

MJB_98_timone_davis

Julia: [00:00:00] I'm here with Timone Davis. Hi Timone. Welcome to Message Jesus Business. Ah,

timone: hello. I'm glad to be here.

Julia: And you are probably in the middle of a busy teaching term already as you are a professor at the Loyola University Chicago Institute of Pastoral Studies. Right? And so I wanna thank you especially for stepping away from the busy.

The busy time of teaching and to be with us and to share your story, your wisdom, your experience, especially in this time that that we're in. And, and see. See where, see where that takes us. So Simone, I always like to ask, start with people's story. How did you become who you are today, this effective minister, teacher, and prophetic voice and.

US Catholic church

timone: falling down a lot. Yeah. Falling down a lot. [00:01:00] Um, this, this was not my, um, you know, when you, when you think about who you're going to be mm-hmm. Right? What do you wanna do when you grow up? Right. And who do you wanna be? Um, it was always to be a doctor. Oh really? A, a pediatrician actually.

Speaker 3: Hmm.

timone: And, and so I went to school thinking like, yeah, I'm gonna be a doctor. And I majored in biology and probably like junior year, I was like, yeah, me school is just not gonna be it. I don't like school that much. I like school, but I don't like it that much. Um, and um, so my trajectory changed, um, when I went into the [00:02:00] military.

So I, I went to undergrad on a Air Force scholarship. Hmm. And, um, when I was commissioned, uh, I. Moved into logistics, um, or I became a su a supply officer. Uh, that wasn't my chosen field either, but, you know, circumstances kind of, you know, push you in different directions and then you make, you make it what it is.

And so I thought that I would make a career, uh, in the military. I, I was just like, yep, I know how to do this. This is fine. Hmm. And, um, I met a, a man in the military who was enlisted and, um, my commanding officer said, choose the military or choose the man.

Julia: Wow.

timone: And I chose the man. And, uh, so that ended, uh, my military career because he was enlisted and [00:03:00] I was an officer, and she made sure that, um, I didn't get, uh, promoted.

To next rank, which, which would've been captain. Um, and so you, you know, um, it's, it's funny because I reached back out to her some years later to thank her for everything that she had done and taught me and. Um, that I realized that I had learned a lot from her. And so she asked me, she said, so are you still with the man?

I was like, girl, no. You saw that, right? Um, you know, I, I said, but I, I did ask her, why, why did you do me like you did, basically.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: And, and she said, I saw general in you.

Julia: Huh.

timone: And as a, um, black woman in the military who had the potential to be general, I wanted you, I wanted that for you. I said, well, yeah, it would've been nice if you had said that.[00:04:00]

Julia: Hmm.

timone: You know? Um, and, and so from that experience, I learned that it's important, um, to say what we see

Julia: Uhhuh right?

timone: To, to say, um, what do we see in people? You know, because sometimes, um, when we can name it for people,

Speaker 3: yeah.

timone: Um, it can become possible or at least gets them thinking, right?

Speaker 3: Mm-hmm.

timone: Um, and, and so I, um, ended up in Chicago and, um, in my first marriage, um.

My husband brought two kids to that relationship that I was, I was like, well, I'm in Chicago. They'll be in Catholic schools. Um, because I was like, Catholic school, Chicago public school, uh, it's gonna be Catholic school all the way.

Speaker 3: Mm.

timone: [00:05:00] And when we moved them to a particular school, the, the thing was, you gotta show up at church.

And I was like, do I get a discount on tuition if I show up at church?

Speaker 3: Hmm.

timone: And, um, because at that point you, you know, I didn't have a great relationship, um, with God. I was definitely not trying to be in tune with the Catholic church. I was just like, oh. But, but I was willing to do it for these kids.

Julia: Hmm.

Hmm.

timone: Um. And while I was at this, this parish, uh, the pastors, again, na naming things or being able to call things out, the pastor named for me, um, Hey, I think you could be involved in, or I would like you to get involved in. And so he kept calling me forward, calling me forward, and [00:06:00] I, um. Got involved with the right of Christian initiation for adults.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: And

Julia: just to be clear, were you Catholic actually at this point? Always Catholic. Okay, got it.

timone: Always Catholic.

Julia: Just not like a, you know,

timone: at this point I wasn't Catholic at this point. I wasn't a, a practicing Catholic, but, um, Uhhuh, I've always been Catholic.

Julia: Got it.

timone: Um, and so our CIA, it, well, it's, it's really funny because I didn't think I was equipped, and so the first couple of, you know, like the first year that I was helping him out, I used to skip class.

I was a true college student. I think, you know, I know this already. I could skip class. He don't need me. And then the second year that he asked me to be involved, I was like, dude, I'm gonna need a [00:07:00] class or something. You want me doing this stuff? And he was like, you went to Catholic University? I said, that was only so that I could pass the class.

I, I wasn't trying to get any information. You know, and so I need something now. I'm gonna get some information. You're making me responsible for other people's journey. And, um, he sent me to a master catechist class that the archdiocese was, was doing called Catching the Spirit, which, um, was master catechist class that focused on, uh, African American spirituality.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: And, and I caught the spirit, right? I was intrigued and I was like, Hey, this is, this is really nice. So what I was learning in the Master catechist class, I was taking back to, um, the RCIA in the parish. And so what happened is the pastor started skipping class and, and then I would be like, [00:08:00] dude, like, he was like, yeah, you seem like you got it.

And so, uh, I'll be back to lock up. And I

Julia: was like,

timone: what the hell? You know? And, and so after that, I told him, I, I said, I'm gonna need another class. If you leaving, you leaving those people to me and it's my responsibility. I'm gonna need another class. And he said, I got a perfect thing. I need you to go over to Catholic Theological Union and I need you to talk to, uh, sister Jamie t Phelps.

Op, who's in charge of this program, uh, called the Augustus Toten Pastoral Ministry Program, which was a scholarship program for African American lay people who would be getting their master's degree.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: And I said, I don't need a master's degree, I just need another class. And he said, yeah, go talk to this

Julia: Wow.

timone: To this nun. And, [00:09:00] and she is very busy. It took me a, uh, probably two, three months to get in to, to see her, and so I finally got in to see her in December of 95. December of 95. I'm sitting down, I'm having this conversation. With this nun and, and she is like, oh, you would be a great candidate for our program, blah, blah, blah.

When do you think you wanna start? And I said, sister, like all things, when people start school in the fall, right? And she said, I'll have you registered for January. I said, sister, it's December. She said, yes, I have you registered for January term Starts in about three weeks. I said, no, I don't think that's gonna be possible.

I have a life and I gotta do things. I have a child and I, and she says, yeah. She says, um, oh, we all have to decrease so that Christ increase. Yeah. I said, what the hell? [00:10:00] Because that mean Uhhuh. I like, I was like that. What? And she mm-hmm. She had me in school in January. I was just like, this is insane.

Julia: Another, so another naming what She saw

timone: another naming right? Yeah. So another naming.

Julia: She named The Potential,

timone: she named the Potential. Um, and so I got my M Div. Yeah. Um, and it was funny 'cause you could get a master, a Master of Arts and Pastoral studies, an M Div or, um. Master of Arts in Theology, I

Speaker 3: think

timone: that's what it was, right?

Julia: Mm-hmm. And,

timone: and so I was like, what's the difference? You know, because I, I wasn't really interested, but I'm like, y'all got me in here, so what's the difference? Um, and so they talked, uh, about the difference and I was like, well, let me do this M Div thing 'cause that seems like that's the most well-rounded.

I don't know what it is that I'm gonna do with this degree, but, mm-hmm. Okay, let's, let's do [00:11:00] that. In the midst of the degree, right? So you're doing the academics, but we were also doing formation, much like religious communities do formation because it was at CTU. And so what Sister Jamie had done was model this on religious life where you are in formation as long as you are in your studies.

And so the transformation right, was happening, um, over, over time to where. By the time I graduated, I had quit working at a Fortune 500 company. Hmm. I had taken a job working in a high school to teach theology, which I had no experience doing. Um

Julia: hmm.

timone: But it was the, uh, a blast of my life. I found out that I enjoy teaching and, um.

I went back to this pastor who had since retired, and I asked [00:12:00] him what he saw, right. That he kept calling me forward and naming things

Julia: again. Yeah.

timone: And he said, I saw you.

Julia: Mm-hmm. And I was

timone: like,

Julia: what?

timone: He said, I saw you.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: And. So part of the work that I'm, I'm doing now at, at Loyola teaching is to help name things for people

Julia: Yeah,

timone: yeah.

Right. To, to name what it is that I see in them, um, to help them along the journey.

Julia: Right. Right. And you're in such a, I mean, formative, are you working, wait a minute, are you working with both undergrads and grad students? Is that right? Just graduate students. Just graduate students. Okay. So, well, anyway, I'm, I'm conscious of how, I mean, those years, but graduate school [00:13:00] too can be, it's so incredibly formative, like you talk about, and, and so the naming, um, this saying what you see.

Naming the truth, naming the potential in people. It's, it's incredibly powerful. I'm, I'm reminded too of like how, in my own story I had, and it was undergrad and I had a professor who, a couple professors who sort of pulled me aside and like, and, and you know, gave me that little talk of like. Julia, you've got something.

You get this in a different way than other people do, and God's asked, it seems like God has a different sort of plan for you, so you need to, you know, think about that. Mm-hmm. Here I am. Right. Julia, Fs PA. Right. And you're just like, who's idea was this? So, right. The power of that. So, okay. I love the way you tell your story and how we got to where we are now.

Can I, can I just go back to the beginning and say, yeah. It feels a little ironic to me that you [00:14:00] started in the military and, and, and you could have become a general, because I am looking, we talked about the background before. Mm-hmm. Uh, your decorations around you before we started recording, you have set up around you.

Um. I can't, I can't even count how many peace signs there are in your environment right there. And in your, you know, and those cloths that you have. You have a little sign, you have cross, you have angel statues, sister Thea Bowman is there, right? You. It's like you are surrounded by all these. Other things now that, that seem to tell a very different story about who you are.

So, so I wonder if, if, if there's been a conversion or do I misunderstand something?

timone: So,

Julia: stereotypes of, of military versus Christian, of

timone: military. So like a lot of people in, um, the black community, [00:15:00] the military provides a, a way outta circumstances. Mm.

Julia: Mm-hmm. Right.

timone: And in my instance, the military afforded me, um, tuition free education.

Julia: Ah-huh. That's what it was about.

timone: Right? It was, I I, I'm not gonna say it was never about serving my country, but it wasn't about serving my country. It was about I'm getting this education

Julia: uhhuh

timone: and my commitment. Is to, they give me four years. I give them four years.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: It was doing the work that I realized, um, the importance of the military.

Julia: Mm.

timone: When, um,

I, I wanted, I gotta tread it lightly here. The importance of the military when used [00:16:00] correctly.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Right. Mm-hmm. Because military might, can be misused. Yeah. Um, and, and so when we think about, um, serve and protect is the role of, of the military, but we also have as parts of the military where we invade and we secure, um, based on, um.

Political agendas.

Julia: Yeah. Right. Yeah.

timone: Um, but at its core, it, it is to serve and protect people. Um, but the peace symbols and those things. So I, I think all of us have paradox within us.

Julia: That's right.

timone: And I. I was always in a Catholic space, let me say it that way, [00:17:00] Catholic elementary, Catholic, um, high school, Catholic undergrad, um, Catholic institution for my, my master's and my doctorate.

I, but it has had taken me a while to begin to internalize,

Julia: ah.

timone: What it, what it means to be, to, to claim being Catholic little c mm-hmm. Universal in that sense. So when I was in, getting toward the end of my m diviv, my mother handed me a box, a jewelry box, and in the box. Was, um, well wait. Before, before we get to the box, [00:18:00] I had this affinity for peace symbols.

You know, I'm, I'm a, I'm a kid of the, of the seventies, the, the late sixties and the seventies. So peace symbol. And I had, um, already gotten the tattoo with the peace symbol.

Julia: Uh huh

timone: Right? No, the tattoo of the cross. Okay. I had already gotten the tattoo of a bleeding cross so that I could be reminded of what Christ sacrificed for me and, and to keep getting up.

Right. Because as a black woman in the United States, you, you know, you gotta keep getting up.

Speaker 3: Hmm. And

timone: so the cross for me was to keep getting up.

Speaker 3: Mm.

timone: And, um, and then I, this, this peace symbol that I added later to symbolize Christ peace. If Christ peace can reign in the [00:19:00] world, there would be no need for any other type of peace.

Julia: Mm-hmm. Right?

timone: We could, and, and so if I could obtain Christ's peace in my life first. Then I could extend that to other people. Right? So my mother hands me this box, this jewelry box, um, and I open up this box and there's a cross in it made out of flattened thin nails.

Julia: Huh?

timone: And there is a medallion necklace that has praying hands on it.

Julia: Uh huh

timone: And I was like, and it said, uh, peace on it. And I was like, mom, wow, this is so nice. Kinda going with my Christ Peace thing. And this is what I, I said, where did you find such things? This is so cool. She said, oh, [00:20:00] those were yours when you were in high school.

I said, what? What? She said, those were yours from high school. I said, you bought 'em for me when I was in high school. And she said, no, you bought them for yourself.

And I, I said, are you telling me that I have been on this journey? Since high school.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: She said yes.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: And I thought now was a good time to give them back to you. You left them when you went to college And I was like, damn. That's deep right there.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Right [00:21:00] to, it's beautiful to discover a part of you that you had forgotten.

Yeah.

Speaker 3: Yeah.

timone: Right. That you, so now I was like, so who was I in high school? 'cause I, 'cause I don't remember

Julia: quite

timone: being a person who was embracing God, but at some point, I, I clearly was right. Mm-hmm. Um, that I would buy those for myself. And I asked her, I said, well, did I wear them? She said all the time.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: All, all the time.

Julia: So interesting. You had forgotten.

timone: I had forgotten.

Julia: So interesting. But it came

timone: back to me, both the cross and the, the peace, right? Yeah.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: But instead of praying hands, I chose the, the peace symbol. And so now I'm on this, this trajectory, right? Of Christ's peace that, um. Guides what I do.

So when nine, when nine [00:22:00] 11 happened, I was teaching class high school and I happened to be wearing my, um, was I wearing my mismatch

earrings, right? The mim max earrings of the cross and the peace symbol. And have, and deciding in that moment that I, those would be the only earrings I would wear.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Some form of a crossing, some form of a peace symbol until Christ Peace reigns.

Hmm. Um, and so we do these little things for ourselves Right. To keep us, um, moving forward. Yeah. And they also become, uh. Points of conversation or interjection for other people to be like, why do you always wear the same ear rings? Yeah. Every time I see you, you always have a cross and a peace symbol.

Well, hey, thank you for the, the, the open [00:23:00] door. So now I can talk about Christ, right? Yeah. And, and we can have this, this conversation, um, about how do we make Christ manifest, um. The world, um, uh, for, for people. Um, so, so yeah, that's the, and, and so I try to do it in the background too, right? Mm-hmm. Of, of where I'm sitting.

You, you know, I'm teaching online, so it helps, right? Mm-hmm. That students get to get to see something. It all depends. People typically don't ask about the background and what I put up, except when I change it. So if I was to change it halfway through the semester, then students would be like, Hey, what happened to the peace symbol cloth that you had in the background?

Or what happened to the blah, blah blah? Which tells me that they do pay attention. They just don't always ask Uhhuh.

Julia: Right. Um,

timone: and, and so I'm trying to, [00:24:00] one of the things that I learned when I was at CTU and we were in formation. To create an environment, right? Mm-hmm. That the environment is also important for what it is that you're trying to curate or cultivate.

Speaker 3: That's right.

timone: And so I try to create an environment behind me, um, for what it is that I'm trying to cultivate.

Julia: Yeah. Yeah. You know, I'm hearing so much there about intentionality, right. And the power of symbol as, as a way into the deeper place and, and into. Communicate, but also to remind oneself of who one truly is and claims to be and is aiming to be.

Which, which is all really fascinating. Fascinating for me because, um. I, I feel like I, I wasn't anticipating this, but, but I'm, I, I have this lingering question now that, that I just wanna hear your take on and because you've, you've had your feet in the [00:25:00] military world and for myself, I've been a person that's been on the outside, but honestly has just been really critical of it, um, because of my own analysis.

Um, and. Because of my own devotion to, to Christ and, and my desire too, to, to help Christ peace reign. And so it has always bothered me how our culture, how our society, how we really celebrate war heroes, how, and, and militarism is, is celebrated so much. Mm-hmm. But peacemaking isn't, and peace heroes are not celebrated.

Um, the. The people who have been conscientious objectors, who have done acts of civil disobedience. In some ways it's as if our, our history would like to forget them. Mm-hmm. Um, and, and I, and I'm, that, that really bothers me. And, and I've, I am curious about how you as a teacher, um, have come [00:26:00] to like, yeah.

What are you thinking about, about regarding that tension? And then what do you communicate to your students? Regarding the contrast,

timone: I think peace peacemakers are often seen as weak.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: When, when we think of success, um, in terms of might, in terms of domination, in terms of, uh, oppression. Peacemaking, it seem, seems weak, right? Um,

Julia: yeah. It just, and I almost wanna start crying just thinking about how that mindset toone has gotten our world to the state it's in now

timone: of Of course.

Julia: I have so much to lament there.

timone: Yes. I, I mean it, when we think about [00:27:00] the, let me, let me say it this way. Why was it so difficult for people to accept Jesus as Messiah?

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Because he didn't come in the, the form that people expect for, uh, success and ruling and overcoming, right? Right. He come, he comes as an ordinary individual.

Ask other ordinary individuals to, to join him. And everybody is like, yeah, but we need you to overthrow Rome.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Right? And, and he says, yeah, well we probably get to that, but first we gotta feed the hungry and we gotta clothe the naked and you know, we gotta pay attention to the, and they were just like, what the hell man, that's, no, no, we, we need to go in with this military might.

Mm-hmm. Right. Here's the thing. [00:28:00] When you are pressed down so much, you want something drastic to happen.

Julia: Mm.

timone: So you think then military might, is drastic. It will overturn it, it will do the thing and, and it'll, and it'll do it quickly, right?

Julia: Yeah. They want. People want fast solutions when, when they feel really desperate,

timone: right?

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Yeah. We, we, we want it to, we want it to be fast, but

Julia: Right.

timone: But the truth of the matter is war does not solve our issues.

Julia: Never.

timone: Now we know that. Right. When, when I had to study. You know, um, so, so when you go to [00:29:00] school on a, on a, uh, ROTC scholarship, you are studying war, right? So you, you have to, you have to take the courses, uh, but where you're, you're studying war.

Julia: I was a history major and I studied war too, but from a different angle,

timone: see?

Julia: Yeah.

timone: And all depends on what type of history you're looking at, right? See, so, mm-hmm.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: So you are studying war, um, and you come to understand how you can end up in war.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: When you are taking it from the standpoint of relieving the pressure on the oppressed, what happens though is that military [00:30:00] might begins to believe their own press and believe that it is the only solution.

Yeah. Right. Um, and, and, but there are other ways to be.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Um, so what do I teach my students? Um, we don't talk a lot about me being in the military. Um, not a lot of people know. Um, I mean, people find out and then they go, what really? That seems odd. Um, and I was like, yeah, well, um, but here's what I am trying to help students know is that the work of Jesus is [00:31:00] slow and consistent.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Often lonely.

Julia: Mm. Mm-hmm.

timone: Because,

Julia: yeah,

timone: I want people to understand that when you are doing the work that that God calls you to God is speaking to you.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: And God does not always let the other people in your life know what God has said to you. Right. And so it can be lonely 'cause you start acting out of living out of what God has said.

And people are like, what are you doing? What are you talking about? What do you mean you wanna go back to school? Nobody have money for that. What do you mean you wanna go quit your job? Who does that? You know and you wanna go do what? See the, those are, you get opposition. [00:32:00] Right. And so I try to let people know this, these are some of the things you're going to face when you are following Jesus.

Julia: Yeah. So it's, you know, uh, am I hearing you say in a way here that for you discipleship requires, uh, like persistent devotion, but also clarity of mission?

timone: Yes.

Julia: Uhhuh,

timone: yeah. You, you gotta, you have to know what it is.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: That, um, you are embarking upon, which is why naming is important, right? Helping people to, to name like, so, so at IPS there are people who go, I don't know what it is I'm supposed to be doing, but I do know that I'm supposed to start taking classes.

Speaker 3: But

timone: they don't know beyond that. I was one of those people, I don't know what this is. I, I started taking classes to be a better [00:33:00] RCIA

coordinator. Right. That's, that's how I started. And, and when people say, so what are you gonna do with this degree when you finish? I, I don't know. Aren't I gonna be a better RCIA coordinator?

Like isn't. This is what I'm starting on. Mm-hmm. And, and so we have to make room for, um, people's calls to develop.

Julia: Yeah. Yeah. And right to, and I mean, isn't it true that so much of vocational discernment is really about allowing things to unfold? Yes. And to just pay attention. Like, oh, okay, this is leading to this one thing leads to another.

Yeah. And, you know, and, and I think that's what I'm hearing in your story too. Yeah. So, I, I, um. I'm curious if you might share a bit more about what you're, what you know, what you've noticed, what you've, what you [00:34:00] are seeing, and about how to help the internalization of the gospel, um, to foster that in, in a person.

I mean, people that come to your classroom are like, they're hungry, they're ready. But, but many of us in our daily lives, we're interacting with people who are. Just maybe curious like, what's up with her? Why is she joyful? And whatever. You know? And, and, and it's like, I want, I want to my witness, um, my whatever, my storytelling, my, my love, whatever I'm doing, to somehow invite them to a deeper place.

Right? And, and I don't know if I can, if, if that's. Maybe I need to stop wanting things. Maybe I needed to get outta the way and just trust God. But like what, what? I'm wondering if you have some tricks of the trade. I mean, you're older and wiser than me. Timone.[00:35:00]

You know, I was, I'll say this, I recently led a retreat. Mm-hmm. And it was a beautiful experience and I felt so, so honored to be there. Mm-hmm. For a few different reasons. Afterwards, I found myself wondering if there's a way, as a teacher, as a minister, as a preacher, we can invite people to spiritual maturity more often.

So they're not just coming to hear what they wanna hear. Mm-hmm. But they're open to that conversion. That flips everything around and causes them to surrender.

timone: So anybody who's been to a workshop that I've done, who has heard me preach, um, who's in a class, um, who take a class with me, [00:36:00] or at some point they will probably all say.

I ask the deeper question.

Julia: Mm.

timone: Right. Um, I am a question person. I'm gonna ask the, the question. I am not interested as an instructor in you regurgitating the material that we read. I don't, I'm not interested in that. Right. But what I am interested in is how does the information that we are reading affect you

Speaker 3: Yeah.

timone: In your day-to-day life. And so I may ask a question that that says, um, what I'm, I'm asking students. [00:37:00] Oh, here's, it is a wonderful example. Um. I had students reading about the Trinity and so we're reading, um, did it, I don't know if it's a plug for his book or not, but it is the book that we're reading,

Julia: you can plug it.

I don't,

timone: I don't really need to plug it, but it. It, it's a, uh, a, a Protestant author, faith Seeking Understanding and Introduction to Christian Theology, the fourth edition. Okay. His fourth edition. And students are reading that. And, um, Glori has a wonderful section and as he talks about the Trinity and what I've asked students to do after reading that.

Is to respond artistically.[00:38:00]

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Your response to this is to either create an art piece, um, or take a picture or something. Give credit to who? If it's somebody else's picture that represents the trinity for you.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Now that sounds real simple, doesn't it? That's all you, that's all you gotta do. Students ask a lot of questions.

Okay? So, so what if I don't draw? Well? Well, what if I, I, I'm just interested in whatever image. Did you know? If you're not a drawer, maybe you a poet.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: If you are not a poet, maybe you do prose, you do short story, right? If you're not either one of those, maybe you are a musician.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: But I need a creative response.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Um, I said, but what [00:39:00] you cannot do is write an essay.

Julia: And it's stretching their them to another part of their brain, right? Yes. So it's, it's not an analysis now, but now it's become soul work, doesn't it? Yes.

timone: See?

Julia: Yeah.

timone: It gets them to go deeper. Yeah. Right. So they're going deeper. So I'm gonna be asking the questions or giving an assignment Yeah.

That says based on this.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: How does this show up in your living? So we just did also. Statements of faith where we were covering the creeds and then they have to write their own statement of faith.

Julia: Yeah. Right. This, I mean, this is the sort of stuff I did in my classroom too. I, I, you're making me miss teaching

timone: you, but you could still do it on your retreats.

Yeah. You still do an aspect of it on your retreats, right? Yeah. So, um, I, I believe to help people then. Live the [00:40:00] gospel is to be able to ask the questions that have them interrogate their living.

Julia: Ah, that's it. If,

timone: if the gospel remains in the pulpit

Julia: mm-hmm.

timone: Right. From where it was proclaimed

Julia: mm-hmm. And it

timone: just filters in the air.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Then I, I, I don't know what to do with that. But if there's someone, some word, something in the bulletin, some encounter that says, but what does that mean? What does that look like in the kitchen? When you cooking dinner.

Julia: Yeah, yeah. You see what

timone: I'm saying? If we, I, I,

Julia: yeah. If we

timone: can't do that for people then, then the gospel remains a text.

That's just that a text. Mm-hmm.

Julia: That's true. So, so you're bringing the gospel alive. What is preaching?
[00:41:00]

timone: What is preaching for me?

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Preaching. Preaching then is unpacking that word. Four people, um, into these, um, bite-sized pieces that they can, they can take home and go, oh, I got, I got this morsel here.

Yeah. Sometimes preaching is, I had to puree it right so that you can drink it. Because it is too complex. And so I had to puree it up. But, but preaching for me is this breaking open of the word of God. So where you can see yourself and an aspect of that word being played out in your life or that needs to be played out in your life.

Julia: Mm mm Right.

timone: Um, it something that, that. Invites you to look at who you are as person and [00:42:00] how you're moving about in the world.

Julia: Yeah. And I know that you're a very effective preacher. It's how I first, you've been listening to my

timone: podcast.

Julia: Yeah. Uh, let's give it a shout out again. It's, what is it? Skinny, skinny Thoughts on Christ Peace.

There you go. And especially since message Jesus business is winding down and I need to make recommendations to my listeners for new podcasts for them to listen to. What you mean you winding down? Yeah. We're gonna land with a hundred episodes in December, so that's, that's pretty solid.

timone: That is been solid.

Julia: Yeah. So anyway, skinny thoughts on, on Christ Peace, on Christ, Christ, peace, skinny Thoughts on Christ. Peace. I hope they all subscribe and listen to your amazing preaching. Thank you. And, and I'm curious though, because we all are baptized priest. No priest, prophet,

timone: priest, prophet and

Julia: king,

timone: and part

Julia: of prof and royalty.

The prophetic work. Right, right, right, right. And royalty. Priest,

timone: prophet and royalty.

Julia: But I was gonna say preacher, [00:43:00] but I guess we're not all baptized preachers, but, but some of us clearly are called and, and, um, you know, that. That adage that's oftentimes, um, put upon St. Francis of Assisi, which is not his words, that we are called to preach the gospel at, at all times.

Mm-hmm. And when, when necessary, when necessary, used words, uh, that. Is, I think, true to everyone who's living the gospel Franciscan or not. We all are meant to proclaim the world word by how we live our lives. Mm-hmm. By how we let the word interrogate our lives, like you were saying. So, so I, I'm curious because you're such a skilled and experienced preacher, how, how do you prepare, prepare to preach?

What, what goes into good preaching for you? Um, you know, what's, what's the, it's gonna common listener to message Jesus business need to be thinking about like, they're called to be a preacher.

timone: It's gonna be different for every person. Right on. Yeah. On how they're [00:44:00] preparing, um, to, to preach on the word, but, but for me, it's gonna start with the text.

Julia: Yeah.

timone: Um, and reading the text. Uh. Deciphering. Now, what do I mean by deciphering my theologians and my other preachers would say, I would do an exegesis of the text and I would get behind the language and all of the technical aspects of what, what do these words mean?

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: But I didn't study Greek. I didn't study Hebrew.

I don't know any of those. So, uh, sometimes I use a commentary. Sometimes I'm looking, I'm looking things up. Um, but I read a text and I take notes.

Speaker 3: What

timone: jumps out for me when I read the text first, read what jumps out, and I use small pieces of [00:45:00] paper. Mm, I, I, large pieces of paper get lost for some unknown reason.

And, um, and so I use small pieces of paper and, um, and then I walk away from the text.

Julia: Mm.

timone: And then I come back to the text. It could be a day later and I come back to the text to find out what the text is saying to me, and I write some more notes. Um, I have gotten to the point where I can write a sermon in a day.

It used to take me a month, but I can do one in a day. And, um, when I sit to write the sermon, when the Holy Spirit tells me you have enough notes, and I am a writer who has to write with a title. So it has to have a title first.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Before I can write. And then we, we read the notes. I read the [00:46:00] notes, and um, I sit with the spirit and I got some music playlist that I've been listening to now for the last 15 years.

Same playlist

Speaker 3: for

timone: any writing that I'm doing. Um, and it has stuff, you know, nature sounds, Gregorian chant. It's got a, a yeah. Bunch of stuff in it. Um, and so I turn that on when it's time to write and then I let the spirit do the spirit's work.

Julia: Yeah. Yeah.

timone: Um.

Julia: It's actually what you're describing is a similar process to my own, so I think that's so beautiful that, you know.

Yeah. It's, it's, I mean, while we were both trained to preach at CTU, maybe that's part of it. That could, but I,

timone: that could be, you know, I was, yeah. It, it's funny, I was preaching before I got to CT U.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Yeah. And I

Julia: was too. Yeah.

timone: Which you, you know, people say, oh, that's 'cause your father was a [00:47:00] preacher. But I didn't know.

I, I hadn't, I don't ever remember going to. To my father's church when I was growing up, um, to hear him preach.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Um, and so when I connected with my father as an adult, um, I did so because I was at CTU.

Julia: Huh.

timone: And um, and then I went to hear my father preach. And one of the things that I was intrigued by.

And his preaching is that he, he doesn't use, he, he didn't use, uh, lofty words. Yeah. It was always reachable again. Yeah. And, and so for me, the preach word needs to be reachable.

Julia: Mm-hmm.

timone: Right. That, um, I agree. I, I preach to an intergenerational audience.

Julia: So

timone: it's not just a message for middle aged [00:48:00] people, it's not just what it's, what is God trying to say through me?

Um, and, uh, and I am never sure. Until it's, it's preached. Like I, I preach from a manuscript, I'm a manuscript preacher, and yet the Holy Spirit always finds some space in there for mm-hmm. Yeah. But we gonna say something else, or

we gonna say something extra. And I'm like, okay, well, it's your word, not mine.

Anyway.

Speaker 3: Yeah.

timone: Um, and, and so I, I think though. What's important is to let people know that it is the text that leads Right. That it's God who's leading through this, through this text and not, and not me. Yeah. Yeah. [00:49:00] You, you know, I'm very, I'm very clear in my preaching when it is about me. Yeah. Right. Like, this is happening to me, story coming through me or whatever.

But for the most part, I work to get out of the way.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Um, for of what God is trying to say.

Julia: Thank you. And isn't that the work of each of our lives? We're all trying to get out of the way of God.

timone: We trying, but man, you know, or just some days it's difficult.

Julia: Whew. Right. So maybe that brings us now, I mean, we're, we're at the end of our conversation and I'd like to ask you what, what you have to say about the Messi messiness of Gospel living.

What, what would you want our listeners to be pondering. Integrating into their lives

timone: first. Drop a notion of drop or eliminate, get rid of a notion of perfection. [00:50:00]

Julia: Yes.

timone: Um, how that entered into our lives. I have no idea. Um, but when, when I think about my own life and. The days that I snap off at somebody or the, the days that, um, compassion is at an all time low.

Um, I am reminded that this journey is not linear.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: It is, um, not always smooth. That when we are encountering another person, they're also encountering us. And I think that's something that we forget. Yeah, we always talk about the encount. [00:51:00] We're encountering someone else and what that other person is doing, but we don't always talk about what we're bringing to the encounter.

And so the messiness, um. It is, I'm a messy person. My life is, is sometimes running off kilter. And if I have to interact on one of my bad days, right on one of my days that I'm not feeling it on one of my days. That, you know, I just feel like the world is pressed down. Um, you, you, you know, as a, as a, a black woman in this world, sometimes.

You know, when you look at the news, you'll be like, dang, what else you doing to black people today? You know? Um, right. And, and then I need to encounter you. And I'm supposed to bring some aspect of hope just to, to be real, to understand that, hey, I don't have hope right now. I don't, I don't, I don't have a, a picture of [00:52:00] hope right now because this is what's happening to me right now.

Vulnerability.

Julia: Hmm.

timone: Our relationships will go a long way to understanding the mess we carry and the mess we encounter. Yeah. Right. If I can, again, let's, let's circle back to, can I name what I, what I'm dealing with?

Julia: Yeah.

timone: In a honest encounter with you. That opens the door for you to be able to name what you are dealing with

Julia: right

timone: or right.

And that's gonna come through our vulnerability. And vulnerability is messy in and of itself.

Julia: Yeah. It's, yeah. It's a, it's a powerful force though. I mean, we, that's the cross for us, right? Yes.

timone: That is the cross for us.

Julia: That is the cross of peace. [00:53:00] So Timone Davis, thank you so much for coming on Message Jesus business.

And to conclude, I just would like to give you a little space to share how our listeners can support you and your ministries.

timone: Oh my God. Come and be a student at the Institute for Pastoral Studies. No,

Julia: there you go. Yeah. Come and be a student. You know, it was the dean of your faculty that said you need to have the Timon on

timone: it.

It, it was right that, that was Peter. That was Peter Jones. But at Loyola University to Loyola University, Chicago, um, Institute of Pastoral Studies. Let me just say, um, all of our degrees and our certificates can be done online. So you do not have to move to, to Chicago. Um, but the, the other thing, um, is, um, trust that God is speaking to you.

Yeah. And that God is nudging you. [00:54:00] Understand that not everybody is getting the same nudge. So if you go and share that with your friend, they may not understand because it's not their nudge. It's, it's your nudge. Um, my podcast is Skinny Thoughts on Christ Peace. Um, we try to drop a episode like. Every couple of weeks.

I, I think we're back on cycle. Um, I do batch recordings, so I, I do, uh, a bunch of sermons all at the same time. Um, so check it out and, um, tell me what you think, right? Yeah. Send a, send an email to, um, Christ Peace. At gmail.com to let me know what you think of the, the, the podcast.

Julia: That's a perfect email address

timone: Christ piece.

Julia: How did you get that? Amazing.

timone: You know, it started as X piece because I didn't think people [00:55:00] were ready. Oh. And so it was, it was X piece.

Julia: Huh. And then

timone: I was like, no, if you're gonna do this, this god thing for real. Yeah. Then you need to, you need to put Christ. I will tell people though, it's grammatically correct.

The way it, it, it's spelled it's C-H-R-I-S-T-S. Mm

Julia: Christ.

timone: Peace at? At gmail. So say drop me a line. Listen to my show, drop me a line. Thank you so much, Julia, for, for bringing me onto your show to just talk about. Yeah. How God shows up in our lives. God is not waiting for us to be perfect. God is not waiting for us to, uh, set things right.

We can't do it without God. And God enters right into the messiness of our lives.

Julia: Amen. Amen. Thank you so much, Timone. You're welcome. God bless you and your ministry.

timone: Thank you. Blessings.

Julia: Yeah. [00:56:00] I think Colin's probably still around here. There you.