



EPISODE TITLE: "Called to Misfit Community"

Vocatio, Episode 8

**Featured Guest:** *Eric Elnes*

Dr. Eric Elnes is a biblical scholar with a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies from Princeton Theological Seminary. He is also a leading articulator of Convergence Christianity and Senior Minister of Countryside Community Church (UCC) in Omaha, NE. Eric has written several books on faith, theology and culture including, *The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity* (Jossey-Bass, 2006) and a book on experiential worship called *Igniting Worship: The Seven Deadly Sins* (Abingdon, 2004). In 2006, Eric also helped lead a 2,500 mile walk from Phoenix to Washington, DC, to promote awareness of progressive/emerging Christian faith and practice and meet with Christians at a grassroots to hear their hopes and dreams for the future of faith in America. His journey, which is the subject of a feature-length film, *The Asphalt Gospel*, is recounted in his book, *Asphalt Jesus: Finding a New Christian Faith on the Highways of America* (Jossey-Bass, 2007). Elnes lives as an "empty nester" in Omaha with his wife, Melanie, dog Roe, and cat Tamar. They have two college-age daughters, Arianna and Maren.

**Questions:**

1. What stood out for you from John 20:1-16? What do you think this familiar Easter passage might have to say about misfit community?
2. Why do you think Jesus would choose to appear to his disciples instead of the powerful people of his day? What do you think that might mean for us today?
3. How do you think the misfits Eric describes differ from other religious people? What makes them different? Do you ever feel like a misfit when it comes to your faith? If so, why?
4. What do you think of Eric's idea that our communities of faith benefit from including people who have experienced brokenness? Why do you think that might be? What might that mean about the place of misfits in God's kingdom?
5. Practicing love for God, neighbor and self, as Jesus taught, may lead to being considered, or feeling like, a misfit. What is it about the path of Jesus that causes that to happen? What do you think is the place for misfits in the Christian faith, and in the world?

**Pneuma Divina Scripture: John 20: 1-16**

<sup>20</sup>Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. <sup>21</sup>So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>22</sup>Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. <sup>23</sup>The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>24</sup>He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>25</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, <sup>26</sup>and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. <sup>27</sup>Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>28</sup>for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>29</sup>Then the disciples returned to their homes.

<sup>30</sup>But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; <sup>31</sup>and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. <sup>32</sup>They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." <sup>33</sup>When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. <sup>34</sup>Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." <sup>35</sup>Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher).

*The New Revised Standard Version (Anglicized Edition)*, copyright 1989, 1995 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.