

Engage360 Episode 133 | The Meaning of Mission; Dr. Michael Frost

[00:00:00] **Angie Ward:** Hello, friends, and welcome to Engage 360, Denver Seminary's podcast. I'm your host, Angie Ward. Thanks for joining us for today's conversation. I am honored today to be in the studio with Dr. Michael Frost, a. k. a. Mike, a. k. a. Frosty, who I think may have won the award for furthest distance traveled to be a guest on the Engage 360 podcast. Mike is from Sydney, Australia. He is here in Denver for a bit of time as part of a visit to the United States doing some ministry here. Mike is an internationally recognized missiologist, and one of the leading voices in the missional church movement. Some of those words we're going to unpack and explore more during our conversation. He is, the founding director of the Tinsley Institute, which is a mission study center at Moreland College in Sydney, Australia. He's been an adjunct lecturer at different schools, travels around the world speaking. He's also the author of almost 20, probably working on 20 right now, theological books, and the most recent is Mission is the Shape of Water, Learning from the Past to Inform Our Role in the World Today, and we'll talk about that a little bit as well. So, Mike, welcome from across the world to Denver.

[00:01:30] **Mike Frost:** Thank you. It's so good to be here. Good to talk to you.

[00:01:32] **Angie Ward:** It's great. Great to have you here. So, let's start by talking about this missiologist thing. What in the world does that mean? Is that a name you just made for yourself?

[00:01:42] **Mike Frost:** I didn't make it up myself, but if I were to introduce myself like that at a dinner party to somebody, which I don't.

[00:01:49] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, I was going to say.

[00:01:50] **Mike Frost:** But if I did, it would be like, huh, what is that? Even Christians don't really know what that means. But it's essentially the study of the mission of God's people. So, missiology is exploring that kind of interplay between the religious community, the faith community, and the society or culture of which it's part. So, it includes all sorts of trainings for people around kind of high-level thinking about culture and engagement in society. So, issues like cultural anthropology and contextualization and cross-cultural communication and kind of things I guess we would like to think that overseas missionaries had studied before they went to seek to make a contribution in whatever field they find themselves in. All the way down to really practical subjects like aid and development and social justice and church planting and evangelism. Anything which is really about equipping Christian people to engage in the world of which they're part. As distinct from other areas of study which might be much more about how to serve the church, or how to grow as a Christian or understand discipleship.

[00:02:57] **Angie Ward:** Yeah. How did you become interested in missiology? I mean, what's your background? How'd you get here?

[00:03:04] **Mike Frost:** I don't know how far back we go, but

[00:03:05] **Angie Ward:** Just give me the broad overview. Was there some aha moment that kind of spurred your interest in this?

[00:03:11] **Mike Frost:** Yeah, I became a minister, a local church pastor in the 80s in the halcyon days of the church growth movement.

[00:03:19] **Angie Ward:** Yes, indeed.

[00:03:21] **Mike Frost:** And church growth movement was a movement which kind of married the areas of church leadership, of course, evangelism and the social sciences like marketing and leadership. And essentially created what today we might call the attractional church, which was how do we appeal to our cultural context? How do we provide religious goods and services? I don't mean that in a negative way, but how do we offer something that serves the needs or interests or yearnings of our neighbors. And it was developed in California by and large and grew like wildfire across the United States and was exported to my country. And it chiefly worked among broadly Christian, I'm using air quotes here in the studio, but broadly Christian suburban white people who may have had a church experience and had drifted away or lost interest, and now it was about how to equip the church to appeal to them, to provide services for their kids or men's ministries or women's ministries, all those things, how to have a church that was not esoteric or old fashioned, to use rock music and engage culturally in society. And so, I was a very young pastor at that time. And Angie, I was really good at it turns out. I'm quite good at preaching and I could kind of appeal to, you know, suburban people and my church grew really dramatically and radically, and I was in a Bible Belt area of Sydney suburbia. Hillsong was just down the road, and our church was bigger than Hillsong back in those days. There was a big Presbyterian megachurch around the corner, and I thought we were doing great. I just thought.

[00:05:04] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, all the signs of success at that time.

[00:05:06] **Mike Frost:** Right. But I had this nagging sense that I had to tap dance faster than any of the other pastors in the other churches around. So, if I heard that this church had great children's ministry, we needed to up our game on that. Or if I heard the music was great at Hillsong, we had to up our efforts in that respect. This moment happened in my life, it's not that big of a deal, but to me it was a big turning point. I was at our church one night, this is before the internet and before you could Google who's preaching at which church, and two or three cars pulled into our parking lot. Someone ran out from the first car and said are you preaching tonight? And I wasn't, as it happened. But I said, oh no, but so and so is preaching and she's awesome, or whatever the case may be. And he's like, no, no, that's fine, but you're not. Okay, that's fine, and jumped in the car. And then they turned around and they drove off I don't know, to Hillsong or to the Presbyterians or wherever. And I clearly remember having this impulse thinking, right, that does it. I have to preach every Sunday. And immediately after that, a second prompting, I think, which was from the Holy Spirit, which was that first prompting did not come from the Holy Spirit. That was not God saying, and God might say this to some people, but that was not God saying, you have to preach every Sunday in order to pull the crowd. That was me. That was a spirit of male ego and competitiveness. It was a crushing moment for me, but I think things had been building to that point, and I was a very young guy, I really didn't know anything about remissionalizing or revitalizing, maybe even really change management in an organization. And so, I quit. I mean, the elders were really kind and tried to encourage me not to, but I quit and started just teaching ideology and sociology at a community college and started reading David Bosch, who was a South African missiologist and Leslie Newbigin who was a British missiologist and practitioner. And the American NewBeginians as they were called, American theologians who were really influenced by Newbigin. And I kind of was going through a process of, we would call deconstruction and reconstruction, certainly around my views on the church.

[00:07:25] **Angie Ward:** Yes, rethinking it all.

[00:07:26] **Mike Frost:** Right. And what are we meant to do as the people of God in a neighborhood, as distinct from trying to vacuum them out of society into our church? What does it mean for us to see ourselves as sent people in a neighborhood? This is a much longer journey than I'm going to make it out to be, but during that time I met another guy called Alan Hirsch and he was on a similar kind of journey and we encouraged each other and we ended up saying, at one point, to people, if you're going on this journey, why don't you come along with us and let's start reading David Bosch and Leslie Newbigin and all that kind of stuff together. And that developed into a course of study which we called the Forge Mission Training Network. And it was just training people to think missionally, as we would say, to think about what it means for us to be sent people in our neighborhoods. And then Alan and I wrote up the curriculum, effectively, to make a sort of a textbook and we thought maybe we would sell as many as we had people in that course. And blow me down if, who knows why or how, but that book just became an international bestseller, and we ended up kind of being part of or helping in some cases to catalyze this conversation across the board. And what we discovered was that there are people in Denver and all around the world who are in the same place that we were at on the same journey that we had been on, disaffected and disillusioned with the church in the same way that we were. And so many people have said to me, that book's a bit old now, but at the time when it came out, I'd been thinking all those things and hadn't really kind of crystallized those into a kind of a missional framework. And that book is the one that gave me the vocabulary to be able to do it. And It's truly one of the great honors of my life to have been used by God to write a book that does that. I mean, I wish everyone could have this experience. To turn up and have strangers say to you, that book kind of changed my life. I know everyone says that kind of phrase regularly, but for some people it did. And then one thing led to another, which is kind of how I ended up being interested in mission, effectively.

[00:09:35] **Angie Ward:** Yes, you were an early voice and thought leader in all of this, putting this together, sounds like. So, you're a missiologist and you've already said a number of times, being on mission, missions. Let's talk about what you mean by mission, because growing up, my streams I grew up in, missions always referred to cross cultural, usually international evangelism, almost exclusively. But I understand you're using it much differently or much broader. So, what do you mean when we're talking about missions? Mission, being on mission, living missionally.

[00:10:10] **Mike Frost:** Yeah. So, my personal definition of mission is one I stole from David Bosch, one of those writers that I talked about earlier. And David Bosch said this, that the mission of God's people is to alert everyone, everywhere to the universal reign of God through Christ. And in courses, I can spend a whole lecture just unpacking that one sentence because it's one of those sentences, relatively short, that is just pregnant with meaning.

[00:10:39] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, can you even say it again one more time?

[00:10:41] **Mike Frost:** Yeah, sure. So, the mission of God's people is to alert everyone everywhere to the universal reign of God through Christ. So, for missiologists, mission, and an understanding of the reign of God, some people say kingdom of God, whatever phrase you prefer, they are inextricably linked. So, to be a kingdom person is to be a missional person and vice versa. If you're missional, it's rooted in a thoroughgoing understanding of and belief in the unfurling reign of God throughout this world. And so, missiologists are really deeply concerned with trying to study and unpack and understand what that kingdom of God is like. And we don't start with the Gospels, although you'd think that's where we would start, but we start with Israel's hope for, and they use in the Old Testament, there are various phrases for this. The day of the Lord, the coming kingdom the day of

freedom. The culmination of all that Israel hoped and yearned for, which was an experience of freedom and deliverance from enemies, kind of a utopian society of justice and love and hope and peace, uh, reconciliation, inclusion, welcome, acceptance of the outsider. And there was this hope that developed that one day One will come and will inaugurate this kingdom and lead us into this place where we're no longer afraid of the Egyptians or the Assyrians or anybody else. We live in peace and a whole new way of being human emerges. And in particular, the book of Isaiah, you say Isaiah in this country, the book of Isaiah kind of really generates a lot of the language and a lot of the images of what that would be like so that when we get to the gospels, like the synoptic gospels, the first three gospels are just they draw on the book of Isaiah so extraordinarily, I mean, we have Jesus saying, I've come in order to fulfill this particular text from Isaiah. We have allusions to the language of Isaiah. All of Isaiah's hopes for the coming day of the Lord are fulfilled in Christ. So, all of Israel's hope culminates in Jesus, and he inaugurates this kingdom through his teaching and his parables, but also through his miracles, which were not chiefly just acts of kindness. I mean, it's kind to heal a man who's blind so that he can now see. But all of the miracles are, hey, look here this is a taste of what it's going to look like in the age to come. There'll be no blindness, no leprosy, no storms you need to be afraid of on the Sea of Galilee. All things will be set right. People will be fed. So, feeding thousands of people isn't just, wow, what a great party trick. You must be amazing, Jesus. It's like, here, this is a little taste. Everyone will have enough. And so, in Jesus, the kingdom of God is kind of crystallized and inaugurated. And so, this belief in and understanding of and studying of the kingdom, both its Old Testament hope, its fulfillment in Christ, its outworkings in the rest of the New Testament, and its unfurling throughout history, that is at the very heart of the kind of study of mission. We're concerned about what does it look like for us to participate in this unfurling of God's kingdom around the world. And then back to that quote I mentioned, to alert everyone to the universal reign of God through Christ, one thing is to know what the universal reign of God through Christ looks like. But the other thing is to alert people to it. And I really love that he used the word alert. Because it is a loose enough term to include a variety of activities. So instead of saying, the mission of God's people is to preach to everyone about the universal reign of God, which would kind of really limit what our kind of missional strategies are like, you alert people to something in a variety of ways. And I would say that we alert people on the one hand by explaining it, describing it, talking about it. And that could be preached, it could be an evangelistic sermon, it could be our testimonies, it could be here's what the kingdom looks like when it came into my life, I was blind and now I see, I mean I was an alcoholic and now I'm not. Or it could be my testimony, I lived in fear of condemnation and now I'm free. So, it could be testimony, it could be witness. These are spoken ways in which we let people know, this thing is happening, and it happened to me, that's offered to everyone to enter into this magnificent reign, to acknowledge Jesus as king, as to bend your knee and to enter into his zone, his domain, his realm, and to experience just a foretaste of the benefits which are to come. Isaiah wanted them, Matthew, Mark, and Luke saw them. And here we are living them now. So that's all spoken ways that we alert people to something. But I want to suggest to you alert people to things by showing them it. It's like, I'm not very good with the words here's what it looks like. So, we feed the poor and we heal the sick and we are committed to stewarding the environment and we are committed to social justice. We're trying to unravel structures which exclude or marginalize or victimize. Why do we do all those things? Not because we're committed to a series of liberal talking points or because we're just like trying to be good citizens. We're saying, this is what the reign of God looks like. In the reign of God, no one will be hungry. That's why we run a freeing program. In the age to come, no one will be sick anymore. That's why we run a counseling center, or why we run a healing ministry, or why we opened a hospital. I mean, these are ways of giving you a little taste of what the reign of God looks like. So that's my understanding of mission. It is alerting people to the reign of God through a spectrum of activities, from announcement to demonstration and a variety of behaviors in between.

[00:16:22] **Angie Ward:** Well, to me that's just compelling. The first time I heard any of that stuff you know, I just remember being so captivated by that. But the other thing I hear in that definition, you talk about the people of God, and you've said multiple times, we, again, the stream I grew up in, there was not we as in me. It was either kind of these specially called people who, you know, were called to the ends of the earth, and they had some unique sacrificial calling, or that's what my church does. And it's an institutional role. But I hear you saying, my understanding is that each of us is on mission, and we as people of God. So, that doesn't let me off the hook at all.

[00:17:02] **Mike Frost:** Sure. Yeah, look, as best I can figure it out from Paul's epistles, I think he had a kind of two speed approach to mission. Like, he did think that there were specially called and gifted people, and he saw himself as one of those. There was an apostolic band of people who were evangelists, preachers, church planters. They activated, initiated. Stuck their foot in the door. Shouldered open opportunities. Yeah, he goes to synagogue and preaches and gets chucked out. And then he goes and talks to the common people. And like he makes things happen. In Colossians he says, pray for us, the apostolic band, that we may be bold in accepting these opportunities and have clarity in the way we alert people through preaching and proclamation. But then in that same passage, he then goes on to say to the average Colossian, you're not necessarily like this. He doesn't say that explicitly, but he doesn't say, hey, you should be praying that you get opportunities, be bold and preach with clarity. Rather, he says to them, let your conversation always be seasoned with salt, know how to socialize in a way which is appropriate, and be ready to answer people's questions. And so, I think Paul's assumption is, there are some of us, the minority I suspect, who are these gifted people who may go to the ends of the earth, who may go as overseas missionaries to difficult fields and the like. But then there's the rest of us, we're no less missional, we're no less evangelistic for that matter.

[00:18:33] **Angie Ward:** Or shouldn't be.

[00:18:34] **Mike Frost:** Or shouldn't be, sorry, yes, or shouldn't be. But our opportunities for these things are probably going to emerge more from living a kind of kingdom life which is so unlikely, so intriguing, arouses curiosity enough for people to say, what the heck? Who are you people? And then we don't have to boldly proclaim like maybe Paul does, but we get to answer in conversations around dinner tables. So, I mean, sometimes the most beautifully missional thing we can do is practice hospitality, host dinner parties, be interesting in conversation, and live a mission, a kingdom life, so that when people ask us who we are, we're able to talk about it. And definitely, I think when you start to embrace the values of the kingdom, people want to know, you know, why you live the way you live. And that was always the case from the earliest era, the earliest part of the Christian era, Christians took people into their homes that weren't related to them. They fed the hungry, they healed the sick, they tended to those who were dying. Julian the Apostate, who's the emperor in the fourth century, who was trying to kill off the church, says, look, they even go and tend the graves of people who aren't their relatives. I don't know if that was a big deal, but this was unlikely behavior that then led people to want to know who they were. If a village down the street was infected with plague, Christians in the nearby town would pray that God would reveal which of us should go there, serve them, die with them for the sake of the kingdom. Now, who lives like that? Like in Paul's time, men had three women at their disposal. Their wife, their concubine, their mistress. And yet here comes this movement of people who treat their spouses as their sister or their brother. They even kind of tried to accuse the church of incest because you would talk about your spouse like they were your sibling. That was just unheard of. And yet it seems to me these days, very often, suburban Christians at least, are being equipped in how to fit in. We get told, don't be different, don't be weird, don't let your neighbors think there's something kind of creepy and odd about being Christian. And yet really the thing that really contributed to the success of the early church was it

was weird, it was unlikely. And I think that in this day and age, we need to figure out what that kind of weirdness looks like. I just had a lunch with you and a bunch of other people, Angie, and this guy was telling me about how there's an immigrant community living in tents in North Denver from Venezuela, never seen snow before. They're freezing. And his church, women from his church and women from the neighborhood have come together in order to respond to this particular need to take water and food, and they've now set up a feeding program and a free clothing kind of, site on the campus of the church. And they're discovering like, wow, this is what we were meant to be. And he was showing me some text messages where women from the neighborhood are texting his wife saying, this is incredible, like this is what Church should be, isn't it? And it's like, exactly! That's what Christians have always done. We have expended ourselves in the service of others because this is what the reign of God looks like. It looks like helping freezing Venezuelans, the most vulnerable people in our society. Irrespective of your view on what the immigration policies in this country should be, they're here, and we respond to them. Again, not because we're liberals, but because that's what the kingdom looks like. And these Venezuelans are now like, who are you? Why do you live like this? So, this is what it is to do mission, I think, that everyone can be on mission in the sense that everyone can be living in a kind of way that intrigues or becomes questionable to their neighbors.

[00:22:14] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, you mentioned the lunch we just had, and we were talking in that conversation about commissioning laity into their workplaces. The thing that strikes me about this whole living missionally thing, I think I can at least tend to still make it like it has to be this special thing in addition to my regular life instead of just where has God already placed me? And where are the opportunities right in front of my eyes? So, these are, you know, the Venezuelans, that's neighbors, and it's in their neighborhood, in their churches. People who are listening and going, man, how do I live missionally? Where do we start? What do you tell them?

[00:22:49] **Mike Frost:** Yeah, well, I would say that the church needs to equip people to see their everyday life as an expression of the work of God in the world. You know, that seems obvious when it's raising children, or working as a nurse or a doctor or working for a nonprofit, or a social worker. Some of these sort of work vocations seem to lean into the values of the kingdom, like healing and social justice, and care for the poor, and those sorts of things. The challenge for a lot of people is like, well, I'm a tax accountant, or I'm an animator, you know, I work in a studio all day, I'm in my tracksuit pants, you know, it's like, how is this the kingdom? And so actually helping people to see firstly, what is the kingdom to get a vision of that and then to see actually maybe kind of bringing joy into the world as an animator might actually be the work of God in this world or being a tax accountant and just taking pure pleasure in the beautiful order that God has created or adding up a column of numbers and seeing it work and helping your clients to actually pay the right amount of tax, but to minimize that tax in ways that they can contribute to the greater common good. I mean, to help people to see this is actually also part of the mission of God. Now, I think in the past, evangelical churches, charismatic churches, have tended to encourage people in their vocations to share the gospel with their colleagues, to be a good witness in their values, to not lie or cheat or anything like that. And they know all that's true, that's good. But there's also a sense in which helping people to see their actual work as contributing and be shaped by the values of the kingdom. So, there's a great book by a woman named Amy Sherman called Kingdom Calling, where she talks about how, yeah, witness is one and ethics is another. They are ways that our work expresses our faith, but actually taking the sheer delight in healing or serving or building or shaping or bringing order. These can be ways that we honor God's image in us and which we do God's work in this world. All of that to me is part of the mission of God's people.

[00:24:57] **Angie Ward:** Yeah. Your most recent book is *Mission is the Shape of Water*, and I know you talk in there about kind of historically you lay a framework of contextualization and how it adjusted. So just say a little bit, kind of your elevator pitch about the principles behind, and what you discovered as you were writing that book.

[00:25:15] **Mike Frost:** Yeah, yeah. Well, I'm not usually very good at coming up with book titles, but I reckon I crushed it with that one.

[00:25:21] **Angie Ward:** Okay, well good, congrats.

[00:25:22] **Mike Frost:** Thank you. Because I think as soon as I mentioned the title, *Mission is the Shape of Water*, people are like, huh, okay. It immediately resonates, because water is always H₂O, so it doesn't change its inherent properties, but it is shaped entirely by the context. It's the shape of this bottle of water I'm holding in my hand, and it's the shape of the Caspian Sea. Like, water is shaped by its context. And my point is, mission is the same. Always alerting people to the reign of God through Christ. That doesn't change. Yeah. We don't compromise on the message, if you like, or the orientation toward bringing people into an awareness of Jesus as king and his kingdom unfolding.

[00:26:01] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, the nature of it.

[00:26:02] **Mike Frost:** It's always the same. Yeah. But it will look really different in Africa in 1820 than it looked in Japan in the 10th century. I mean, it will look different in Denver in 2024 as it looks in Brazil in 2024. Like culture makes a contribution to the shape of the mission. So, if you're in an affluent area and there's no real poverty, that's hard to imagine, but there's no real poverty in that neighborhood, you're not going to set up a feeding program. Now you might want to catalyze that community into seeing its responsibility to other people beyond that community, but you're not just simply going to kind of mirror what a church in an urban or poor neighborhood is doing. Your context will shape what you're doing without compromising the inherent kind of mission of God's people. And so, in that book, I look at 10 different shapes that have been prevalent throughout history. So we go right through the history of Christian mission in effect, and people have told me it was incredibly freeing to read it because it was just what the Benedictines were doing, I know you're a Benedictine fan, but what the Benedictines, over their extraordinarily long history, what they were doing both with Benedict and then with their kind of later iterations was beautiful and rich, but it was very different to what you find the pietists in Germany doing later with somebody like Ludwig Von Zinzendorf and the Moravian movement. I mean, they are distinct and different and beautiful and perfect for their particular context and their time. And so, it all builds up to the end of the book, which is like, okay, we're in the 21st century and most of my readers are in the West. So, what does mission in the West look like in the 21st century? And I don't pretend to be a futurologist or to have any particular great insight into what the next 50 years will look like. But you can sniff out some signs. There are certain trends that they're occurring now, some of which the church seems to be resisting or at best oblivious to, that I think the church needs to take seriously because it seems as though this is the shape that is emerging. We have to allow mission to enter into that context and make a contribution to it.

[00:28:18] **Angie Ward:** Can you give some hints as to what some of those shapes might be taking?

[00:28:23] **Mike Frost:** I think that there's liberation movements that are happening across the West, like anti racist movements, outing and exposing sexual assault and misogyny and sexual abuse in the

church and in Hollywood and in business and in politics. There's a greater openness to us hearing the voice of the voiceless and the marginal and the previously disadvantaged or even oppressed. I think the environmental movement is another one. I think that you can't deny that one of the most unique things the church has to deal with now that it has never had to deal with before is the digital revolution. And what does hybrid community look like? How do we communicate in digital spaces? We can moan and complain about all our fears and disappointments with the digital space, but it is not going away and we have to work out. I mean you're working in a seminary, so educationalists have had to work out and lockdowns really sped that up. What does it look like to offer hybrid education? And I don't think we've come to the end of exploring what that looks like, but we've been forced to kind of jump too quickly and respond to that. But I think the church also needs to figure out, what does community look like in a hybrid fashion? Not to put all our eggs in the face-to-face basket any more than entirely in the online space. And how does AI and VR and the virtual revolution we're now experiencing, what is that going to do to our understanding of the gospel and the reign of God and Christian community? These are peculiar things. Often, we think, we live in a time of history that Christians have never faced this before and just about everything else. Right. Yep. We have faced this before. Yeah. And we've responded in different ways throughout history. But this is a very peculiar one for our current age, for sure.

[00:30:09] **Angie Ward:** So, when you look at the church, I mean, kind of the western church, what's going on among the body of Christ in the west, are you encouraged? Are you discouraged?

[00:30:19] **Mike Frost:** Yes. I'm encouraged and discouraged.

[00:30:22] **Angie Ward:** Okay. Say more about that.

[00:30:24] **Mike Frost:** Well, I'm encouraged and discouraged because 20 years ago I mentioned that book, *The Shaping of Things to Come*. We forecast the fact that the church was moving into really significant decline, and if we didn't do something quickly, radically we were going to get kind of left behind. That decline continued slowly, I would say for the last 20 or so years, but it started to drop exponentially.

[00:30:49] **Angie Ward:** Yeah, and COVID just accelerated and exposed everything.

[00:30:52] **Mike Frost:** Indeed. I also think in this country unfortunately some of the worst expressions of evangelicalism and conservative politics and all of that have disillusioned young Americans dramatically, as well as all the kind of sexual scandals and leadership scandals. So, I am discouraged in the sense that I think that they're, I mean, this is not my personal insight. It's statistically, we can just see the church is in very significant and radical decline. Yeah. I see a lot of church leaders trying to just kind of keep doing what we've always been doing but maybe try to do it better or do it faster. But that's not going to engage that generation which is going. And when I say that generation, they're not just young people who are going. They're people my age, and I'm 62. I know people who are now saying, I've given my whole life to church, and I just can't be party to this any longer. So, I think that there needs to be some really kind of even more radical steps than maybe we had anticipated, you know, 20 years ago into helping to fashion and foster a movement of maybe micro churches or dinner churches or house churches or small organic movements of people holding on to faith, deconstructing things that need to be deconstructed, being honest about things that are wrong in the Western or American church, and seeking to find kind of new, fresh expressions of what that looks like in neighborhood. And you do hear lots of stories about that kind of thing happening, so I'm encouraged about that. Yeah. You're also seeing lots of Christians now wanting to

move into spiritual entrepreneurship, like seeking to build businesses that foster the common good. And that's a really encouraging enterprise as well. So, there are good signs. There are also lots of really frightening signs.

[00:32:46] **Angie Ward:** Yeah. Wow. Well, I sure appreciate having you in Denver for the day. Thanks for spending this little time in front of microphones together across the table for our listeners of the Engage360 podcast. It's really a joy to have you here.

[00:32:59] **Mike Frost:** Oh, it's been my pleasure. Great to talk to you.

[00:33:02] **Angie Ward:** Folks, we are grateful that you've chosen to spend some time here with us. If you get the chance, please leave us a rating or review wherever you listen to your podcasts. And you can send any questions or comments to us at podcast@denverseminary.edu. You can also visit denverseminary.edu for more information and resources about Denver Seminary, including events, degree programs, other episodes of Engage360, and full transcripts. We are grateful for your interest, support, and prayers. Until next time, may the Lord bless you. Peace.