

Introduction: Welcome to Engage360 Denver Seminary's podcast. Join us as we explore the redemptive power of the gospel and the life changing truth of Scripture at work in our culture today.

Dr. Don Payne: Hay Engage360 friends. This is Don Payne. And before we get into this week's podcast interview, which I'm excited about, I have something particularly specific. I want to tell you about an exciting event coming up on Wednesday, May fourth, and that's going to be Denver Seminary's Day To Give we're calling it "Reaching Further Together". Now on this day, the entire Denver Seminary community is going to join together to help us support current and future students through donations to our student scholarship fund. Now in today's interview, this week's interview, you're going to get to meet one of our scholarship recipients. And I'm really excited about his story because it's going to shine a lot of light on why our support to students through scholarships is so incredibly valuable. 100% of all donations to the student scholarship fund on this day to give, will go towards students with a demonstrated financial need, whether you make a gift now, or on May 4th. And so I would really love to invite you to go to our website, [denverseminary.edu](http://denverseminary.edu), and make a contribution, a generous contribution toward Day to Give because that's going to help prepare, present and future leaders for the kingdom of God, through what we do here at Denver Seminary. Thanks for that. And I hope you enjoy this week's podcast.

Hello again, friends, Denver Seminary, friends. You have reached Engage360 again here at Denver Seminary. I'm Don Payne, and we are really glad to have you with us and glad this week, especially to be joined by my colleague, Joey Dodson, who teaches New Testament here. Joey, welcome back.

Joey Dodson: Hey, thank you so much for having me again.

Dr. Don Payne: Joey's always both informative from a New Testament perspective. Though, he's kind of a one trick pony. He only knows that there's one chapter in the New Testament. It's Romans 7. I don't, I don't know that he's read anything before or after Roman 7. Is that more or less true Joey?

Joey Dodson: Accurate, very accurate.

Dr. Don Payne: Well, we're glad Joey's here. And we've got Joey as co-host today because he's got some connections with our, our special guests. And as we often do we like to highlight different students at Denver seminary who were doing something really interesting in ministry and give us various examples of what it means to live out the redemptive power of the gospel and giving a kind of case studies of what that looks like, and so we're really honored to have Isaac Oliverez with us today. Welcome Isaac.

Isaac Oliverez: Thank you so much. I'm really, really happy to be here today and good to see you too, Dr. Dodson, and so happy to be here today.

Dr. Don Payne: Dr. Dodson is always glad to be seen. And he's easy on the eyes. At least that's what his wife says. Well Isaac welcome here. And we wanted to get you in front of our listeners because you've got kind of an interesting ministry that we want you to tell us about you and your wife, Jamie, began what is called Urban Outreach Denver, correct, in 2012?

Isaac Oliverez: That's right.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Tell us about that. How did that get launched and what is it about? I know it's about eating. I know it's about food, so you'll have to unpack that for us.

Isaac Oliverez: Yeah. So let's just start there. You said food and that's, just to jump in. That's why I love Jesus so much. He loves food and I like to. That's one of the ways I like to follow him. And so we, in essence, Urban Outreach Denver started as a nonprofit organization and it just grew out of the desire of my wife's heart. And I, that we just wanted to find a way to connect with the marginalized here in downtown Denver. We wanted to just have a way almost an excuse to hang out with them and, and, and, and meet people and, and go beyond just learning their name, but learning their story. And so obviously we found that food was a great way to connect with people. So, it just grew out of that. And as conversations started happening, you know they would ask if we had resources you know, whether it was socks which is that our number one requested item among homeless around the world or hygiene items or just whatever they might need. So we started just kind of jotting stuff down and then we take some time and gather it and then come back. And so it really started out of that. And then it evolved even further into what we call now, it's dinner church. So it's, it's just an effort to live out the gospel among what we feel is a marginalized group of people. And they are certainly marginalized, but even within the church that aren't being reached with the gospel on a consistent basis.

Dr. Don Payne: What's the church situation? Like how do you do church with those folks?

Isaac Oliverez: Yeah. So that's part of where the story starts and, you know, it took some twists and turns for us because the whole, you know, idea was to start a church for the homeless. And it grew out of some experience that I had way back in 2002, but it was just a, again, it was the desire to like to give them a church of their own. I've been saying this for several years now that the marginalized deserve to be more than the recipients of our outreach efforts, that, you know, they deserve full inclusion in the life of the church, but we also can't expect them to assimilate into the way that we do church you know, the way we do church speaking of, you know, middle-class Americans or whoever that may be. So the idea was that we would launch this church for the marginalized and that we would, you know, use food. We started gathering on Thursday nights after we had, I say, collected a group of friends. We had been hanging out for almost a year, just in the parks, alleys, and streets to be invited into people's homes, sometimes crack houses, and we'd just be talking to people and then we wanted to invite them to a meal.

And then within that context then say, Hey, we're starting a church. And that would be setup on a Sunday morning, you know, just having church. So Thursday night meals was our effort to start a church. And then when that finally happened, we had a lot of people that came on on the first Sunday which was September of 2013. But from the very first sermon that I preached I looked out and there was maybe two or three people from the streets that we had been ministering to during the week. So I really knew that first Sunday, it wasn't going to work. And meanwhile, Thursday nights were packed and it was loud and it was just, it was awesome. And for two years we tried to just make it work. And then finally we realized we had been having church on Thursday night. So we just canceled Sunday morning and we kind of realized, acknowledged that we were at dinner church. And then I had to go back and figure out what's a dinner church, because that wasn't the plan. And so that's kind of what led me to the book of Luke and seeing how much Jesus enjoyed eating food with people who were on the margins.

Dr. Don Payne: Okay. Dinner church, you need to rename this thing, dinner church there, man.

Isaac Oliverez: Well, what we do Thursday nights is community dinner. That was kind of the way we just started to advertise it. So to speak. And by the advertisement, I mean, I just would write down what the food was for that Thursday handed out with the address and the time. And yeah, we call it community dinner, but yeah, I mean, dinner church, it's something that I, like I said, when I started trying to see, you know, research what this is all about, what are we doing? Who are we? There's actually a growing number of churches that are starting to add dinner churches to their menu of options for the communities that they serve. So it's pretty cool.

Joey Dodson: Isaacc, I grew up Baptist, so we had more potlucks than we did baptismal sacraments. So it makes sense to me that food is involved, but how did you come upon this idea that the meal needs to be central to your ministry?

Isaac Oliverez: We just found out that when people were gathered around the table, that it just seemed to open up conversations about who we would lead from behind. I would tell our volunteers, like they would be the ones to begin to peel back layers of their story. And I just realized that's happening as they're eating food, it's just putting people at ease. And again, this was all built on about a year of just working among them in the streets and in their context. So I've found that food was just such a rich way to invite people into a conversation with which they almost didn't realize that they were leading the conversation. So usually early on it would start just very benign, just, Hey, you know, how's your day, how's things going? And then over the series of weeks and months, man, they're just peeling back layers of their lives. And they're telling you why they hate church. They're telling you why they hate God, why they believe there is no God, they might have grown up in church. And they're just telling you all these things.

And so I was shocked to find out just how honest people were. Like, there were no errors, it was just no mask. I mean, the man, they were just so raw. And to me, as someone who grew up in church that was so refreshing, like I just found out that around the dinner table, it was just something where a conversation about the meal itself that night, 20 minutes later was just deep, deep spiritual conversation. And so dinner church, it was the space that they had to actually have those conversations, as opposed to just walking into church, sitting in a Pew or a chair, and then taking in whatever was happening from the platform, the conversations were happening. So that was the time and the space for that to actually happen within our quote unquote church service. So that was the dynamic that kind of came as a surprise, but that we just ran with it because it was something that was, we were like fostering this conversation that was happening. And then I would come up and share what we call the Christ story. It's about a 10, 15 minute sermon.

And it was from the gospels. And I spent a ton of time with Luke, obviously, but just talking about Jesus. I mean, there's something so poignant about talking about Jesus at the table of affairs when everyone who's looking at you is around tables with food, you know, and, and it's, it's not, it's not, you can't hear a pin drop you're hearing chairs move back and forth on the concrete. Maybe there was a spill, maybe there's two homeboys arguing because they had beef outside and it came in. So it's just a dynamic that like, Oh my gosh, it was, it was so beautiful. It was wonderfully chaotic. And it was so refreshing to me, honestly.

Joey Dodson:

Let me get a pen real quick. So Don, he's a theologian, so you and I, we know Luke. And so you've mentioned Luke, a couple of times, why the gospel of Luke over against John or writing Roman 7? How does theologians get on the same page with this. What do we see in Luke's gospel that is so good for you and your ministry?

Isaac Oliverez:

So the thing that I love about the book of Luke is just the explicit nature with which he goes. So the travel narrative, I mean, it's just, it's way longer than in Matthew or Mark. And I didn't know this then in 2013, but as I've come to learn, you know, that the extended travel narrative, we just it's like Jesus was eating his way to Jerusalem. And, and you know, for me, the, the, I mean, Luke 14 has been like my flagship chapter for years now. And specifically verses 12 to 14 where Jesus, I mean, he just says, look, don't. It gets okay to throw parties. It's okay to invite your friends and family to the barbecue. And you know that at some point they're going to invite you back, but Hey, here's an idea why don't you invite the crippled, the lame and the blind, because they can't repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. So like, that's just man, that's just such a powerhouse verse because it's just, to me, it resonated because I have felt marginalized in my life when we moved to Tennessee, you know, growing up Hispanic.

Like, I know what it feels like to be on the margins. I know what it feels like to be poor. I know what it feels like to be looked at differently and to explicitly be called racist names. I know how that feels. And so I don't know exactly every

situation, but I know how the marginalized feel. And my question is how are we going to, like, they deserve to know that Jesus loves them too. They deserve to have a place in the church. And so I almost get upset about it because it's just like a, just, just something that just wells up in me and the book of Luke fuels that. And so you know, from chapter five, the feast at the house of Levi, it's just like sets everything into motion where it's food, it's food, it's food, time and time and time again, all the way through the end of the tribal narrative chapter 19 with Zacchaeus. So marginalized doesn't mean you're always poor financially. I mean, Zacchaeus was wealthy, but he was despised. And so I just find for me that helps me frame my presentation of the gospel for marginalized people.

Dr. Don Payne: Isaac, put that against your own personal backstory. How did the Lord form this heart in you growing up? You had mentioned before we started, your dad was a pastor and you moved around a good bit for the various States. Give us a little narrative of your own journey.

Isaac Olivarez: So growing up in Taos, New Mexico it's like a fish in water, right? I didn't realize, I didn't really think about being Hispanic. I didn't think about all the issues that we're talking about today. I mean, I just, I had a wonderful childhood surrounded by a ton of cousins, you know, Hey, Mexican families, like, we come with the whole enchilada man. It's big. It's just a ton of cousins, a ton of family, all my closest friends were my cousins. So you can't hardly get more drastic of a change from New Mexico to Memphis, Tennessee. And that's when quite honestly I realized I was Hispanic because I was told in different ways. And it was, it was tough now I've to this day, I know some great people that I met in Tennessee. So, but I started to just realize that, like, people don't always see you the same way. And I saw, I began to see economic disparities and I just kind of tucked those away almost.

And then living in Colorado, just loving the outdoors, loving just Colorado life, and then going to school back in the Midwest and Missouri I just would notice that people that were eating by themselves or, you know, on a corner asking for me, I just would, I would see them on my way to church or wherever. And I just wonder, you know, like, man, they need to go to church. Not even thinking, like there's no way they're going to assimilate into church. Cause there's so many other barriers that they had to go through before. So then after I graduated with my, so I graduated in 2002 with my bachelor's in journalism and I wanted to be a sports writer. Like most kids, I realized that I wasn't going to be able to make a major league roster. So when I accepted that reality, I wanted to be as close to sports as I could. And I thought, what better job to have and to cover sports and have access to all the stadiums. Heck yeah man. And so that was my thing.

So my first job out of college was to write for a, I was writing for Christian Magazine and as it happened, they sent me back to Denver to write a story on the inner city ministry that was going on. And that's when I saw something that I believe God truly used it to just change my direction. And I was interviewing a young man named Perry and it was July 19th, 2001. And I was there and had

spent about an hour talking to him about his life story. He had grown up homeless in the streets of Denver. He told me that he didn't, I asked him, you know, man, if you've survived this long and he was 21 years old and I said, do you rely on faith, you know, to carry you through, what is it? And it wasn't even so much what he said, but how he said it, that shocked me. And he said, I don't believe in God. Because I've never seen God work in my life. And he kind of told me like, look around, this is my life. He said, but I believe in the devil because I see demons all the time and not in my dreams, not in my imagination. I see demons every night and they work the corners. He told me just like the pimps, just like the prostitutes, these demons work downtown, they own it.

And I was shocked again, just to see how stoic his face was, how it was normal. It was his life. So we talked about an hour and then this was down on 16th and Arapahoe, downtown Denver. And then he said, I got to go. And he started walking across the street, which had been 16th street mall. And when he got across the street, another young man approached him. They started arguing and fighting. And within a minute, I kid you not, within a minute, he was, he had gotten stabbed. He got stabbed with a pair of scissors. And I ran across as several people did. And it's like straight out of a movie. I mean, I saw him, I knelt, I was kneeling right there beside him as he died. And I had just spent an hour talking to him about God. And the last words he told me, he said, you know, can I tell you more about my friend, Jesus, because I really, really want you to just know. And I said, my friend Jesus. And he said, honestly, man, no, I've done too much. Like even if he was real, he wouldn't, he wouldn't love me enough to forgive me. I've done way too much.

Those were his last words to me. And it just absolutely floored. I didn't even, I got physically sick. I almost passed out. I was, I had never seen a murder. I had, I mean, I grew up in a bubble man. Like even though I faced a couple of things in Tennessee, like I just didn't know, you know, and all I could think about was how in the world are we going to get people like Perry into church? How are we going to let them know that Jesus loves them? Like I was so frustrated by that. And so long story short, I just, I mean, it's already a long story, sorry, but I just within a year, my wife and I had moved to Denver and we want us to start ministering to these kinds of people, to the marginalized. And so you know that to me, is it on top of kind of some of my life experiences, it just was a slam dunk. It was not going back from there. And it was just like, you know what? These people need a church of their own. Like I said, they deserve more as image bearers, they deserve more than just being our outreach recipients, you know, like they deserve to have inclusion in the life of a church. And that's what drives me. That's what fuels me. And I'm still trying to figure it out.

Dr. Don Payne:

And what a story, what brought you to seminary Isaac?

Isaac Oliverez:

I would say that what brought me to Denver Seminary was an awareness that my passion wasn't enough to carry me through in ministry. I needed to be absolutely grounded. I just wanted to know what I didn't know and learn it. I want him to know what I believe, why I believed it. You know, again, I graduated

with a journalism degree, so, you know, and then, you know, as things go, I mean, I started in the summer of 2018. So it had been about 16 years, you know, of life and ministry. And you pay off student loans and then it's ready to roll. So that's literally that January, it paid off my undergrad loans. Cause you can't really send the chunks of money you sent to your student loans aren't that big when you're in full-time ministry just starting out. So, but that January of 16 and then my wife was like, man, now you can do it. And I almost like, what are you talking about? She's like, let's go. And I said, all right. So that summer of 2018, I started at Denver Seminary and it was a no brainer for me because I've lived in this community. I know the reputation Denver Seminary has. And I just wanted to be challenged academically. I wanted to be. And for me, I felt like I was never going to be at risk of having it be all head knowledge ivory tower type stuff. I've spent way too much time in ministry for it not to just fuel me on a spiritual, even pastoral level. And it certainly has.

Joey Dodson: Isaac earlier you mentioned Luke 14. Most of our audience probably loves Luke 15 and the story of the prodigal son, I feel like it's probably the most preached passage in the New Testament. It's not Roman 7 Don. But what sets up that prodigal son story is the religious people looking at Jesus hanging out, eating with tax collectors, prostitutes, West Texas from Odessa. And so really Jesus, his response, the story of the prodigal was on his, his response to the religious self righteous. Have you gotten any of the Pharisees pushing back the questioning you or I don't know, pitying you or anything? What's been the response to you from other religious organizations and churches and people?

Isaac Oliverez: You know and you're right. You're absolutely right. That's exactly what it is. Jesus is doubling down, in his response. And for the most part, everyone has been just nothing, but like, man, that's awesome. Like that's great. The only thing I would say is that there's a bit of a misunderstanding sometimes that maybe it's not fully church and to a degree, I get that. I mean, it's way different. Like it is, you know, but it has to be, it just has to be. So I understand it, but I'm trying to, I guess that's kind of my endeavor. That's my pursuit right now. So like, this is valid. This is a valid way of doing church because of the nature of what has to be done. So I would say though, man, by and large, everyone's been super amazing. In fact, they've carried us through, we have a network of about 165 churches around the country that support us on a monthly basis that allow us to do what we do, because obviously you can't pick up tithes and offerings from people that like slept under a tarp last night. Right. So it's not just verbal affirmation. I mean, they're there supporting us and keeping us going. And man, we're just so grateful.

Dr. Don Payne: Isaac, I love this statement you have on your website. It says, we want you to eat as much as you possibly can tonight. We want you to roll out of here, but no matter how much you eat tonight, you're still gonna wake up hungry tomorrow morning. But the Bible says that if you receive what Jesus has to offer, you will never hunger a thirst again, how'd you? I love that statement.

Isaac Oliverez:

So our space is, we're on the corner of 26th and Welton and we're in a basement space. So the whole roll you out of here is literally like, just when I, when I say that I'm up at the front and the stairs would be back to my right and I just say, look, eat as much as you can. If we have to roll you out of here, that's okay. That's how that started. And so then it kind of like people would chuckle and laugh. It's like, I would just say it every week because there were always new people coming and new people coming. But it was just a way also to reinforce the whole theme of a banquet. This is a banquet of food. People tell us every week you guys have the best food for the homeless people in the city of Denver. Like they would tell us that we, you know, we go to different places. You guys have the best food and then they would tell us I used to come just for the food. But now I come to hear the Christ story. And that's most significant, but we want it to be able to tell them like, look, we have plenty of food. We're not going to parse it out for you.

And we don't make people sign in. It's just come eat and you can eat before I'm going to preach. We're not trying to trap you here, nothing like that. But we've got a bounty of food. It's good food. And to me, all of that is actually like my first two points of my message. If you will, if I was, I mean, Christ's story just has one point. I'm just getting to a point, but everything's preaching because it's reinforcing that idea of, the generosity of who God is, the quality of his meal. So when I come up and I talk about a story from the gospels, it just makes sense. It's just connecting the dots for them. And now please hear me. It's remarkably simple. Our space is not flashy. It's concrete walls and floors. It is not pretty aesthetically speaking, it's raw, but that's, that's the world in which we live you know that down there. And so we've had to say no to a lot of pretty good ideas to keep it simple because you know, we want to make sure that we keep our audience in mind. We're not doing it for anyone else. We're doing it to be there. So yeah, sometimes I say some things that stick and I didn't even intend for them to stick.

Joey Dodson:

Now you're making me hungry just out of sheer curiosity. And then secondly, going back to the Bible what are you serving? What is this good food? Is it Enchiladas from New Mexico or ribs from Memphis? What's usually on the menu?

Isaac Oliverez:

Sure. So in seven years now, we've served everything from Flan. I mean, an exquisite Mexican dessert we've served. Yeah. Enchiladas we've served, we've served ribs. We've served all, I mean, what was my favorite random one, stuffed bell peppers. I mean, so also the way that that happens is we just, there was a caterer who catered my sister's wedding. He was our first caterer and I asked him if he could do this for us. And I told him what the vision was. So his way of giving back to the community was that he would only charge us for the cost of the food. So for, you know, I think back then it was about \$300 a week. And so then I would take that information and say, okay, Hey, listen, I've got another guy and he's willing to do this. And so then we've built up a little, little team of caterers around the city that rotate and provide us the meals. And so we have a

lady whose specialty is homemade, you know cupcakes, they're huge buttercream.

And these aren't like, it's the little details like they notice when we have real butter. Like they notice when we have, when we add Sprite into the Kool-Aid, that's like a beautiful thing. Or in the summertime, when we do root beer floats, they just say, it's been years since I've had a root beer. It's just those little things that just, they just piling layers and it's, to me, it's all preaching and I don't miss anything. Right. I mean, it's, it's just preparing to hear the gospel. And so, I mean, fried chicken, the first time we did fried chicken. Oh my gosh. It was a fire hazard. It was so packed. I was a little bit afraid. I was like, this is getting out of hand. It was so much, I mean, I can't even tell you how much fried chicken we had and then the hot sauce I learned, you have to add the hot sauce. And it's not like we're not talking about Cholula, which is my personal favorite. It's the actual Louisiana hot sauce. It's all right.

Joey Dodson: Tomasco. Come on. Now you're talking.

Isaac Oliverez: And so like, it's homemade meals. These are like catered meals that we would be happy to enjoy at a Denver Seminary banquet. Like it's really good.

Dr. Don Payne: Oh, that's great. So not having to like to cook this stuff.

Isaac Oliverez: Well, right. We have a team of caterers now over the years, there've been times where my wife and I are here and we're just grinding to make, make sure that we get a meal served. But I mean, my meal to my wife does a great job, but we have a team of caterers that does that. And that, because our building doesn't have a kitchen in our space and it's got, we've put in a little sink now and some things, but we don't have anything like a big commercial stove or anything like that in our space. So out of necessity, we just had to do it that way from day one.

Dr. Don Payne: Great. Joe, you had a biblical question. You were going to bring this back to serious all of a sudden, right.

Joey Dodson: In 1st Corinthians it seems like this was the practice for the church in Corinth as well, but it got messy really quickly. One of the things that Paul has to respond to is abuses of this. Some become drunk during the Agopi fees, the love feast, right? Some eating more than their share to the exclusion is probably of the poor. And because of this judgment comes down. If you remember, some of them had fallen sick and some of them had died because they had properly discerned the body, which is debated by. I think it's probably that they were not taking care of the poor and the needy with respect to that. So it seems like when you bring food in, it's going to be messy not just with Tabasco sauce down your shirt, but with relationships. So what abuses or messes or problems hurdles have you had in this ministry?

Isaac Oliverez:

There certainly have been. And I think back to about three years ago, it got to a point where there were probably 30 drug dealers on the corner, right outside of our doors and traffickers. So there'd be prostitutes, and my nature is I'm like, come and eat. Let's go like, Hey, you know, like on a Thursday that wouldn't have been the first time they saw me, you know, I much prefer to be out on the streets than in an office in terms of like just 40 hours a week. So they would see me and they knew me and they knew what we were about. So that kept them at Bay from a standpoint. But then I found out they were trying to actually exploit the homeless people that would come to our meals. They would try to intimidate them. And obviously like trying to sell drugs or whatever it might be. And then some of them might trickle down and try to take three, four, five plates and walk out. So one of the rules we do have is, listen, you are welcome to come and join us for a meal, but not to go. Orders is what I would say. No to go orders.

And so we'd have people that would want to try to exploit that and just use that tactic of like, Hey, I'm big, I'm bad, and you're not going to stop me. So volunteers, I would tell them, don't you ever feel the need? Like, I don't want you to tackle people like that. That's not you, you can just let me know. Not because I'm like, you know, level three black belt ninjutsu are no, no, no. Not because of that. But you know, as the spiritual authority, they're like, that's, that's my role. So there've been plenty of times where people have been in my face and threatening to see what I'm going to do about it. And I'm like, I'm about to go down. Like, I can't take this guy. But the crazy thing is the first time I did several men that were regulars stood up and said, you're not going to do that. And it was just like this weird thing where they had taken ownership of the space of the time. And they were not going to let it be exploited because it was special. It was sacred to them. So those things have certainly happened. And I tell them all the time, this is not just about food.

This is not just about you trying to get as much. Like, that's why we tell people there's a ton of food. So no one has to feel like they have to cut in line or make sure they get their serving. We've got plenty of food. If I had to go buy 10 more pizzas and we've had to do that, I'm like we don't have enough food. I just knew it. And we're on the horn ordering 15 pizzas. And by the time we run out of that initial meal, the pizzas arrive and we want everyone to have food, but I tell them, this is all a waste of money and a waste of time. If I don't tell you about who Jesus is the waste. And so we're very clear to make sure that people know like this is not just, you know, I tell them we're not in the charity business. This is not charity. This is not just all we want to feel good about serving the community, the needs that exist. And I, and I'd be telling them the needs that exist in your life that need it, it exists right outside our doors. The only one who can meet these needs is Jesus Christ. He's the only one.

So, I would, I do my best to reinforce that every chance I get. So people know this is not just some other charity, like there's power in the name of Jesus. And I want you to, I want to introduce you. Yeah, no. And that's where it comes from for me, you know? And I because you're right, Dr. Dodson, like it can go awry

pretty quickly. And I just choose to say like, as much as I just say the name of Jesus as many times as I can, and I proclaim him and I proclaim him and the Holy Spirit is here. What a dynamic. It is. Well, the Holy Spirit's he's got our back and it's not naivety. I truly, I mean, there've been times where we've had weapons, we've had things happen and I don't seem to panic and it's not because I'm some, it's just, I just know the Holy Spirit's in charge. And because I want to keep it that way, I keep promoting him. So the way I tell people is like this, and I would illustrate this, I'd say, listen, my job is to set up a pedestal, put Jesus on that pedestal, and walk away. I want you to see Jesus. And I feel like if I just continue to do that, and he continues to be glorified in our midst, then he's going to take care of us.

Dr. Don Payne: This is so great. Hey, Isaac, tell us real quickly just a little bit about your family.

Isaac Oliverez: Well, my wife, Jamie and I have been married 19 years. We met in Missouri and we have three kids. Our oldest is Isabella. She's 14. And then my son Abraham, he's 10. So my name is Isaac Abraham. His name is Abraham Isaac. So that's, can't get more beautiful than that. Right. And then our youngest is Nестea. She's seven years old and we actually adopted her from, from downtown here early on in our ministry. And that's a pretty crazy story in and of itself. So we've got our three kids loving, you know, just loving life.

Joey Dodson: You have a dog named Jacob?

Isaac Oliverez: Okay. You know what, we have a little Bernedoodle . He's gosh, 10 pounds. He's still a puppy, like 16 weeks old. His name is Winston. So Winston was the first double black diamond I skied in Tons when I was in junior high. So that's why he's named Winston.

Dr. Don Payne: Okay. Real quick. As we wind up, I got two offbeat questions for you. First of all. What's your favorite thing about Joey Dodson?

Isaac Oliverez: Oh, man. The thing I love about Dr. Dodson is that he is super friendly, super approachable yet. He'll just be in the midst of a very friendly conversation, throw in a challenge and you're like, wait, what? So like I took NT635 with him last semester. And I just, it was very challenging. It was awesome. And then he'd be so friendly about it. Like if it was easy, I'm like, well, yeah, it's easy for you. You read the Bible in Greek all the time. I'm like, I'm still trying to learn, but what I love is his just laid back. I really relate to people who are just laid back and don't put on airs. That just resonates with me, especially when they have a lot of knowledge. I appreciate that. So that's what I think that's, what's gravitated me to him to still talk and hang out, and you know, many professors at Denver Seminary are the same way. Very approachable. I love that. But you know, it's cool because I'm like, we're about the same age as Dr. Dodson and I, and I just sometimes wonder if I would have started on this path earlier. I could be like him on podcasts all over the place and like papers.

Dr. Don Payne: They would be with the cool kids. Right? Yeah. It's really, it's really strange when, when people who are that smart and that nerdy are also pretty cool. Well, yeah, the package came right.

Isaac Oliverez: And we can talk baseball, we can talk football and.

Dr. Don Payne: But you know, his tastes in sports teams are kind of questionable, but apart from that.

Isaac Oliverez: Well, it's you, we sorted that out one time. We were hanging out and he told me why he likes certain teams. So, I came to understand that, you know what I mean? I can, the Yankees thing, I'm still praying. he'll come out.

Dr. Don Payne: Everybody's got their baggage. They have. Everybody's got their baggage. Isaac Alverez thank you very much for spending time with us. We are so excited about what you're doing. And Hey, if people want to know more about your ministry or even are interested in supporting your ministry, how do they get in touch with you? How do they find out more?

Isaac Oliverez: Sure. we'd be honored and they can check us out on [lovedenver.org](http://lovedenver.org). And from there you can, yeah. Click the donate button if you would so wish and, and at any rate, pray for us. Anytime you hear Denver or think about the Broncos. I tell people, pray for us as well. So love [denver.org](http://denver.org).

Dr. Don Payne: Great word. Well, thanks Isaac. And thanks joy. You've been a good sport. Go read Roman 7. Friends. This is Engage360 Denver Seminary. We're really glad to have you with us. While I, while I've got your ear, if I still have your ear, everybody, I want to encourage you to check our seminary website because we have a number of other resources there that you'll want to get plugged into. One is called the In Perspective, it's a series of panel discussions on various issues. And then one of our newest ministries is called The Gospel Initiative under the leadership of Dr. Mark Harden. We've had him on the podcast somewhat recently, and The Gospel Initiative has a series of issues, forums where they're tackling really tough stuff. So these will all be noted, get links to them on the seminary website, which is [denverseminary.edu](http://denverseminary.edu). So check that out when you get a chance and we would love to hear from you. We have an email address ourselves, podcast at [denverseminary.edu](http://denverseminary.edu). If you want to give us any feedback or have any questions for us. And if you're listening on one of the popular podcast platforms, we'd love it if now, and then you get on there and give us a rating or a review. That would be great stuff. Anyway, until next time I'm Don Payne, and this is Engage360. We hope to talk to you again soon. Take care.