



## **Slowing Down by 5% | An Interview with Thomas Wirthlin McConkie**

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Speaker 1 00:00:02 Have you ever had a loved one leave the church and your relationship becomes awkward. This is so common and so sad. I got the chance to interview the Packard family who have been down this road. Cindy and Blair Packard are Orthodox believing parents and Josh, their son and his wife, have left the church. We came together to discuss their journey, and it was amazing what they taught. They talked about the communications that you regretted and how other siblings responded in positive and negative ways. They learned how to pick up the pieces. Again, express love, carry on, and build a beautiful relationship. This has become a favorite in the Questioning Saints Virtual Library. You can actually gain access to this [interview@leadingsaints.org](mailto:interview@leadingsaints.org) slash 14. This will give you 14 days to watch the Packards interview and many others related to helping individuals who begin to question their faith. Go to [leading-saints.org/fourteen](http://leading-saints.org/fourteen) and get access now.

Speaker 1 00:01:01 I would be rude if I didn't take the time to explain to the newer listeners what Leading Saints is. Here goes. Leading Saints is an organization that started as a hobby blog in 2010, and then really caught some traction in 2014 when the podcast started. We talk about all things leadership in the context of the Church of Jesus Christ, of Latterday Saints. We aren't owned by the church, but we have a great relationship with them and always aimed to be faith promoting even though we talk about the tough topics. My name is Kurt Francom. I'm generally the voice you hear as the host of the podcast. I've tried to get other hosts, but people demand my smooth tone and I really enjoy it. Check out [leading-saints.org](http://leading-saints.org) to really get into the weeds of what Leading Saints is and learn all about our mission to help Latter Day Saints be better prepared to lead.

Speaker 1 00:01:56 You know, when I have a return guest that it's gonna be a phenomenal episode, and today I welcome back Thomas Wirthlin McConkie, who is, uh, the author of a new book called *At one Mint*, embodying the Fullness of Human Divinity. And I always love my conversations with Thomas. Uh, we approach leadership in definitely a unique way. And I mean, really Thomas's faith and, and witness of the gospel is unique, uh, because it's not really how you hear it often or in a, in a sacra meeting or a Sunday school class, but it is so informative, it is so pure and enriching. I just love stepping into this mindfulness space with Thomas and exploring concepts of, of the gospel. I loved reading his book and it really got me thinking in a, in a new way about some of these concepts of love, light, heart, repentance.

Speaker 1 00:02:42 And it, I I recommend it for all leaders to check out and read. And especially for, you know, Thomas mentions this in the, our conversation is that, you know, that younger audience out there, the, the millennials and and younger, they may need a sort of a, a different voice as it comes to the gospel. The same gospel may be just articulated differently, and Thomas's work does such a remarkable service at providing that. And so maybe you can point into other individuals that you counsel with as leaders to some of Thomas's resources and, uh, I think they'll find, uh, enrichment there. They'll find a deeper thought, uh, deeper faith and encouragement in the gospel. I encourage you in this episode to definitely listen in for his story of going to general conference as a inactive young man and sitting and, and feeling the love and the long game love that he felt from his grandfather, who was an apostle, who had maybe every reason to be worried and anxious about his, his grandson that was maybe veering off the path, but how, uh, his love was one of many things that drew him back to the restored gospel and, uh, engaging with it in, in a different way.

Speaker 1 00:03:48 So you're gonna love this interview with Thomas Wirthlin McConkie, and here it is. I am excited to welcome back Thomas McConkie to the Leading Saints Podcast. Thomas, how are you?

Speaker 2 00:04:07 Hey, I'm good. Good to see you, Kurt. Thanks for having me here.

Speaker 1 00:04:10 And you are back east now doing some, uh, doing some schooling. Yeah,

Speaker 2 00:04:13 That's right. I've been in Massachusetts, Boston area for about a year and a half. I'm halfway through a three years master's degree, so it's That's fantastic. It's been really interesting. I'm looking into human development, spiritual flourishing, all the stuff that I think Latter Day Saints tend to be curious about and engaged in. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:04:32 In all your spare time, you've recently put a book together called *At One Mint*. Yes. The *Embodying The Fullness of Human Divinity*. I lost the subtitle there, <laugh>. And this, this is sort of as a spinoff of your, was it *Transformations of Faith* series that you did? It was a video series, almost like a masterclass, right?

Speaker 2 00:04:48 Yeah, that's right. *Faith Matters*. The foundation asked me to put together an online course, so, you know, video presentation that was pretty sizable. It was

probably, I can't remember, it might have been 10 to 12 hours of lecture or, you know, video. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And later on Bill Turnbull said, you know, these transcripts read a lot like a book. What do you think about, you think he got a book in you? And I worked with it for a couple years, and at one that came out of it, I think took the video presentation in new directions, and I'm still exploring what it all means. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:05:20 Well, I think I'm so glad you put it in book form. I think this is the, your perspective, your experience. It's so insightful that I think it just needs to have sort of that immortality of the written word and, and j McConkie and McConkie write books, right? <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:05:33 Yeah. We must, you know, they kick you outta the family if you don't publish by the time you're 35. I think <laugh>

Speaker 1 00:05:40 Nice. I love it. I love it. And I had to the privilege of, of reading the book, and, you know, I do a lot of reading on my exercise bike in the morning, and, uh, there's this moment and I usually put like, some instrumental music on, and sometimes the, the music is, you know, from a movie or other things, but getting into this book, I'm like, okay, this music is not working. And so I went over to like a, a spa meditative playlist. I'm like, yep, there it is. There it's, there it is.

Speaker 2 00:06:05 <laugh>. So Cool. Maybe you could share that with your listeners, the ideal soundtrack to read this book too.

Speaker 1 00:06:11 <laugh>. Yeah. Because I mean, you're obviously so thoughtful and meditative. I mean, <laugh> obviously. And so just like, just sitting with some of these concepts I sort of needed, I needed to clear my mind of any other noise unless it was sort of more calming and, and, uh, focusing so Well,

Speaker 2 00:06:26 I I'm happy to hear it had that effect on you. I, I hope it was edifying. So

Speaker 1 00:06:30 I love the title, obviously, uh, you know, it's a, a playoff of atonement and we've heard this, I think any,

Speaker 2 00:06:36 I heard this when I was, I heard this in Sunday school when I was seven.

Speaker 1 00:06:39 Yeah. You break the word up.

Speaker 2 00:06:41 Even at the time, I remember even when I heard it as a young kid, I'm like, wow, <laugh>. I was blown away by that.

Speaker 1 00:06:47 Yeah. Yeah. And, you know, and atonement is very much a latter day saint word, you know, I think if you said it to an evangelical or a Catholic, they sort of get what you're saying. But we've definitely sort of owned this word in our theology is, is that how you feel?

Speaker 2 00:07:01 I feel a lot of ways. I don't know. Okay. Alright. Let hear it. <laugh>, how much time you want me to spend on this? I mean, atonement, this is theological reflection that came many centuries after Christ's life. People, the early Christians and Jews didn't talk about atonement the way we do, but I don't think that should discourage us from talking about it. They didn't talk about golden plates either, right? Yeah, exactly. Or at least not the, uh, <laugh> not the mainstream even at the time. So I don't think we should shy away from new words and innovations in the tradition. And for me, atonement is, it's where I take it in the book. It's a really powerful invitation to join ourselves fully with God and with the divine life.

Speaker 1 00:07:40 Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:07:40 That's it. And that's, that's really been a north star for me in my life of faith. It's been, it's a very meaningful experience for me to notice when I feel at one with the divine and when I don't and when I don't, what can I do that would align myself more with the privilege of being a child of God? So it, it's very meaningful to me, and I hope it's meaningful for other people to explore.

Speaker 1 00:08:04 Yeah. So, you know, I, whenever I, we chat and do interviews, I realize it's always a fool's errand for me to, to prepare a list of questions that I'm gonna go point by point with Thomas about all these questions, because we always find unique places to go. And, and your insights are always so intriguing. And so I just, I wanna maybe try this mental exercises. If you were walking into a room full of latterday, Saint Lay leaders, bishops, stake presidents, relief society presidents, and the whole room is full, maybe a thousand of, of these leaders, and they're all looking at you like, just from your background, your perspective, like what message would you wanna start with as you, as you see that, that crowd of leaders?

Speaker 2 00:08:43 Yeah, thanks for that question. It's, it's something I love about you and your body of work, just how focused it is on leadership in the church and what a difference a, a sensitive, inspired leader can make to all of us. And we're all leaders, right? Yeah. We're all in that role. Yeah. To an extent, room full of leaders. I come in, well, I would start with any variation on the theme of how do we really come back into the body, come back into our divine embodiment, and how do we start to notice when we're lost in our thoughts, lost in kind of daydreams and anywhere, but the fullness of what's right here? I'm gonna talk a little bit, but as, as you listen and as people listen to this conversation, I hope they'll start by doing something as simple as like, finding their feet. It's like when I tell you to find your feet, it's like, okay, I know where my feet, I can feel them now.

Speaker 2 00:09:40 And oh, it's, it's kind of warm and tingly when I bring my awareness to my feet and I can, can feel my feet on the ground and I'm, whether I'm sitting or walking or whatever, you know, I feel the sense of being supported by the ground. And oh, then I can relax in my body a little bit. And, oh, when my body's relaxed, my heart starts to soften. I can kind of open my heart a little bit when my body's relaxed, when my heart is open, my mind is lucid. It's, it's even more alert than it was a few moments ago, but it might be more silent. What I hear from a lot of students, because I teach a lot of, I teach this, you know, human development, contemplation for a living. What I hear from students is the more they're just present in and

through their body, their divine vessel in their heart, the mind becomes more sharp, becomes more keen, but it also becomes more silent.

Speaker 2 00:10:28 And when the mind needs to boot up and be brilliant, well, that's what minds are good for. But we can learn to feel and think and know more through all of our faculties. And I think we're at a great advantage living in the fullness of times, and we're at a great disadvantage. The disadvantage is that someone or something is almost always trying to capture attention and get us to think about something and get us to do something. It's much less common in my experience, to be invited to like, just take a slow breath and to ground and to be still and know that God is God. So a lot of my adventure, my exploration and the gospel has been in that territory of really coming to know stillness at a deep level. And I've found that as I come to know stillness, my body feels more vibrant and alive.

Speaker 2 00:11:20 My heart feels more open and compassionate, and my mind works better when my mind is working. It's working better than it's ever worked. And when it's not working, it's, it's resting and it's getting ready to work when it's, when it needs to. So I would say to a coming back full circle to a room full of leaders, I would say that, you know, I'm serious about the subtitle of the book that the fullness to embody the fullness of our divinity is not even just a lifelong practice, but it's a, I believe it's something we'll be doing into the eons as divine beings. So why not start right now and like, really draw from the wisdom, the intelligence and divinity of the body and the heart, and not just make the mind the thinking mind of all the heavy lifting. So that's a big theme in the book. Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:08 You know, that concept of fullness is really intriguing. It's in the subtitle, right? Embodying the fullness of human divinity. Right. And, you know, I just, as I step back and just observe the, the theology that we have, and even, you know, the pinnacle of that theology being, the temple experience of being endowed from on high, from a divine being given identity. I mean, I mean, talk about fullness, like right. Not only do we, we may assume walking into that building that we're, that we're in a state of fullness, but then he'll say, oh, there's so much more space to make it more full. And it's a remarkable to, to just realize this, this is a theology of fullness, and, and God is offering us fullness. Right. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:12:47 Thank you. Amazing. Absolutely. And as you say that it occurs to me, we could do like just a little, like play a quick game kind of. Okay. And by game, I mean this book, I'm not pronouncing doctrines per se, that's not my intention in the book. It's not my business or my mantle my calling to do that. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But I'm inviting people to pay attention in a new way and to just see what divine realities reveal themselves when we pay attention in a new way. Yeah. That's it. So as a game, I would invite you to, just for a moment, anyone listening to just call to mind, call to heart, call to presence, somebody that you love very deeply. It can be more than one person, but one person helps us focus a little bit. Just any person. It can be a pet too.

Speaker 2 00:13:33 If it's a dog, an animal, just give yourself a moment to really call this, this being to presence and feel how unique your bond is with this being. It's one of a kind. There's no relationship like it in the whole created universe. And in the uniqueness of this

relationship, feel how much you love them. Just like no holding back. All the love you have is theirs. It's everything you, every good thing you have to give to them is forthcoming. And just feel how big, feel how immense that love is that you have for this being. And then as if it were coming from behind you as a support feel, the unsearchable, the infinite love of God that's actually moving through your unique vessel to love this being. In other words, it is by God's love that we love. And is there any boundary to that?

Speaker 2 00:14:26 Can we find the boundaries or the limits of God's immensity and love? And so for a moment to just open ourselves to the immensity of love, that my experiences, it's pouring through us right now. And in our unique way, we're offering this love to everyone and everything that we love and serve and take care of. And in just that little exercise, you start to get a taste. I start to get a taste of how full fullness is. Fullness is. It's bigger than I can say. Yeah. It's bigger than I can think. And I find it's an appropriate place. Many people find it a natural place to deepen their faith and their inquiry into the gospel from this place, not from a place. Some people orient to ideas more and theologies and doctrines, and that's great. And others like myself, maybe it's 'cause I'm left-handed, who knows? <laugh> like,

Speaker 1 00:15:20 Hey, me too. So there we go. Hey,

Speaker 2 00:15:21 There you go. So two lefties, but you know, we're all wired differently. And I find like, I actually quite like, like the intuitive open space of Yeah. You know, the, the exploration of sacred beauty, which I feel when I slow down a little bit.

Speaker 1 00:15:34 Yeah. You know, just like the thoughts that come to my mind just going through that exercise is that, like you said earlier, like there's this moment where like when we show up in life in diff different contexts, even in leadership context, we sort of, we turn on our brain, right? It's like, let's make sure we get a good breakfast and we're gonna fire our brain up on all cylinders. We're gonna handle problems and answer questions and do these things. But just going through that, and it's almost that grounding experience. It's almost like you, instead of turning on your brain, you turn on like that divine identity. Yeah. And it is, it's, you know, the fullness is, is such a great word because it's, it feels, it's not just my brain and my cognitive, you know, function that's happening, but it's my spirit, you know, it's suddenly God's light has opportunity to, to come through me and, and in. So it's very, it's, I mean, fullness is a great way to perceive it. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:16:21 Thanks for articulating that. I, as you speak, I get the image of a fire, you know? Yeah. If you've ever built a fire camping in the woods, in your backyard, wherever, you figure out pretty quickly, you need to find the balance between how much flame and how much wood, how much fuel. And you can quickly choke off a fire by throwing like too big a log too soon onto it. And I think many of us in this day and age have that relationship to the spirit, to God's immensity of love with our thinking about it. It's like, we feel some love and boom, we start to think about it. 'cause it, oh wow, this gives me so many ideas about so many things. And when I'm sitting, when I'm counseling with somebody that I, let's say I'm their leader and they look to me in my leadership position, it's a real discipline to like, let those flames of love really grow and become vivid before we throw just like a twig on just to like, give it a little, little kindling.

Right? Yeah. So in, in general, most people I meet say like, oh, I think too much. I didn't realize that. I think a thousand percent more than I actually need to, than is useful. And a lot of the book is just hope. It's to draw from scripture, from revealed doctrine, the ways in which we're encouraged in the gospel to embody our fullness. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:17:35 So I want to sort of pause and, and just consider maybe the type of people that are listening to this, uh, yeah. You know, in the leadership audience there we are in that room full of leaders and somebody raises their hand and says, all right, Kurt Tom was like, what are we doing here? Like this, come on. Like, this sounds a little bit too woo woo. I mean Yeah, yeah, mindfulness. Sure. But like, at the end of the day, like, we got the gospel, we got the things like, what are we doing here? Like, what's the point of all this? It just sound, I get lost in all the terms and right things. So I mean, how would you respond to that? And I'm just sort of considering that the potential audience that's out there,

Speaker 2 00:18:05 It's so happens that I get this question all the time from different people. Oh, cool. Think about, I'm, I'm in an image based mood today, apparently. 'cause I keep seeing images as you're talking, so I'll just trust it. But, um, nice. I think about my grandparents who spent a whole lifetime together and just how deeply they loved each other.

Speaker 1 00:18:24 And you have pictures of them behind you, isn't it? They're a little small

Speaker 2 00:18:27 On my screen. It's those, I do have pictures of my grandparents hanging over my head, just, you know, that's great. Inspiring me. And their love was very quiet, right? Like, when they had all the grandchildren over for a Sunday dinner or when I just like kind of caught a glimpse of 'em just together off in a corner somewhere in the house, the love that flowed between them. It was very silent. It's as if, it's as if after 50 years of marriage, you don't need a ton of commentary on like, are you feeling this right now? Are you feeling what I'm saying? They just know it. They embody the same space. 'cause they love is so deep, they've become one in their union. So, you know, to the, to the person in the crowd who says, what are we doing here? I would say we're allowing love to do love's work, to actually open our hearts and deepen us in my life.

Speaker 2 00:19:15 The most powerful gospel teachings have not come in the eloquence of what the person is saying. It's come from an intuition I have, like where they're saying that from the place, from their divine being, the place those words are coming from is what's moving me. And the words are just helping me notice that better. But I, I would suggest the more intimate we can become with this love and this quality of silence, the, the more force our testimony our witness has for other people. That's been my experience. You know, that's been a moving experience for me that I, I like to share with others. Yeah. Of course. We can use our words. Right. And of course, sometimes, you know, in a room of a thousand, a hundred of them are gonna be like, I still think I'm in the wrong room. You know, I, I dislike you a little bit less than I did 10 minutes ago, but I'm still in the wrong room. That's fine. You know, it's not, yeah. You know, we all have our own approaches. It's, this is not supposed to be some universal new approach to just like the, the wisdom of the gospel. Right?

Speaker 1 00:20:18 Yeah. You know, when you say allowing love to do love's work, like, so profound. And, and really, you know, we, we know we can encapsulate the concept of, of love in doctrine, right? We know the doctrine of love, the power of love love's all over in the scriptures. And so many times as leaders, we think, I gotta love my people. I mean, that's something we hear a lot on the Leading Saints podcast. When I ask people, how do you lead? And they always say, just love the people, right. In the song. Yeah. But that seems so fleeting. Like, okay, what, like, like you hug them a lot, or

Speaker 2 00:20:48 You like Exactly.

Speaker 1 00:20:49 What do you, and oftentimes leaders will default to this cadence of, well, no, I stand up in front of relief society and say, I just love you. Right. But I think what you're illustrating is just this process of like, no, actually this is like this grounding experience. Then, then, then love does the work. It's not you articulating the words that Yeah. That does the work.

Speaker 2 00:21:08 Yeah. No, thank you for that. Um, I, I explore this a lot in the book, what gets in the way of love, you could say. And what I find, like, yes, I've heard that response a lot too. Just love the people and tell me love them. But like, we also all have the experience when someone says, I love you, and it kind of registers a little shallow, like, oh, you're saying that 'cause I know you love me. I'm, you're not lying, but I'm not feeling it. It's not like bringing me to tears right now. Right, right. Yeah. And I think the difference is like when people are willing to be very vulnerable with themselves at the deepest level, when they're willing to lay themselves bare to divine love and to let that move through them. Because when we do that, we don't get to control the message.

Speaker 2 00:21:51 We don't get to dictate what we say or who we even say it to. Right. Love, love recruits us to do its work. So it's a very vulnerable thing. It's actually what I explore in the book is it's a very intense and vulnerable experience in the body to let ourselves be moved more by divine light and love. And certainly, I'm, I guess by some standards, I'm young by some, I'm old. But at my ripe age of 43, I'm, I look back on my life now and I think, wow. Like, I had no idea how defended against God's love. I was like, I thought I was doing the loving work, and I see all the ways I kind of tried to keep myself safe and control the message. So this is a path of infinite exploration, I think will never be done with it.

Speaker 1 00:22:40 Yeah. You know, where my mind goes is I'm just thinking of the leader who's like, I love who's listening to this thinking. I love everything that Thomas just said there. And I mean, this afternoon or this evening at seven o'clock, I got, I got an appointment with Sister Jones. And I don't know, like, I want her to feel that. Like, is there any like a, a crash course you can give us on just like, approaching these relationships, sometimes leadership relationships with that love or Yeah. Making space for it, what comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:23:10 Totally. Well, like, um, a number of examples of vulnerability that I avoid, and I've learned from experience doing this work that other people avoid going 5% slower. Right. Just it, what is it? Why should it be vulnerable for me to slow down and say less? I don't know why, but it is, whenever I go slower, it's as if like, whatever we were trying to protect and



defend by going faster and having all the right things to say it, they come to the surfaces, it's exposed. Do you notice, like, this is a random example, but directly related to your question. I think when someone says a prayer to, let's say close the sacrament meeting, and we all do this, it's not a kind of person, it's something that we all do. There are moments when like, we're willing to be more vulnerable, vulnerable and undefended. We run out things to say, but we have enough faith to just pause.

Speaker 2 00:24:10 It's like, I don't know what I'm gonna say next. And I'm in front, I'm at the pulpit. All these people are listening, I wanna sound good. Right. We get nervous. So, you know, there's a choice point there. We either keep talking and, you know, pray we rattle off some cliché just to break the silence. Yeah. Or in our better moments, I think we like realize like, oh, there's something powerful here. And I, I don't have words for it, but I'm gonna just give it an extra beat and see what comes through me. It, it's as simple as that. Like just slowing down and like letting silence make us a little nervous and uncomfortable and taking a breath. And maybe with, what was the sister you named? Sister, sister

Speaker 1 00:24:47 Jones.

Speaker 2 00:24:47 Sister Jones. How did I forget? Was Sister Jones? Even naming a moment of like, you know, I'm a little nervous right now. I don't even know what to say, but I want to say something that's true and honest. So instead of just saying something, I'm gonna just wait if that's okay. Something like that. And it, yeah. Anytime any gospel teacher has done that for me, and there have been many and they've changed my life, it's like the whole conversation, the whole room kind of goes chunk and it drops down to this deeper space of like, oh wow. Like, I feel like the quality of presence in this room between us just changed entirely because we took a risk to be a little bit more open towards one another. A little less offended.

Speaker 1 00:25:28 Yeah. That's really helpful. Just that slowing down 5% more and that can, can show up in, in many ways where you can reach for that in different ways of even I remember as a bishop, I, for whatever reason, I would set up my appointments at, at 30 minute increments. Right. And not, because, you know, usually that's just how long it takes. But, but sometimes there's this pressure of like, I have to take this person to the top of Mount Sinai and back down and solve their problem and read the scripture and do all these things. But even to just say, maybe I'm gonna space that out a little bit more and then, and then that'll gimme a little more confidence in slowing down 5% more. Right. So, but yeah. Any other thoughts or come to mind?

Speaker 2 00:26:05 Well, just, you know, another, another vulnerable thing to say is when we admit to someone like, I don't know the answer to this. Yeah. I don't know how to comfort you right now. I don't know how to lead you right now, but I have faith that God knows how to lead both of us. And then we, we wait and watch, you know?

Speaker 1 00:26:23 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:26:24 So those come to mind. Yeah. And this is not, that's really helpful. You know, this is not one size fits all. Not just telling people to slow down and chew slower and talk slower. It's not <laugh>, it's not that, it's to, it's to be honest with ourselves. Like when I'm with other people, am I willing to be vulnerable? Am I willing to be seen? Am I willing to be confused and lost, et cetera? Like all these experiences, we, we all are experts at avoiding Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, how willing am I to go up to the edge of my known world? And when I'm willing, in my experience, when I'm willing to go up to the edge of my known world, like something deeper takes over, takes, you know, once I'm completely out of my, you know, I'm into terror, incognito, is that the word <laugh>? Like all of a sudden something deeper comes through. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:27:13 Yeah. And, and, and it takes a bit of faith to do that, to slow down. 'cause know you wanna be the leader that is just fast with response in this scripture, and let's go here and, and there you go. Right. A, B, and C. That's the, the, you know, we'll see you next week or whatever <laugh>. Yeah, exactly. And then off the go. Yeah,

Speaker 2 00:27:27 Exactly. It's difficult. So sometimes knowing this experience of like saying, I know what to do, sometimes we just do, sometimes we just know. And sometimes we realize that knowing has been masquerading as knowing and actually that knowing is insecurity and it's fear and it's anxiety. And it's, I'm not willing to slow down because it's actually too intense to realize that I've been pretending to know more than I actually know.

Speaker 1 00:27:54 You know, there's digs my mind, and I'll just mention this, maybe it's meant to be, but the, an exercise I do, and I got it from a, a different author, he talks about this, the power of, uh, a list of 10 ideas. So whenever I'm facing a problem or I have a question, I, I force myself to sit down and, and write out 10 ideas as far as the next step or how I can approach it or whatever it be. And it's interesting to see what unfolds in that, because by idea number three or four, I, I actually have one or two ideas that are pretty solid that I can actually move, move forward with. Yeah. But by forcing myself to now, no, no, no, I'm not done yet. Yeah. I'm going to finish the list of 10 <laugh> and maybe there's 12, 15, 20. Yeah. I'm just gonna let that do that. And it's remarkable by the ninth or 10th line that I get to, not only is it a great next step, but I mean, there, it's sort of laced with revelation because it just opens up and like, wow, that is a phenomenal next step or a phenomenal idea. But if I didn't give the space of just slowing down and, and going through the whole process, I never would've gotten to that deeper revelation.

Speaker 2 00:28:57 Yeah. No, that's a beautiful example. I love that. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:29:00 You know, you, you mentioned your grandparents in the book, you'd tell a story about going to conference to hear your, your grandfather speaking conference. Yeah. Will you give us the, the circumstance of that and, and what you learned from that experience?

Speaker 2 00:29:11 Just 2008, I remember kind of being in between tours, like, you know, I was between Europe and China, my whole, the whole of my twenties. Yeah. I went to conference and my granddad spoke. It became a pretty wellknown talk come what may and love at least for the, you know, wir offic, certainly for our family. It became a well known dog.

Speaker 1 00:29:30 <laugh>. Yes,

Speaker 2 00:29:31 Absolutely. But, um,

Speaker 1 00:29:32 I was, and you were in the church at this time, right? Or you weren't active, quote unquote active,

Speaker 2 00:29:36 Hadn't, hadn't been in the church for 15 years at that point, a long time. And was really what really struck me, what touched my heart about that talk is it felt so familiar. Actually, I had a rare experience at that time in my life of feeling like I was at home when I was like at a church function. In this case it was general conference. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, uh, everything. My granddad said it, it spoke to my heart. And my heart told me that I, I know this what he's saying. I love, I love what this man loves. And that was one of those moments to, to have the experience of loving what a dear family member of mine loved. I was back home, you know, after all those years of being away and not feeling like I had a home. It really changed me. And, uh, it also evoked, I think, some of the deepest wisdom of Christ's teachings.

Speaker 2 00:30:27 You know, like, come what may and love it is a kind of, it's some kind of parallel phrase with thy will be done. Right. It's like, whatever comes up, I'm gonna just give it my whole heart and I'm gonna love it, even if it's not what I would've chosen for myself in this moment. Yeah. So there was the homecoming for me, there's that element, but then there was also just being laid bare by Christ's depth and his love that I felt in that talk. So that was, yeah, it was a special experience for me that I share about a little in the book.

Speaker 1 00:31:01 And, you know, as you, as you talk about your grandfather, and not only in this book, in other context, as we've had conversations that, I mean, as an individual who maybe had, you know, stepped away from the gospel and not the traditional route and sort of got on this, uh, you know, this journey around the world and learning about their mindfulness and Buddhism and all these things. I think there were probably many opportunities to classify your grandfather as far as, you know, especially an apostle. I mean, talk about Orthodox and, you know, he just doesn't get it or, but, but just these examples of you capturing like these moments of love and that, I mean, he really was just this being of love that when there was probably many, many ways you could maybe stretch it and fit him into the box of like, ah, you know, just roll your eyes at Grandfather. He goes again, you know, Mr. Apostle, or, you know, I mean he did really did was just a, a loving man that in hindsight you look back, that, that God was just showing up for you through him in unique ways. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:31:58 Thank you. Yeah. That rings true to my experience. You know, sometimes when we call, often I think when we call someone simple in modern English, it's pejorative. We mean that that person's like kind of slow or Right. Dimwitted, my granddad was a very simple man, and it was, it was actually in his willingness to be simple that I felt the deepest love. So I think just his influence really shaped the way I experienced the gospel and that that was a real juxtaposition. I admire many McConkie are gifted with quite keen intellects, um, Bruce r McConkie. Many know he had a very keen intellect, and I admire that gift very much. But it was interesting to see in my family those two kinds of gifts playing out like very keen

intellects, like doctrinally very sharp mind scripts and that kind of tradition in the McConkie family. And I think, uh, a tradition of simple virtue in the Wirthlin family. And we need both, obviously they're both, you know, equal gifts in God's eyes. And to me, like what really changed my heart was my grandparents' simplicity.

Speaker 1 00:33:09 Yeah. And, uh, I love reading about your story of just being, you know, what was the experience talking about? Like, you just wake up one day and you think I'm going to church, you know, and Yeah, you walk into this, this Yeah. LDS chapel, like here I am. I don't know why I'm here, but, uh, yeah. But I just love that that draw

Speaker 2 00:33:26 I was blown away. Yeah. No, and that's very much in the spirit of simplicity. Like it that was, and I, you know, for people listening, Kurt's referring to a moment, just a little vignette from the book where it was an utterly simple moment. I literally had no thought about it. I hadn't been to church in 20 years, and I woke up and I thought, wow, I'm, I'm surprised as anybody, but I, only thing I wanna do is go to church today, <laugh>. And that was the simplicity of God's love. It was too simple for even a thought. Yeah. Had I started to think about it, I wouldn't have made it halfway to church because it wouldn't have made any sense. So in that way, I think God blesses us with a, a love that's so simple, we can't formulate it in the mind.

Speaker 1 00:34:10 Yeah. And you know, going back to that leadership perspective, I mean, I think some leaders hear that like, alright, Thomas, tell us how we, how do we can that? And so that I can give, there's a lot of people in my ward that they just need to just, you know, wake up and come to church. So how do I do that? Yeah. There's like a deeper relational dynamic happening there. I mean, what comes to mind for leaders who are just desperate for, I mean, obviously we want individuals to just show up to church and fill his love and, and have that that ping in their heart, you know?

Speaker 2 00:34:35 Yeah. No, I, and what a, what a difficult job. So many leaders have to love their congregants, love the people and their ward families and their stakes. And, and to genuinely want them to be in the fold in the congregation and have no idea how that's gonna happen or what they can do to affect that. I can say, you know, not to get on too much of a, you know, my Wirthlin grandparents and that whole kick. But, um, another lesson I learned from my grandparents was what I've called in the past, the way they played the long game. I did not feel a shred of anxiety from them about what was going on in my life. Maybe they felt anxiety about me, maybe they didn't. But when I was with them, I sure didn't feel it. It was as if they had so much faith, and faith being, you know, in some ways a synonym of patience.

Speaker 2 00:35:28 When we have infinite faith, we have infinite patience. 'cause I, I already know what's gonna happen. I don't know when it's gonna happen or how, but I know what's gonna happen. I have faith. So I felt that that coupling of faith and patience with my grandparents and in that sense, like, you know, what was 20 years away from church, I'm not recommending people take 20 years away from the church or not, or don't, but what was 20 years in the eternal scheme of things. I think my grandparents better than most people I ever met on the planet, I think they had an idea of what 20 years was in the eternal scheme of things.

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, I think more than I do and more than many of us, they could see years and centuries and millennia in the way that God sees years and centuries in millennia.

Speaker 2 00:36:13 And so they, they gave me a lot of grace and a lot of space. And paradoxically that changed my heart instantaneously. Yeah. Yeah. It took no time for that to bring about a mighty change of heart. Yeah. So, I don't know how it works, Kurt <laugh>. I don't know how it works. That's cool. I just, yeah, exactly. But it does work something very, very deep. Yeah. Is working right now, working in US and through us and we, we call him Christ. Yeah. And my faith is deeper and more settled and more powerful when I take time to just slow down here and there and like reconnect. Like, oh yeah. I get so busy, you know, buzzing up here with all my ideas and everything I gotta do. 'cause everything I do is so important and it's all gotta get done. Yeah. When I just drop down and remember that it's like, oh, yeah. You know, like, I, I need to remember to play the long game. I had good teachers that showed me that. Yeah. <laugh>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:37:12 You know, you mentioned, uh, slowing down again and, and, you know, going back even further in our conversation as far as, you know, slowing down by 5% and another thought experiment that I, I'd love to like step into and just see what we could learn here because, you know, leadership can be such an, an administrative heavy experience I had Sunday morning. Gotta make sure the doors are unlocked, the lights are on, you know, chapel's ready to go. All right. Someone playing the, the hymns like, all right, we're good. I think, you know, here we go. Right. And when you sort get caught up in these steps. Right. And I would just be interested, like, what comes to mind, and I mean, I, I hope and pray there's a, a moment in time where, you know, Bishop McConkie exists as far as like you as a bishop. Like what would that board look

Speaker 2 00:37:52 Like? I'd, I'd be honored. I'd be honored someday. Kurt <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:37:56 Yes. Well, if, if, uh, there's an application process, I'm gonna send an endorsement letter with a, but, uh, but I'm just curious, like what would that look like or what perspective could you give to a leader walking into a typical Sunday where they're about to facilitate a sa meeting, where the most sacred emblems of that week are gonna be, you know, given to that, that congregation? And how do we slow down 5% there? Or how, I mean, what or what other concepts could we think about just sort of being the administrator of the gospel,

Speaker 2 00:38:27 The response that's coming up right now? I have a feeling you and the listeners might not like, oh, never even better. That's, nevertheless, nevertheless, this is the genuine response coming up that love it. I do not want to offer some formula of what some like future version of myself might do to open up a sacrament meeting. That would be just some idea and it would be some formula i, I appeal to. And like, once I have the formula, then I can finally just, then I just know. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And like part of this vulnerability is saying like, I'm not gonna know till I get there. It's when Nephi says, I was led by the spirit not knowing beforehand the things which I would do, or something to that effect. Yeah. It's very, it's naked, it's vulnerable. It's like, what am I doing here? It's like, why I'm bishop, are you kidding me?

Speaker 2 00:39:16 But to like actually relax into that intensity and anxiety, and again, this faith of, but I know something deeper is gonna come through me if I don't allow myself to be moved by anxiety and restlessness and my own vanity to try to be, to try to appear to others to be more put together than I actually am. If I can just let something deeper come through, it wants to come through. And let me add to maybe you guys, maybe this is the part of the response you might like. Um, okay. Yeah. Slow, slow down. Fine.

Speaker 1 00:39:48 I appreciate what you said. That's

Speaker 2 00:39:49 Good. Slow down, 5%, slow down, 50%, but then speed up. I'm not just here to offer some formula about we're all going too fast, we should slow down. Maybe that's true, maybe it's not. But I think it, from my experience, when I'm willing to go slow and feel something new and be moved in a new way, well, when I'm inspired, boom, I get up and I serve and I do something that's surprising to even me. And that might ask me to go really fast. This is not some like formulaic conversation about slowing down in the modern age that, I mean, just kill me right now. If that's what we're talking about, <laugh>. It's, it's deeper. It's, if we slow down, it will allow the spirit to speed us up in the moments that we need to speed up. And it'll allow the spirit to slow us down in the moments when we're going fast, just 'cause we're in that habit of going fast. So there's something about that, like, it's this dynamic equilibrium of life and the spirit being willing to go slow and willing to go fast. And I think proving those contraries, if you'll to borrow, you know, a phrase from Joseph Smith, when we prove both of those Aries, when we show our willingness to do both of them, that's in my experience, when the spirit can like really live through us in new and surprising ways.

Speaker 1 00:41:08 Yeah. You know, as, as you go through all that, and I'm not sure if this is what you're articulating, but this is what came up for me, is this, this sense of authenticity as, as a leader shows up on a Sunday morning. It's not about being prescriptive about this, how you handle it, and this is what you say or do, but, uh, to just be, be real in that moment and just be who you are presently. Yeah. And, and that's who the, you can offer to the ward. It reminds me of an experience when I was bishop and, uh, we had just had our, our son that week, and it led to, uh, he had some complications and he was, it led to 26 days in the nicu. Right. And that Sunday was ward conference where I was planning to speak, and I remember I stood up at the lectern and there I am, like, I'm just like overwhelmed by the worry of my little newborn son in the hospital.

Speaker 1 00:41:57 And, and here I am, you know, as the bishop and gotta give this talk. And I remember, uh, saying to the congregation, I have no business in talking right now because I am so broken and I'm so fearful and I'm, so, I don't know what to do. Yeah. Yeah. And that sort of became the launchpad of this, this talk where I articulated how the savior was showing up for me in that moment and, and Right. So, and it was such a healing, unifying experience for the war to see, to be the bishop that that was worried just as many, just as much as many of them in the, the congregation were worried about their own self, you know? So. Yeah. Exactly. Anyways, that's what came to mind, that authenticity of

Speaker 2 00:42:34 A leader. Yeah. Ex you know, I love that. That's such a moving story to me. And it reminds me of, you know, in some ways authenticity is a bit of a battle cry for the millennials. That's a word. <laugh>, I think its incident has increased 10000% this generation. Yeah. And that can evoke some eyerolling, some of it Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> narrative. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But it's also pointing to something deeply powerful that I think you're pointing to, like, to be authentic is to be, it's another way of saying honest, just being honest, not being a phony. And I think, I think that does matter, <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:43:09 Yeah. That's really powerful. So in this book, I'm trying to remember how old your kids were when you did the first, you know, the online series, but in this book, there's parenting moments that you recorded Yeah. <laugh> totally. And how your, this fullness of mortality was showing up in, in your role as a parent. Uh, yeah. What, what comes to mind? Like if you were speak to a group of parents and just sort of having that fullness in terms of parenting. Oh man. What, what comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:43:34 What comes to mind when you ask this very tired dad with a three and a half year old and a 1-year-old daughter now? The fullness of exhaustion, the fullness of frustration, the fullness of, you know, like uhhuh <affirmative>, it's super intense right now. You know, my kids, they show me right where I break, like every day they show me the, the upper limits of my patience and my love. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and all that stuff. So parenting is a recovery practice for me. It's, it's noticing like I run out of patience and noticing, like, hopefully I don't spend too much time in that space where I've run out of patience and then realizing like, oh yeah, I need to learn to bring, you know, more grace and more love to this moment to myself, to my kids. So, you know, <laugh>, if I'm totally honest, uh, parenting right now is like just showing me, you know, moment after moment holding up a mirror to me in all the places I need to grow, all the ways that life, all the ways that God is asking me to grow. And it's, it's painful. Yeah. It's sweet growth. It's painful growth.

Speaker 1 00:44:44 Yeah. My experience, you know, and I, I resonated with a lot of the examples you gave in the, the book, but just this, this new perspective of, you know, we, we go, we started in our life sort of in this, I'm the child, God's the parent, and then suddenly you're the parent to the child, and you gain a different level of empathy and understanding of God because you're in that role and that fullness is, is interpreted differently. That's been my experience, so

Speaker 2 00:45:09 Yeah. I love that. No, it's, it's really powerful. Yeah. I think being a parent is, you know, it's changed my ideas about what parenting and what divine parenting is, so Yeah. For, for those of us who are lucky to have our own children or adopt or to raise anybody in anything as a divine experience, I think. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:45:28 And in terms of relationship, I wanna maybe spend a few minutes on this because in the book you talk about it's a vulnerable moment of you talking about some counseling you and your wife received. Yeah. <laugh>, uh, just in the dynamics of being married. Right. Like, and that

Speaker 2 00:45:42 Was such a millennial moment when I read the, uh, galleys. I'm like, the first page of that chapter is like a transcript from a therapy session. That's such a millennial thing to do, like to just like tell everybody about my therapy session.

Speaker 1 00:45:53 That's right. Well, therapy's cool,

Speaker 2 00:45:54 But then I thought it was for the greater good <laugh>

Speaker 1 00:45:57 <laugh>, it is for the greater good. I appreciate it. And I don't know if you need to, uh, tell that story to put it in the context, but I'm just thinking in terms of as leaders, we're in the business of relationships, whether it's, uh, relationships with those that we lead in our, in our ward. Or another thing that came to mind is helping individuals who are really struggling with their relationship with the church right there. There's that, that dissonance, that discontent that, that they feel of like, I don't know if I can show up here on Sundays. Right. And I guess you Right, that was similar to your story as, uh, yeah. As you, uh, in those teenage years. Right. But what comes to mind as far as relationship and the fullness or, or mindfulness that we can understand in that context?

Speaker 2 00:46:36 Yeah, so, you know, I moved to the United States from China in 2011 and just, you know, spontaneously got involved in this, you know, informal ministry work of spending all my time with people who had troubled relationships with the church. And I think that happened because that was so much my story. It was very easy for me to identify with and empath, empathize with. I'll bring this full circle. You know, we're talking about the fullness of our human divinity embodiment. Certainly what I realized after having hundreds, maybe thousands of conversations with people who are struggling in faith, struggling with their relationship to the church, I realized at a fundamental level, if I did nothing but just resonate with them, I mean, at the level of our physical bodies and an image I like when you push, I don't, I'm not a musician, but if you push the left pedal on a piano down, is it the left pedal that lifts all of the pedals? Or is that the right pedal?

Speaker 1 00:47:42 Uh, I think the left pedal's the soft pedal. Right. <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:47:44 Oh, thank you. We got someone more accomplished than me at the piano.

Speaker 1 00:47:48 I'm a piano lessons drop out, so

Speaker 2 00:47:50 Okay. Same. Okay. We've revealed ourselves, but there's a pedal on a piano. It lifts all the hammers off the strings uhhuh. So that like, once those hammers are lifted up, the strings are sensitive to any sound in the room, if you like, kind of sing into them, they'll start to vibrate. Right. Yeah. So what I realized after doing hundreds of conversations with people who were thinking about leaving the church, have left the church, have left the church, but are contemplating coming back the whole spectrum, I realized like a piano, if I just kind of lift those dampeners off the strings and I just let anything they're sensing, anything they're feeling just vibrate through me, that they will feel that accompaniment and that God will take care of the rest of that. Maybe God will give me something to say. Maybe God won't give me something to



say, but just the accompaniment, the the experience of feeling felt was actually healing for people.

Speaker 2 00:48:44 Mm. And I learned to let go of any claim to the results after that. I just, I could feel something divine working through us and edifying us both if I was willing to just be so open and without answers, unless an answer came that they would actually have the experience of like, wow. Like I am felt I'm known. And of course, the experience of feeling felt and knowing that we're known is the experience of being loved by God. So what could possibly go wrong if, you know, I'm able to just like, give people a thimble full of that experience of like, wow, I really feel, felt and known again, maybe there's more to this whole divine love thing than I thought. Hmm. That was an experience I had just over many years. I mean, I've been doing this work for 13 years now, and it really strikes me how, how profound it is and how much action is not occurring at the level of what we're saying. Right. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:49:43 Yeah. And, and again, going back to what you said earlier, just allowing love to do love's work and, and it really does the heavy lifting, you know, that's the, the beauty of it is Yeah. And that's the savior is the one doing the lifting, right. That Yeah. It's his, it's his yoke that we're in and thank you. And he's the one carrying us. Right.

Speaker 2 00:49:59 Yeah. No, you said it, that's the tagline for this whole conversation. Yeah. You know, to let love, love do the heavy lifting. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:50:06 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:50:07 And that's scary, you know? Mm-Hmm,

Speaker 1 00:50:09 <affirmative>. Yeah. Because we don't have control, right? We don't know <laugh>, we don't know how to

Speaker 2 00:50:12 Love. Love has very different ideas about how to get things done than I do often. It's scary. Like in theory, my ideas should be very similar to love's Ideas <laugh>, but in practice they're very different. <laugh>. Yeah. Right. That's disturbing to me. Like, how could love make that call? It's, you know.

Speaker 1 00:50:30 Yeah. And that's why I find <laugh>, I find

Speaker 2 00:50:32 That I think we can all relate to that as leaders <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:50:34 Yes, absolutely. And, uh, I love that part about your story and, you know, putting, you know, contemplating the perspective of your grandfather and your story of, you know, there were probably those scary moments of like, okay, what's Thomas doing? Oh, he's moving overseas. Yeah. Like now we've really lost him. Like, and when we're scared, that requires faith. And to see that long game, that faith that came in there, but then it worked. But I can see, you know, lots of people can look at your journey, be like, no, no, no, no. Thomas life was not that did not, that was not what you should have done, you know, but it's like, but look,

like, look at the result. Like, look what God has done. And, and his queries may manifest through that. It's beautiful.

Speaker 2 00:51:14 And I think, yeah. And I think, you know, I think both those perspectives are valid. I, I did some things I shouldn't do and Sure. And love is so awesome and forgiving that, you know, if, if we can reflect that just a little bit more to each other. Yeah. I think we all end up, I think we're all doing better than we fear <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:51:31 Yeah. Yeah. I, I think so. I hope so. That's,

Speaker 2 00:51:39 I I have, so that's, that's my feeling about it.

Speaker 1 00:51:42 That's cool. Any other principle concept story that we, that you wanna make sure as we consider this, uh, you know, this audience of leaders in front of us, uh, anything else that comes to mind that we wanna make sure we, we share before we wrap up? Or what do you think? Well,

Speaker 2 00:51:55 Same question to you two, Kurt. I'm just feeling the richness of the conversation. I love the notes you've hit and I love this conversation. You're one of, this is one of my, you know, unique opportunities to speak to a leader about church leadership. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, I really appreciate it. I, I appreciate so much what leadership does and how unique the challenges are right now in this generation. There. I think it's a new order of challenge than we've ever seen. Yeah. And that comes with a new order of opportunity. So it's, it, I feel really blessed to just be in the questions with you because I, I just feel in my heart right now how much I care about these same questions. So I'm grateful for your company in that.

Speaker 1 00:52:36 Awesome. Well, thank you. I guess the, well, I, I'll ask one more question, but if people do wanna check out the book and, and really jump in. 'cause I mean, we've not even scratched the surface on some of the points and principles that, that you talk with. I think it's, it's time well spent for people to check out and, and, uh, contemplate, uh, yeah. The words about this, you know, fullness of human divinity, where would you send people or if the people wanna learn more about you and

Speaker 2 00:53:00 Yeah, thank you. I mean, I would absolutely send people to DT book. I got news from the publisher a few weeks ago that Desiree book has picked up at one minute, and I'm thrilled because it's, it's a new kind of book, you know, like you said at the beginning of the conversation, like, Hey, this feels a little woo. And, you know, there <laugh> and you know, I agree, it can get confused with that. But to me, like it's my authentic expression of what Christ's love and gospel is doing on the planet right now. And I've found this language and this approach to be especially resonant with millennial, gen z, gen Alpha coming up quick on the heels of Gen Z. It's, uh, I found it to be a very powerful pastoral toolkit to engage upcoming generations. So I would check out Desert Book and send them a message like, yeah, this is different, but it's good different, and it's helping us do what we do. Yeah. I hope that's the case. It has been for me. Awesome.

Speaker 1 00:54:01 Well, the last question I have for you, and maybe I wanna put you in a context of if your great grandchildren were listening to this and Oh, listen to, to

Speaker 2 00:54:09 They are McConkie Yes. And they're in a meaning in a meaningful way. They are. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:54:13 Yeah. I mean, and you were to respond to the question like, what does at One Mint mean to you? How would you respond to that?

Speaker 2 00:54:21 Oh man, no one. That's such a lovely question. Thank you for invoking my, did you say great grandchildren?

Speaker 1 00:54:27 Yeah, sure. Or great, great or great great

Speaker 2 00:54:30 <laugh>. Keep going. I mean, that's such a beautiful thing to ask and it tunes me into them in a way that I haven't tuned into before. Love is such that love is so awesome that in love, past, present, and future are gathered. So when, when we're really in love and letting love do love's work, everything we've ever loved is already right here. The fullness of everything, the fullness of times, the fullness of the gospel, the fullness of love is right here. And we can draw from it. We can actually live our way, our lives in a way that draws from this inexhaustible source. And I believe it's this divine love that's building God's kingdom, that's building Zion. And somehow, and this is hard to believe, like love needs us. It's not just that we need to love more and we need to love each other as a command. It's that love needs us to be love's means. And that is a stunning reality in Christ's gospel.

Speaker 1 00:55:41 Now that we've reached the end of the episode, I quickly wanna thank you for supporting the Leading Saints podcast. There's so much content out there to consider, and you picked this one. If Leading Saints has made an impact in your life, we would sure like to hear about it at [leading.saints.org/contact](http://leading.saints.org/contact). And if you could quickly text or email this episode to a leader, you know, I bet it will bless their life. You can mark off your good turn daily and let's even call it ministering. Okay. Maybe not that far, but seriously, thank you. And help us share this content. Remember, go to [leading.saints.org/fourteen](http://leading.saints.org/fourteen) to hear the Packard family's experience of when loved ones leave the church.

Speaker 3 00:56:29 It came as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of Heaven, who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the Declaration was made concerning, the only and only true and living church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness. The loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away. And to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.