but in our culture, I think we tend to just, through entertainment or through speed or whatever it might be, just moving quickly through life, we just don't look at it. But I actually think transformation begins when you take a look at, there's something really wrong with me, I can't fix it, and I'm just going to look at it for a while.

I actually think that that looking at our pain and our suffering in a way that doesn't try to fix it, but is, I would say courageous in saying there's something really wrong with me. I do think that really is the beginning. And then what I also wrote is I think that it has to be coupled with a high commitment community in a context of emotional and relational vulnerability. So the high commitment community, I think that should be or could be the church, but I really mean people that aren't going to leave you, no matter what you say in the next five minutes, those people are not going to leave you because if you're going to really be vulnerable with people, and I mean actually vulnerability, because I think a lot of Christians myself, have been in context where I know the right thing to say right now that's going to really sound vulnerable and I'll get some applauds, but it's actually not very vulnerable because I'm not really thinking that right now.



I actually think those contexts of some sort of high commitment community where you're emotionally and relationally vulnerable and you look at some pain and you offer that to others, I think that's like tilling the soil of change, the black soil of thinking about the sower seeds for instance.

Then, I think from there, if those relationships maintain, if you can stay in your pain, if you have other people that will walk alongside you in that, I think then the next step really is evaluating our stories, number one, and then the habits and practices that come from those stories. So the stories could be a universal story like a religion or a faith construct. Oftentimes the story of who I am and identity could be from those wounds. It could be coming from a family of origin question, I actually think evaluating what are the stories that I really believe and what are the habits and practices that then come out of those stories and having other people either say, "Yeah, that's a part of God's good story," or "That one's really broken and that's not a part of his story," and people that you trust. I think those are really critical aspects of change.

So I think it's that. I think that's the beginning. I think there's other aspects of change, but if I was going to lay a foundation for of how somebody changed, it would be looking at your pain and suffering, high commitment community of real emotional and relational vulnerability where then you look at the stories you believe and then the habits and the practices that come out of those stories and let the spirit start to do some of the good work.

Joanna Meyer:

I'm wondering how a person finds those kinds of relationships in which you could trust someone to that degree. What has it meant? How have you done that in your own life?



Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, Joanna, that is a great question because I think everybody would like those relationships, but in a time where again, I don't know, with your family or whatever it might be or your work all the time, it's hard to find those. I actually think something like a good friend is that, so it could be a spouse, but you've really got to pursue friendship. And that doesn't happen accidentally because so many contexts of work, for instance, it could be an economic exchange, it could be a sales client relationship. We need something from one another. You have to be around I think contexts where people were, I'm not going to benefit you and you're not going to benefit me other than just friendship is its own gift.

So I think the first thing I think about is make time for friendship. If you have somebody that you think could be that, it's certainly not going to happen overnight, but after maybe the second or the fourth or the fifth time you choose to share something a little bit more vulnerable. I've also been in contexts where somebody got way too vulnerable too quickly.

Joanna Meyer:

I've been in those.

Jeff Haanen:

People got a little spooked out like, oh, that was TMI right now, I don't even know you, right? But I've also been in contexts with deep friends, right, that are like that was appropriate because I know you and you know me, and we're still going to be friends in a month, in a year, maybe even in five years. So I think pursuing friendship and then taking incremental steps of offering vulnerability, then people reciprocate. That's how that, but actually coming back, most of those times it doesn't exist. Where



work oftentimes is necessary relationships. Oftentimes marriage is a necessary relationship, though I would hope that genuine intimacy and vulnerability happens in a marriage relationship as well. But I think they have to be pursued. I think they just have to be pursued.

Joanna Meyer:

So I hesitate to say this, Jeff, because I think what we're talking about is very subtle and nuanced and happens over time. And so my question is going to sound like it's exactly none of those things. But if we have listeners that their ears are perking up and they're thinking, gosh, I would love to see this type of growth or change happen in my life. What are some practical steps that people could take to begin a journey of greater reintegration or healing as they respond to God's call?

Jeff Haanen:

That's a great question. I think at least for me, it's been twofold. One is finding some of those communities like we just talked about or real friends where we're willing to open up and really be honest with one another. So I do think that's a practical step of just invest in those relationships and they'll grow over time. I think the second thing of that though is the journey of self-awareness and being willing to take a look at your heart or your life or even pausing after a work, a work meeting that didn't go well, for instance, just take a moment and pause and pay attention to your heart and your emotions.

So in the book I mentioned the welcoming prayer, which maybe we'll come back to, but our first part of that is noticing how our body is feeling in any given moment and becoming aware of our body is really key of becoming, I think, aware of our emotions.



And I really believe that the journey of self-awareness and starting to become aware of what's happening is very close to the journey of becoming aware of what God is saying to us and how he is speaking to us in our heart, in our mind, emotions, in our circumstances as well. So I would say do the courageous work of finding friends. Do the courageous work of looking at the stuff that you actually don't like about yourself. Don't look away, but look toward it and don't try to fix it either, but sort of just start noticing what's there and when you start to notice what's there, offer it, just like the psalmist, just like David did. Just notice all of that emotions that there, offer that to God. And I do think that is the foundation of starting just a deeper walk with God and living out well, working from the inside out.

Brian Gray:

Before we close, I just want to say one thing about, we've had a conversation about these guiding principles and the way that Jeff has captured in the book, but for those who are listeners, and I'd highly encourage you to pick up the book and also be a reader, I want to say that these are actually very pragmatic. These are things, what I appreciate about these is the language we would use inside our organizations. We can operationalize these.

In other words, it's not like a company, they just throws some splashy words on a wall, but they can have actual practices that over time can lead to transformation. And so that type of organizational leadership, that impetus of let's not have them just be words, but let's put them into practice and let the practices change us. That's both the through line that you've written about, but it's also what we've done over time. It's a really significant shaper of organizational culture and let's people go to work in a place that helps them to represent their own values, but also allows them to be changed for the better, through the practice of those values.



So, I'd highly encourage people to think about each one of these and what it looks like to personally operationalize them. I think the book's a really great mentoring guide to that.

Joanna Meyer:

And I think one of the qualities that stands out to me, Jeff, of the type of leader that has allowed this inner work to happen is that their leadership is tempered. It doesn't mean that they aren't strongly opinionated about stuff or able to influence people, but they have the ability to restrain themselves. There's like a gentleness there that comes from wisdom and not rushing in or not needing to force or exert power to get their way. And it kind of just dawned on me that most leaders I respect have that godly hesitation that almost makes me uncomfortable because they're so willing to let time pass and allow wisdom and space to happen in a situation that I just want them to rush in and make it easy and tell me what to do. But I think that's the beauty of the Holy Spirit at work.

You're nodding as I'm watching you on the video, and I'm guessing you have a few leaders of your own that think that way, and it's very much the opposite, I think of sometimes what effective leadership in the world is modeled like.

So that challenges me. It also kind of scares the pants off me because I don't think that's how I'm wired. So you've given me some great stuff to think about. I'm wondering, as you think about what effective leadership looks like, that is very different than what's modeled in the world, what do you think when you see some of these senior leaders that are deeply seasoned and healthy at an internal level, what would you experience or feel from them?



Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, Joanna. I think that's such a wise insight of this temperedness that you see in really godly people or that pause, as you said. I would also use the word gentleness. You see this with people that have a certain sort of interior wholeness that they don't need to prove themselves in a conversation anymore. They can either speak or not speak. Either of those is okay, and that's not going to be a top 10 leadership characteristic in HBR or anything of gentleness. But I do think there's something in that is distinctively Christian that the meek one inherit the earth. There is actually, I just happened to see this morning, Christy over at Ocean, which is a Christian accelerator. They're raising money for a fund right now. And when you're in those meetings and you're raising money, there could be a lot of subtext of power and control and who knows more who's going to transfer money from place A to place B and sort of refusing to play that game is just important. I'm not going to play that game.

So you asked a question about leadership. The Christian leader looks like the fruit of the spirit, and that's not only sort of how am I going to get from here to there? How am I going to raise capital? How am I going to build something? It may be big or it may be small, it may be a blockbuster or it may go bankrupt. Either of those could potentially be it. But I think in any context, Christians are continually not only being driven, but being led by the gift of the just Holy Spirit in the moment by moment. So I love the word of tempered, actually Todd Bolsinger's got that word, tempered resilience, which I really like, as well as sort of gentleness and love and genuine concern for the person across the table, before the outcome or the impact that you're looking for.

Joanna Meyer:

As we wrap up our conversation, Jeff, I wonder if you would be willing to share a prayer that you mentioned in the book, it's Father Thomas Keating's Welcoming Prayer. That has become an anchor



for your working life, and that seems like a fitting way to close this conversation. So I'll ask if you would offer that as a prayer for all of us.

Jeff Haanen:

Yeah, absolutely. I'd be happy to do that. So the Welcoming Prayer, which I believe Brian, you first exposed it to me, and then through a program called The Praxis here in Colorado, which is for ministry leaders, also exposed me to the Welcoming Prayer. But it's been just as you said, Joanna, it's been a real gift to me.

And for me, there's at least three core parts to it, which I won't go into all of it right now. But the first is sort of just noticing your emotions in your body in this moment. The second is really the prayer itself, which is in this moment, I let go of my need for security, affection, and control, and I welcome this moment as it is. And I think doing that work of letting go of the need for security, of power, of affection, even from others and allowing this moment to be, and it is, it just really releases us to be okay in the moment. And then the final part of it is welcoming God's active presence within and just seeing what he says in that moment.

So we'll just do that. We'll maybe take just a short pause for listeners and we can maybe finish off with that. So maybe just pause for a couple seconds and then for our listeners today, I just want to encourage you to do that with us, to do the Welcoming Prayer.

Spirit, we thank you for this gift of a conversation. Thank you for old friends. Thank you for the listeners on this podcast.

So much of our life is trying to get power, control. So much of our life is about getting a more secure place, particularly our work and with money and trying to position ourselves in a better place. So much



of it is a longing for affection, to be known and seen by others for doing something valuable and importance.

Lord, we come to you and we just let go of the need for that today. We let go of our need for security, for affection from others, and control, recognizing that we have affection from you, that you are our security and you are in control of our lives and you're guiding us, and we have what we need in you. So we welcome you in this moment, in this time, in this place. And Lord, we invite you to do your work within us.

Whatever you want to speak to us, whatever you want to say, whether it's about our work or some of our core relationships or whatever it might be. We open our heart to you today, right now, and for our listeners as well as they're opening their heart to you as well, I pray that you would speak to them and that maybe bring up a Bible verse or an interaction that you want them to hear in this moment. And I pray for everybody listening to this as well, that they would know and understand that you are very near to them and that in you, Lord Jesus, we have all we need. Our cup overflows.

In your name, we pray. Amen.

Joanna Meyer:

If today's conversation with Jeff Hainan intrigues you, I encourage you to check out his book, *Working from the Inside Out: A Brief Guide to Inner Work That Transforms Our Outer World*.

We will link to that in today's show notes, and we also will have a link to a free downloadable discussion guide based on the book. Grab a friend as you head into the new year and consider discussing the themes in this book together. Or use the discussion guide for your own personal



reflection and journaling. It's that rich. So we encourage you to take the next step and act on what you've heard of in today's conversation.

And as we head into the end of the year, would you consider supporting the work of Denver Institute with a financial gift? This is a critical time financially for many nonprofits, and your support will make a difference in our ability to serve more people as they grow from the inside out to shape our worlds as God shapes their inner lives.

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