



## **Leading Like Elder David B. Haight | An Interview with Jim Ritchie**

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Speaker 1 00:00:02 How's your teaching calling going? Have you ever asked a question during the second hour? And suddenly everyone is looking at the carpet in silence? There are proven methods to stimulate class discussion that work like a charm. David Farnsworth does a masterful job presenting on this very subject in the Teaching Saints Virtual Library. What questions? Get people talking. How can you effectively listen to the answer they're saying without being distracted of where you want to take the class? Next? These are crucial principles to consider, especially in this time of Come Follow Me Sunday School. You can watch David Farnsworth's presentation by visiting [leadingsaints.org/fourteen](https://leadingsaints.org/fourteen). There you can gain free access for 14 days to the Teaching Saints Virtual Library, where you'll find hours and hours of content to help you be a better prepared Sunday teacher.

Speaker 1 00:00:54 Hey, welcome to the Leading Saints Podcast. Now, for many of you that are brand new, uh, to Leading Saints, it's important that you know that Leading Saints is a nonprofit organization, 5 0 1 C3, dedicated to helping Latter Day Saints be better prepared to lead. And we do that through content creation. We get so much positive feedback on the podcast, our virtual conferences, the articles on our website. You definitely gotta check it out at [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org) and on their homepage at [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org). You can actually find the top six most downloaded episodes to the podcast. So if you're new, like the content, want to jump into some of our most popular episodes? Head there after you listen to this episode. Welcome back to the Leading Saints podcast. Today I get to welcome on, uh, Jim Ritchie. How are you, Jim? Good. Awesome. Now, you have been, uh, on my list of people suggesting people I should interview for a while and we're finally making it happen. And where does your story begin? Where's a good starting point?

Speaker 2 00:01:58 Oh, man, that, that's gotta go way back to when I was a year old. I had, I got polio, so I was, had this, I was born, raised on the chicken farm and a feed mill and a motel and, and I paper out area. So my parents were very hardworking people, but, and I was only one of two children, the second of two kids and got polio. So I had this bad leg is in the hospital for five months with, I don't remember any of that. But then when I was two years old, learning to speak, I stuttered when very badly, when I learned how to talk. And so I lived with these two handicaps, quote, even though my parents wouldn't let me feel sorry for myself, they <laugh> they kept me working 18 hours a day, even as a kid. But, but I had this inferior complex that I was gonna fail in life 'cause I couldn't be the quarterback on the football team.

Speaker 2 00:02:46 And I couldn't be the debate captain because I had these impediments. And so I, but I also, I, I'll just to add to this and make a long story short, I, I think it ended up being one of my strengths because it forced me, you know, kids would, my friends would kinda laugh at me a little bit 'cause of my stuttering and my, my limping and so on. And, and I would feel bad about that. But I discovered if I would laugh with them, that I learned that, that it, I made a lot of friends. I hmm. Even though I couldn't communicate very well and couldn't play the football game, I, I be, I voted the, the, the seventh grade class president and eighth grade student body president for junior high, and then the senior high, I as a student body president for the school for Wasatch High as my last year in school. So even though I couldn't communicate the story, I discovered that my inadequacies gave me the courage to try to laugh it off and smile it off and, and made a lot of friends in a process to where I learned how to cope with that probably life. So yeah, it, it kinda got me going, but it helped me discover that you can, uh, compensate and sometimes we get compensated when we discover a weakness. Sometimes it can become our great strength. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:04:02 So there's a lot of leadership indicators in your, in your character, even a young age,

Speaker 2 00:04:07 You know? And my brother was the, was the junior high student body president and the senior high student wide president. I was four years behind him in the same building. So we, we, we kind of followed him too. He became a doctor, a cardiologist. And so it was kind of nice to have parents really hardworking and very popular in the community and hired a lot of kids. And so we worked hard, but we also learned to, to compensate and, and followed a big brother and mom and dad and, and, uh, some great friends that really helped me get through that era of life that I wonder if I'd ever be able to make it in life. Yeah. So it was interesting time. And

Speaker 1 00:04:41 Then did you serve a mission as a young man

Speaker 2 00:04:42 Then? I just about didn't serve a mission because of my inadequacies. I figured I'd be a lousy missionary. And so I, when I graduated from high school, I ran away to a gentile school, <laugh>, the, the University of Utah

Speaker 1 00:04:54 <laugh>. Oh boy, we're, we share that, but that's because BYE didn't want me but

Speaker 2 00:04:58 <laugh>. And so I ran away to, to kinda hide from my bishop and my mom and dad. And

Speaker 1 00:05:04 You didn't want the pressure. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:05:05 <laugh>. Yeah. So anyway, but I, but fortunately I came home a few weekends and, uh, and one time I came home and went to my priest corps class at church. And one of my best friends, my, the high school principal I'd worked with as the student body president, he, he was my priest Corps advisor. And when I walked in the door, he said he changed the lesson totally and taught a lesson on doctrine of covenants 82 and 10. I, the Lord abound when you do what I say, if you do not what I say, you have no promise. On the way out of the class, he put his arm around me and said, Jim, do you, do you know who that lesson was for? And I said, that was for me, wasn't it? And he said, yes. He said, I saw you walk the door.

Speaker 2 00:05:44 And I, and I just was inspired to teach that lesson today. And he said, you have a problem and you're trying to run away from it, and the Lord can't bless you. I Lord, a bound when you do what I say. Mm-Hmm. And he walked me right to the bishop's office and <laugh> picked up the mission papers, and a few weeks later, I received a call to go to Scotland Wow. On my mission. And, uh, I don't know, without that lesson, I might not have gone, I, I look back on my life and realized that a few times in my life when a mentor stepped in and saved my direction, because I'll still destroy in a minute here, but I could still be in Hebrew city herding chickens right now, you know, it's 70 years, years later. But without that lesson, and then I'll just keep going a minute.

Speaker 2 00:06:28 'cause I, and then I get to the m empty old mt No, no, MTC, the old Mission home in Salt Lake. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> downtown Salt Lake. And in that, I was there for a week and, uh, went to Logan to get her endowments. Salt Lake Temple was closed. And, and, uh, I had a dream one night, and I dreamed I was in Scotland knocking on doors. And this little old lady, uh, opened the door and introduced myself in perfect English, which I couldn't have done in real life. And, and then they had ended, the dream ended. So I'd get on the airplane and one of the first few I regular flights going to Europe in 1962, and, and land with my first mission president Bernard Brockbank, who became a general authority eventually. And, and he asked me some yes or no questions. You don't stutter when you say yes or no.

Speaker 2 00:07:12 And so he had no idea that I had a problem. And he sends me out to No Barton that night, and my new big six foot six companion from Bountiful, we unpack my bags and, and then we go knocking on doors. And he takes the first 20 doors, whatever, and, and, uh, without any success. And then he says, finally says to me, elder Richie, this is your door. I don't need to knock. I just gotta lay my arm on that door. <laugh>, you're so nervous. Because I'm so nervous. Anyway, the door opens and there's this little lady in my dream now I dreamed in the mission hall there she was this little old lady standing there. And I went, in my heart, I went, hoo, man, the church is true. I mean, it is gonna be idle, Lord abound, you know, I'm here on my mission.

Speaker 2 00:07:53 I'm gonna have this great blessing happen. And I opened my mouth to give this little memorized door approach about my friend and I, and I couldn't say friend my, everything I could say would, but friend, and finally had a mercy. My companion took over and introduced us, and, uh, she had no interest in the church, closed the door. And I said, at that point, I said, this is gonna fail. I'm gonna be a, I'm gonna fail as a missionary. Mm-Hmm. I said, don't make me do that again. I'll pack the bags and you do the talk. And I can't go home. I can't embarrass my folks and my brother, so I gotta stay. And I've only got 729 more days to go <laugh>. And so we, we go for two or three days. I'm, he does the talking. And two days after transfers, were over on a Thursday of that week, another transfer happens. And I've been a mission president, so I know how transfers work. But you don't transfer one day. And then two days later you do another transfer. He transferred into our zone, a new zone leader who had been a Catholic priest in Oh wow. In New England, like

Speaker 1 00:08:56 Before he converted

Speaker 2 00:08:57 <laugh> before Mission. And he had one of his PR parishioners had come to him with a book of Mormon given to her by two sister Missionaries and Liver in, uh, Newcastle. And they asked, they, she asked her if she's to read that book, and he said, no, it's of the devil. But he said, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll read it for you and I'll you come back in a week and I'll tell you why you don't wanna read that book. He read it once, he read it twice. He said the third time through, he knew he was in trouble. <laugh> eventually joined the church with disowned by his family, disowned by a church. And Bernard Breck Bank sponsored him on a mission, brought him to Scotland. He'd been 18 months. One of the great communicators, he was the Jeff Holland of Scotland at that time, because he was just a great communicator.

Speaker 2 00:09:41 And, and that go could go anywhere. He, he could go anywhere on a mission to speak on invitation, where most of us were restricted to our zones. And, and he called up Saturday night, two days after he got there, didn't, would never met, had no idea I had a problem, and said, uh, elder Barlow, I wanna go, we're gonna go to these three wards or branches tomorrow to speak, and I wanna trade companions. I wanna take Elder Richie with me. And so we drive into these three branches and wards the next day. And on the way, he says, by the way, you'll be given a talk today on Faith. And I say, no, I don't do that. He said, yeah, you'll,

Speaker 1 00:10:15 You're the missionary that doesn't talk right <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:10:18 No, you'll, he said, and he made me stand up in front of that group and give this five minute terrible talk. I mean, I destroyed it. It was terrible. And then he gets up 35 minutes and dazzles the audience, and everybody lines up to join the church. And I'm overdoing this story just a little bit. And then he goes to the next meeting, he says, five minutes on repentance, five minutes on something else. And, and I suffer through the day. And then the next week he does the same thing for the next six months every day. But fast day, he took me all over Scotland, making me give these five minute talks until one day, about halfway through that experience, I stood up and gave a little talk that I can still remember this little old man

walking up to me in the aisle of this rendered hall in Scotland and, and thanked me for what I'd said that first time in my life, anybody but my mother had ever complimented me in what I'd said.

Speaker 2 00:11:08 And it changed my life. I mean, wow. It, it was like getting outta Liberty Jail. I, that's a lousy comparison, white, white comparison. But, but it, for me, it was, it was an escape from a prison that I thought I was gonna be trapped in my whole life. And it went on. David ha David bha arrived a few weeks later as our new mission president. And I spent the last eight months working very closely with him. And it was just a change of life. And I, he, he became my mentor for life. And I'll just finish with this part, with one a week before I went home from my mission, were on a, on the river Clyde, with the members on a preparation day, just on a outdoor excursion. And he comes up to the side of me on the edge of the boat and said, Jim, you're going home in a week.

Speaker 2 00:11:50 He said, lemme tell you what I want you to do when you go home. And this has become what's ended up being the, the formula for success and happiness for teaching all over the world in this Launching Leaders course is, is the foundation of that was get up early, work hard, get your education, you gotta find your oil, find where your, that's a J Paul Getty statement, but we've incorporated it. Find your oil so you can, number five, make your mark. Mm-Hmm. You gotta be good at something. You gotta have your oil to do it, to get good at something. And tho those five steps, he said, I guarantee will help you be, it'll make you successful, but it won't guarantee happiness. He said, if you'll do those five things and get, and be, get successful at something, then do number six and you'll be happy. And that is give back or serve others. Build a kingdom, whatever the word you want to use. If you'll find your oil and make your marking life and then give it away, then you'll find real happiness. And I can bear witness. That's really true. I, we spend our life teaching that all over the world. And it's, I've never seen this an exception to it. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:59 Yeah. And that came from, uh, president haight, elder Haight. Right. David B Haight. Wow. So, I'm curious working with, uh, David bha, uh, I've read his biography. He is just so inspiring his journey and the type of man he was. I mean, if someday when I interview him in, in the eternities, what are some leadership principles that, that come to the surface

Speaker 2 00:13:17 Thinking, oh, he was such a successful man in everything. He, he was of course the business, the hated, hated hardware. He, his Palo Al Lo, and then he helped get the temple built, the name of stake president. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:13:27 He's in California, Palo area, California

Speaker 2 00:13:29 Uhhuh, you know, California guy. So everything he did was just an example of how to excel and do something out of the, out of the ordinary and help build, build his own world of business, which is children to go over and Iran, and then used it to build the kingdom, you know, get the temples built and organize and run in charge of that. And then, of course, move up to become one, one of the Chrome to 12. And for him to be end up being in Scotland when I was just getting through my real hardship, months of six months of trial, and

then to have the next 18 months, I got to work with him. He changed the mission. He, he created five quote, what we call five missions named after famous Scottish people. I was the, and called five mission presidents, five of us to be mission presidents.

Speaker 2 00:14:13 Really. I was, I was Robert De Bruce, the, the Bruce mission president for over fifth of the Mission. And for six months, and every Monday morning, got to get in his office and Paisley and work with him and hear him and talk with him. And, and it just life changing experience I just saw between my parents who taught me how to work and how to take opportunities. And then to see him teach me how to lead and how to be that. And it would just, and then he, when I came home, he became a mentor of mine. He, he, I'm sure many of my colleagues in life have been ary small to David, hate taking this limping, stuttering chicken farmer and trying to make something of his life because he, he just, uh, would meet in his office once or twice a year. And, and I know that some of the colonies we'll talk about were, were definitely from David Ha.

Speaker 2 00:15:01 But he really impacted my life. Yeah. Let me just finish with saying this point about that, that I use this now. 'cause in my patriarchal blessing as a 15-year-old kid, Ralph Giles, my patriarch in my own ward, gave me this, this limping stuttering chicken farmer kid. I wrote a limerick, and my only a in high school was a limerick. It was once was a boy named Jim, who was full of vigor. And vim who limped when he walked and stuttered when he talked, that little boy named Jim <laugh>. That was my only a in high school. So I, uh, but Ralph Giles gave me a patriarchal blessing. And here it was, I mean, this limping stuttering chicken farmer kid. And he, and he laid his hands on my head and told me that I would travel for the church, that I would have friends all over the world and I would witness before many.

Speaker 2 00:15:49 Now he had to go home that night and tell his wife, he'd say, you can't believe what I just said to this kid. <laugh>. I mean, <laugh>, I'll, they'll, they'll never forgive me in Salt Lake, giving a patriarchal blessing to this kid that that's probably never gonna leave Dodge. And I told him he is gonna be all over the world doing things and, uh, friends all over the world, and he'll witness for many. And, and of course, nine missions later. And having spent 25 years in the mission field full time with my wife, uh, I mean, we got friends all over the world. Like we got an email list over a thousand people that we talked to every week. And, and we've been, we've spoken in thousands of places all over the world, and it's just really a, a miracle. But to think that heavenly father knows us and knows what we could do and what we ought to do and what we're ordained to do, and that, that he would tell me this again, limping, stuttering kid, that those things that I would be able to do and then to send a Catholic priest <laugh> to become a full-time missionary and to, and to send him in my zone and have me take the only kid he took around the mission and made me stand up and communicate.

Speaker 2 00:16:55 I mean, he knows who we are. Yeah. And he does. And he'll, he'll fulfill every promise for ordained blessing in life if we'll just have the marrying trees of life, that high school principal to give that lesson at the right time and have me there to listen to it without which I, I shudder to what might have happened in my life.

Speaker 1 00:17:14 Yeah. It's powerful. So I, I'd love to dig into these nuances. Going back to Elder Haight, uh, leadership. So he, did he have zone leaders in the mission? Yeah. But but he, did he call you mission president? Or He created,

Speaker 2 00:17:25 He created five missions under which then each of us had several zones. Okay. E every senior companion was a district leader. The moment called us Senior Companion, and he had a, had a award to work with or branch. Oh, okay. So we all had our own board of branch. And, and that senior companion was in charge of all the missionaries, all the members of that ward, and then zone leader over several wards, and then the five mission leaders. In fact, as a mission president, I did the same thing. I was, uh, lucky enough to have John Carmack as my area president. They would never let me do the things I did. <laugh>, I'd been for a guy who came along. In fact, let me tell you a story. We were in Virginia as mission president and, and we're having our first mission tour, and John Carmack is my area president.

Speaker 2 00:18:09 And, and he, we divide the mission into three regions like President Haight had done, we had the, the Bluefield region, and we had the Capital Richmond area Richmond. And, and the, the title came out, the, the Ocean, the Norfolk area, and three regions. And so anyway, we took him to the first regional conference and, and we had two assistants with us in the backseat. And, uh, and we just left Richmond, I think, and, and we left two area assistants in that region. I had eight assistants, two in each region, and two with us every month. We'd have two come in, train them, they'd go in the region and then sit two, go home and two more and come in. So we had eight minutes, eight assistant going all the time. 'cause of David Haight and Elder Carmack. We got through at that first region conference.

Speaker 2 00:18:55 And he says, Jamie leaned up and I was driving. He said, how do you feel about being out of conformity with the white handbook in eight areas, <laugh>? And I can feel myself being released at the moment in time it spends being sent home. And I said, oh, yeah. Then he said, for instance, then he started naming 'em off and named the eight assistants. He said, the white handbook calls for two, you got eight. And I said, David, eight that caught white handbook calls for zones and districts, you got region zones in conferences, said David Haight and on and on, everything. I blamed him for everything. And, and after he got through listing all of them, he said, you the white, you have yellow planters in the mission. You got Franklin planners in your deal. I said, well, I, with Franklin for five years hiring Smith came out and gave us all Franklin planners.

Speaker 2 00:19:41 And, and he said, when he finally got through, he said, he said, okay. He said, listen, he said, your mission's on fire said you're leading the whole area in baptisms. Everybody's doing a great job. Your, your missionaries are excited and loving it. He says, just do me one favor. He says, two weeks before you go home, make it look like a white handbook. Mission <laugh> <laugh>. He says, make it. He said, don't make somebody come and inherit your style or your mission. He said, they won't, they won't, they'll feel bad. They won't know what to do. Yeah. Make them look bad. He said, just make it look like a normal mission <laugh> two and a half years from now, will you? Oh, that's awesome. Anyway, that was the,

Speaker 1 00:20:18 And this really came from that mentorship from Elder Haight of just saying like, you know, we're gonna do leadership in a way that's inspiring or that's different.

Speaker 2 00:20:25 Everything, everything he did was to motivate and inspire. He said, give a kid a calling and then make him understand what that means, what he is gotta do to live up to it. So we get district leader quick, you know, senior companion, district leader, zone leader, you know, regional rep, young mission president. I mean, you know, and our mission, we had two, so we had 24 aps every year. And so over 70 of our missionaries, the Rick McGees and the Doug Nielsen's of Life were all assistants. It's 72 of 'em that otherwise they would've been probably eight or 10 in the three years. Mm-Hmm. Yeah. And because David Haight said, give a kid a position, tell what it means to live up to it, and then they'll rise to the occasion. They'll become a leader. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:09 Yeah. And this, this dynamic's interesting. Yeah. I even see it, you know, recording this the day after conference. And elder Karen, he mentions that when you're called to these positions, you sort of step back and reassess who you are. Yeah. And that's the power of leadership. And so, you know, obviously there's only 12 spots for apostles, but we can still have these dynamics happen as we invite people into leadership roles by giving 'em a title of responsibility. And then they, they find a different part of them, but their soul.

Speaker 2 00:21:34 Think about that. Think about the fact that I, I mean, I was a real, as a bishop for only three years before David Haight suggested that I leave Heber and get out of town and go <laugh>, build a, build a church somewhere. I had 26 businesses at the time, and Bishop in the ward and the Chamber of Commerce president. And, and I went to see him and I said, you, and then I, I remembered giving back, helping building the kingdom, helping others. And, and I went to see him and I said, you know, I've got this urge to volunteer to be a seminary teacher and get outta take my kids on a mission. I had seven kids at the time said, we, I'd like to, I got all these businesses on and I'm a bishop and so on. And he said, remember the formula? And I said, yes, that's why we're thinking about it. He says, follow your impression, follow your spirit. And so we volunteered to go teach the seminary to be a seminary teacher somewhere outta Utah. And they didn't have a, a program then. They didn't have a volunteer program for CES.

Speaker 1 00:22:30 So like stakes weren't calling seminary teachers back then.

Speaker 2 00:22:33 So anyway, they had to hire me. I had to get hired and, and I, so I had to go through this training program and luckily I had my bachelor's degree. I had to have a bachelor's degree at least. And, and then they, they hired me to go to California and take my kids. I said, I'm only going for nine months. I can't, this is just a mini mission to me. So I don't care about the money at all, and I gotta get back to my business stuff and so on. And they said, well, okay, but we'll send you to California. So I got opened the first day seminary program in California with my seven kids. We liked it so much, we stayed for another year. And then by that time I stayed president and then we stayed down for another five years. And then David Hay, I'm sure intervened at that point because I'd only bishop for three and stake president for five, which is usually five and 10.



Speaker 2 00:23:19 And then we're called as mission president to go back to Virginia at that point. So we're in Simi Valley for eight years on that, that mini mission. It was gonna be nine months spending full time as stake president and institute director that build an institute program. We had two kids start at Moore Park and an old farmhouse ended up with 350 kids at that institute. Biggest in the church outside of Utah and an old farmhouse. And, and because of that, I, I'm just, I'm adding on to this forever, but because of that 350 kids in an old farmhouse, the commissioner of education heard about it in Salt Lake. And he flew to set to California to come and see if it really was happy. And this old farmhouse, 350 kids, and, and he come out and spoke at the devotional and, and his name was Stan Peterson.

Speaker 2 00:24:06 And he later, a few years later ended up calling me on the phone and saying, we just had a, our area director for CES who just called into the, the rum of, of 70 in Africa. Would you go to Africa for us? And for a short period of time and, you know, one to three years and be the area director, the only non-paid area director in the church. And I went and told my wife, I just got invited to go to Africa. She <laugh>, she was, oh, you know, she couldn't believe it. I mean, she had the visualization of the pi the, the chemistry, you know, on the fire underneath and the natives around going around the outside <laugh>. And so it was, but we went, but it was Stan Peterson. Had we not been to California and helped build that institute, Stan Peterson never would've come and find out who we were.

Speaker 2 00:24:53 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And because that we got to go to Africa and then Africa to West Africa as the MTC President, then from there to BYU Hawaii as a entrepreneurship director for three years in, in Hawaii. And then the young adult leader in Washington DC South Mission. So several of our missions, the New Zealand for two years as well. In between that, that were all because of, you know, Marion tree and the high priest and the priest Corps advisor. And, and then the patriarch given that blessing. And, and now Stan Peterson, the commissioner of education, any one of those without having would have not met him, that would've changed our whole life. Right. Yeah. And it all happened because the David Haight said, you know, give back, serve others, build the kingdom, you

Speaker 1 00:25:36 Know. Yeah. That's powerful. And all this, uh, the sort of a, a core principle I'm recognizing is this is mentorship. Yeah. And I've talked to some of your missionaries that I'm, I'm good friends with, and they could come back to this, that they see you as a great mentor. So if there's church leaders out there striving to be a better mentor, like what advice would you give them to do that effectively?

Speaker 2 00:25:56 Well, I'd, I'd have em start with Moses, you know, but Moses was an 80-year-old man herding sheep in sand. Pete County. I use that as a joke, <laugh>, because I dunno where he was, but I just got back from sand. Pete County

Speaker 1 00:26:07 Would've probably looked like that, right?

Speaker 2 00:26:08 It looked like that. But he was th he was jet throws his father-in-law jet throws sheep herder for the last 30 years. But finally, for some reason, at age, my age, he, he went up the mountain, made the trek up the mountain, difficult trek for an old man. And when he

did, God waited for him to come. He could have done this 30 years before, but he waited for Moses to make the decision that he wanted to find out more and come to the mountain, come to Scotland, or come to the mountain. And when he did, then God says, okay, welcome Moses. Sit down a minute. I gotta show you a of home video. And they sit down and watch his home video of the creation story. And all time they're watching it together, Moses is saying, wonder why he's showing me this video. You know, is he trying to impress me with what he's done with his life?

Speaker 2 00:26:56 And of course, that's insanity. And, and, uh, and so finally he recognizes the fact that he's standing next to God watching a video of what he's done in his life. And then finally it dawns on him, he's standing to, to me, Moses, Moses, you know, you can do more than being a sheep birder. You know, you've done a, a waited 30 years for you to come. 'cause you have incredible opportunity. 'cause I made you to be like me. I'm your mentor. I, I'm now, would you use what you want know you have and go do something with it? And he comes off the mountain saying, comes right after him because he says he Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, he didn't wanna have Moses realize that he was a leader and he wanted to be a sheep. Her. And, and, uh, and finally in invoices seven times said to him, I get outta my life now.

Speaker 2 00:27:41 I don't want you anymore. I, he's okay yesterday I didn't understand all this, but now I know who I am. And then when he finally gets through the rid of Satan and Satan departs, then God comes back to him and says, now I know I can use you. He'd been tested, you've been tried. And now you've said, okay, now go to Egypt. Mm-Hmm. Go to Scotland. Go to Simi Valley. Go to Washington dc go to New Zealand. Go to Hawaii. Go to go to California. You know, 'cause Right. The Lord can use you somewhere. He just develop your strengths and all you can and go try. And he'll help you fill up that role and position and you'll discover the, the joy of mentorship and leadership. And in fact, I'll go back to kind of where I started. I, I kind of pushed the church <laugh> a little to say, why don't you call bishops at three years and instead of five?

Speaker 2 00:28:31 And and my point was, I got a few of, when our stake president, I got a few early calls and because I saw so many people in every one of those wards whose family and person would've thrived and excelled if they'd had the chance to be a bishop. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so I was really pushing for three year bishops and five year stake presidents. 'cause I said, man, there's so many people that they thrive when they, they grow when the opportunity comes. And you don't need to be a bishop and a stake president to serve. You know, there's mentorship in this, you know, what do they call it when you go fellowship in the Mm-Hmm. Ministry. Ministry. Ministry. So you can, you can be a bishop as a junior companion in the church as, because you just can go out and help people minister and lift people, save, save lives and lift people's lives. But it's also really a thrill when you get a chance to take your family through a bishop brick role and the, and a high council role in the stake president role, or counselor, whatever. Yeah. Mission president, we MTC president man, what a great experience that was in Ghana. I mean, every one of those were just David Haight called up opportunities that, that changed our life. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:29:43 So to take me back to, you come up from your mission, you, you sort of get, you spent your time as an entrepreneur. Is that safe to say?

Speaker 2 00:29:49 Yeah. I, uh, I come up with my mission. I <laugh> I went to, I went to BYU now that I could joined the church since I, then I sort go to BYU and I tell this story, it's didn't happen this way, but my is a story by tale. I realized that I had the formula and, and I wanted to get onto life. And so I, I needed a woman to do that and a wife. And so I said, I goes, I started knocking on girls' dorm doors and there's always the bin to every door. There was six to eight beautiful women there. And, and then they'd open the door and I'd say, hi, my name is Jim Ritchie and I'm from Hebrew City and, and, uh, I need a woman <laugh>. And they'd, they'd look at me and they'd say, why? Why would we wanna date you?

Speaker 2 00:30:30 You know, you're, you're not very handsome. You got a bad leg used to stutter chicken farmer's, kid. Why'd we date you? And I said, you know, that hurts. That really hurts you say that, but they're all true. But I said, you know what? But I have the formula <laugh>, and I'm gonna make it in life Uhhuh, because I've been promised by a future apostle that if I'll live these six steps, I'll be successful. But I need a woman to help me do that. Now that didn't happen that way. And my wife hates the story <laugh>. But, but, uh, but we finally found this beautiful Dixie chick from St. George. It was, it was, uh, Dixie queen, and she was in ward. And and I, we started dating and got gays and married and mm-hmm. <affirmative> eight kids later and 41 grandkids, and 21 great grandkids, and 90 of us now in the family.

Speaker 2 00:31:17 And, and right now all but one, one adopted granddaughter, she's not doing well in the church, but everybody else is, all 90 of us will be in church every week of some sort two or three that are struggling a little bit with life. But, uh, but they're still going to church and they're gonna make it, they're gonna be okay. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And it's, uh, so I came home and then we graduate from BYU, the two of us. And then we go start law school, which didn't work out. I, I spent a year in, did a u and graduate school. But we dropped out of there and went back to start taught school for a year in high school, high Wasatch High, while I built my first business, I built, got an SBA loan and built a modern feed mill in Hebrew Valley. And from there we went on. From there I ended up with a Chevrolet dealership and several restaurants and motels from St. George to Rexburg. Mm-Hmm. And we ended up with 26 businesses. And then that's when, at age 35, we got the urge to say, let's go take these kids on a mini mission. That's

Speaker 1 00:32:18 Cool. Now, this role as Bishop, during that time, was that really your first like, formal leadership role since your mission? Yeah. I, I, yeah.

Speaker 2 00:32:25 After my mission, I was, I was called to be, I was the first stake executive secretary in the church. I think they, they come out with stake executive secretaries. And Harold Call was the stake president. And he called me to be the first, he didn't know how to use me. I didn't know how to use me. We, we learned together how to be an executive secretary. And I was there for a year. And then Bishop Besendorfer was the bishop on my ward. He called me to be a counselor. And I was in, so I was a counselor to Bishop Besendorfer and then for two years, and then he could build a home in Charleston where his hometown was. And, and we knew he was gonna, he was gonna move that week and we're gonna be released. And I got called to Glen to see the stake president.

Speaker 2 00:33:05 Now, this is a prideful story, <laugh>, I, uh, he get called to go. I'm, I'm the counselor. I got all these Chevrolet dealership and I'm a businessman. And I'm only 26 or seven years old. And I'm quite thinking I'm quite cool. And, and I, uh, and so I assumed to bring my wife and put my best suit on. And so I'm assuming I'm gonna be called to be the bishop to replace Bishop Best Norford. So I go in and meet with the stake president, Bob Quiet. And, and he, uh, he says, we're gonna be releasing you guys this weekend. And, and I, I remember humbly shaking my head and saying, well, it's gonna be hard to replace Bishop Bestor for you. He's a great, and it's gonna, it's gonna be really hard to do that <laugh>. He says, yes. He said, and the the Lord has called Harvey Horner to be the new bishop.

Speaker 2 00:33:50 He's asked that you be a counselor. <laugh> and I, and Harvey's younger than I was and their school teacher. And I, and I thought, you know what? How can he be wrong on this school, you know, <laugh>. Anyway, so I, I served with Harvey and it takes me a while to really catch on. 'cause I'm looking for the reasons why he was called, and I was supposed to be. And, and finally one night, in the middle of the night, I got a one Saturday night, I got a, a dream as vivid as can be that, and it just said that, that Jim Harvey Horner's not on trial. Here you are. Hmm. And, uh, the next day I went to Harvey and told him, I said, I've been kind of a mediocre counselor and I, but I think I can be a good one if you, you ought to can me, but if you don't, I think I can be a good counselor.

Speaker 2 00:34:35 And so I, I finished off another year, and then we built a home in Daniels and, and met the new bishop and we moved there. And he called me to be a scout master, which was the furthest thing from my mind is a scout master. I'm not an outdoor guy at all. And, but I did it five months later I was called to be the bishop. Hmm. So I, I, uh, I know if I'd have failed as that counselor for Harvey Horner or if I'd have failed as that scoutmaster Yeah. My whole life would've been different. Interesting. You know? Yeah. The Bishop then turned into the stake president and several regions and jobs in California and then, and then mission president and so on. So, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:35:10 So if you go back in time and mentor yourself during those early leadership years as a, as a young bishop, I mean, what what comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:35:16 You know, it, it's, uh, it is being a David Haight what, trying to be a David Haight and trying to follow his footsteps and trying to touch lives and, and realize that, you know, in Scotland, I'll tell you one quick story and I'll tell you how it fit. He decided to have a, what he called a feat of Faith, a 40 day program where he wanted the missionaries to, to live perfect lives. All, all of us for Perfect. Gave us a calendar, told us exactly what to do, six 30 to nine 30 at night, 10 30 at night, or what to do all day long, what to do, what to study every day. Memorizing that scripture on faith. If thou can't believe all things are possible to him to believe it. That was the first deal. And he said, I promise you something that we're gonna have a miracle happen in Scotland, but you gotta be, gotta gotta earn it.

Speaker 2 00:36:03 You gotta be, you gotta believe and do it. You gotta do it. You gotta live this perfect life. And so we all committed to do it. And they said, we're gonna send it a letter, a calendar, a tribute pledge to David Oma Kai, the church leader on his 91st birthday. We're

gonna baptize at least 182 people two times his birthday. And, and if you'd baptize in the six week parade, you can sign the scroll. It'll go to Scotland, it'll go to Salt Lake, to David eight, who's not David, eight to David M. McKay, who's Scottish. And so we have five weeks of mediocre work. And why that was just right after the time they'd cut off the Kitty Dip program. You couldn't baptize unattached kids anymore. So the Holy Western European missions had gone south dramatically. David Hayes said, we can still baptize just so many people, but not have to baptize baseball kids.

Speaker 2 00:36:51 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And, uh, five weeks was normal. The last week of that mission, of that 40 day period, we not only baptized more people than any other mission, we baptized more people than all the western European missions combined. Wow. It was an incredible experience when, I'll never forget, we all got every mission companion, but one got to sign the scroll. And, but I never forgot the fact that we leaders cause miracles to happen. You know, leaders cause miracles to happen. And David Haight showed me how to do that. And, and so everything I did and Daniels, we had, we got all the young women leaders and the young men leaders and, and we'd only had one kid go to youth conference a year before we got there. And we said, let's, let's do something bigger. And the council got excited and they said, let's send every kid.

Speaker 2 00:37:39 We had 62 kids in our ward to young kids. Let's next year, let's have everybody go at the youth conference and let's raise enough money this winter to do it. And the young women, the young men got together and they worked hard. The Bishop Rick. And, and next year we had 62 kids on the bus and one got off 'cause her boyfriend came and got her off the bus. But we, 61, outta 62 went, went from one to 61 and a year. And the kids called themselves the biggest and the best. They were from this little rural town of Daniels where nobody ever exceled. And all of a sudden we became the biggest mistake. And, and we go to California and we're stake president. And, and, uh, after been there a few months, I said to the guy said, what, what if we did something?

Speaker 2 00:38:21 What if we create a Zion in a stake and uh, what if we did a feed of faith? They said, what, what are you talking about? I said, why don't we come up with a calendar and have all the members give a calendar and outline their day and what to do and read the book of Roman out loud as a family in 40 days and have a mission experience and temple experience and the whole bit. And, and, uh, they said, that's a pretty good idea. And I gave 'em a copy of the calendar. And, and then I said, you know what guys? I, they, they thought I was bright and genius. And I said, we're copying every bit of this. We do. Didn't do a thing of this myself. And they all liked it. And we got excited. We started getting awards to get excited about starting off this program.

Speaker 2 00:38:58 We didn't tell 'em what it was. We said, let's start off with the temple experience in the LA Temple and, and then the next night we'll meet y'all and tell you what we want you to do. And, and so we built it up for several months. And the night of the temple nights, November 7th, 1982 or three, I can't remember now, they, uh, started coming to the temple for the temple. I called the temple president and told him, we're gonna have a session. Come, we wanna have a big deal. And he said, president, we have steak temple nights every night. Just

bring your people. Come on down. You know, okay. I said, yeah, but we're all coming. He said, we've heard that before, <laugh>. And uh, so anyway, we, we all started coming. We had a chapel session first, and, and they all kept coming and kept coming and kept coming. And, and before we were through that night, we had 747 members of our stake come to the temple that Wow. We were seven the next morning.

Speaker 1 00:39:47 And which temple is this again?

Speaker 2 00:39:48 In Los Angeles. la Okay. We were three o'clock the next morning getting everybody through the temple. They, they stayed up all night getting this done. But, but it was only 27 people who could have had a re who had a recommend, didn't come at 11 wards. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And we found out the next day that those 27, everyone were even dying having babies are deathly ill. Not one single person who could, who had a recommended and over a hundred people gotta recommend to get ready for it. Came to the temple that night and to that. And they, they still in time, I meet anybody was there that night. A nice, and we've been gone there for 35 years. They talk about that temple night of be in the temple in la That's cool. And, and, uh, and then, then we finished a 40 day program with another temple.

Speaker 2 00:40:35 707 came back. Temple was ready for us the second time. <laugh>, we had 707 Quebec and finished that after having read. We were gonna create Zion. We were gonna create Zion. We didn't get it done. We weren't translated, but we came close. We came close because we really did have this goal of having a David eight Miracle happen in our stake. And, and it still today re I still get chicken skin just telling the story of what it was like to live in that stake when we, we were, people were really trying to become a Zion people. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Uh,

Speaker 1 00:41:08 So, and as a leader, you're rallying them around this, this movement really every week of what we're doing. And

Speaker 2 00:41:14 The three of us go to, we'd go to a ward. So we'd go to two or three wards every Sunday. The three stake presidency members. We'd have at least five minutes in every ward and mistake before and during a 40 day period where we would be talking about creating design stake and be the first one since Enoch to, and again, we didn't make it Yeah. But we came close

Speaker 1 00:41:35 <laugh> or maybe you're the only one they left behind. Everybody else was translating No <laugh>. Now. Um, and I'm just curious, like in that dynamic, like how do you, was it difficult to maybe get your bishops on board with this or

Speaker 2 00:41:47 It wasn't really, it was interesting. They, they were easily excited and motivated. Then they got behind it and they were all with it. We had 11 awards at the time. There were only five right now in Simi Valley. The California's had a drain of the members all come to Utah and <laugh>. That's right. We had those 11 units and they were all really pumped about what they were trying to do. You know, it's interesting that we, we kind of debated why we quite didn't quite finish it off. And then one of my counselors and I went to this general

conference in April after we'd done that in November, December. And we were still in the very back row of the old tabernacle. And I discovered that when to get President Kimball cool up on that stage a mile away, they had to have an air conditioning unit, which they didn't have when they built it.

Speaker 2 00:42:31 Hmm. But they know where they put it. They put it right back here behind when it comes out of the wall right there, Uhhuh. And if it comes at 80 miles an hour, they can get to the time of President Kimball. And we're sitting right in on the back row, right in front of it, freezing to death, <laugh> literally believing we're gonna die in the spot there. We were gonna be frozen to death at that air conditioning. But it made us, and I remember jokingly saying, I wrote notes to my wife and put in my pocket. So when they found the body, they'd find my last word for about my wife and the kids. And, and, uh, but we joke about that. But we decided, and then they asked me, what did you learn in the conference? I said that, I don't know. I have no idea.

Speaker 2 00:43:07 I don't know who spoke <laugh>. I just tried to survive just to live through it. But then it got us back to the Zion one heart, one mind dwelling in righteousness and no poor. We had focused on one heart, one mind dwelling. The righteousness for the 40 days had not worked on the temporal side. And that experience of being freezing to death convince us that the temporal side is as important as the other. When, when ne did it, he worked on all four mm. You know, we'd spent working on all three of 'em <laugh>. So if if we'd had time, we'd have worked the Navajo, then were called to go to Virginia. So we didn't have time to work on the other. But it was just great learning experience. So realizing that you gotta take 'em temporally and spiritually if we're gonna create that Yeah. That place.

Speaker 1 00:43:51 So were you stake president when the call came to be a mission president? Yeah. And what's the story behind that? Well, I

Speaker 2 00:43:55 Just, oh, it'd been five years and all of a sudden I get a call when family night from President Monson, actually we'd been called, we flew to Northern California to meet with, uh, with Elder Oaks, just in the interview. No idea what it was for. Just,

Speaker 1 00:44:11 And he just happened to be in town or he was

Speaker 2 00:44:13 In Oakland. And we flew from Sea LA to Oakland to meet with him as just as for an interview. No idea why. He just interviewed us. And then two weeks later we got a phone call on a family night right in the middle of Family Lesson from President Monson, which

Speaker 1 00:44:28 Was outta the ordinary. It was a counselor

Speaker 2 00:44:29 At the time, a counselor Uhhuh and call us to be mission president. And so, uh, so we only got to spend five years as a stake president. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:44:37 And, uh, did he have a call your location where you were going that point

Speaker 2 00:44:41 Or No? He, he just said it would be English speaking and we had know in a few weeks where it was gonna be. Were you

Speaker 1 00:44:45 Praying for Scotland? I

Speaker 2 00:44:46 Don't know where I was praying for, you know, interesting. We had eight kids at the time and they're all still, the oldest one's a senior in high school. And so, uh, that was a complication to the church as well. 'cause you know, where do you, where do you have a mission home that could house 10 people? Uhhuh <affirmative>. And so there's only two or three missions in church that would've worked. Washington DC one of 'em was one, and Roanoke was, was the other one. And they, we got to go to Roanoke, thankfully. And it was just a perfu for us. Uh, we had, we created Southern Virginia University during the time, just right after we were there and helped. Glad Knight was one, the board of trustees of that for the first ground. And, and, uh, glad Knight developed that. And I got a help. And, and we're just a fun time. We just had, we had just incredible growth. We went from few hundred baptisms to the second and third year we had over a thousand mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Uh,

Speaker 1 00:45:36 And how do you walk into that role? Like where do you start, uh, as a mission president?

Speaker 2 00:45:40 And again, you know, you, you remember what David did, you know Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> David, what did president ha do? How would he do it? And we just started meeting with the stake presidents every month. We met with all nine stake presidents every month, and the stake presidency and the mission leaders. And, and we started calling these missionaries into whether be as district senior became district leaders working with the warden. So we just started trying to do those leadership things again that elder Haight had done and it worked. And then meet with the stake president every month. We lived in Roanoke, which like, like living in St. George and your missionaries in Salt Lake, our mission was 11 hours across, we go from outer banks of North Carolina to, to West Virginia. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so we had a, a lodge mission elder. There's four missions now in that same area.

Speaker 2 00:46:24 But, but we just started meeting with the leaders and meeting, we interviewed every missionary every month, had 250 missionaries and we had transfers in every month, not every six weeks like they are now. So we were, we would spend as many nights in a hotel, a member's home, as we did in our, in Roanoke, leaving eight kids, uh, back in Roanoke with Carolyn's mom and dad come out on a mission and lived in a mission home with us and Mission Office couple. And so they were there when we weren't there and helping raise those kids. And I got the kids close to those parents, which they didn't really know her parents very well because we lived in Hebrew. They lived in St. George. But that was fun. And our oldest daughter had graduated from high school when we theft. She came out, she went to BYU for a year. She got a mission call and she had the she was asked, do you wanna go be assigned to go back to your parents' mission? 'cause we still had 18 months left of our mission, and she's asked to come to our mission. Oh, really? Wow. My oldest daughter gotta serve with her. And we put her in the worst areas, <laugh>. We didn't want anybody to think we were have showing favoritism. She became her best missionary. Wow. Great, great experience. To what



Speaker 1 00:47:31 <crosstalk>, was that common back then? Or, I mean, I guess, was that a common thing? But maybe there weren't a lot of mission resident with?

Speaker 2 00:47:36 I'm not sure about

Speaker 1 00:47:36 That. With 21-year-old

Speaker 2 00:47:38 Daughter and, and she got to go a year early besides, you know. Oh, okay. Kids being mission presence kid. In fact, we had our three oldest were girls in those days. Girls, most of 'em didn't go on missions. It was kind of odd exception. They had to be 21, you know, and the whole bit. And, but when we got to Virginia and they got to go out every night and work with the sister missionaries, they all got the spirit of it. And of course, Marisa came to serve with us. Michelle was with, had she went to BYU and then she got to go early too. And so she, and she, we only had six months left, so she was assigned, went to, went to Brazil. Wendy had to wait her full term, but she was with to, to Spain. And then our boys all went on missions. And, uh, so it, I don't think our girls would've gone had we not had that experience of working with the sister missionaries. And, and they all became great. Yeah. All, all eight of our kids went on missions. It was fun.

Speaker 1 00:48:28 Yeah. Now, the nature of missions is you have missionaries coming and going all the time. So as a new missionary came into the mission, how do you get them in the culture of the mission so that, you know, they don't drag the energetic culture behind? Know,

Speaker 2 00:48:40 We, we, we'd get 'em in, we'd spend a couple of days with 'em to start with. They'd come, they'd lived right in the mi We had a big mission home. It's now been sold, made into a hotel. Oh, wow. <laugh>. But, but, but we, we had a, we had room to have 25 missionaries besides our family and the mission couple living in the mission homes, and the office was right there. So it was perfect for us.

Speaker 1 00:49:00 It was like the White House, the That's right. You lived there and you worked

Speaker 2 00:49:02 There. Yeah. Our kids got to watch the missionaries, our little kids and little Jonathan. Some, some weren't even at the school yet, Jonathan, he was, he started school in Virginia and they were all grade school, high school and missions. And so they got to mingle with the missionaries, and the assistants were there every day till we go on the trips and with them and so on. And, and so it would just, the missionaries would come in and, and we'd bring in the kids going home for their going home time. Then we'd bring in the all the zone leaders and, and regional mission to assistants to have a training session that weekend. And then they'd be there to help train the new missionaries. So they would, they'd spend two days with, with these eight assistants and these 15 zone leaders. They were the trainers that got 'em going. So they got 'em indoctrinated very quickly. And so they moved right into their roles. It was the natural for them to, to kinda move into that spirit of the, of the Roke Virginia mission. Yeah. And then to watch the numbers go up, it was really fun to see that. Yeah. Dramatically grow up.

Speaker 1 00:50:03 As far as your wife's role in, in that, uh, how did that develop? Or

Speaker 2 00:50:08 She, she went one weekend served and cooked and prepared 400 meals. One weekend, <laugh> adult for the senior couple conference zone leaders conference, new mission transfers, old missionaries going home. So she, when she wasn't on the road with me as we were doing the mission tour every month, and when she was home, she was, she was of course raising eight kids. Right. And, uh, still making sure everything, we didn't have maid service in those days to day. Our daughter in, in Denver, they have, they have someone come and do cleaning and they have, they have some help with cooking and so on. My wife and her mother and our children did all of that for all these missionaries. And, uh, and she did a great job. She was really, really, really good at, uh, yeah. Taking everything, making the home still work and the family still work. So

Speaker 1 00:50:57 What, what advice do you have for leaders who maybe have younger families or they want have a strong mentorship or influence on their children while also stepping up in the, these roles? Like, uh, how do you strike a balance there? Well,

Speaker 2 00:51:08 You know, it, it is, it just be where you're supposed to be, I guess, is the key. You know, you, you just show up, be there. If you're called to be the, the primary teacher, which I, I've never had the chance to be, you know, just be the best primary teacher going and just love those kids and, and just do it. 'cause the, the Lord's watching and he's, and he is waiting for you to, to step up and say, Hey, and then whatever it is, ministering counselors, you know, just so many places to serve and the joy of what you feel it makes you just want to do more. Our missions, when we, uh, when we got, we call to, to go to New Zealand, our first CES real mission. And when we got to go, we got to the Y Cattery University, the Ha Hamilton, the W Cattery University.

Speaker 2 00:51:55 The Hillcrest Institute. We had 200 kids. It was the, it was the only, the first building built as an institute building outside the United States in place at the time. And we got to go there and it was going, Jesse, they had 200 kids to go into the institute, but you know what we'd learned in California about working with the priesthood, having them own the, the leadership owned the stuff. We, we started doing the same thing. We quickly got to the stake presence and ies and thought identified. We had 2000 young adults and they, there was nine to seven stakes, whatever it was. And we only had 200 coming institutes. So I said, we've got a lot of work to do, and we're gonna be here at six three in the morning until nine 30 at night, which means we can't go and knock on their doors.

Speaker 2 00:52:37 We can't go find them. But if you guys want them to institute, want them to go on missions and be right in the temple, I think we can make that happen if we can get 'em in the institute. But we can't do it if we don't have 'em there. So they all, they got behind us and they called the young adult reps and senior adult, uh, young adult reps in every award. And, and we grew that program with their help with our leadership. We grew that from 200 to 700 kids. We had 700 kids in the institute in Hillcrest before we left in two years. And, and it was just really fun to watch that happen. And I'm sure that's the reason why we got to go to Africa. 'cause they, the church, Stan Peterson saw that happen in Simi Valley and then in, in Hillcrest Institute and realized that there's a way to recruit and build a program.

Speaker 2 00:53:23 And, and it really relies on getting the priesthood to own it. If you can get the stake presidencies to own the program, they own the kids. And there's always this philosophy, oh, you had leave the priesthood alone. They got a lot of work to do. You know, they run on the youth and all that. Well, young adults are their program too, you know, they're their youth as well. And everywhere we went in Africa, we went to Africa, spent two years and doubled everywhere we went. The the numbers doubled when we got the priesthood to buy the fact that these kids are your kids and if you want 'em trained in institute program, you know, you gotta deliver 'em. And Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, we think we got the kind of teachers that can keep 'em if you can deliver 'em.

Speaker 1 00:54:01 Yeah. And, and this is, this is a common dynamic that comes up, uh, that we get emails about is this concept of buy-in and, and getting people sort of on the same bus as you Yeah. Right. You know, people don't mind leading, but it's like, what do I do with all these people who don't necessarily want to, to come with us on this, this journey doing? So any advice as far as stimulating buy-in or getting people all on, on board

Speaker 2 00:54:22 Y you know, it's, it's amazing. Success begets success when, when they feel the joy of watching their numbers increase, watching their young adult wards be created. We created the first young adult ward in the church in Simi Valley. They had branches at the universities, but they didn't have a young adult ward. And we took, they turned us down three times before we finally got permission to build the first young adult ward in Simi Valley in the church. And then we went from x to a hundred missionaries at the time, serving out of our stake, serving full-time missions. I mean, it was incredible why, and that, and that, just watching that happen and being a part of it Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> being the bishops and Bishop Bricks and the other ward were feeding the young adults into that young adult ward. And then watching those great dynamic bishops get them on missions and get our number from 50 to over a hundred.

Speaker 2 00:55:11 It's compensation enough. You know, you, you love being involved in something that works. I've been out of the Daniel Ward since 1978. This is 20, that's 46 years ago. And every kid that was in that program that I see around in the to, to a wedding or instruction or something, they'll all come up to me and they'll say, we were part of the biggest and the best. You know, they just coined the phrase themselves, but it was just part of something big. Yeah. And every time we had a Simi Valley person we meet, they'll comment about the temple night they went to and what a spirit that was there and how they were, came close to creating Zion. And, uh, if you could generate something, a program or something that, that gets 'em engaged and involved emotionally and spiritually. Yeah. Then it's self perpetuating. Now you, everybody gets behind it. They all wanna be part of it. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:56:02 And and large part of that, that you mentioned is just like, you sort of getting this momentum of success. Right. Just a little success. And then that sort of builds, and that's inspiring to people feel like we're, we're, we're part of the biggest ambassador, whatever it was. Right.

Speaker 2 00:56:14 Right. Back to David Hagan, you know, to meet every Monday morning in his office and have the five of us report our numbers for the week. You know, every one of us wanted to have the most numbers, you know, <laugh>, we wanted to be the, we wanted to be David h All Star for the week, you know, and it wasn't, I don't remember being a really competitive, or where we were trying to compete with each other, but we just wanted to perform. We wanted to make him look good. We wanted our missionaries to look good. And we'd count up the number of the five regions of the baptism for the week. And, and it was just a thrill to be along to something that was growing and dynamic. And you're being led by such a leader and, and, uh, you just wanted to be like it, you wanted to someday try my wings.

Speaker 2 00:56:58 I wanted someday if I could ever do what he did. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> in some way. And it's, uh, yeah. Leadership is catchy. It's self perpetuating. And if it's guided by something that, that works and is building the kingdom so you can see results, there's nothing like it. Like you said, here's success, but here's happiness. Use this success to, to give it away and help others become successful. In fact, he, he told me one day in his office, he said that this, and this is back when a million dollar home was, wasn't a starter home. Right. But he, he said, you know, Jim, he said, he said, there's nothing wrong with having a million dollar home. But he said, if you do, be sure your neighbors have one too.

Speaker 1 00:57:37 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:57:38 If you can help your neighbors get one too, then it's okay to have your own. Mm. But make sure they got one too. Yeah. That's, you know, what a great principle. Nice.

Speaker 1 00:57:46 And one of your missionaries told me about this dynamic you're good at of, of giving, like with this buy-in, of giving autonomy to the leaders around the mission. That you're not just mar sending down marching orders from the mission home or mission office and away they go. And then, uh, maybe some interpret that differently. Does that ring a bell or

Speaker 2 00:58:04 <laugh>? Yeah. But it was fun watching the, the Nelsons and the, the rest of you mentioned it. They really did get the spirit of it. And they did it because they wanted to do it. And they felt the joy of it. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. It wasn't 'cause they were being forced or mandated. I hope that none of ever felt that. I will say we, the first week we got there, we, we uh, we tr toured the mission and we tried to explain what we wanted the missionaries to become. We wanted to become Zion missionaries. And we tried to describe what that was. And we, we finally wrote it in a paper. I quote, the first one of the iron rods I wrote, we called it No Rules from Roanoke <laugh>. And we had the three kind of sloth missionary, the obedient missionary, and the Zion missionary. And we try describe those. The sloth really has no interest in anything mission wise. The obedience, the kids that are doing good job, they live their mission rules. They're doing everything. But the one you really want is design missionary who's doing it for the right reason. Because they really wanna become something. They wanna become like God, they wanna become a great leader.

Speaker 1 00:59:01 You don't necessarily need to prescribe rules for them. But Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:59:04 And, and they don't live by rules. They live by his rules. You know, I can't mandate a design missionary. I can mandate you to be obedient, but I don't, I don't want you to be obedient. 'cause I want you to be, I want you to be obedient. I want you to be one like he wants you to be. So anyway, I wrote it up, I had this written up and, and we went around the mission, explained it, and one of the missionaries from California, he went home that day and called his mother on the phone, which we didn't do in those days, only on Easter Christmas. But he called his mother and he said, mother, you can't believe this new mission present. He said, he has no rules <laugh>, he has no rules. <laugh>. And, and she lived next door. The next door neighbor was he, he was, he was the mission president of our mission. And he now he's at the general authority and General Authority seventies Corps. And, uh, and he had been the mission president and his daughter was living next door. So his daughter called her dad

Speaker 1 00:59:59 <laugh> and told on you

Speaker 2 01:00:00 And said, dad, you can't believe what the new mission bread that took your place three times ago that he took, took your place. And, uh, he said he didn't got any rules. And he said to her, he said, you know, I happy to going out to Roanoke to be speaking to the Boy Scout retreatment in the Northern Virginia next week. I'll stop in and visit <laugh>. So, uh, so, and this picture's on the wall, like

Speaker 1 01:00:25 You have all the other mission brain.

Speaker 2 01:00:26 I'll see you in a minute. And he, uh, and so anyway, he, the stake president picks him up and brings the mission home. And, and we, we visit from then. He says, can we go in my office and visit? And I said, he said, do you want to go in my office, his office? And I thought that was my office <laugh>. So anyway, we go his office. That's great. So I thought my office and revisit, he said, tell me your theory on how you're gonna work trying to train your missionaries. And I said, Hey, I'll, let me just to read what I, what I've written is kind of how my theory is. I'm trying to create the design mission and design missionaries. And, and he read that. And then he started to laugh <laugh>. And he said, if you can do that, he said, you'll be the first person in the history of the church to ever pull this off. He said, but he said, lemme tell you how at least one of your missionaries got it. <laugh>

Speaker 1 01:01:12 <laugh> told you the

Speaker 2 01:01:13 Story. He explained how this ministry called it. He said, so you maybe ought to do one more round of explanation <laugh> before you turn them loose. That's great. Anyway, that's great. Was a great experience. Any

Speaker 1 01:01:23 Other, uh, story.

Speaker 2 01:01:24 And he, and he became a great friend. He became, oh, he, he even sealed one of our children after he got home. Anyway, great guy. Cool.

Speaker 1 01:01:32 Anything else from those missionaries? Uh, serving as a mission president comes, uh, that we need to make sure we mention.

Speaker 2 01:01:37 It's just been an extremely fun, exciting time trying to, and just so blessed to know that what if I hadn't have been to that pre Corps class that day? What if I hadn't have got Scotland? What if I never met David Haight? What if I never heard the formula? You know, I mean, just on and on the little mentoring experiences that, that if I'd have been, if I'd have been there, I would've, this Catholic priest, heaven me father had one prepared, but I had to be in, in, in the, the Barton Scotland to get it. If I'd have been there, would've been wasted for me. Wow. And so I, I just teach the value of, of mentorships and also being where you're supposed to be. 'cause you're gonna gonna run into somebody who's gonna change your life if you can just, uh Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> be at that spot. Yeah.

Speaker 1 01:02:24 So you, you come from your mission, and generally speaking, you were a young mission president, right? Yeah. You really had more than half your life to go <laugh> at that point, right?

Speaker 2 01:02:31 Yeah. Yeah. We were quite in, that's 86. So we were, we were 43 when they got this. Got

Speaker 1 01:02:36 The, so what was your plan as you come home? What were we gonna do with your life?

Speaker 2 01:02:40 Well, and I came home and I immediately got, uh, well before that, after we, before that 89 to 94, you know, that's right after we came home. And then I was, uh, called to be regional rep. And I also, M Smith invited me to come and help him build the Franklin Company.

Speaker 1 01:02:57 And he's, he worked for Franklin Covey.

Speaker 2 01:02:58 Yeah. Yeah. He was the, he started the Franklin

Speaker 1 01:03:00 In, this isn't a vision of the Hyrum Smith.

Speaker 2 01:03:02 Years later they bought Franklin, they bought Covey, but Right. But he asked me to help him start it. And we, the fight, 1111 of us really got the Franklin Quest company going. And, and I got to be the charge of sales and training for the company in 90. That was 89 92. We went public in 94. We were a billion dollar company, training 6 million corporate executives a year. Wow. So I, I learned the nut five year block of time. The only time I worked outside my entrepreneurship, only time I worked in the corporate America was that one experience. But I had a great experience. And I also, it was being in charge of sales and training, I discovered that most training doesn't work. Most training doesn't empower, most training educates. But if you don't educate and empower, you're wasting your time. Hmm. You, if you don't alter behavior, you don't change behavior.

Speaker 2 01:03:51 Every time you teach a class launching leaders, we always say, will you, will you live this principle? And then we, I, I promise, if you will, heavenly father wants you to do a little work. And I know from experience it'll work. And, and so when you walk out that door, will you go do this? And if you do, we promise you that you'll be more successful and happier. And

that's what launching Leaders is. That's what Steve Hits has helped create is is the company of Launching Leaders, which is a training program that really does work. Yeah.

Speaker 1 01:04:21 And we've done several episodes and we'll link to those so that people can check it out. 'cause it's, it's phenomenal. I love the book and everything that, that's happening there. So did you feel like, I guess this may be reflective of my own experience. If I had some, I had 10 years of my life, very busy of Bishop being and stake presidencies, and, and then you move, or things change, and then you're sort of not in the, the, the core of the leadership efforts and the vision making and all those things. And have you gone through those types of seasons?

Speaker 2 01:04:49 Welcome to the eighties, by the way, <laugh>. Uh, you know, that is really the most difficult part of my life right now, is the fact that, I mean, just for instance, my name is still still on the door of my boys. Uh, five of my, five of or eight kids work together in a Richie group. And, uh, the Richie still rich with Richie Enterprises when I had it in this Richie group now. And, and, uh, they're doing the similar things to what we did, but they're doing it a thousand times bigger. And even though my name's on the door, they don't call me anymore, <laugh>. I mean, it really is. I mean, I get, I hear about it and they so on, but I'm not involved, really. I'm out of it. I've been retired. I'm, I'm outside. You know, in the church when you get to be 80, you, you've been all the positions and all this stuff you do, and they don't really need you anymore.

Speaker 2 01:05:35 Even yesterday, you know, we watched some of my good friends get released in the seventies quorum and become emeritus. And they'll, they're only 70 and I'm in eighties. And, and it's really, really hard to have done all that in your life. And now to be kinda registered to this bench Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and watch it and think back and you can write your story. And I've written several books and destroy my life and so on. But, uh, it is really hard to have been that involved in watching great things happen and then to be registered to a bystander cer Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> basically. We still do a lot of ministry and we do two Days the Temple and trying to stay active and involved, but, uh, but it's hard. Yeah. It really is hard. So

Speaker 1 01:06:15 How do you find purpose or how do you find follow that formula?

Speaker 2 01:06:17 That's, that's, that's the only way we are, we're trying, we have to, we have to create it. Now. We, this being a patron of the temple, we did 30 ordinances day before yesterday, uh, I mean day before conference. And, and we kinda get a joke about beat that record. You know, we did that in three hours. You know, give us <laugh> and, and, uh, and so we kinda tried our kids, you know, we'd get, see if you can beat that record. And so we're trying to find a motivation and we find great joy in the temple, and we find great joy in ministry. And we have several restaurant friends of ours that are struggling really hard. And we visit them every week and take them out to dinner to do some things. But, so we're trying to, to have meaning. We're trying to be useful. We're trying to find, but it's hard. And it certainly is several levels below what we, what we used to do. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> <affirmative>. And, and that's hard. And sometimes, as you're saying, kind of nice to get the other side. 'cause you know, the

other side, you're gonna be back engaged again, <laugh> and back involved. And you don't need to be looking for something to do. He'll have you something to do. So, yeah.

Speaker 1 01:07:17 Anyway, uh, what was it like hearing Scotland's getting a temple

Speaker 2 01:07:20 That was exciting? He Heber Scotland. Yeah. Roanoke, you know, Uhhuh, <affirmative>, Roanoke last time. Scotland this time, Hebrew two times ago. I mean, everywhere's, we've been, and you know, and think about it, we, we, in California, we had the LA Temple and Hebrew are getting a temple now. And the New Zealand, we had the, we had the LA Temple in New Zealand, in Hawaii. We had the LA Temple, and now Rons gonna get a temple in Washington, DC We had a temple in, in Africa. When he got to Africa, we had one temple in all of Africa in Johannesburg. We worked there for two years, boarded 122 airplanes out of Johannesburg in two years, took 26 countries, we supervised, then we get seven weeks home, we get transferred and asked to go become the MTC president of Ghana. We get to Ghana the weekend they opened the, the temple.

Speaker 2 01:08:05 Wow. The second, second temple in Africa. We get to take the first missionaries to the temple that in all of West Africa. And now there's 18 temples announced for built in Africa. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. I mean, it's just exciting to know that everywhere we've been, everywhere we've worked, there's either is or has been or will be a temple, you know, and the Roanoke will have a big reunion if we back there when they have that one. And with this scholar, we ought to go have a reunion, this scholar again, when they have that one. So, yeah. Yeah. It's fun. It really is. The temple is really the, and the whole conference was focused on that. The temple really is the, the spot for a person of my kind, a retired person whose years of real leadership are over. And, and so you're relegated to self perpetuating something.

Speaker 2 01:08:50 You gotta self engineer your life right now. If you're gonna be useful, you're not gonna get asked by the church to do it. So you gotta volunteer to do it. And, uh, we just got off another mission up on the girls camp, but you got released. But it's really hard at our age to do anything more than finding the temple and ministry and the things of that kind. But they're rewarding and they're there. Yeah. And there's unlimited use. You can Yeah. If, if you go inactive, it's your own fault. 'cause there's plenty of opportunity. Yeah.

Speaker 1 01:09:20 Now you, I know that you keep in touch with some of your missionaries. I'm sure many people that you've led in the past just that continue that mentorship. Yeah. I know you send out a letter or an email. We have an

Speaker 2 01:09:29 Whatnot. We got over a thousand people on email and several hundred of those are missionaries and MTC kids. And, and we literally have friends all over the world. We get emails back from every country we've served in several a week. There's some people all over the world. And it is such a great joy to pull up your email list and see there's Eddie Dube of the seventies, Corrum, the, you know, and this got put in the seven presidents and I took him all, we tied him with us. He was one of our seminary institute directors in Zimbabwe and Zambian Malawi. Hmm. And now he is his seven presidents of 70. Yeah. Albert Morrison, elder Morrison



was one of our teachers in the MTC come off of Mission in Nigeria. Came and knocked on her door to be a teacher, became one of her teachers married our cook.

Speaker 2 01:10:16 Oh, really? <laugh>. We, they, neither one had parents in the church, so we became their parents in the temple and they got married and we become dear friends ever since they, they called us our mom and dad and <laugh> and, and to, but to have to watch that, to see that happen, that kid, he's only 43 years old. He'll be in that role for 30 years. Yeah. 30 years. He'll be in that, in that seventies quorum if he's not, if he doesn't become Prophet <laugh>. Uh, and you know, and Eddie Dubay and Joseph sat and Ian er just got released. He took us all over New Zealand. He was our Boston New Zealand for two years. Yeah. It just, just having those kind of people Yeah.

Speaker 1 01:10:54 Those relationships continue

Speaker 2 01:10:55 To work with. Yeah. They just keep going. Awesome. You know Paul Johnson?

Speaker 1 01:11:00 Paul V. Johnson,

Speaker 2 01:11:01 Yeah. Yep. He's the Sunday school president right now. Yeah. Paul Johnson. Yeah. We took him on safari in Africa. I mean, we've become bad dear friends and just to see these guys doing their stuff, you know, it's just, uh, uh,

Speaker 1 01:11:13 It's inspiring. It's

Speaker 2 01:11:14 Just, just inspiring. And it is so fun to have them think that those three 19 people are our friends. And we, Jeff Hall, and I got a note from him that out to finish, it was at Jeff Hall. And I went to administering one night the other night, night before conference Friday night. And I saw a guy, one of my friends from high school, he is in the, the rest home, two years old, a great football basketball star of our day. And he told me, he went, went in his office in his room and he said, you know, he said, one of the great thi moments of my life, he said, it was in high school, I was the athletic director. I couldn't play basketball. So I watched their towels for him. And I was on a trip with him when he went, when he took on the state championship, and they didn't, they lost the, Dixie and Wasatch had a perfect season.

Speaker 2 01:11:57 They lost the Dixie and he was on the bench. Jerry was on the bench moping about getting beat, and had mine named Jeff Hallman come over. A kid who had played on the other team, come over and shook his hand and said, Hey, don't worry about that. Watch that had a great time. They did a great job. You know, don't cry about it. And this kid told me other night, he said, I, my greatest bucket list on my list is to someday have Jeff Holland meet him or talk to him. Thank him for what he did for me six 70 years ago. Oh, wow. I went home and wrote Elder Holland, because he is a good friend of ours. My wife's from St. George, and he'd married three of our children and we'd been, he's followed us all over. I mean, it's been fun being, and his friend, I wrote him a note and I told him about Jerry Christianson and, uh, and he picked up the phone Friday night, 10 o'clock at night.

Speaker 2 01:12:44 Wow. And called Jerry was asleep. He didn't get it. He didn't answer the phone, but he wrote me back a note, elder Holland did. And said, I've tried to call him. I'll call him when conference is over. You're probably doing it today. He said, but I wanna thank you for telling me that. And I called Jerry the next morning, Saturday morning. I said, Jerry, you missed the call <laugh>. And uh, I said, elder Holland called you last night at, and he started crying. Oh, wow. He just started crying. He was so touched that Oh, that's cool. Elder Holland would call him on the phone to fill his bucket list before he dies. Yeah.

Speaker 1 01:13:14 I mean, yeah. Wow. That's powerful. Well, thanks again, Jim. This is such, there's so many stories. I mean, I know you've written many of these down and, and I'm grateful we could, uh, get a snapshot of many of them and learn from your leadership, your mentorship. Last question I have for you, as you reflect back on your life of leadership, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 01:13:33 Oh, you know, that's the greatest success story of leadership is discovering that how fun it is to also follow and watch people who are trying to do what you tried to do and trying to do what, what you've done and to see how well how they do it. And it really is a thrill to be in the rank and file and watch. Right now, my daughter-in-law's brother is our bishop. And, uh, he's doing a great job. And he is, uh, and he is just son to sit in the audience and look at him and realize that his sister is the mother of five of my grandkids, you know? And, uh, and his dad was the stake president of our stake. And then he was a mission president in, in Michigan. And so, you know, just to kind of be in, in this benches now watching these kind of people and, and being part of that kind of team, it really is a thrill to be a follower when you really, uh, because I, in fact, just to finish it off, I say I wrote envy the days when I was there, when I doing their job.

Speaker 2 01:14:34 But I look at it then I say, I'm sure glad I'm not doing it today, because I don't think I could go camping anymore with those kids. I couldn't do those kind of things. But, so I'm glad they're doing it. I'm glad I don't have to do it, but it sure is fine watching them do it because they've, uh, they're taking my kids and my grandkids and my great grandkids and, and helping them learn how the great the gospel is.

Speaker 1 01:15:03 That concludes this episode of the Leading Saints podcast. Hey, listen, would you do me a favor? You know, everybody's got that friend who listens to a ton of podcasts and maybe they aren't aware of Leading Saints. So would you mind taking the link of this episode or another episode of Leading Saints and just texting it to that friend? You know who I'm talking about, the friend who always listens to podcasts and is always telling you about different podcasts? Well, it's your turn to tell that friend about Leading Saints. So share it. We'd also love to hear from you. If you have any perspective or thought on this episode, you can go to [leading-saints.org](http://leading-saints.org) and actually leave a comment on the, uh, episode page, or reach out to us at [leading-saints.org/contact](http://leading-saints.org/contact). Remember up your teaching game by listening to the David Farnsworth presentation by visiting [leading-saints.org/fourteen](http://leading-saints.org/fourteen).

Speaker 3 01:16:00 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.