

Introduction: Welcome to Engage 360, 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: Hey friends, this is Engage 360 at Denver Seminary. Welcome, glad to have you with us again, my name is Don Payne. And we are going to have a conversation today about something that might seem to some ears, a little bit philosophical, but it ends up having a lot of very street level impact on lots and lots of lives. You may have heard the word deconstruction. Now we're not talking about demolition like of undoing buildings or things like that. When we talk about deconstruction where using a word that seems to have been generated largely within European literary criticism and philosophy, but in the last few years, the word deconstruction has taken on sort of a popular character. And you'll hear it a lot these days in reference to people experiencing the dismantling of their faith, the deconstruction of their faith. And if you're listening at all to conversations, particularly with younger adults, that maybe narrowing it a little bit more than it needs to. But I think this often is with younger adults who are experiencing doubt, disillusionment, unsettlement in their faith and questioning their faith at what seems to be almost unprecedented levels. But we're going to have a conversation about that today with our graduate Anthony Pierri Anthony, welcome to Engage 360.

Anthony Pierri: Hey, Don, glad to be on with you.

Dr. Don Payne: Anthony is in the greater Chicago land area and has been, I think, living in serving there for, for some time, but Anthony has in the last year or two really found himself engaged with this whole phenomenon of deconstruction and skepticism and doubt, almost as a sole ministry focus, I think. And so, we want to draw from his wisdom draw from his experiences about that. So, Anthony, first of all tell us a little bit about your own personal and ministry experience and then how that connects, how you found your way into dealing so much with deconstruction and faith.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, for sure. So, I grew up a Christian, Christian household did the whole Sunday school youth group went through all that, and started working for churches pretty early in music and production roles back actually starting like in high school. And so worked through a lot of that thought that I wanted to be a high school English teacher ended up pivoting and ended up back in ministry. And I worked for a church in the city of Chicago for a couple of years and then became a pastor in the last couple of years there. And then my wife and I, we moved out of the city of Chicago into the suburbs. And I started working for my home church in the Northern suburbs of Chicago. And so, I came on staff to Pastor and then immediately we were hit with the pandemic. And so, once the pandemic happened, everything got shut down. As we all know, everyone was isolated. And so, we pivoted, we launched a live stream as so many churches did in America, but we quickly realized that a live stream format sitting in your house watching on a screen, it doesn't really replace the connectivity of an

actual church service where you can interact with people. So, we said, well, maybe we could do something that's a little bit more interactive.

And so, we started launching some zoom meetings on a weekly basis where we were talking about the sermons and it kind of started just as a young adult, small group almost, but as time went on, it started growing a bit and we were getting more and more people who were getting involved who were deconstructing. And I wasn't even familiar with this term. I knew the concept, but I had a couple of friends who had become they would call themselves ex evangelical. So grew up in the evangelical world and then left. And so, through a bunch of conversations with one of them basically just learned a lot more about the topic and realized that a lot of the people who were coming on the zoom, that bill, whether they would call themselves deconstructing or not, they were taking a hard look at everything the church was doing in the world or maybe their beliefs. And a lot of them were saying, I'm not sure I'm even going to be able to go back to a church, even if they do open up. And so, we pivoted a bit to try to serve the needs of those people. We really focused in on deconstruction. And so, the zoom calls that we had weekly and the content that we were making on social media, it all sort of was with the goal of helping people through that messy process of deconstruction.

And ideally to help push them towards reconstruction because it's a painful place to live in the deconstruction where everything's confusing and you don't know what you believe, and you're maybe shedding some things that are, should be shed that were never of Jesus, but have become part of Christian culture. So, there's definitely positives to that, but it can also just be a very scary place, a lonely place. A lot of these people described that they never felt comfortable sharing this stuff with their members. So, you know, different ideas about theology were just too taboo to even bring up to people. And so, something about the online format made it much safer, especially because it was with people who were strangers, who would, they would never meet because we were spread out. People were coming on from all different parts of the country. And so the anonymity almost helped people be more open with each other. So we would have a main session where we would have a speaker or an interview, or like a sermon or something along those lines around one of these topics that causes deconstruction. And then we were doing smaller, small groups that met in other zoom rooms to kind of process it through together. And so basically how the ministry evolved.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. And you call this .church, correct?

Anthony Pierri: Yep. And that was a play on a, whether they're good or not. I don't know. It was a play on how the URLs in churches, they moved from.org and then they came out with one called .church. So I worked at a church in the city called park community and it was parkcommunity.church. And so the idea of online church community that's how we came up with that name.

Dr. Don Payne: So you just call it .Church.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. So we just called it . church. Cause it was all.

Dr. Don Payne: I'm curious that, or it's curious that so many people who are in this process of deconstruction are still willing to engage with Christian resources, Christian people something maybe right off center of church. But still something like church they're still willing to engage that they haven't just chucked it all.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. Yeah. And I think a big reason for that was just the heart behind many of our leaders and the speakers that we would have on is as many of them kind of reject the black and white thinking, the tribalism that we see present in a lot of churches. It's interesting enough. A lot of us who were leading some of these conversations in the zooms, we were borrowing much more from the seminary model of looking at things where, when you're in seminary, you learn about all the different perspectives, right? You learn about the heresies, you learn about orthodoxy. They're not that I've always felt, especially in my experience at Denver was the professors believed that we were adults and we could be exposed to ideas without being corrupted. And I think you know, the phrase teach you how to think, not what to think necessarily. I think we tried to adopt that, which is very common in a lot of seminaries, but unfortunately is pretty rare in a lot of evangelical non-denominational churches, at least the churches that I've visited and been a part of over the years. It's not always framed that way. It's much more, here are the 10 things you have to believe. If you don't believe all 10, then we're not sure that you can be a part of this church or we're not even sure that you're really a Christian. And so trying to take more of the seminary approach of being willing to talk through these ideas and dive into them. I think that was what allowed people to stay engaged.

Dr. Don Payne: Well, as you have interacted with lots and lots of people about their own process of deconstruction, again, whether or not they're using that word as you mentioned, but as you see them being unsettled, disillusioned really asking deep level hard questions that seem to be distancing them from the main stream of the church bodies they are familiar with, as you've engaged them. What are some of the patterns you've seen in terms of what contributes to being in this process of deconstruction? What moves people into that?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, I think it can be very different depending on the person. I don't think the process is uniform by any sense. And I think a lot of times we've seen because people are in different parts of the country, they may deal with very different reasons. Right. Then, you know, if you're in a more politically progressive area, you might deconstruct for one reason, if you're in more of a conservative political area, geographically, you might deconstruct for another reason. Right. But it is like a laundry list. And there's a lot of overlap between some of these and people will, you know, deconstruct more for one than another, or maybe more for two or three, but it's really things like theological issues and some cases, you know, believing in a God who sends people to hell, or maybe it's a question about women in leadership, or maybe it's interpreting Genesis literally. Can I really believe that the world was created 6,000 years ago? Questions like that, I've seen bring people to that place, but then also things like purity culture,

which for people who are not familiar is sort of a framework for looking at sexuality that was taught pretty widely in the nineties, early two thousands and led to lots of issues, you know, with a conversation all in of itself, obviously. But then we've seen, you know, the church's response to the racism that has been revealed in so many different places or maybe it's church scandals.

Prominent Christian leaders who everyone looked up to and then engaged in sexual sin or financial sin, or any of the number of people that you can point to church pastors who have flamed out in the various ways, or it could be political reasons, right? The church becoming too political and in one direction or another to embedded in the politics. And so there's, there's really a lot of different reasons, but I think a main one probably if I had to say would be more on the interpersonal level of the church, just not really looking like Jesus. I think that underlies many, many of the different responses. There's definitely a lot of the people like the theological reasons you see come up. But I think the broader one are questions about how do people, you know, love the LGBTQ community and, and not really believing that the church has done a good job in that area or the church is not loving the poor and the marginalized, or whatever it might be and saying, this doesn't really square with the way that Jesus loved people for better or for worse.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. So it sounds like in many instances there is this almost necessary detachment of the, some of the phenomena of Christianity from the core of the Gospel or what Christian. In other words, it sounds like it's a process of having to differentiate or discriminate between what really is following Jesus. And how do I see that packaged and iterated either politically or relationally socially, culturally? Because I think this is a natural process of, of faith development early on in all of our faith, perhaps we tend to associate the faith itself with the way we experience it, the way we see it packaged, the way we see it iterated. And then when we start to become aware of disjunctions, we don't know what to do with those, we go through this, this painful and disorienting process of figuring out what's the real the real deal of the faith and what is a cultural packaging that's not the faith itself. Does that make any sense?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, absolutely. And I think that's where there is some real benefit to this deconstruction movement that I think sometimes often gets overlooked by Pastors. I think Pastors can see deconstruction as a threat. They could see it as these are people who want to be morally lax and they want to be able to go out and do what they want. And so they're deconstructing and shedding their church structures that live or liberate.

Dr. Don Payne: Looking for excuses to do what they want to do. Right.

Anthony Pierri: Exactly. And I've heard that and you follow, you know, there's Instagram accounts of pastors and thought leaders who say that, who say it very openly, all this deconstruction stuff. It's just people they want to sleep with who they want to sleep with as crass as that sounds. And I have not found that to be the case in nearly any of the conversations that I've been having, or at least people

who are gravitating to our ministry. It is almost never been the case that they are just people looking for ways to do what they want. And we use a lot of things theologically or whatever. It's almost always a result of how do I square the Jesus of the Bible with the church that I'm seeing in America. And so I think we can look to examples, even in the Bible of healthy, I would call it deconstruction. I think some people would disagree, but I think what I learned at Denver was that Paul didn't necessarily experience a conversion because he never stopped considering himself Jewish, but he had a radical, a radical re-imagining of what it meant to follow [inaudible] post Jesus. And he could look through the lens of Christ backwards and see here's where our religion has gotten off track, right? Like the zealot violence approach of taking power and using violence. And he can look back on that and say, this actually was wrong. And we need to deconstruct these ideas and move forward using Jesus as the guide and Jesus himself coming to the Pharisees and basically calling out all the ways that it had become corrupt. And so I think every generation probably needs to do some of that hard work because we're always at risk of becoming embedded with the culture embedded with politics or whatever it is. And the Gospel becoming subservient to one of those other forces.

Dr. Don Payne: The way you described that Anthony that probably leads us to conclude that deconstruction in some fashion is an essential and necessary part of a growth in discipleship. Again, even if we don't use that word, even if it doesn't feel like that, everybody who I'll make a blanket statement here. Everybody, and anybody who actually pays attention to the world around them and thinks about their faith and thinks about their experiences has to undergo some kind of deconstruction along the way in order to discriminate between packaging and the core of the Gospel. It's deconstruction is an essential part of discipleship, even if we don't call it that. I mean, would you agree?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, I definitely would agree with that. And I didn't come up with this. This has been used by a ton of different people, but I think that there's this pretty clear three-stage process where its construction is the first stage where people learn about Christianity, and build their faith. And they maybe read some systematic theology and they say, okay, here's all the nice and neat categories. We've got answers to all the hard questions. And then for whatever reason, life hits them, whether it's one of those reasons that I mentioned before, right. Or something person, but some of those categories seem to be, this is not really totally working.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah it Challenges assumptions.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. The assumptions are challenged and, and, or, or, Hey, wait a minute. If this is all true, then why are these Christian institutions that believe all this stuff? Why are they so corrupted or whatever? And so what happens is people then move into this deconstruction phase. And so the challenge and the danger is the deconstruction phase will almost always be characterized by some bitterness, some anger, some heartbreak, right? Because people are always tempted to look back at the church and say, these people lied to me. You know,

they, they told me this, but they didn't actually live it out. And kind of just ignoring the fact that people are broken and church leaders are broken just like everyone else. And church members are broken. And so of course there's going to be hurt. And so if you get stuck in this deconstruction phase, you often can become more and more bitter and angry with the world in a way that's not necessarily very helpful to you, even as a person, the goal, in my opinion, as a Christian myself, obviously other people would say there shouldn't be a goal of deconstruction.

The purist would say, follow it wherever it leads. And if that's atheism, that's fine. But as a, you know, a Christian pastor, I want people to reconstruct. And I think the reconstruction phase it's people who hold convictions. It's not just nothing matters. Anything goes, it's people who hold convictions, but they hold them open-handed and they're willing to say, I have convictions about these, and this is going to be how I live my life, but I'm holding them. Open-Handed I could be wrong. And there's like a level of humility that just isn't present in those first two phases. You know, in the construction phase, you can have a lack of humility by saying, all of our answers are correct. My theological camp, or my tradition is right. And all the ones over the last 2000 years of church history are wrong. That that's lack of humility. And then the deconstruction phase, you can say, everyone is wrong. Nobody's right. And trying, essentially the same level of pride, but in the opposite direction. So neither of those are very helpful. And so to me, the reconstruction phase is one that's primarily characterized by humility. And again, like I said, not just giving up your convictions because we need convictions to exist in the world. We need to, we're not gonna help anyone's problems without having conviction.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah, that reconstruction is what it gives us the ongoing capacity to learn. Well, I should say maybe the link between the movement, the pathway between deconstruction and reconstruction is the pathway to being able to hold convictions open handedly as you described, but still be able to learn, still be able to be challenged and the capacity we sort of gain the capacity for that, right?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, absolutely. And I mean, that was why I was, so I loved my seminary education at Denver for that reason, because when I came on and I had looked at some other seminaries, and some other seminaries are more like, here's the 10 things we teach and we'll teach you other ideas, but they're wrong. And they're heresy and anyone who believes those isn't a Christian anyways. But Denver was like, we have some professors on staff who are complementarian and we have some who are egalitarian. And so to me that seems that you guys are willing to wrestle through these things with each other, to sharpen each other, to push back on each other. And that's just something that I think if that was more present in many churches, if people were willing to be okay with not every person landing at the same place. And to understand that so many of us are in process theologically, then I think a lot more people would be willing to share their struggles with other church members or with their Pastor. And not

just feel like they have to find these groups online, which are often very hostile to Christianity.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Yeah. That becomes the main resource. Then it's easy to get stuck in deconstruction and become, I guess, a perpetual cynic, or it leads to a sort of perpetual agnosticism. Which can be as you described Anthony kind of an unlivable place, but nobody can actually that way. But it can feel like the only safe space to be if we've not had a healthy, positive, honest guidance toward a sort of realistic reconstruction.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. And I think Pastors and churches, I think a lot of them are moving in that direction. The conversations I have with other parents.

Dr. Don Payne: That's Encouraging.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. A lot of it's encouraging and I feel like more people are willing to think that way now, especially just because it's becoming more and more of a talked about phenomenon. Like I'm not sure following the Christianity Today podcast about Mars Hill. Yeah. That has sparked conversations between, I think a lot of Pastors who might, might not have been willing to really look at it, but now it's like, just that, as an example, one example, there's so many other works that are bringing this type of stuff up. But I think that as the conversation progresses, I think more and more people are willing to think about these things. And I'm hoping and praying that the next generation of pastors really are able to foster that type of environment in their churches, that people feel free to share these things because so many of them who would come to us would say, I can't tell anyone in my church that I'm thinking about this. I don't feel safe to do that, but I'm safe to share it in this space. So I would much rather them be sharing it with their church community, same with us. But, you know, we're, we're happy to create this kind of almost like halfway house in the meantime.

Dr. Don Payne: I mentioned in the intro that this, this might be, or at least by my observation, it might be kind of generational in the way it's being currently publicized and expressed. Do you find that that deconstruction is more prevalent among certain generations? Is it generationally specific or is it just not have been talked about before?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, I think, I think there's probably always been some level of deconstruction in every generation over the ages, but I do think that this specific brand is probably more prevalent in the younger generation. And I know that you said it can sound a little philosophical in your intro and this, you know, stop me if this is too philosophical. But I do think that the older generations who grew up more in a, like a modernist framework of we can look at things objectively there's black and white answers, we can uncover the facts. And then the younger generation is much more influenced by post-modernism, which is actually everyone brings in their own lens and nobody is an unbiased interpreter. And even facts themselves in many cases are, are interpreted and, and can mean different things in different contexts and things like that. So I think that the

underlying philosophical movement of the younger generation also is contributing to that, and just even youth culture in general, being more rebellion based of, we want to tear down structures that are evil and oppressive, and we see a lot of that outside of religion. And I think that Christianity is getting just put under that same, that same magnifying glass of, well, if our government is corrupt, let's look at the church to what are we going to find there? And in many cases we're finding there's equal problems in those institutions, which to me, the human problem of sin that pervades everything. I don't think it's uniquely a church problem, but I think that's a big part that's driving, especially among the younger generation that wouldn't necessarily be as apparent in the older generation that grew up with those different philosophical ideas.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Well, you know, in my generation authority figures and authority institutions were you know, just granted more credibility right out of the gate. And going back to what you mentioned earlier with the number of public figures, religious and secular who have been exposed as fraudulent in one way or another duplicitous in some fashion, it's created this culture in which any assertion is suspect and any, any authority is suspect until exonerated. And then the questions really have more weight than assertions or answers. So you live in this. I remember one of our previous seminary presidents from a few decades ago, Haddon Robinson used to talk about not being able to live life when you're draped over the back of a question, Mark, which I just find a real powerful image. You know, if all of life is a question mark, you, you have an unlivable life, but the fact is the questions are there and we have to learn how to deal with them. And I guess that's really at the heart of your ministry now is helping people walk through those questions. Right. Or walk through that questioning process knowing how to interpret that, what to make of it?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And to say one more thing about the generational divide I wish I could remember where I heard this cause I would give credit. But it basically the idea that millennials were kind of this bridge generation that grew up believing that the big institutions had their best interest in mind. Like many patients still believed if I get a really big, expensive four year college degree, that there's going to be a job waiting for me. And so we went through, we took on massive amounts of debt, you know, our guidance councilors framed it as school debt is good debt, you know, take it on a hundred grand or 150. Yeah. And on the other side of it, when we got our anthropology degrees and our, you know, whatever degrees there weren't jobs waiting for us. And so millennials are very disillusioned.

Dr. Don Payne: Very jaded.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, exactly. And they look around and they say, man, I've been duped. All these organizations, they, you know, they were supposed to help me, but they've totally hurt me. And then the difference between millennials and the youngest generation gen Z, is that gen Z grew up in the time of, you know, the 2008 financial crisis post 9/11. They grew up in this world of, we can't trust the

institutions. And so they're less disillusioned and more just realists. And so my younger sister and people her age, she's in the gen Z category. So many of her friends are just looking for stable jobs. They have no illusions about changing the world or growing the next billion dollar company.

Dr. Don Payne: How am I going to survive. Right.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. Yeah. And so many of them are going into fields purely out of there's a big job market. And so they would look at the millennials and be like, why did you ever, why did you ever think that a bank was going to have your best interest in mind?

Dr. Don Payne: Wow, well, Anthony, I'm gonna move this back to your ministry at Church. What is your ministry with people in deconstruction look like, how do you come alongside them?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. So, we, we did this for about a year. We actually, the last month we paused for the summer because a lot of people were out of town. And as you know, the normal church summer slump, we paused for the summer and we're trying to rethink for a good relaunch in the next couple of months, but for the last year or so, the actual mechanics of the ministry was that we would try to tackle a different, big topic that causes people to deconstruct. We would try to tackle one each week. Sometimes we would take two weeks on a topic if it needed it, maybe even three weeks on a topic, but we would basically try to look at scripture. We would have sometimes a shorter sermon. And then we would usually bring on people who had already dive deep in this topic. So for example, we talked about we spent a couple of weeks talking about toxic church cultures and kind of the, the rise of the celebrity pastor and all that comes with that. And so we were actually able to get on Scott McKnight, who wrote the Church Called [inaudible], and him and his dog were on, and we did an interview with them. And so people, people from the doctor's community they'd be on the main zoom. The first half of it, they would be, you know, engaging in the chat and we would do live Q and A, and try to keep it as interactive as possible. And then in the second half of the night, we would break everyone out into smaller groups. And we had small group leaders in each of those, with questions based on the topic to kind of dive into it deeper. So not really reinventing the wheel or anything in the way that churches have done things for a long time. Right. Like consuming.

Dr. Don Payne: You're just giving them a safe space though.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, exactly.

Dr. Don Payne: I've heard that you kind of described .church as a halfway house for Christians.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. And I think I that's a good metaphor because for a lot of these people after being in .church for a while, they said, okay, I feel ready to go back to a

church. I wasn't sure that I would ever be able to, but I've wrestled through this stuff. And I know no church is perfect and they're going to let me down and have problems, but, you know, I see the value in the church community. So if you were going to try to take some sort of metric for success of .church, to me, it's not, I'm not super interested in how many people are watching or how many people are joining. The real measure would be how many of these people are willing to go back into actual .church communities in their area. And so we did start to see more of that and were really encouraged by that.

Dr. Don Payne: What have you discovered as what are some of the factors that make the difference between people getting stuck in deconstruction or moving into a healthy reconstruction? What makes the difference?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, that's a good question. I think it really comes down to feeling like you have a support network who you can talk to about these things, because even, even as people started going back into the churches, being able to say, I still have me. church connections and my group that I can talk to as I go in, like, hey, I went to this church and it was crazy because of X, Y, and Z or, or whatever. So feeling like you're not alone and feeling like you can actually talk about things openly without fear. I think that's the major catalyst to people being willing to move out of that phase.

Dr. Don Payne: Well, as we start to kind of wind this up, do you have any practical guidance or resources that you would offer for Pastors, other leaders is if they're trying to come along, people who are navigating a deconstruction process?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, definitely. I think there's a growing list of authors and speakers and podcasts. So I can recommend some of the ones that I have found pretty helpful. I think the work that Kristen Cobez Dumay, has been doing around, you know, Christian masculinity, and she wrote that book Jesus and John Wayne. I think that's recommend that to anybody, obviously that Mars Hill podcast Christianity today, I think is really eye-opening. Sobering for sure. Jamar Tisby his work on racism and lots of other people in that space doing really good work. I'm trying to think of some other ones. I really enjoyed that. The holy post podcast. I think it's pretty I think there's a, just a good, healthy diet. I don't know if you're familiar with that that's Sky [inaudible]..

Dr. Don Payne: I am familiar with Sky, not his podcast.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. It's him and Phil Fischer actually from Veggie Tales, which is, which is a fun combo.

Dr. Don Payne: It's got to be, I don't know. Are you familiar with AJ Swoboda's work?

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. Yeah. Him too, I just listened to his he did a sermon, I think, at a John, John Mark Homer's church about deconstruction. And I thought it was really good, really helpful.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. I've heard AJ Swoboda's on Preston Sprinkles, podcasts theology in the raw. And he's got a, he's got a new book out called after doubt, which I just read. And I would recommend that. I think it's a really helpful resource for the whole process of deconstruction, navigating faith, tangles, and such.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah, definitely. And Preston Sprinkle too. I think. Great resource, his podcast, his books. He's been a really good like north star. I think just as far as passengers go, I think he does a really good job of modeling that, Hey, we're going to be, we're going to talk about the different ways that people have thought about this, because we're doing a disservice to our congregations when we present theological ideas or whatever. And we just say, hey, this is how Christians have always thought about it. And there's no argument. And everyone's on the same page with it.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Anthony, think about maybe a Pastor or another leader. Somebody who's involved in formational work, who this is just now getting on their radar or they're just starting to see it, but don't quite know what to make of it. A couple of tips, even I hate to be this simplistic, but maybe even some do's and don'ts for somebody who's just now starting to think about this as an important part of their ministry with people.

Anthony Pierri: Yeah. I think some do's would be to actually try to have conversations with people who are in this phase, right. Trying to challenge some of the assumptions, because I think if you come from an assumption of people are doing our deconstruction for X, Y, and Z. I think if you actually start talking to people who are in the phase, you'll start to see that a lot of those assumptions are false. So I think I would encourage Pastors to just have the conversations without having a goal in mind of, of basically trying to get them back on the right path as quickly as possible. Just the goal of listening. I think that would go a really, really long way. And I think don't, would be to immediately get on social media and start posting all these, but they just, they're just trying to do whatever they want. And that kind of stuff is completely unhelpful and will virtually guarantee that if there are people in your congregation that are deconstructing, that they're not going to share it. They're going to say this is not a safe place for me to talk about this.

Dr. Don Payne: Yeah. Anthony, this has been great. Thanks so much for both spend some time with us, but also for the way you're investing in this ministry. I couldn't be more excited about that.

Anthony Pierri: For sure. Thanks so much for having me on.

Dr. Don Payne: Folks, this has been Anthony Pierri from .church coming out of Chicago, and we're again, really, really grateful for how the Lord's using you in so many people's lives this way, and look forward to more, more good fruit. Hope that this has a lot of long tentacles of impact on lots of folks who are trying to figure out how to walk alongside so many. And when I say so many, it's like, you know, those are others. This is in some respect. This is true of all of us. We have to go

through this. We just have to have some really healthy ways of naming it and walking through the weeds. And the Lord is using you in some really, really great and exciting ways to do this. And we're proud of you, and grateful for what you're doing. Folks, this has been Engage 360 with Anthony Pierri our guest this week and thankful for you for taking some time to listen to us and grateful if you would pray for us at Denver seminary and check us out on the website. We've got a new website and entirely new website being launched here in just a couple of weeks, Denverseminary.edu. You'll always find some really helpful resources there. And we'd love it. If you'd communicate with us, you can email us at podcast@denverseminary.edu. So until next time I'm Don Payne, we look forward to another conversation, take care.