



From Stake President to Regional Rep | An Interview with Douglas McKinlay

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Speaker 1 00:00:04 It's finally available. I've been working on a manuscript for the past four years, and it is finally a book I can hold in my hands. It's titled, is God Disappointed In Me Removing Shame from a Gospel of Grace? This book has gotten so much attention that it is already a number one Amazon bestseller. I'm Beyond amazed in just a few words I wrote, is God Disappointed in Me for Latter Day Saints who often feel overwhelmed by the gospel and who are constantly worrying if they are doing enough. It's for the latter-Day Saint who have stepped away from the church. It's for the individuals who appear to be living right, but still can't find peace and happiness. And frankly, it's for everyone who enjoys listening to the Leading Saints podcast. You will love and cherish this book. Now, warning, you might want to consider purchasing multiple copies to share one Bishop who got an advanced copy, read it in one weekend, and then literally purchased 100 additional copies. You can order it on Amazon. The link is in the show notes, or starting in March, you can find it in your local Costco in Idaho, Utah, and Arizona. It's called, is God Disappointed In Me? And you can order it Now.

Speaker 1 00:01:25 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 lead segments to share.

Speaker 1 00:03:07 In this interview, I'm excited to welcome in Douglas McKinlay and to talk about his years or decades of church leadership. He's got quite the experience of serving in various capacities in church leadership, all the way back to the seventies, really, uh, early eighties called as a stake president and a regional representative, then a mission president. Then even later, uh, got a chance to serve as a bishop. Kind of out of order there <laugh>. But, uh, Douglas has got some phenomenal stories. Uh, his time in interactions with even President Hinkley and running the church back east, you know, in the, in the Manhattan area at times witnessing the miracle of New York and the growth there, running regional conferences. And then how his, uh, leadership style shifted between, uh, being a, a stake president, regional representative, and even as a mission president in Tucson, Arizona, and motivating young missionaries to, uh, stay obedient, stay focused, and enjoy their mission. I think you're gonna enjoy this, uh, as we explore the leadership life and lessons of Douglas McKinlay. All right, let's jump into it. All right. Today I am welcoming in Doug McKinlay. How are you, Doug?

Speaker 2 00:04:36 I'm doing well, thank you.

Speaker 1 00:04:37 Awesome. Now, uh, we gotta give a shout out to your son, Alex, who, uh, he actually reached out a few years ago, <laugh>, and, you know, as, as all inboxes go, it fell through the cracks and didn't, uh, I, I lost track of it, but nonetheless, he, uh, followed up and said, we've definitely got to record this episode. And so we did it. Here we are, we're making it happen. So,

Speaker 2 00:04:57 Oh, great. Great.

Speaker 1 00:04:59 Now, maybe just start with you. I mean, we were just talking before we hit record. You're, you're 82 years old, uh, yes. You've been around the block a couple times, had some leadership experience and Yes. Uh, but where's a, a good place to start to put you into context.

Speaker 2 00:05:13 Probably everyone went to, well, not everyone, but, uh, went to high school in Utah at or high school and BYU and Mission and Army Reserve. And so maybe, uh, adult life is where we can start if you want to.

Speaker 1 00:05:29 Okay. <laugh>. But you're a Utah boy originally, right? Oh,

Speaker 2 00:05:32 Yeah, yeah. Salt

Speaker 1 00:05:33 Lake. Okay. Pretty traditional upbringing and,

Speaker 2 00:05:35 Uh, salt Lake up on the avenues. And then, uh, my parents moved to Bountiful, and when I went there for a couple years and then into Provo, where I went to Orum High School, we lived in Edgemont, which hadn't been incorporated into Provo yet. So we took the school bus over to Orum High School, and I did, uh, high school there. Nice. Active in sports, football, baseball, wrestling, um, track.

Speaker 1 00:06:04 Yeah. Did you, uh, serve a mission as a young man?

Speaker 2 00:06:07 I did, yeah. Not right at the proper age, but not too far down the path. Um, I actually went into the Army when I was still 17. I graduated from high school when I was 17 and went to Fort Ord and, and, um, did six months there, uh, there in, in, uh, camp Roberts, California. And then, um, as some of you may know, um, it was an eight year obligation, six months active, three and a half years active reserve, they call it. And I have no idea why we were not called up for Vietnam, but we were not.

Speaker 1 00:06:48 Oh, really? Wow.

Speaker 2 00:06:49 And, and then, uh, four years on, uh, I guess church term is less active, uh, reserve. So you don't go to meetings, you're just, the, the government still owns you, but, uh, they're not looking at you.

Speaker 1 00:07:06 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:07:07 Uh, after BYU, um, I did a bachelor's degree, then a master's degree. I did a two year degree in one year, one calendar year, uh, which I'm glad I don't have to do that again, <laugh>. And, uh, that was the worst year of our marriage. <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:07:27 You survived. Good. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:07:29 Every term, every, uh, semester. But we survived. Yeah. You know, I had, we were dorm parents at BYU. We had 75 girls. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And then there was me, and we had our first little baby. So then we had another guy with me in the dorm, <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:07:49 Nice. And did you say where, where you went on a mission?

Speaker 2 00:07:52 Oh, I went to the Western States. Okay. I got a train, got on a train in Salt Lake, and got off the train in Denver. Oh, wow. <laugh>. So that's where I went on.

Speaker 1 00:08:01 That's great. Awesome. And that was a two year commitment? Yes.

Speaker 2 00:08:05 Great.

Speaker 1 00:08:06 Awesome.

Speaker 2 00:08:07 And I'll have to say that I fogged up the windows of the train when we are going through southern Wyoming, because I had, I was actually hunting an antelope when

my mission call came. And so, you know, a couple weeks later, I'm back out there and in southern Wyoming and fogging up the windows looking at those beautiful antelope out there.

Speaker 1 00:08:31 Yeah. Nice. And, uh, what did you establish your career in?

Speaker 2 00:08:36 Um, I studied advertising at BYU and, uh, that's what I wanted to do my entire life. I've made a living with words, so to speak. Uh, so, um, when I finished BYU I had two options. One was to teach English, 'cause I had an English minor, teach English at Eastern Arizona College. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> or, uh, join General Electric Company out in San Francisco, which is what I decided to do. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:09:10 Cool. Now, when did this, uh, uh, long journey of church leadership begin? Like, when do you feel like that that first calling was where you sort of stepped into, into the leadership world?

Speaker 2 00:09:20 Probably when, when, when we were in San Francisco, um, we were actually, um, we couldn't afford that side of the bay. So we were on the east side of the Bay in, uh, Oakland, in a little incorporated town called, uh, Piedmont. And so, um, we lived, we had a high rise there, and I did the Bay Bridge commute to San Francisco every day. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I was called to be the elders quorum president. And, uh, my first activity we had, I wrote a radio commercial <laugh>, and I asked the bishop if I could make an announcement, and he said yes. And I took my little tape recorder up to the podium. He dropped the mic down and played my 32nd spot.

Speaker 1 00:10:13 Oh, nice. 'cause you're, you're, you're an ad guy, right? Like

Speaker 2 00:10:16 <laugh>. That's great. That was the last time I ever did that, but <laugh>, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:10:21 Did, did he not, did the Bishop not like that?

Speaker 2 00:10:23 He he was a big fan of that. No, no. <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:10:26 Oh,

Speaker 2 00:10:26 Man. But, uh, we got a lot of people, and it was a, it was really a neat thing.

Speaker 1 00:10:31 That's great. And was that, so you're in San Francisco, is that like you, when you were just starting your, your career then? Yes.

Speaker 2 00:10:37 Okay. Yes. That was my first, uh, job out of school. Okay. Was GE and their, uh, actually in their sales promotion department. I was a sales promotion specialist, and I started a newsletter in San Francisco called Westward. And, uh, that kind of brought a little notoriety and <laugh> and, uh, nice. Some, uh, the sales people, the salespeople loved it. Anyway. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:11:03 There's no Facebook back then, right? So <laugh> No.

Speaker 2 00:11:05 Facebook,

Speaker 1 00:11:06 You went with the newsletter,

Speaker 2 00:11:06 Everything was print. That's right.

Speaker 1 00:11:08 That's great. Awesome. And, uh, so what leadership callings came after that?

Speaker 2 00:11:12 Uh, then we moved to, um, back east. We, we were, we went from San Francisco to Schenectady, New York, upstate New York. Uh, I remember pulling into Schenectady and a little bug, 1961 Volkswagen Bug, and we had a toddler and an infant with us, and we went down this street of just this row of bricked up red brick buildings that were all boarded up. And, uh, I'm not sure my wife cried, but I think she did. <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:11:51 You're in a different world, huh? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:11:53 You're, you're bringing me to this

Speaker 1 00:11:55 <laugh>. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:11:56 So, uh, I was there for a while, and then I, um, left GE went to work for a large advertising agency in Hartford, Connecticut. Uh, it was the biggest agency north of New York City. And, uh, I had lots of big accounts that I got to work on. Wow. So big banks and Buxton and Spalding. And so I kind of cut my teeth, uh, working on those kind of accounts. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:22 And then what, uh, leadership Calling Con found you out there?

Speaker 2 00:12:25 Actually, uh, let's see. Uh, this is wasn't exactly traditional, but I had young men's calling it the Warden Stake, and then I was called to be the Stake Executive Secretary, and then I was called on the high council. Then I was called to be a counselor in the stake presidency. Oh, wow. And then when I was 39, I was called to be the stake president in Hartford, Connecticut. Wow. So there were 16 years where I was either a counselor or the stake president.

Speaker 1 00:13:03 Yeah. So that, and you were working in, in the stake there, right? Yes. Um, so you hadn't had an opportunity to be a bishop when you're called a stake president?

Speaker 2 00:13:10 No. Wow. I, I was gonna say that's sort of non-traditional.

Speaker 1 00:13:14 Yeah. Yeah. So what, what's the, give us the story of being called as the Stake President. What do you remember of that, that process?

Speaker 2 00:13:20 Um, well, it was kind of interesting. They split the stake. Um, I was first counselor to, uh, guy named Steve Colson, who was a, uh, faculty at Yale University. Uh, New Haven was in our stake at that time. And, uh, so they created the New Haven Stake. And so then he became the stake president of New Haven, and I became the stake president of the Hartford Connecticut Stake. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so for 10 years, I was the stake president, and we started off with 13 units from, from Rhode Island to Vermont. Wow. And pretty much everything in between. Um, wow. And, uh, so it was, it, those were busy days. Those were busy days. I

Speaker 1 00:14:08 Bet. Yeah. I've, I've often thought about doing an episode, 'cause I think of my father, like he was a bishop in the eighties. You know, it'd just be interesting, uh, to hear just the little nuances about being a, a church leader in the eighties, because it was a different world then. I mean Oh, yeah. Where, where now, you know, we got Zoom meetings and <laugh>, you know, we can, uh, yeah. Send out email blasts or whatever it be, but it was really different, a different time. And it, in order to lead you, it was just there were different tools at your hands, right?

Speaker 2 00:14:35 Very, very true. Yeah. Yeah. From the time I was a counselor in stake presidency, uh, for the next 30 years, I was sitting on the stand and my wife was sitting in the audience and Wow. And so, uh, it was a long time, you know? Yeah. As a stake president, then as a regional representative for five years. So everywhere you go, it was like an area authority 70 today. So you, you presided wherever you went. So I was always on the stand, and then I was called to be mission president after that. And so, again, when the mission president walks into a building, he's gonna sit on the stand and they're gonna ask him to say something

Speaker 1 00:15:20 <laugh>. Yeah. So I'm curious of the process of being called as a stake president. Back then. It was a pretty similar to today, just you, you know, uh, a 70 comes to town. There's a lot of interviews, and

Speaker 2 00:15:30 We actually had two 70, uh, that came. But yeah, we had two 70 that they came as a team, which was a little bit unusual, but we were creating a new stake in calling, I guess a new stake president that would be me, then dividing our stake into, uh, two different stakes. And so, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:15:55 And so, did, did you just had a, an interview along with other people and then Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:16:00 Yeah. I was, I was interviewed, uh, along with, uh, as a matter of fact, since I was a counselor, they said, we want to interview all the bishops in the stake and, uh, branch's presidents and the high council. And, you know, they said, is there anyone not in this group that you think should be interviewed? Um, I think I recommended one other person, uh, that I thought could be a good stake president. And at the end of the day, um, it was me.

Speaker 1 00:16:36 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:16:37 But when I was called to be a counselor in the stake presidency, um, elder packer came to our stake for a stake conference, Uhhuh <affirmative>. And this is, this is in like the late seventies. Okay. So I have mutton chops, <laugh> sideburns.

Speaker 1 00:16:58 Yeah. Your stylish marketing guy. Right.

Speaker 2 00:17:00 The bottom trousers

Speaker 1 00:17:02 <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:17:03 And, uh, I was, I was a executive secretary at the time around the high council, and they came into leadership meeting, said, elder packer would like to talk to you, <laugh>. So I went into the president's office where he was, and he looked at me and, you know, with those, uh, piercing eyes and said, um, president Robinson would like you to be his counselor. How far from this building do you live <laugh>? I said, well, about 15 minutes away. And he said, uh, then you have time to go home and shave before stake conference <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:17:41 So it was just the sideburns that you had that Oh, yeah. Yeah. That

Speaker 2 00:17:44 Was, I didn't have long hair, just sideburns and, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:17:48 No mustache or anything?

Speaker 2 00:17:50 No, no. All I have, he said, president Robinson would like you to work with a youth, and you do not look like a missionary.

Speaker 1 00:17:58 Oh, boy. Oh boy. <laugh>. Yeah. The sideburns were called to repentance. So there you go. All right.

Speaker 2 00:18:04 There you go.

Speaker 1 00:18:06 It was a different time, for sure. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:18:08 <laugh>, it was.

Speaker 1 00:18:09 And then, um, so when, when you were called to stake president, did the, how did that work with, um, calling counselors? Did they just give you short time to select counselors or,

Speaker 2 00:18:18 Well, yeah. You, you really have to, depending on the spirit, uh, because once you're called, then you have like, less than 24 hours to call your counselors. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So, um, fortunately I had, uh, two very, very great, uh, counselors that were called and, and, uh, it was one of those really amazing, it was a five year run before I lost my first counselor be they created the Springfield Massachusetts stake, and he became the stake president there. Oh, wow. And so, but for five years I had a FBI agent, and I had a <laugh>, uh, a financial advisor, uh, as counselors. And, uh, it was, it was amazing. Yeah. And we had a lot of fun. We enjoyed our service. We were very serious about the gospel, but we

were not serious about ourselves. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So, um, our first counselor, who was, who was, uh, FBI agent, uh, Dave Sutton, uh, didn't come to presidency meeting. It turned out there was a bank robbery, and he had to go to the bank. So the next week in the minutes at res, uh, president Sutton was excused to attend a bank robbery,

Speaker 1 00:19:41 <laugh> <laugh>. Nice.

Speaker 2 00:19:44 And then two weeks later, um, president Myers was excused to attend a cocktail party, which, you know, he was obliged to go to and that kind of thing. So, uh, as I said, we didn't take ourselves too seriously. Yeah. But we took the work very seriously,

Speaker 1 00:20:03 So. Sure. Well, I think that's a, it's an important point, right? That, uh, you gotta have fun and 'cause these, a lot of these callings are a long time, so they're, you go crazy if you don't have a little fun. Right. Awesome.

Speaker 2 00:20:13 10 years is a long time to have the same calling. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:20:15 Does any, um, principle come, come to the service when you think about that time as stake president, uh, over those, those years that, uh, that you would, you'd bring up?

Speaker 2 00:20:26 I mentioned, uh, in my little note to you that I learned a really, really good lesson back in the day, they used to bring all the stake presidents into Salt Lake for, um, leadership meetings. Oh, really? And they were held in the tabernacle.

Speaker 1 00:20:43 So they'd fly you in and put you in a hotel, and,

Speaker 2 00:20:46 Uh, yes. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:20:47 Wow.

Speaker 2 00:20:48 President Packer was at the stand, and I remember he held up the general Handbook of instructions, and he said, this is the what of church leadership. And then in his other hand, he picked up the scriptures and he said, this is the how of church leadership. And I never ever forgot that. So Interesting. You know, what the rules are, and you know what the expectation is, uh, but you really need to lead like the savior led and be influenced, you know, by the spirit. And so it wasn't that strict, you know, book only, it was book plus the Bible.

Speaker 1 00:21:38 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:21:39 Never forgot that. And all my years after that in mm-Hmm. <affirmative> leadership.

Speaker 1 00:21:44 And then, so you spend Good nine years as stake president then?

Speaker 2 00:21:48 Uh, almost 10.

Speaker 1 00:21:50 Okay. And then, uh, what came after that?

Speaker 2 00:21:53 Uh, well, at the, at the same meeting that I was released in, I was called to be a, uh, regional representative of the 12. And I had, uh, two regions, uh, New York City and the five boroughs of New York, and also, uh, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Wow. Um, region, which had, uh, surrounding area there, York and other cities.

Speaker 1 00:22:20 So how, how did that call come about? Did they, did the seventies that were doing the stake presidency change, just extend that calling as well?

Speaker 2 00:22:27 Uh, yes. They, when they came, uh, they again, see, that was when I was called 10 years later when I was released, and a new stake president was called. Um, I had, um, it's really interesting because you have a lot of responsibility as a regional representative of the 12 mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, but I was only interviewed once, and that was by the General Authority that came to conference.

Speaker 1 00:22:55 And he's the one that that set you apart and does Yes. Did he, and he ordained you a 70, I assume, or

Speaker 2 00:23:01 Oh, uh,

Speaker 1 00:23:02 Or was that not

Speaker 2 00:23:03 Required? I was a priest. I didn't need to be ordained to 70, so,

Speaker 1 00:23:06 Okay. Because, uh, the regional rep representative calling is sort of, uh, similar to today as a, as a area 70. Right. And they're ordained seventies, but back then, you were just a high priest then. That's right. That had the calling is regional representative, and, uh, but nonetheless, you presided.

Speaker 2 00:23:22 Yeah. I would get letters from Salt Lake and they would say, here's the stake conference you're supposed to preside at, and, and, you know, please send us a, um, a letter outlining what, who the speakers are gonna be and what the conference is gonna be, and so on. And then you had to fill out a report after stake conference and, uh, describing the business of the stake, who was called, who was released, et cetera. So, uh, there was, uh, a fair amount of clerical work associated with that as well. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:23:59 Wow. So were, were most of your weeks during that, that time were, I mean, were you attending a lot of, a lot of, uh, stake conferences on the weekends? Is that Yes. Was that your general typical, uh, weekend?

Speaker 2 00:24:11 Yes. Pretty much every week. I was somewhere on assignment, uh, not every single week, but I'd say 80 90% of the time I was, I was away on a weekend Wow. At a conference. And, um, I had another, uh, duty that was not, uh, all that pleasant, and that was, I had to be involved in the d composition of a stake.

Speaker 1 00:24:41 What, what, what does that mean?

Speaker 2 00:24:42 One of the stakes in New York, um, had single digit home teaching numbers, and they couldn't, the stake couldn't keep a high council 12 on the high council. There was six or seven. And so, um, I was instructed to release the stake president and, uh, create districts. Uh, it was Elder Dellenbaugh of the 70 that came out, and he and I conferred on that. And in one Sunday, we dissolved, uh, the New York East stake and created the Queen District and the Brooklyn District, which are now their own stakes, by the way. I'm sure I'm, but that was, that was back in, you know, like the, um, early nineties. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:25:34 So still a lot of, uh, growth that still needed to happen in those areas.

Speaker 2 00:25:37 Oh my goodness. You know, you, you see, the church hates to go backwards, you know? Right. Yeah. So that was, that was, that was pretty difficult. But when it happened, uh, the year after we created the Queen District Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, there were 600 baptisms in Queens, and then we had to create, within two years, we had to create this Queen's West District because the church had grown. Um, and another little, uh, leadership note on that, uh, I was down in the Rigo Park area of Queens, uh, to do some training. And, um, I started training off, um, with a group of, you know, new, uh, newly baptized people. And I mentioned an agenda, and someone raised his hand and said, elder, what's an agenda?

Speaker 1 00:26:45 <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:26:46 In 30, in a nanosecond, I retool their, all my leadership training <laugh>. He'd been in the church, um, two months. Wow. He was called to be an Elders quorum president. Wow. He had no clue.

Speaker 1 00:27:01 Yeah. Wow.

Speaker 2 00:27:03 That's how fast, that's how fast things were going then. I call it the Miracle of New York,

Speaker 1 00:27:07 Because it just, it just exploded, huh?

Speaker 2 00:27:09 Oh, yeah. It was, it was amazing. Absolutely amazing.

Speaker 1 00:27:12 Was there any reason for that or just, uh,

Speaker 2 00:27:15 Well, yeah. The, uh, district leadership and, um, they were missionary minded. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And, you know, we were doing things like, we, we create a branch and, and the meetings were held in, in buildings that had big corrugated steel doors that came down. You know, you unlock the, the, the entrance to the building and raise up the corrugated, uh, gate in the morning and at night, <laugh>, you pull it back down. I mean, Uhhuh some places in Queens and Brooklyn that were, um, not too friendly, uh, but the church just really, really took off. And it was so, I was so blessed to be there and to be a part of that, and to see it. And, uh,

Speaker 1 00:28:12 Yeah. So you mentioned, so you did have the title of Elder when you're a Yes. A regional rep. Right. So it's very similar again. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Did you, you know, a lot of area seventies are running coordinating councils with a group of, of stake presidents. Is that, was that part of your responsibilities?

Speaker 2 00:28:28 Um, not at that time. I mean Okay. We had regional conferences then. I don't know if you remember those or not.

Speaker 1 00:28:35 Uh, I was very young in the eighties,

Speaker 2 00:28:37 Back in the eighties and nineties, and they would have regional conference. We had one at Radio City Music Hall.

Speaker 1 00:28:44 Wow. How often did those happen?

Speaker 2 00:28:46 Not often. Okay. Uh, we had two in my five years there in New York. Oh, okay. Um, and people come from New Jersey and Connecticut, New York. And,

Speaker 1 00:28:55 And, and it wasn't just for leadership, it was for everybody. Yes. All members. It was for everybody,

Speaker 2 00:28:59 Yeah. And President Hinkley, uh, came to one.

Speaker 1 00:29:03 Yeah. So typically a, a member of the 12 would be there. Yes. Okay. So it wasn't all on you to preside and No. And run the meeting. Okay. No, but you just, I, I bet you were involved in just the details of organizing it.

Speaker 2 00:29:14 Exactly. The kind of the local contact, if you will.

Speaker 1 00:29:18 Nice. So were, did, were you seen as regional rep as like somebody, if the stake president had a question in, in that area, they would typically call you and then you would Yes. Direct it from there.

Speaker 2 00:29:27 And I, I would be available to go and train. Um, I remember, uh, a, a very accomplished business leader, uh, was called to be stake president when a new stake president was called. I was always there. Usually I was there and there would be a general authority from Salt Lake would be there at the conference at the same time. And after a few months, he, I got a call from him and he said, can you come down and train us as a stake presidency? And I said, I'd be happy to, you know, I'll do my best. What seems to be the issue, <laugh>. Yeah. You know, because I thought when I drove away after he was called to be a stake president, I thought, I'll never hear from him again. <laugh>. Yeah. He said, people think I run the stake like a business. And they're kind of put off by that. The previous stake president was loving and kind and gentle, and, and he's, you know, he wants to get things done. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:30:33 The numbers, right.

Speaker 2 00:30:34 Yeah. And I just reminded him that there are differences of organization, but it's the same Lord. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and the gospel will come through you, and don't try to change your personality, uh, just let the spirit flow through you. Yeah. Yeah. And he was later called to be a 70.

Speaker 1 00:30:55 Hmm. Were there any, like, uh, you know, you mentioned you had several opportunities to maybe meet some apostles, general authorities. Any stories come to mind with

Speaker 2 00:31:03 Oh, yeah. It was, uh, an interesting little backstory. A temple was announced in, in Connecticut, and then there became this thing of, well, there was, there was only a temple in, in Washington, DC at the time. And the idea was Connecticut was halfway between New York and Boston, and people could come to Connecticut. And, and then things kind of got divisive in the sense that, well, maybe Hartford's not the best place. You can't get public transportation from New York City to Hartford, Connecticut. Yeah. I mean, you could, but it's difficult. Or from Boston. So the idea then was maybe we need two temples, one in New York and one in Boston. It turned out that, uh, that's the way the brethren decided to do it. Uh, I was involved in a couple of meetings where I went to Salt Lake, and we talked about that. Uh, but at the end of the day, that's what, what they decided to do. And when that happened, um, I'll never forget, president Hinkley called me and he said, Doug <laugh>, uh, we are, uh, not gonna build a temple in Hartford as planned. We're gonna build one in Boston, and we're gonna build one in New York City. And I want you to know that before it gets announced from the pulpit.

Speaker 1 00:32:42 Oh,

Speaker 2 00:32:42 Wow. Um, and he said, that doesn't mean there'll never be a temple in Connecticut. That just means that, uh, we've decided that we're gonna have two temples. And I had taken President Hinkley to dozens more than a dozen possible temple sites in Connecticut before that decision was made. And, uh, it, it became difficult to pro procure the land in, in Connecticut for a temple. So, you know, we had that kind of a, you know, relationship. Um, but it was just so reassuring for me to, to hear from President Ty like that. I mean, he didn't have to do that.

Speaker 1 00:33:32 Yeah. Yeah. That's great. That's

Speaker 2 00:33:34 Kind of, that's kind of, man, he was

Speaker 1 00:33:35 Awesome. And then, um, so was there any expectation when you were called as regional rep as far as the timeframe that you'd be in that call?

Speaker 2 00:33:43 Yeah, it was a five year, three to five years. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and I served for five years.

Speaker 1 00:33:48 Nice. And then is that, was winding down, was there, uh, any inclination that, uh, another call was coming? Or what's that story?

Speaker 2 00:33:56 I would say no. And then interestingly enough, um, as I said, I had one interview when I was called to be the regional representative and to be a mission president. I went through a whole series of interviews. I met a 70 at LaGuardia Airport once, and he interviewed me. And then, uh, I was on a business trip in Chicago, and, and elder ha called me from the 12th. It was because I was late getting in. And he said, uh, when I got to my, uh, room, there was a call waiting. And so I returned the call and he said, well, we called you earlier and expected you to be there, but you weren't there. <laugh>. Like, he didn't say, where were you, but

Speaker 1 00:34:49 Right, right.

Speaker 2 00:34:50 I said, well, yeah, I, I've been at the Chicago Temple, and then you could almost hear a sigh of relief. <laugh> <laugh>. Nice. And then he said, uh, I'm the armor bearer. That's how he ca he called it, I'm the armor bearer for the first presidency. Um, can you serve a mission? Would it be a, uh, imposition for you financially or career-wise? Um, and I guess I pass the interview at LaGuardia Pass the interview at Elder Ha <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:35:27 So let me ask you, when you get interviewed at LaGuardia, I mean, you just find a corner at the airport and, and have a casual chat. Okay. <laugh>,

Speaker 2 00:35:34 We, we, we went to, uh, you know, there was one of the concourses that just was sort of lightly attended, and we found a couple of seats, like, we're waiting for a flight

Speaker 1 00:35:46 <laugh>. Nice.

Speaker 2 00:35:47 And then, um, the other interview was on the phone, and Elder Faust actually called us and, uh, this is humorous. It was 11 o'clock in Connecticut, and we get a phone call and the lady said, my wife answered it, and the lady said, this is so and so, I'm calling from Salt Lake City, uh, for Elder Faust, president Faust, is your husband there? And, uh, she said, yeah, right. Like, she thought it was <laugh>, somebody playing a joke, I guess. And then she said, uh, no, this is elder, uh, fous secretary. Is your husband there? <laugh>? So she passed me the phone, she passed me the phone, and, you know,

Speaker 1 00:36:45 Yeah, I'd love to talk with these secretaries of, you know, how many times Oh,

Speaker 2 00:36:48 Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:36:49 Five outta 10 calls. They're always like, oh, whatever. You know, I don't believe you. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:36:53 That's great. It was, it was a little

Speaker 1 00:36:55 Humorous. So that, that's when, so, uh, president faus extended the call over the phone Yes. To be a mission president at that point. Yes. And then it was just a matter of

waiting for the call. Yep. Nice. And, and, uh, what do you remember about like, receiving the call?

Speaker 2 00:37:08 Well, that was actually the call, but I got a letter, you know, later on describing, okay, this is the time you would report and you go to the mission president's, MTC, uh, it was at the same place in Provo as the, you know, young missionary mtc Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, uh, but it was for mission presidents, and it was a week long, and then you go and, um, it was nice. So that was kind of a phone call and follow up with a letter.

Speaker 1 00:37:39 Nice. And so did they, uh, when did you find out where you were going

Speaker 2 00:37:42 That night.

Speaker 1 00:37:44 Okay. Over the phone? Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:37:45 Oh, wow.

Speaker 1 00:37:46 Nice. And, and where, where did you go?

Speaker 2 00:37:48 Went to the Arizona Tucson mission. Awesome. At that time, we had all those neat little border towns along the Arizona, New Mexico border, Uhhuh, <affirmative>, uh, uh, Tucson was our west anchor town in El Paso, Texas was our east and anchor town. So,

Speaker 1 00:38:07 Yeah. And then, uh, starting your mission as a mission president, I mean, what do you remember as far as being, getting established as a leader, had, you know, working with the young missionaries and those types of

Speaker 2 00:38:17 Things? Oh, that's a beautiful question. Thank you for asking that. When I re when I got there, I found out that, um, the mission was, was in my estimation, pretty disobedient and, um, kind of struggling. And so, um, I, I remember after the first six months, um, elder Mickelson of the 70 came by on a mission tour. And he said, well, president, what can I do for you at the end of a three day tour? And I took this list out of my coat pocket, and I said, I need 40 tickets, one way tickets to Salt Lake.

Speaker 1 00:39:05 Oh, wow.

Speaker 2 00:39:06 I got 40 names here of, of missionaries that really don't want to serve and don't want to be here. Can you do that for me? And when he stopped laughing, he said, he almost put his finger in my chest, and he said, president, you are gonna save every one of those missionaries. Hmm. Is there anything else I can do for you, <laugh>? And so all of a sudden I realized, okay, the inus was on me, that that's the easy way. Yeah. So, uh, leadership became a really important aspect of, uh, being a mission president to try to turn this ship around. Um, it took about a year, and then it was cool to be obedient as a missionary, and we started to set baptismal records and, you know, things like that that come along with, you know, living mission rules and, and working hard.

Speaker 1 00:40:12 Where do you even begin with those, those 40, or with just shifting that culture, you know, how how did you begin to chip away at that?

Speaker 2 00:40:18 Well, there was, there was one missionary that did go home early, and that news went through the mission like wildfire. This president is serious. And, um, at that point it became so important, really fun and cool to be obedient and to understand why you're on a mission partway through our mission, uh, transfers went from monthly to six weeks, and the brethren said, well, you can have zone conferences every six weeks if you want. And my wife and I said, no, we're gonna do, keep doing that every month, which was a kind of a burden to travel for us. We had 12 zones. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Uh, so we spent, you know, more than two weeks every month on the road. But I wanted to get next to those missionaries and sit across the desk from them at least once a month. Hmm. That really, really helped. Yeah. As well. And then, uh, I started another thing when transfers came along, I had everyone come in to Tucson, the new missionaries and their senior companions, and had a special meeting with them and outlined how important it was to be obedient. Hmm. I remember drawing a bridge on the blackboard saying, here's life as you knew it. Here's life as a missionary. Certain things you gotta do to cross that bridge, <laugh>. I said, okay. How many of you have girlfriends? Eh, a few hands went up and I said, throw 'em all over the bridge. <laugh>. And I drew a picture of a, a lady going over the bridge.

Speaker 2 00:42:09 I was kind of mean to 'em, but they <laugh> they got it.

Speaker 1 00:42:13 And this is when, when dynamic your son brought up, uh, in, in preparation that you have these, these doctrinal diagrams. What, what are these doctrinal diagrams about? Or, or,

Speaker 2 00:42:22 Well, yeah. I used to do this in, in our advertising agency business, we got some big clients because I could diagram their distribution system. Hmm. And the contact points and the communication tools you needed at each contact point. How do you diagram things like the big picture, I told you that I had a, um, on one side of one piece of paper, there's the entire history of God's dealing with man on the earth. And I had done this for some Jewish friends that joined the church in Connecticut. Try to find a way to describe in lines what you're saying in words.

Speaker 1 00:43:12 Hmm. Kinda give them a visual. Right.

Speaker 2 00:43:14 Exactly. Uh, yeah. And there are a lot of visual learners out there that if you say something, they may or not get it, but if you can draw it on the board. Yeah. Um, and here are some of the ones we did, uh, the Natural Man's Syndrome, uh, lifelong spiritual growth, communicating by the spirit, celestial marriage, the accordion theory, uh, atonement of Jesus Christ, how priesthood blessings work, uh, the why of fasting, things like that. Uh, which I, sometimes I start, I'd go up to the board and I wasn't sure what I was gonna write <laugh> on the course, you know?

Speaker 1 00:44:03 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:44:04 And, uh, so yeah. So I did a whole series of, uh, doctrinal diagrams. Uh, my wife thinks I should make a book out of them, and it would be a pamphlet, not a book. So I'll leave those for my kids.

Speaker 1 00:44:19 Yeah. <laugh>. So, and it wasn't that, you know, you, you figured out the perfect diagram of these no, these different principles, but it was more of just, and I love this exercise of, you know, so many times we articulate the gospel or we'll, we'll put the gospel in the form of a a, a sacra meeting talk or a fifth Sunday talk. Right. But can you diagram these different principles in a way that's gonna make it, uh, um, more memorable? Yeah. Easier to teach and, and communicate,

Speaker 2 00:44:44 And understandable. Uh, yeah. As I said, I, I first had this, um, sort of mantra. You don't fully understand the concept unless you can diagram it. Hmm. And then later I added, uh, diagram first, so you understand. And then so others can understand. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:45:04 That's, that's awesome. It is

Speaker 2 00:45:05 A perspective. That's all it is. It's, it's one way to look at things,

Speaker 1 00:45:09 And two people may diagram the same principle differently. Right, exactly. And I just love this idea of, uh, you know, especially in leadership context, whether it's you're meeting with eye council or with a bishopric and, and you're talking through things and you know, maybe somebody diagrams something that creates a different type of engagement in the room. Right. We're not just talking now, we're now following this diagram that's happening on the board, or, or wherever. Right.

Speaker 2 00:45:32 Absolutely.

Speaker 1 00:45:32 Yeah. Oh, that's great. Awesome. Yeah. Anything else that related to the doctrinal diagrams or,

Speaker 2 00:45:36 Um, I did one other thing as a leader that, um, when I was stake president in, in Connecticut, every year we'd set a goal for a hundred baptisms, and every year we get 60 baptisms,

Speaker 1 00:45:50 <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:45:51 So finally, uh, when I was the president, I called up our regional representative, and I said, elder, this is President McKinley in Hartford, Connecticut. I'm gonna release myself <laugh>, and let let that hang there for a minute, <laugh>. He said, president, you can't do that. You can't just release yourself. I said, well, I only wanna release myself for a month, and I'm gonna call myself on a stake mission, and I'm gonna turn everything over to my counselors, who were easily better than I was <laugh>. Right. And he said, well, there's certain things you still have to do. I mean, you still have to reside and you still have to call missionaries. You still have to set 'em apart. You still have to release them. And, um, I said, okay, I'll, I'll do that, but I'm not gonna go to presidency meeting. I'm gonna go to my ward missionary meeting.

Speaker 1 00:46:54 <laugh>. Nice.

Speaker 2 00:46:55 And it was interesting because we made a list. My wife and I made a list of all of our friends, and 90% of 'em were non-members, Uhhuh, and went down through that list and asked every single person on that list if they'd like to learn more about the church. And we got, no, no, no, no. <laugh> Uhhuh. Finally, I was playing rock ball with a, a chiropractor friend of mine, and the spirit said, asked um, TOK if he wants to be, if he wants to learn more about the gospel, ask Andy Tok. And I thought, you know, he's, he's Jewish. Why would he wanna learn more about the church? Uhhuh <affirmative>? So right in the middle of a racquetball game, I said, Hey, Andy, would you like to learn more about the church? He said, it's funny, you should ask. My wife and I are studying about Jesus Christ, and yeah, we'd like to learn more. Well, their whole family was baptized. Oh, wow. So I reported that that didn't happen during that first month, but the contact was made during that first month. About six weeks later, they were all baptized. And so I made my report to the high council, what I did while I was not the stake president, <laugh>. And, and then my first counselor being a smart person said, president, I wanna release myself <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:48:32 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:48:32 And then, so it went through the whole stake leadership, and guess what happened to our baptisms that year? Yeah,

Speaker 1 00:48:40 I bet Well

Speaker 2 00:48:41 Over a hundred, well over a hundred sometimes you just gotta get out from behind the desk. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and go do what you proclaim.

Speaker 1 00:48:52 Yeah. I love that so much, because oftentimes I found, you know, especially being the, you know, the, the leading saints guy, you know, I'm on here yapping and interviewing people who are yapping about this and that. And uh, and then I remember there's those moments where I remember when I got called as an Elders quorum president a few years back, and, you know, just being on the ground and being, being on it, you know, in the mix of it, I'm like, oh, wow. Yeah, this is harder than we sometimes make a sound, you know? And so sometimes, yeah, you gotta get out from out, from behind the desk and, and go see it, and you'll actually gain a new perspective and, and, and, uh, set a good example. Right.

Speaker 2 00:49:25 Yeah. Absolutely. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:49:26 That's awesome.

Speaker 2 00:49:27 I can't remember who said it, but somebody said, um, you can't minister from behind the desk. You can minister, but you can't minister. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative> impossible. Yeah. I mean, you can counsel, you can do things like that, but No, you gotta,

Speaker 1 00:49:44 I'm curious, just, you know, you mentioned 30 plus years of, of sitting on the stand and, you know, presiding in different meetings and being asked to give a few words,

you know, here and there. Um, what comes to mind? Like what, what advice would you give to a leader who's in that as far as having to stand up and, and address, you know, an audience over and over again, you know, for whatever reason. What, what advice comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:50:07 Um, well the first part is, uh, something I learned from President Hinkley. I loved President Hinkley. He was always good natured. He was always very topical. And so I always try to do something that's topical and, um, meaningful to the specific audience you're talking to. Uh, timely and topical. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and President, technically, he was a master at that. And 'cause he always knew what was going on in the world as you, as you probably know, he read three or four newspapers every single day. I think I also mentioned at the end of the day, it's about the family. So I always tried whenever I could possibly do it to, um, get to my kids' games and recitals and, and, uh, sometimes I'd show up halfway through, um, a, a baseball game, you know, or a recital of some kind. But I really tried my best. Um, not sure that I did it well, that I tried hard to be there for them so that they could look into the audience and see their dad. And dad was not just this person who got on an airplane Saturday and came back Sunday night. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:51:37 Awesome. Well, any other, uh, any other point, principle story that comes to mind that we need to make sure we hit on before we wrap up? Or what do you think, Doug?

Speaker 2 00:51:45 My mantra has always been, love who you lead. If you love the people, they will follow you.

Speaker 1 00:51:52 Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:51:53 Some people lead with sticks. I think carrots are a much better approach. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:51:58 <laugh> for sure. <laugh> for sure. I, I'm curious, you know, now you're 82, you know, obviously, uh, many decades of, of, uh, service in the church, um, has, I mean, what have the last couple decades been like? Have you have, has it felt like you're maybe out to pastor a little bit? Is it hard not being involved or doing those things? Or what, what's that experience been like? You know what,

Speaker 2 00:52:20 Kurt, I'm glad you asked that question because I told you that I skipped being a bishop

Speaker 1 00:52:26 Uhhuh <affirmative>

Speaker 2 00:52:27 <laugh>. Um, when we got home from our mission, I joined the BYU faculty. And, um, I was called to be the stake mission president for the BYU 20th Stake <laugh>. And, and our stake president was Ed Pener. And I recall, I was in New York City at the time with, uh, with some students, and I heard from the pulpit that all the seventies in the church were released, and there were no more stake missionaries. And so I'm sitting there in the pew thinking, okay, I'm done. So I called, uh, president Pinnegar that evening and I said, president,

this is Doug. I'm in New York. Uh, it's been really nice working with you, <laugh>, I appreciate your leadership, yada, yada. And he said, not so fast, <laugh>. And he said, I, now I have a letter I just got yesterday from the first presidency authorizing me to call you as a bishop.

Speaker 1 00:53:37 Oh, wow.

Speaker 2 00:53:38 So I, I'd done the whole sort of leadership curve, and now I'm the faculty of BYU in my sixties, and I get called to be a bishop of the BYU 217th Ward. And that was an amazing, amazing, I'm gonna cry, that was an amazing time. I recall we had a apartment of four girls, all were in some form of church disciplinary action, and President Vinegar and I went to their apartment at Ward Conference and spoke with them. And about a year later, I wrote President Pinnegar a letter, and I said, dear president, remember those four girls, they all have Temple Recommends

Speaker 1 00:54:43 Love those stories, stories of redemption. Right. It's powerful.

Speaker 2 00:54:48 And it's never too late. Yeah. And it's never too early. Yeah. Um, so yeah, out to Pastor <laugh> now, I think I'm out to pastor. Okay.

Speaker 1 00:54:59 And then how has that been? Is it,

Speaker 2 00:55:01 You know what, I, I, I love going to church. I love sitting with my wife. Uh, she teaches a gospel doctrine. Hmm. Uh, I love her lessons. I am thoroughly enjoying this chapter of my life. Um, it's time for somebody else to lead. Yeah. And there comes a time when you have to give that baton to somebody else. Okay. Yeah. You're running the race. They're gonna finish the race.

Speaker 1 00:55:34 Yeah. Love it. Well, as we, um, as we wrap up here, last question I have for you. As, as you think back on all your time as a, as a leader in the church and all the different callings you've had, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:55:50 Um, I think maybe we could use the analogy of a, uh, of a coin. It's got two sides, and the leadership side, uh, is one side. And, and then the followership side is the other side of the coin. And if you've seen one side of the coin, you understand the challenges of leadership. When you become a follower, you appreciate those challenges. I think you're not, not as quick to say, oh, he should have done this, or The Bishop should have said this, instead of that, you just don't go there. Um, and it makes being a follower a lot easier because you're free, you understand a little bit more, the big picture. And, and frankly, you're glad <laugh>, that you're not in that catbird seat, if you will. Um, the buck no longer stops on your desk, and that's fine. That's absolutely fine. Uh, I enjoy being a follower and understanding some of the challenges of leadership. It's not easy to be a leader in the church. It is not easy.

Speaker 1 00:57:21 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. And remember, grab your copy of my new book, is God Disappointed In Me, on Amazon or in select Costco stores?

Speaker 3 00:58:39 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, 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.