

Engage360 Episode 149 | Faithful Civic Engagement to Bridge Divides; Justin Giboney

Don Payne: Hello, friends. We are grateful that you have chosen to spend a little bit of time again with us at Engage360, which is Denver Seminary's podcast. My name is Don Payne. I will be your host for this episode along with my colleague and co host, Dr. Patty Pell. Patty, good to see you. Have you here again.

[00:00:35] **Patty Pell:** Thank you. Good to be here always.

[00:00:37] **Don Payne:** Dr. Pell is the executive director of the Gospel Initiative here at Denver Seminary and also the director of the Theology, Justice, and Advocacy degree program, so we're grateful for her fine work in that. Well, here we are again on the cusp of a presidential election and other elections with everything we've come to expect of those seasons in our political life. the smear campaigns, the negative ads, the polarization, the fear, and the list can go on and on, and, then all of the accompanying emotions and divisions and conflicts that, that we're always dealing with in our country. And sadly, once again, the church is not immune. To being sucked into the emotions and the division that we see in the broader culture and for that reason We're really grateful to have as our guest in this episode Justin Giboney from Atlanta, Georgia Justin actually grew up in Denver. I just learned and we're Glad to know of that. Justin has devoted significant thought and energy to helping followers of Jesus know how to engage civic culture, in a faithful way through what he has launched called the and campaign. And if you see this in writing, it's and is with an ampersand, the and campaign. And Justin's here with us today. We're just really pleased to have some time with Justin. So welcome.

[00:02:03] **Justin Giboney:** Thanks for having me.

[00:02:05] **Don Payne:** Justin, maybe to launch us, you can reflect back a little bit, on a few weeks ago when you were a key presenter for our most recent gospel initiative event here at Denver Seminary. you offered a recorded presentation, so we didn't have a chance to interact with you, and glad we can this time. I would love to hear just quick bullet summary of some of those key points you offered in that presentation because I was so taken with the, I think you had two lists of ten and they were so crisp and poignant in shaping how we engage and don't engage, the surrounding culture. Can you give us a, just a quick summary of those?

[00:02:54] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah. Sure. So, I think you're referring to our civic revival 10 disciplines what the and campaign was trying to do is as we were preparing for this moment, preparing for 2024, we didn't believe it was enough for the church to just say, yeah, we should do better than we did in 2016 and 2020. We understood that you have to, in the Bible tells us you have to prepare to change to do better. You have to have habits and practices that push you in the direction of doing things differently. And so that's why we came up with disciplines that we felt the church should follow in order to be to go into this election cycle constructively and come out of it constructively. and so those 10 disciplines, the first one, which I really appreciate is, seeing people, not political abstraction. Chloe Valvery does a good job of talking about this. everybody's more than their vote, but it just so happens that during election season, we tend to limit people to their vote. I know who you are. I know what your motivations are. I know how you feel about me and, what you want in the future. based off how you voted. And it's just not true. And I think in this moment, we tend to take people's profile or their vote and think we know a lot more about them than we really do. So what we were trying to tell people about that one was make sure that you don't just judge people off of how they voted. People have a testimony. People have experience they've gone through. We all know that we're all struggling through the human condition. and so, you know, let's build

relationships instead of making those kind of assumptions. Another one of them was find the issue on your side. Many of us can list all the issues and all the problems that other the other side has, but haven't really taken the time to be as critical as we should be about our side. I mean, if we really believe in the fall, then surely we understand that our side is not perfect. Our side has been touched by human hands. And as Christians, if we haven't identified those issues that we have, then we might succumb to them and they can take us away from a gospel centered witness. The next one that we talked about was finding the virtue on the other side. And this might even be harder than the last one to say, you know, I really disagree with, those people over there, but they might get something right. you know, as a Christian, I truly believe that another group can get 99 things wrong. And the one thing that they get, right. I have to recognize that. Otherwise I'm, bearing false witness. And so we talk about that quite a bit. There's another discipline that was about, media hygiene. And so understanding that what we are intaking as far as media is going to have an impact on our opinion, right? If we're taking in what amounts to kind of like trashy intake, then we're gonna have an opinion that isn't gonna be so good. We need to make sure that We've identified again, people on the other side that we may disagree with. I'm not trying to say their conclusions are right, but we can say that they're intellectually honest and, that they're working in good faith. And if you don't know anybody or any influencer or, comment commentator who you can say on the other side is. working in good faith. The problem is not just on the other side. The problems within you because I don't think that you've done your due diligence to find that there are people who are trying to get it right and doesn't mean that you agree with them. Some of the other things that we talk about is public grace. I mean, we are in a constitutional republic and, you know, and in this democracy, you have to persuade people and going up and telling people how stupid they are and how they get everything wrong. You know, really an effective way to go about it. But some for some reason in our society, we kind of value the people or think the people who act that way and have these public temper tantrums are actually the most passionate and the most, you know, we kind of look to them for information as if they're the ones that who are the most committed. And it's just not true. Someone who is willing to be civil and is willing to respect the opinions of others, even if they disagree, are more likely to create change because they're more likely to be able to, persuade those same people. So those are some of the, ones we brought up. I think the last one was, you know, understanding the work that we can do locally. We're so focused on these national elections that we tend to forget that we have a more direct impact on local issues, which are usually less polarized, at least on a partisan basis. And so I think that provides an opportunity for the church to, to unite around some of those issues.

[00:07:46] **Don Payne:** Thank you for that. Justin, I think it would be important for our listeners to put your work, in context, in your own context. Some of what you were, some of your background you were sharing with me before we started recording was really interesting. I'd love you to just give a little bit about your own background leading up to the founding of the and campaign. and

[00:08:07] **Justin Giboney:** Sure. Sure.

[00:08:08] **Don Payne:** shapes what you're doing now.

[00:08:09] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah, for sure. For sure. So I grew up in the church. My mom was a preacher's kid. and so, that was something that was always, you know, very important to me. end up getting a football scholarship to Vanderbilt University. So I grew up in Aurora, Colorado. end up getting a football scholarship to Vanderbilt University where I study social policy and philosophy. Um, end up going to Vanderbilt Law School. After I graduate from Vanderbilt Law School, I go to Atlanta and I'm working at a law firm in Atlanta. And really started. I had a group of friends who we would always come together and we would either talk about sports or we talk about politics. And

one day I was like, well, why are we being so, you know, our playing days might be over, but why are we being so academic when it comes to the conversations and nothing against Epic academics, but why aren't we getting actually getting into it instead of just, you know, instead of just going back and forth. And so we researched the, candidates. And we told, you know, we selected candidate and basically knocked on the door and say, Hey, how can we help? How can we be involved? The campaign that candidate ends up winning? And that's how I get into politics at that point after that election, I start running campaigns around the city for obviously candidates, but also, the city water and, transportation infrastructure. and because of my faith at that time, I start seeing. that a lot of Christians who wanted to run for office that be in politics at a high level felt that they had to put their faith or put some of their convictions to the side in order to run. Atlanta is not very different. I would imagine from Denver in that way. if you, know, if you don't agree with everything that a polite society might say on a certain issue, then you can't talk about it. And I just couldn't be a part of that type of system without saying something about it. It just didn't sit right with me. And I think God kind of pushed me out of that space to say, well, you know, you've got to find other people cause something's got to change. And so we ended up creating the end campaign and really what the end campaign was a response to is what I, is what we saw. The founder saw as a false dichotomy in the public square where you were either all about justice. Or you are all about these like moral issues, like the moral majority issues. that's not what the gospel that was to me. That was a false separation that the gospel to me was about both that you could care about justice and you could care about moral order that you could be about love and truth, compassion and conviction. So the end campaign was basically saying. That we're not going to choose between justice and moral order. We're not going to choose between love and truth. The gospel brings those together. And as Christians, our public witness should bring those together, even if conservatism and progressivism as ideologies tend to separate those things. So the end campaign literally means compassion and conviction rather than choosing between the two. Uh, and so that's in a nutshell how I got to this point.

[00:11:14] **Don Payne:** Yeah. Love, love that. Because basically what you have chosen is to have the gospel, to pursue the gospel as largely, you've chosen a large gospel, a gospel as large as how the scripture presents it.

[00:11:27] **Patty Pell:** Yeah. It's a holistic understanding of redemption and justice and embraces the tension that's inherent in our faith that I think we have such a hard time discipling people into. Good. The willingness to hold things in tension and, like you said, Don, have a wide, large gospel that includes both justice and personal moral ethics.

[00:11:53] **Don Payne:** Justin, where, have you seen. Christians exhibit patterns of engagement that are troublesome enough to need this type of attention. Need this type of course correction. I think you've kind of hinted at this already, but I'd love to see you develop that.

[00:12:13] **Justin Giboney:** everywhere, especially during elections. And so what I began to see was that Christians on both sides of the aisle were allowing their political affiliation to become religious in nature. So that their opinion on issues with very serious moral implications started to follow their party. People weren't changing their opinion on the sanctity of life and things like that because they had a better interpretation of the Bible. No, that's where their peers and their parties had taken them. People hadn't changed their position on immigration issues because they got some type of clarity while we read in the Bible. No, that's where their party went. And we were very opposition centered. So the thing wasn't that we just love our parties that much. We just really hate and fear the other side. And hating and fearing the other side, they become the center of our politics. And we're just trying to get away and be different than them. That's, a problem because the center of

our politics should be the gospel. But we were looking at others because of all these influences and noises that we have going on and saying, I dislike or fear them so much that they kind of become the center of what we're doing. So you see it, I think all the time you see it in the divided church in general. I mean, let's be honest. If you look at the many parts of the church, we have justice Christians and then we have morality Christians and the justice Christians don't want to talk about, you know, the issues of sexuality, transgenderism, all that. The morality Christians don't want to talk about racial justice and all these other things. That shouldn't be, but that's the church instead of informing the world that there's a better way to do this is the church reflecting the world and creating a separation that the church shouldn't have inside of it.

[00:14:01] **Don Payne:** Wow. You know, this this is a tiny bit of a sidebar, but what scares me about that, the, the example that you described is how much our reading of the Bible is shaped or limited by the Christian groups we're a part of. We may not want to think that is the case. We want to think we're taking the Bible at face value and yet the particular subculture, Christian subcultures we're a part of, the churches or, uh, you know, other groups. do in fact shape or limit the way we read the Bible and what we pick out of the Bible.

[00:14:36] **Justin Giboney:** Absolutely. And I think that's why we need each other. I mean, if you look at any tradition, every tradition has its blind spots. And if the church really is a body that, you know, that we mature together, there's a reason for that because we may have different perspectives. And I'm not saying any type of Christian theology is right, but I'm saying, if you, know, if you stay within those, with the authority of scripture, I think you do find that there are a lot of different points of views that can help you see the Bible. more fully. and so that's one of the biggest issues with having such a divide in the church. We don't get the benefit of those perspectives that we need to be more faithful.

[00:15:16] **Patty Pell:** Yeah, we have to have a diverse community that's interpreting scripture. Reflecting theologically on life and the issues around us. I think we're just not disciplined in how to Theologically reflect and, and we doing that by ourselves just means we see things through our own perspective and blinders, as you were saying, Justin, without the benefit of hearing from other people's experience and their perspectives.

[00:15:45] **Justin Giboney:** That's right.

[00:15:46] **Don Payne:** Yeah. And we never, see what We don't see what we don't see, but we don't see what we fear. Going back to what you said, Justin, about, fear of the other side being a primary driver. we don't see what we fear which, is kind terrifyingly, just suffocating and, it produces a sort of anemia in our faith as well as in our life together culturally. Let me flip this around a little bit. you know, in light of some of the volatile risks involved, that, you know, the division, the animosity politically and within the church, I know some Christians are tempted simply to give up and disengage. Why is it still important for Christians to engage with civic, cultural, political arenas? What, why, do we keep going when we're so, so tempted to despair and to throw our hands up?

[00:16:40] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah. I think that's a really good question, Don. It starts from understanding the fact that politics touches every aspect of our society. from what's in the food that we eat to what's in the curriculum that our Children are learning from. Also to, you know, not too long ago, and this was probably case in Denver to whether we can go to church or not during a pandemic and things of that nature. It touches all those things. So when we remove ourselves from that conversation, we take away the influence that we've been given to have an impact on that and

to Push, the system or push, push, the laws towards human flourishing. And so if I have a neighbor that's suffering and I just, I decide that I don't want to have anything to do with the political process, I'm forgoing an opportunity to help them. I can't say that you are sinning per se when you don't engage in politics, but I do question whether that's. Good stewardship, right? Because we're all given some influence and if we're not using that influence, to help our neighbor, I do question whether we're using it, you know, whether we're, stewarding our influence in the right way. And so that, that's the, that's, how I would put it. You're missing a huge opportunity to help others, around you.

[00:18:09] **Patty Pell:** I'd love to hear your thoughts on this, Justin, that. I, completely agree that politics is everywhere. It's just the organizing of common life. And people think that when we talk about politics, the only thing we're talking about is legislative action or voting. And it's so much bigger than that. And so I feel like the church is involved in civic engagement, whether it thinks it is or not. It's a question of how we engage, and helping people recognize that the church is in the midst of civic engagement. And we've got to think about how to do that in credible, compassionate ways. So I don't know, thoughts that you have on. how we do that or how we disciple people to see life through a bit more of that lens that we are involved in the common life and we are, whether we want to or not, involved in the dialogue, the public discourse.

[00:19:05] **Justin Giboney:** As a citizen, as somebody who's driving down the street, you're involved in politics. You can't really be avoid being involved in politics in some way. The question is, as we said before, are you going to stewards your influence in a way that has an impact on the politics around you? You can't even Jesus. We see. I mean, when he goes to Caesar, he's placed in a political, nothing he was doing was primarily for the sake of politics, but he's placed in a political situation because of, you know, his questioning of authority, you know, his, statements of authority and things of that nature. So we can't just like that. We can't avoid it. But we also need to realize that your point is not just voting. It's not just what happens in electoral politics. It's what we do in our meeting institutions. When Christians go and they feed people on the street, there's a, political implication to doing some of those things. and so I think we, we do need to expand what we see as political. And you need to say, look, we also don't run away from something because it has a toxic element to it. How can we be the salt in the light? What's the point of having salt and light if Christians avoid every dark and infected situation. No, sometimes that means it's even more necessary for us to go into those situations because guess what? There are children that are suffering because of bad political decisions. People need us and they need advocates. And so we have to step into situations that aren't ideal, but I think the Bible shows us that we shouldn't have an expectation that they'd be ideal for us to feel the need to enter into them.

[00:20:45] **Don Payne:** I am so glad you brought that up, Justin, because, uh, in my own observation, many Christians, at least many in the circles that I tend to inhabit can be idealists in that sense, where they don't want to get involved in something. If there is any identifiable downside to it or any negative trade off. In other words, it's gotta be. It's got to be pure. It's got to be, 100 percent accurate and wholesome and defensible before they can justify in their own minds getting involved in it. And, you know, theologically, we ought to know that the world is far more broken than that. We, when we wake up every day and get out of bed, we enter a fallen world and we become part of fallen structures, whether we want to or not. and yet the, idealism that you mentioned is what often keeps us from Fulfilling the second commandment well, loving our neighbor well, because we don't want to love our neighbor unless we can, sort of control the exact conditions on which we're going to love our neighbor and be, and sort of walk away with clean hands in every way.

[00:21:58] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah. And I think we have to question who, what's our motivation behind not entering it. Are we sure we stay clean? Is it us? Is it kind of a vein? I don't want to be in the

middle of this. It may be too painful. It may, I certainly Jesus doesn't tell us not to go into tough situations and, try to, heal them. and so, yeah, I think we have to question why we take that posture.

[00:22:26] **Don Payne:** Yeah.

[00:22:27] **Patty Pell:** Yeah, and I wonder too if some of the barrier is this idolizing of, full justice. And I think you make this comment in & campaign materials too, that, you know, political justice is never going to approach full justice. And so, if you can't create a flourishing system, what I'm not going to even try as opposed to, you know, being okay with incremental steps, right? And that, that politics and organization, of common life is really all about incremental steps of community benefit rather than the full human flourishing, which is going to happen in this life, right? Not till the new heavens and the new earth.

[00:23:15] **Justin Giboney:** That's right.

[00:23:17] **Don Payne:** When we think about that, that, that concept of redemption, again, it's easy and tempting to think about that sort of in grandiose whole, comprehensive terms, almost trying to bring in the kingdom all at once here now. But realistically, I mean, how would you describe or profile a genuinely and realistically redemptive Christian pattern of engagement. What do you think that looks like?

[00:23:49] **Justin Giboney:** I think it looks like seeing situations that are hurting people or that are unfair to people and trial trying to heal them to the extent that we can. And I think what we have to realize and I learned this from reading about a lot of the civil rights folks in the civil rights generation. When we engage an issue because people are being hurt by it, although we do want to help them and we want to see them do better, we really do it. To glorify God. And when we look at it that way, whether we completely succeed or not, it matters, but ultimately it's not as important as did we do it because that's what God called us to do.

[00:24:27] **Don Payne:** Okay.

[00:24:28] **Justin Giboney:** when you look at it that way, even when you don't get exactly where you want to get, you say, but I know God wants me to do this and I'm working for that, that well done because this is what I'm supposed to do. And when God decides to change it, it will be changed. I just got to do what he called me to do. Um, I think that's a, I think that's a big difference. Um, and so redemption is seeing those issues and trying to heal those issues. And when we look at what a redemptive justice would be, you know, the first element of that, I would say is making sure that our justice is beneficial to everyone in general. I've seen some formulations or conceptions of justice that is really just a reversal of oppressive roles or whatever role was there before. Like, I just want to switch places with you and I could very well be doing the same thing to you, but we just need to switch places. That's not redemptive justice, right? That's not the justice that I, you know, that I think we should see in the Bible. The other, Part of redemptive justice is justice can never be disconnected from truth and God's design. So a lot of what we see as social justice, and I use that term from time to time with what, you know, I try to clarify what I mean by it is completely disconnected from what God said is true from completely disconnected from what God said should be. So we get Initiatives and movements that are seeking justice that can actually make things worse because they're out of line with that. Right? Like if you have a, it's interesting to me that some people can be against absolute truth and then say, but at the same time I'm for justice, but that doesn't make sense. I mean, when I'm telling somebody else they have to do justice, what am I

doing? I'm appealing to an unconditional standard based on the absolute truth that people have human dignity. If I have no unconditional standard based on absolute truth, I can't tell anybody else what they have to do. They can just say, well, that's not my truth. I see things differently. I don't have to do it. No, there's something bigger than all of us. And I think that's what most people who really care about social justice are saying, but you can't have that justice without having absolute truth. And we miss that so many times in our modern or post postmodern justice movements.

[00:26:53] **Don Payne:** Wow. That's, is, so on point. You're reminding me of an op ed piece that was written, I think, in the New York Times after 9 11, 2001, after the falling of the towers. Uh, there was a philosophy professor who wrote an op ed piece in the New York Times who basic, and I don't know if he was a Christian or not, but his basic argument was, if there is no absolute truth, nobody has any right to be mad about anything.

[00:27:18] **Justin Giboney:** Right.

[00:27:19] **Don Payne:** You have no right to be mad about injustice. You have no right to be mad about anything that goes wrong if there's no absolute truth.

[00:27:25] **Justin Giboney:** That's right.

[00:27:26] **Don Payne:** There's no benchmark. Wow.

[00:27:29] **Justin Giboney:** I mean, you, have to have it. It's, and that's, I mean, I think when people begin to see that they see why you need the whole counsel of God, that we take the pieces that we like, and then the pieces that kind of offend us or don't go along with our self perception. We leave those. You can't do that. it's, it all comes together.

[00:27:48] **Patty Pell:** yeah. And I think it's so powerful, Justin, that What you're doing and calling people to, comes alongside that understanding of absolute truth and justice that comes from God. And pairing that with a humility, that, It reminds me of Miroslav Volf, who talks about the universal justice of God, but our, as fallen individuals, our inability to determine necessarily what justice is in any given situation, because of who we are. And so we have to approach everything with humility. Otherwise, we perpetuate injustice on the way to what we think is right. Justice. so I think you pair that really well. It's so important.

[00:28:39] **Don Payne:** Justin, tell us a little bit about what kinds of changes or progress that you have seen, are seeing through the AND campaign.

[00:28:49] **Justin Giboney:** well, just when we go from community to community, church to church, college to college, just people's eyes being open to the fact that it's okay to feel a tension when you don't feel completely comfortable on one side or the other, right? So many people have grown up saying, I have to be completely on the left and agree with everything the left says are completely on the right and agree with everything the right says. And I think people are relieved when they hear that's not exactly the case that I can be honest because what that forces us to do is not really be honest about the wrongs that we see on one side or the other. And I think that's almost a big difference that you see sometimes between ideology and orthodoxy. Orthodoxy leaves, it has certain truths, but it leaves open the opportunity to say, no, this is actually wrong. Uh, whereas if I'm completely tied to my ideology, I'm very hesitant. to say that something's gone wrong because that

kind of tears apart my narrative where in the orthodoxy, I know I'm imperfect. If I get something wrong, I can easily admit it. I just have a standard to compare it to. and so seeing people get that, for instance, just what we talked about seeing young people who want to engage in justice conversations, understand that they can be orthodox and do so. I mean, Fannie Lou Hamer did it. I can name people throughout, you know, American history, Dorothy day, others who were very orthodox and engaged in justice. But we have a situation and a narrative out there today that says you can't do both. And it's just, it's fake. And so seeing people get to kind of eyes be open to that fact is, is one of the most rewarding things that we, come across in when it comes to the & campaign.

[00:30:35] **Don Payne:** Tell us just a little bit about some of the things the AND campaign does. I'm going to refer people to your website, which is AND campaign or spelling out the letters A N D campaign, dot, org. Just give us a little sense of some of the different activities and resources that you make available through the AND campaign.

[00:30:55] **Justin Giboney:** Sure. One of the biggest things we do is education. So just like those 10 disciplines that I gave you, we want Christians to see engagement differently. we want to raise civic literacy. So we do a lot of just education on how politics and civics work. Uh, but again, we also want, we also do a lot of educating on getting Christians to be less ideological and less partisan and more focused on what the Bible really says about certain issues. And I think that can help us kind of remove the divide. Something else we do when it comes to education is we have our Christian civic leadership Academy. Where we take a cohort of Christians through a 10 week process. These are people who may want to run for office. They may want to manage campaigns or work on campaigns in some other way. And we take them through a two, a 10 week program from, you know, from talking about why Christians should engage to the X's and O's of a campaign. What's the anatomy of a campaign? What does the campaign manager do? ethics, different theories, and all that. So that they have a, so they feel, more equipped to engage a lot of, cause a lot of Christians say, I would love to get more engaged in civics. I just don't know where to start. Well, that's a good place to start for people who want, to get engaged. Um, we have our whole life, a committee, which is a committee of Christian sisters, primarily who are engaging the conversation about the sanctity of life from a perspective that values, unborn life, but also the life of the mother and things that she may be experiencing when she's making that choice. you know, so those are, some of the things we do, but a lot of content we have, as you said, we have, the church politics podcast, which we put on, we've written a book, compassion and conviction. And I think one of the other things we try to do is give people on ramps to engage. so we want to work with local muni. So we have an end campaign chapter. In Denver, that's bringing churches, diverse churches of Orthodox Christians together to, you know, eventually really engage on some local issues as one church rather than as, partisans.

[00:33:10] **Don Payne:** Where do you have chapters in some other cities?

[00:33:13] **Justin Giboney:** So we have 1 here in Atlanta. We have 1 in Chicago, D. C. building 1 in L. A. So we have about 14 chapters around the country. If you go to our website and campaign. org, you can get linked up and connected, to those, to those chapters, or you can just email, us at engage@ANDcampaign. org.

[00:33:36] **Don Payne:** Great.

[00:33:37] **Patty Pell:** I'm just curious. You know, we're so close to the election and, you know, in two weeks, we're gonna have, regardless of what happens, half the country's disappointed. So how

do you, what advice do you have, Justin? How do you disciple folks in post election? You know, how do we respond? What does civic engagement look like on the other side of kind of a big election season like this?

[00:34:06] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah. I would say this starting today, start thinking about what your spiritual disposition will be after the election. Will you be able to have a constructive conversation with somebody, you know, voted differently than you? And if not, what does that say about what you believe and who you believe in? Are you too dependent on the outcome of this election where as a Christian, you should know that you already have the victory and that what, regardless of what happens, I've never seen a candidate. I've never seen any leader that can overturn what God has for us. And so if we truly believe that. It should show through how we react to this election, right? people are going to be looking at you and they're going to be able to tell how strong your faith is based on your reaction to what happens, especially if you're on the losing side. So I would keep that in mind. And I would also, and I said this morning, I tweet this out this morning, do not lose friends or family members over this election. As important as this election is, those relationships are more significant than that. And you need to protect those relationships, even if you have to agree to disagree, that's fine. But you don't want to lose people closely. You don't want to get disconnected from loved ones based on an election. It's not worth it.

[00:35:27] **Don Payne:** Amen to that.

[00:35:28] **Patty Pell:** Yeah, thanks. That's really helpful.

[00:35:30] **Don Payne:** Justin, real quick, before we sign off, I'd love to have you tell, listeners about your forthcoming book. You mentioned this to me, before we started recording. And even though it's going to be a little bit before it comes out, I want to get this on listeners radar. But tell us just a little bit about that.

[00:35:45] **Justin Giboney:** Yeah, for sure. So I've just written a book called don't let nobody turn you around, which comes from my, black Christian spiritual. and really it's about how the black church is social action to tradition can lead us out of the culture war. And so the book has a very. piercing critique of both conservatism and progressivism. From that point of view, oftentimes you hear the African American critique, the African American churches critique of conservatism, and you hear that really loudly, but it's kind of been hidden that there was also a, just as piercing critique of progressivism, coming from coming out of that church. And I kind of highlight those along with admitting, you know, the places that, my own faith tradition can get things better. Yeah.

[00:36:33] **Don Payne:** And you said you anticipate this being released,

[00:36:37] **Justin Giboney:** Late next

[00:36:38] **Don Payne:** or went late next year. Okay. So the title again is don't let nobody turn you around.

[00:36:43] **Justin Giboney:** Don't let nobody turn you around. That's

[00:36:45] **Don Payne:** look for, yeah, look for it. I'm going to be looking for my own copy of that. Um, Justin Giboney, we are so grateful for you, my friend, and the work you're doing and for the

time you spent with us, God bless you. And may the Lord encourage you and, and everything you're putting your hand to there in Atlanta and around the country, so grateful

[00:37:04] **Justin Giboney:** Thanks. Thanks for having me. God bless you too.

[00:37:06] **Don Payne:** Friends, we're grateful that you've little bit of time with us again and would love it if you can get the chance to leave us a rating, a review, wherever it is that you listen to podcasts. And if you have questions or comments for us, please send those to us at podcast@Denverseminary.Edu. And also visit our website, denverseminary.Edu for more information. Lots of information, lots of resources about Denver Seminary, our events, our degree programs, and other episodes of this podcast, Engage360. You can also get full transcripts of each podcast on our website. So we're grateful for you, for your interest, your support, your prayers. Look forward to speaking with you again next time. Lord bless you.