



Making Church Approachable | A How I Lead Interview with Shawn Edwards

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Speaker 1 00:00:03 Attention Youth Leaders, if you have recently been called to lead the rising generation, I have a next step for you. Listen to an awesome presentation by Yvonne Hubert and Peter Vidmar, who are both respective members of the young Women and Young Men General Advisory Council for the church. Their presentation really helps clarify ways on how to effectively lead the youth using the Children and youth program. They also cover topics like youth led groups, how to lead through personal ministry, how to meet youth, where they are identifying the youth strengths and capacities. This presentation is part of the Young Saints Virtual Library, and you can access it at no cost by going to leading-saints.org/fourteen. Again, simply click the link in the show notes or go to leading-saints.org/one-four.

Speaker 1 00:00:58 So my name is Kurt Francom, and I am the founder and executive director of Leading Saints, and obviously the host of the Leading Saints podcast. Now, I started Leading Saints back in 2010. It was just a hobby blog, and it grew from there. By the time, uh, 2014 came around, we started the podcast, and that's really when it got some, uh, traction and took off. Uh, 2016, we became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and we've been growing ever since. And now I get the opportunity of interviewing and talking with remarkable people all over the world. Now, this is a segment we do on the Leading Saints podcast called How I Lead, and we reach out to everyday leaders. They're not experts, gurus, authors, PhDs. They're just everyday leaders who've been asked to serve in a specific leadership calling. And we simply ask them, how is it that you lead? And they go through some remarkable principles that should be in a book that should be behind a PhD. They're usually that good. And, uh, we just talk about, uh, sharing what the other guy's doing. And I remember being a leader just simply wanting to know, okay, I know what I'm trying to do, but what's the other guy doing? What's

working for him? And so that's why every Wednesday or so we publish these How I leads segments to share.

Speaker 1 00:02:38 Today I'm in Denver, Colorado, or better say, is this Arvada, Arvada Arvada? I gotta really turn up my Utah accent, Arvada, Colorado. But you say it with an Accent or Arvada. That's right. Right. Absolutely. Yeah. Well said. Now, now you, you are from Utah. I am. But you made it here to, to, uh, Colorado. I did <laugh>. Nice. And you love it. I do love it. Yeah. It's good. And you are the Bishop of the Arvada, uh, Arvada. <laugh>. First word, Arvada. Arvada.

Speaker 2 00:03:05 Arvada. First word.

Speaker 1 00:03:06 That's the last I'll say it. So, okay.

Speaker 2 00:03:07 Good. <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:03:08 And how long have you been the bishop?

Speaker 2 00:03:10 Uh, about two and a half years.

Speaker 1 00:03:11 Nice. Love it. And you, uh, extended the invitation to, uh, have me come here and do a, a fireside, which I did last night. And, uh, it was a lot of fun. Great. Ward. That's fantastic. And I, and I got to attend your ward as well, so this is like a really in depth how I lead interviews. Like I, I'm like going into the experience, I'm experiencing your ward, then we're gonna talk about it, and it was a great experience. That's good. So I wouldn't have asked you to record if it wasn't <laugh> and others will. Sometimes I just don't have time to record if somebody else. Anyways, I'm probably setting myself up. But, um, and, uh, maybe just tell us about a little bit of your background. What, what, uh, makes Sean,

Speaker 2 00:03:51 Uh, my background. So I actually grew up in Sandy, um, Utah. Uh, interestingly, or one unique thing about me is, uh, I didn't grow up in the church as the saying ghost. Um, oh,

Speaker 1 00:04:01 Really? I didn't know that. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:04:03 I was, uh, grew up in what would probably be termed or defined as a part member and or less active family. Um, interestingly, I was baptized at age eight, uh, largely under the influence of my grandparents were very devout members of the church. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, but between the ages of eight and call it 18, I think I stepped into church once. So as an 18-year-old, um, I knew nothing about Joseph Smith. I heard his name. Couldn't have told you anything about him. I had a book, a Mormon collecting dust somewhere. But, um, I was a freshman at University of Utah, completely miserable. So you

Speaker 1 00:04:38 Did do the seminary thing? No. At school?

Speaker 2 00:04:40 Never. Never once. Wow. Never once. Um, I was a freshman at University of Utah, was really unhappy by nature. I'm a very analytic nerd. Started to analyze my life and felt like, wow, well, I don't really have any religious influence in my life, so maybe I should check into that. So I actually, um, perhaps being very analytical, I started studying a lot of different religions. I went to a bunch of churches around the valley after about six months, didn't really find what I was looking for. And my very best friend, whose name is also Sean, he does spell it the wrong way, though <laugh>, um, was about to leave on a mission, invited me to his farewell. And using the nomenclature that we used in those days, I kind of thought, well, technically I'm Mormon. Maybe I should go to that church. So, um, three days after his farewell, he, I was seeing him off at his house before he went to the MTC, and he put his arm around me and said, I want to challenge you to read the Book of Mormon and pray about it and ask God if it's true. Wow. That's what I did, and I got an answer. And here we are.

Speaker 1 00:05:43 And then that sent you off into your own mission then? Yeah,

Speaker 2 00:05:46 I literally left on my own mission one year to the exact day later.

Speaker 1 00:05:49 Wow. So you, you were in Yeah. And, uh, you went to Guatemala? I did. And great experience and fantastic. And from that point, I mean, you've been in ever since.

Speaker 2 00:05:59 Yeah, I'm all in,

Speaker 1 00:05:59 All in. That's awesome. Now, um, is there a story to being called as a bishop?

Speaker 2 00:06:05 Yeah, I think a little bit of one. Um, I actually was called, um, I, I think one thing that's interesting about when I was called to be Bishop is I was called about eight weeks before I was sustained, man, at least six. So I had a lot of time to think about it and pray about it and freak out about it. It's long, six weeks long,

Speaker 1 00:06:24 <laugh>. Oh my

Speaker 2 00:06:25 Goodness. Yeah. So, um, that was a bit unique, but,

Speaker 1 00:06:28 And what, like, tell, tell me about those, those weeks. Like what process did you go through or what were you mulling over?

Speaker 2 00:06:34 Uh, great question. So I, um, probably because I'm really highly analytical, I spent a lot of time thinking about where my ward was at and, um, trying to figure out what it is that, uh, we should do as a ward. Um, you know, to set the context, we were just coming out COVID. Um, I personally felt at the time we were really, uh, kind of focused on all the wrong things. Like there's a lot of the controversy around, you know, mass or no mass vaccine or no vaccine. Mm-Hmm. And I felt like we weren't really focused on, um, Christ, which is obviously what it's all about. Yeah. Um, I also felt like Covid was massively disruptive in a lot of other ways. Like, you know, we'd been going to church on computer screens for two years, and so we weren't really doing anything. Um, and perhaps because we were gonna church on

computer screens for two years, there was a lot of, no one was really connected in the ward. Um, we had a lot of people that had moved into our ward over Covid, and no one really knew who they were because there was no interaction. And so, um, as I focused on those things felt like, wow, what my ward really needs is unity. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so let's focus on that. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:07:41 And Unity's, that one of those principles that every word's sort of striving towards that. Uh, and, you know, you think, well, maybe it's more activities, maybe it's more, uh, you know, munch and mingles after, you know, so how do you, like, it's such a elusive, uh, principle. So how did you get after it?

Speaker 2 00:08:01 Uh, great question. So the, the context I'll give you is I've been in brand marketing for a couple of decades Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and love it. And love brands and love the power of branding and certainly believe in it. And so, as I thought about how do I communicate the concept of Utah, of Unity to my ward, um, I actually decided to brand it. And so this is so cool, <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:08:26 'cause I got a T-shirt.

Speaker 2 00:08:27 You do? Yeah. Yeah. So, um, I decided to brand our ward and, uh, I was remembering the story of Enoch and, um, the concept of becoming one. And so, uh, I perhaps fortuitously, because we're rather about a First Ward, the concept became were ar v of won. Yeah. So since that period of time, I refer to our award as ar v of one. And, um, no good brand, uh, exists without a logo. So I had a logo designed Uhhuh, and in my personal opinion, you can't really have a brand until you have it on a T-shirt. So everybody's got a Novato one T-shirt. Yeah. So do you actually I do. You're part of the

Speaker 1 00:09:02 Craft. I am. And this was cool to see at the fireside, like people, it, it was a casual fireside in the, in the culture hall and people from your ward showing up in this T-shirt. Yeah. And again, it's, it's not like there's something magic about the Cotton in the T-shirt that, but it,

Speaker 2 00:09:15 Uh, no, they were

Speaker 1 00:09:16 Cheap. It's a symbol. <laugh>. Right. It's a symbol of like, this is, this is my team, this is my ward. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:09:21 Yeah. That's

Speaker 1 00:09:22 Powerful. Yeah. And now this concept of branding, I think it would be worth, I mean, we're two marketing geeks, and so where they get it. Yeah. Like, but most people don't, they don't realize the water they're swimming in. Like when you, even when you walk into Walmart or McDonald's, like, there's a feeling there that if it was any bit different or if they just took a, a target and put a Walmart sign on, like it would be like, something's off here. And so the brand is so crucial and there's, I mean, there's departments in the church that handle the branding of the church. Sure. And when you see general conference, you know, there's certain,

there's just a brand there. Right. And so like, what could the lay leader better learn? I mean, other than get a logo and print t-shirts, <laugh> <laugh>. But I mean, what, how can, how can we process this concept of creating a brand? And then how do we, how do we establish it?

Speaker 2 00:10:11 Yeah, great question. Um, well, aside from a logo and t-shirts, uh, I think that, I mean, ultimately a brand represents a collection of thoughts or perceptions about a specific thing, right? Oftentimes a product or a service. So I think as we think about our wards, what are the thoughts and perceptions that we want our members to have about our ward as a collective group? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. And so in our particular case, you know, we were lucky to have to be the first ward and be able to use the word one as opposed to maybe, you know, the R added 12th ward, so to speak. But by way of communicating one, um, we went about trying to alter the perceptions of the time and talk about how we were gonna work together as one to be at one with Christ. And so, um, I do think that we were able to influence the perception of we're gonna work together, we got each other's back. Um, we're gonna focus on supporting each other as we do this. And, um, I do think that there was a mental shift for how, uh, our members actually perceive us as a ward. I think having a conscious discussion or, um, putting conscious thought into what do we want our award to stand for, and as a re and what are we gonna do in order to actually drive those perceptions and drive those associations, I think is worth thinking about. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:11:32 So in the beginning, were there like, uh, like meetings or like you gathered 'em all together and sort of went through those values of what the brand means? Or how did you, what did the, the, the step by step there?

Speaker 2 00:11:43 Yeah, great question. I think, um, so it started with on the day that I was sustained and the, you know, the talk that I gave, or the words that I offered as we close the meeting. Um, that was when I first introduced the idea. I referred to the Ward as Arvada one. Um, and since then, um, I have, whether it be an email communication or in communication I make to the ward, I always refer to us as that. And then I always, um, talk very openly about, um, what it means to act as one. And, um, so I reinforce it every chance I get. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, um, there wasn't really, it was admittedly a concept that I came up with and that I primarily drive, but, um, I think I have definitely seen it take root and seen people actually act in accordance with it. So if you think about branding as a discipline, you know, this, um, everything's about the touchpoint, right? What are the touchpoint that people are having with your brand, and what do they actually, um, take from those touchpoints? And, um, so in our case, we're, I particularly am pretty conscious about making sure that people, um, take away what we want to stand for when they do have a touchpoint with the ward or a member of the ward or so forth.

Speaker 1 00:12:52 Yeah. And then once it's established and it's sort of going, how do you get it from not fizzling out that people are like, oh yeah, they're, remember those T-shirts? Yeah. You know, like, how do you like, keep it going?

Speaker 2 00:13:02 That's a great point. Um, so there's two T-shirts. We've actually done it twice now. Um, I may or may not have plans for third one. Ooh. But I do think, um, you know, in

printed materials, we'll put the actual name of our word and refer to our, you know, if there's an activity flyer, it's, you know, presented by the Arvada first Ward of the Arvada Colorado stake And then, but the Arvada one logo still lives at the bottom. Yeah. Um, uh, so I think that, um, you know, really a marketing plan is driven by making sure that, um, touch points do exist over the course of a year. And so I definitely try to interject them along the way. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:13:41 And then you've also made these attempts to, uh, I don't know if branding's anything, but as far as like different challenges and things, the, the, like the 90 day book warming challenge, <laugh>, tell us about that.

Speaker 2 00:13:51 Yeah, so, um, I talked about how when I was first called, I felt like we weren't really focused on Christ. And so one of the initiatives, if you will, to really get us focused on Christ and thought first year was I challenged the Ward to, um, read the Book of Mormon in 90 Days. And I wanted us to focus on doing it together, uh, as one. So, you know, we printed calendars and created cadence and, um, we even instituted a way to have, um, people share what they learned as they read every day, whether that be through GroupMe or some other communication vehicle. Hmm. And, um, but I wanted, I wanted to be memorable, like a brand, and I wanted, people wanted it to be a handle. Uh, and so I branded that challenge, the bomb 90 <laugh>

Speaker 1 00:14:34 And the Bomb 90. And so

Speaker 2 00:14:35 It, so good, uh, um, kind of caught fire. I actually had a priest just yesterday say, Hey Bishop, when's the next bomb? 90. Nice. Um, so love that. We've actually done that twice too. We're not gonna do that this year. But

Speaker 1 00:14:46 Yeah, because I think it sort of reframes it, like, 'cause obviously there's the challenges, you know, the Bishop's challenge of redoing <inaudible>. Yeah. But it kind of creates it more of like, this is like sort of a movement that we're doing. We're all coming together doing a bomb 90. Yeah. And, and it makes it fun. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:15:00 It was, it's been a ton of fun.

Speaker 1 00:15:02 Anything else like that that you've done that would be worth mentioning or,

Speaker 2 00:15:05 Uh, yeah. Um, I don't know this is the greatest brand name in the world, but in order to, um, drive Temple attendance, we created, uh, faith Fridays. So the Faith Friday is, um, we set up obviously an appointment at the Temple. We get people to, we come to somebody's house, usually my house, we have dinner together, and then we go to the temple together. So it's a way to really drive, um, temple attendance and at the same time connect with each other socially and so forth. Then they've been a big hit. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, but in, in the interest of keeping 'em memorable, like we call 'em Faith Friday. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:15:35 Is there anything to, uh, worth mentioning as far as your, uh, engagement with the, the, uh, the organizational leaders Corp president, uh, el, uh, relief

Society president as far as keeping them engaged or, you know, with, with some of these efforts or helping them do their own thing?

Speaker 2 00:15:52 Yeah, I think so. Um, through the course of my career, I've learned a lot about the power, the power and influence of empowerment in leadership. Um, and so I admittedly don't dictate a lot of what they do. Uh, I give suggestions and, or maybe, um, you know, ask them questions to explore things that they might consider. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But at the end of the day, they've been set up either hold, keys have been set up, set apart through keys, and they absolutely should be empowered and supported to do what they feel like they need to do. And so that's been the approach that I feel like I've taken. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:16:23 And you, uh, referenced this principle of, uh, uh, uh, we not, I, and this sort of feeds into a lot of what you've already said. Is there anything else in that principle that's worth unpacking? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:16:34 The concept of we not, I, I think is, I think I'm wired that way. Like I've always just taken the approach of I'm not really focused on me, I'm focused on the we mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and what is it that I can do to help support other people in what they are trying to do. So, um, you know, if my relief society president says, Hey, we want to do this, we wanna do X type of activity, or whatever the case may be, my typical approach is, great. Go. What do you need from me? Um, so I tend to approach situations through the lens of what can I do to support the we, um, as opposed to taking, as opposed to focusing on, you know, what does the Bishop want? Or what does the Bishop think? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, at the end of the day, I'm just Sean and I'm just trying to do the best I can and, um, I just wanna be able to support others.

Speaker 1 00:17:21 Yeah. Are there any examples that come to mind as far as, uh, situation, uh, that you had a fallback on that principle?

Speaker 2 00:17:30 I think there's been a range of activities and or a range of, uh, initiatives that are, that our organizations have taken over the last couple years where I have, it may not have been what I wanted to do or what I thought would be the best thing to do, but, um, I feel like what, by applying the principle, we not, I am more focused on just supporting them and what they want to do. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, um, you know, and I remember when I was first called the Relief Society wanted to do a relief society birth, birthday party activity. And I remember I'll be very transparent thinking like, I wonder how many people would come to that. Um, and, but at the end of the day, I felt like this is what they want to do. It's my job to support them. Um, even so much that one of the games was pin the wig on the Bishop. And for those of you, since nobody can see me, I'm totally bald. So, um, it was all about pin the wig on the bishop that day. So anyway, <laugh>, I do think it's just looking beyond what I may want and, um, focusing on what others may feel like is best to think is one way I try to demonstrate that. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:18:25 And that's an interesting thing in contrast with the branding thing. 'cause sometimes people can go too far into the brand where they're like, it almost becomes a mechanism to micromanage, right. That, oh, that's not, that's not according to our brand. So you

gotta figure yourself. Right. But to say that's our general brand, now you live within that world and you do what you need to do. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:18:44 Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. That's well said there. There's not a Novato one brand book. Right.

Speaker 1 00:18:48 <laugh> <laugh>. Nice. Um, anything else, you know, this related to we, not I, but, uh, you're a big proponent of servant leadership, something you do in your business and also at at church. Any, any, any principles there as far as like what that looks like or how you co constantly remind yourself of being a servant leader?

Speaker 2 00:19:07 Yeah. I think, um, you know, the way that I define leadership, at least within the context of being a servant or servant leadership, is that, um, leadership is about bringing out the best performance in others as they x Right. As they build their careers or as they become football players or whatever the case may be. And so the way I put that into an easy example is a coach, right? Think about the greatest coach of any sport, and chances are that, um, they've either done the sport or they've become an expert in the sport and they're utilizing what they may know, um, in order to help further the capabilities and performance of other people. And, um, so in my personal opinion, part of being a servant leader is making sure that I have the capabilities and the knowhow and even the knowledge to be able to help support others in whatever they may do. And, and I may not always have that mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, and if not, then I'll go find it or I'll go build it, or whatever the case may be. So, yeah. Um, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:20:11 So just, and, and filling that, just reminding yourself like, what's, what are they trying to be? Right, or what's what, because that keeps you grounded on what the point is rather than Yeah. Just, just get the activity done or Right, whatever, like Right. There's, there's development process here, right? Yeah. Awesome. Um, and then, uh, so I, I peeked into your Bishop's office. Yeah. And I thought, all right, this is different. I like this <laugh>. So tell me the journey of your Bishop's office.

Speaker 2 00:20:38 Um, well, I've, you know, I think, um, when I approached first being called, I think, um, part of my intent was to change the culture of the ward, or at least have a positive impact on it. Um, and I think that, you know, if you think about culture as being a set of beliefs and values and practices, um, and I and you think through, well, what is it that I as a bishop can actually impact? Well, I don't dictate doctrines, so I'm not gonna really impact police necessarily, but I can definitely have an impact, um, on practices. And one of the things that I feel like is important is to, um, I feel like there's power in making church approachable. Mm-Hmm. Um, you know, and full transparency, when I was first, um, became active in the church and getting engaged in the, in the church, uh, I was intimidated.

Speaker 2 00:21:29 And I think many people share that experience. Um, particularly if you're coming into the church or, um, even, you know, investigating the church, I think it can be intimidating. And so approachability is something I've tried to drive into our ward by way of a range of different practices. Um, when I first got in the bishop's office, I didn't feel like it was approachable. There's this ginormous desk and it's been there for 20 years, and it's very

executive and it's president presence. And Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, I, it, I was completely uncomfortable. It felt like, um, you know, people are gonna feel like they're coming to worship. The bishop at his altar <laugh>, I'm like, okay, I gotta get rid of this. So I got rid of the desk, I was like, yeah, um, job number one. And I got a table from Ikea, it's awesome, <laugh>, it sits in the corner. And as a result of that, I sit on the same chair as everybody else does. Um, yeah. And so I tried to make it a, a place that people would feel they could approach and feel comfortable in.

Speaker 1 00:22:21 Alright, so I wanna come back to this principle. I, I love that making church approachable. And then, but you also have this beautiful flat screen TV <laugh> on the, on the wall, right. <laugh> the stake president sitting like, wait a minute, I need to stop <laugh>. Um, and, and, which is cool, and especially, I mean, in 2024, there's so much you can reference, you know, electronically and to have that there, I mean, how do you use it? Any, anything worth mentioning as far as how you use it?

Speaker 2 00:22:44 Yeah, I mean, that's what I display agendas on. Um, I utilize it much like I use flat screen TVs in my office. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> like we display, um, you know, agendas or I teach lessons to the priests and we watch videos and try to utilize the content of the technology that we can in order to make for the best experience possible. So

Speaker 1 00:23:04 Yeah. Now, I don't know if this is a standard issue, but I also walked by your materials center and you had four huge, you know, TV carts in there. And I'm like, because you, I remember like even my wife taught, uh, Relief Society in our last ward. And it was like my job to jump up after saac, meaning beline it to the material center. So I get first dibs on the tv. I think they had two TVs, right? <laugh>. So you gotta get the big one right, right. From, so my wife can teach a lesson, but I, it was Is that your doing or that just

Speaker 2 00:23:35 No, those admittedly just showed up. I don't know how they got there.

Speaker 1 00:23:37 Well, I think it should be standard issue then, right? And maybe they do. I don't know. I've been out of the business for a while, but <laugh>, um, anything else with making church approachable? Like how does else does that show up in your leadership or in your ward or,

Speaker 2 00:23:49 Yeah, I think, um, well one of the things I've done a couple actually a range of times was like last night. Like when we have certain devotionals or activities where you'd probably expect to have to, you know, show up in Sunday dress, um, we actually take a different approach and wear your jeans and your T-shirt. Yeah. Um, I got into that by way of thinking that, uh, early on, if I could make it approachable and make it comfortable, I'd probably have more people come. And I actually found out that that was exactly the case. And so, um, you know, there's a time and place for everything as we're taught in Ecclesiastes. And I think that, um, there are certain cases where, yeah, we probably don't need to show up in Sunny Dress and as a result, can we, um, kind of change the way people think about the, uh, activity or the event and does that drive engagement and so forth. And so, um, as you probably saw last night, like read a lot, a lot of people there

Speaker 1 00:24:41 Right now, and I noticed you didn't, you didn't even have to announce that. Like, it's just a thing people know, like if there's a fireside, just come casual dress.

Speaker 2 00:24:48 Um, I think by now, because we've done it a few times, Uhhuh, um, then yeah, I think that's the expectation. Early on, I definitely had to tell people like, Uhhuh, don't worry about wearing a suit or, you know, Sunday dress, just go ahead and come casual. Yeah. Um, I kinda have this perspective that you can feel the spirit regardless of what you're wearing. So if I can get a lot of people to come and have them feel the spirit, even if they're in jeans, that's a good thing. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:25:10 Any other making church approachable examples?

Speaker 2 00:25:14 Um, I think that, um, you know, this is part of our branding, if you will, but trying to make things perhaps I've said before, and I'll say again, um, church can be fun. And to that point, I think trying to make it a bit lighthearted and tone, um, and something that's kind of fun and full of joy and enjoyable, if you will, is yeah. Something we definitely try to do and the way we communicate and the way we behave with each other and so forth. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:25:41 You know, I, I always go back to the, you hear it more maybe in a more corporate sense of, you know, the boss has an open door policy, you can come talk to him about anything, and no matter how wide do you keep that door open, if it doesn't feel approachable, if he doesn't or she doesn't feel approachable, the conversation will never happen. Even if you speak generally about this open door policy, right? Yeah. And so it's in the details you make these adjustments of fasting yourself. How can we make this more approachable? Yeah. And if, if someone walked in here off the street, would they be confused or would they feel loved and, and wanna stay here? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:26:15 Yeah, yeah. Well said.

Speaker 1 00:26:17 Well, this is cool. So, uh, people need a brand <laugh>, put some t-shirts and, and or stickers or whatever you need. But I, I think that's a, a really helpful concept to just reflect on of, because when it comes to unity, I think this is like, you have to create an identity of that unity. Right? I think we're too, we're a little bit naive at times thinking like, oh, we wanna unify people and that means they're like hanging out with each other and, and talking and we're do partying together. But, uh, you have to create an identity that you surround around Yeah. To, uh, to make

Speaker 2 00:26:49 It work. Yeah. I'll be honest in saying, one of my favorite experiences ever is when I hear people refer to us as, as our rat. Oh, one nice

Speaker 1 00:26:56 <laugh>. Very cool. Awesome. Alright, uh, last question after you, as you reflect on your time as a, as a, as a bishop, as a leader, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:27:07 Uh, that's such a good question. My favorite, um, as I referred to, I think, you know, as I think about leadership as being, um, or bringing out the best capability in

others, I have thought about my calling or my responsibility as a leader in the church to bring out the best performance in others as they come onto Christ. And just like a good coach, I can't do that unless I come onto Christ myself. And so that's something I actively try to do every single day. And I have found that by doing that, um, I do think I have been empowered by him to be able to help others come onto him. And I have also been able to find him and know him myself. And through that I have personally experienced that he can change anybody and he can heal anything.

Speaker 1 00:28:13 And that concludes this how I lead Interview. I hope you enjoyed it. And, uh, I would ask you, could you take a minute and drop this link in an email, on social media, in a text, wherever it makes the most sense, and share it with somebody who could relate to this, this experience. And this is how we, how we develop as leaders, just hearing what the other guy's doing, trying some things out, testing, adjusting for your area. And, uh, that's, that's where great leadership's discovered, right? So we would love to have you, uh, share this with, uh, somebody in this calling or a related calling and that would be great. And also, if you know somebody, uh, any type of leader who would be a fantastic guest on the How I Lead segment, uh, reach out to us. Go to leading-saints.org/contact. Maybe send this in individual an email letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name for this interview. We'll reach out to them and, uh, see if we can line 'em up. So again, go to leading-saints.org/contact and there you can submit all the information and let us know, and maybe they will be on a feature how I lead Segment on the Leading Saints podcast. Remember, check the show notes to listen to the powerful presentation by the general young men, young Women Advisory Council members, or go to leading-saints.org/fourteen.

Speaker 3 00:29:31 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 own 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.