



## Helping Youth & Adults Conquer Mortality | An Interview with Trevor Farnes

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Kurt Francom:

Attention youth leaders, if you have recently been called to lead the rising generation, I have a next step for you. Listen to an awesome presentation by Yvonne Hubert and Peter Vidmar, who are both respective members of the Young Women and Young Men General Advisory Council for the Church. Their presentation really helps clarify ways on how to effectively lead the youth using the Children and Youth Program. They also cover topics like youth-led groups, how to lead through personal ministry, how to meet youth where they are, identifying the youth's strengths and capacities. This presentation is part of the Young Saints Virtual Library and you can access it at no cost by going to [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14). Again, simply click the link in the show notes or go to [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14). Before we jump into the content of this episode, I kind of feel it's important that I introduce myself. Now, many of you have been around a long time. You're well familiar with my voice and with Leading Saints as an organization. But if you're not, well, my name is Kurt Francom and I am the executive director of Leading Saints and the podcast host. Now, Leading Saints is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping Latter-day Saints be better prepared to lead. And we do that through content creation like this podcast and many other resources at [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org). And we don't act like we have all the answers or know exactly what a leader should do or not do, but we like to explore the concepts of leadership, the science of leadership, what people are researching about leadership and see how we can apply them to a Latter-day Saint world. So here we go. We're back in the studio for another episode, and I'm excited to introduce you to a friend of mine. His name is Trevor Farnes. He wrote this book, *The Conquer Code*. I love the subtitle, *Unlocking Success Through Failure, Faith, and Family*. Trevor is the founder of a phenomenal company called MTN OPS. It's

a supplement company. And we talk about his leadership style, much of which has been done in the context of leading a business. But there's so many principles that feed over to the leadership in the church. And he references in his book and just in his leadership, the youth quadrant, right? Those youth leaders out there know exactly what I'm talking about. And maybe this has been more difficult for you as far as how to use this youth quadrant of setting goals and you know, the physical, the mental, the intellectual, forgetting one, but you know what I'm talking about. And how do we use this to really help the youth and not make it so heavy or force them to set goals? And he has a phenomenal approach of how to use this quadrant in a way that maybe will be more appealing to youth. It's all about the experiences. And Trevor does a remarkable job talking about experiences and leadership to create transformation. And then also listen for his Camp Helaman approach to preparing missionaries in his stake. It's a phenomenal approach and program. He's going to send us details on definitely how to do that and how he felt inspired as a high counselor. He's the young men's president in his stake and obviously on the high council. And he goes around and speaks once a month. Well, he felt prompted to bring a youth with him to also be sort of his, his team speaker. And it's led to some remarkable experiences. So this episode is full of ideas, inspiration that will hopefully get your wheels turning. So you're going to love it. Here's my interview with Trevor Farnes. Today, I'm sitting down with Trevor Farnes. How are you? Doing good. Awesome. Now, you are the author this. I don't know if we should lead out of the book, but it's such a good book. So The Conqueror Code, which you wrote, it's not necessarily it's a faith book, but you didn't necessarily write it for, you know, a faith audience only, right? Maybe tell us the background of the book.

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah, I mean, you know, I started a business 10 years ago called MTN OPS and it's been a really incredible business. We built a community around it. It's all built on culture and mission. Supplement business, right? It's a supplement business. The Ops stands for Outdoor Performance Supplements. You know, our family story is all intertwined into the workings of that business and business failures prior to starting that. And you know, what we learned through those business failures, we've applied to this business. And so, a lot of people kept telling me, hey, you know, write this down in a book. I do podcasts like this, tell the stories. You know, there was some financial difficulties that really drove us to our knees and created some strong connection with God through those times and gave us perspective. And I've tried to portray that through this book. It's called The Conquer Code. We've built a business around, you know, a culture of core values, those being our decision-making factors in building the business, leading us to our mission. And so, a lot of the book has, you know, those core values that are built into the chapters. But originally, it was just a writing kind of a journal that I was going to leave for my kids and my wife and my grandkids. And then I shared it with a member of our board and a few other associates and they're like, we need to use this. This is a great tool, not only to drive awareness to MTN OPS and the story behind it, you know, kind of breaking down the walls, letting people into how this business is actually run. But also, it's just good content for people, whether they are of faith or struggling with their faith, to see how it was your faith that pulled you through. And so, in the end, the conquer code for me is, it's Jesus Christ. And, you know,

originally I just thought, you know, I love the scripture. We talk of Christ, rejoice in Christ, preach of Christ, prophesy and write according to our prophecies or our experiences. And it was so that my children would know to what source they could look to for remission of their sins, but also comfort and peace and courage. as they face this world and the trials that they inevitably are going to face, like, I wanted to give them something to turn back to and see their father's words and to have that to remember always. And so, it was that and then it's turned into, you know, something that we're using to point people to MTN OPS, but also in my opinion, most importantly, point people to Jesus Christ.

Kurt Francom:

And obviously the book would be great for anybody who experiences mortality and has trial and tribulation, but leans on Christ and their faith there. But I'm just thinking, if there's somebody out there who knows a Latter-day Saint entrepreneur, this book could be really helpful for them to keep going. Because I've been that Latter-day Saint entrepreneur.

Kurt Francom:

I'm like, all right, like this is the part you show up, right? Like and you're not showing up.

Trevor Farnes:

100%. I feel like you're most powerfully positioned to serve the person you once were. And so, that's what this book is as well. I'm meeting with so many young fathers and husbands and entrepreneurs that are in that grind and they're experiencing failure or they're, you know, how long do I have to go at this? And a lot of times you have to let time do the hard work, but you can wait upon the Lord in that. And so, I'm hoping that this is a tool for young entrepreneurs, young fathers, young husbands. mothers, it doesn't have to be, it's not just for men, but people that are going through some things in life and yes, if you're in the business community and there's tough times now or in the past or coming, you know, your way, then this is kind of some sources that I've found some of, you know, that have given me an ability to overcome those mountains and achieve some different things in life and through my faith and through connection most importantly. And that connection is obviously with God, but also with my family who was so supportive through the hard times and the good times and a team that I've been able to assemble to build this mission-driven organization.

Kurt Francom:

Well, I highly recommend it. Even for just the stories that you put in here, there's like a story and I'll just tease this. You were in the country road, middle of the night, you're driving, you came across a little child in pajamas. Wandering the streets at night, right?

Trevor Farnes:

Like, wow! I wasn't even two years old yet and I stayed late to finish up a store we were building out and I wouldn't normally stay that late but I had this kind of sudden burst of energy and a prompting to stay. Yeah. And so, I called my wife. She said, the kids are already in bed. So, yeah, go ahead. I started driving home at about 1.30 in the morning and then Yeah, there was a little child walking down this old country road at two o'clock in the morning. And then what transpired from that was pretty incredible. And the community that came out to help us find this young man who was lost, find his family and get him home.

Kurt Francom:

So inspiring. So good. Now there's a million directions I want to go. We could go. You're also the state young man's president and we'll touch on some things you've experienced there. But maybe let's start here with just this concept of core values. And I love, you know, talking to Latter-day Saints like yourself who've been in a leadership role and maybe more secular or business context, because a lot of these principles do come over, you know, they do relate to the church experience as well. So as I've toured your offices, got to know your business, like this concept of core values, like it is obvious, like you almost can feel the culture in the air as you walk through there. Like if you're talking to a leader, maybe even a church leader who's like, okay, yeah, we want to establish core values. And sometimes I feel like our religious context sort of, it's harder to do this and that may sound weird, but because we all think, well, what's our core value? We want to bring people to Jesus Christ. And like, great, we're done. We got our core value. Let's move on. But Like, how do you establish core values in a way that actually stimulates positive culture and leads towards goals that they're accomplished?

Trevor Farnes:

And there's a lot we could get into, but I think bringing people to Christ, that's the mission, right? So, what are the actions, what are the decisions you're going to make that will bring people to Christ? And that's when building a business, that's what we had to sit down and it wasn't something like day one, who are we? It had to be like, who have we been? How have we been raised? What's ingrained into us, you know? I was even talking to my brother once and I said, all these books on entrepreneurship I'm reading, like every characteristic is a characteristic of Christ. And he's like, you need to read Jesus the Perfect Leader. I think it's David O. McKay. And that became our leadership curriculum for MTN OPS and just diving into the characteristics

of Christ. These core values that we assembled for MTN OPS, they are our decision-making guardrails. It's the line in the sand. We buried our roots deep into those. They're non-negotiable. And some people may have some good words like integrity and trust and all this up on their walls and that looks good and feels good but until it starts to be lived, it doesn't become credible and you don't create connection of trust. We did a big research study about two years ago at MTN OPS where we wanted to know how did we stack up as a supplement brand against all the major competitors in the supplement industry. There's a lot. Man, it's some one of the most saturated spaces, very hard to compete in and we've been able to do it well because we've created a community inside of a niche and audience that needed what we had to share and they needed to receive it the way we were sharing it. But this research came back after researching 3,000 people. And studying their behavior, studying the products they were taking and then putting us up against those. And we came back with this headliner that MTN OPS is a brand people trust. And trust is not very oftentimes equated to the supplement industry as well. It's very skeptical. People are skeptical of what they're taking in the brand.

Kurt Francom:

What is in this?

Trevor Farnes:

What is in this? And who's behind this and this and that? So, to know that we're a brand people trust and that's actually one of our core values was incredible for us. But then they gave us this mile-long spreadsheet that was the reasons why. And it was what you said, they could feel it, they could see it, they could sense it because of the actions that the people within the walls of MTN OPS are taking, the way that they treat people. And you come back to those core values, it's what guides us to our mission which is to improve the lives of individuals and families at MTN OPS. And so, we need to create core values that will guide us and help us choose. And when we make decisions that are in alignment with those core values, it enhances the brand experience that people have. And if we make decisions that don't align with it, it deviates and it diminishes the effect the brand can have. The same thing within the gospel. If we're going to bring people to Christ, then what's the service aspect of that? How are they going to feel our love? What are the actions we're going to take? And core values dictate our actions. And that's the brand. MTN OPS, there's a logo, yes, that's a mark, it's called a brand, you know, this and that, but the brand is how we interact with people. It's the connection we create with them and fortunately for us, it's been a connection of trust because they've seen us living those. Our number one core value at MTN OPS is recognizing God and that's a unique one and one that you don't typically see from organizations and we're selling throughout the country and throughout the world and people see, recognizing God, even in the workplace, we try to acknowledge his hand in all things. That almost for a lot of people in our audience especially, it gives them this permission. Like, okay, I can speak to God. I can be me. So many of these

environments that I'm a part of or the communities, like it's quieted down. You don't talk about that that much. And it's not always about religion. A lot of times it's just about faith. in a supreme being and in a higher power and sometimes even, you know, people ask, how do you do that in the workplace? Sometimes it's recognizing the good. I have people, I have team members, it's like recognizing the good in them, that's recognizing God and then not just recognizing it, let's put it to work in the best way possible. They're on a team, so how do we position the good that's in them that comes from God to help the team succeed? And let's not always look at weaknesses to become strengths, let's find the strengths and let's hone in on that and let's build upon that. So, it's been huge for us. building an organization that way. And last year, we were recognized as Utah's best place to work. And it's because the employees, they wrote in. Every one of them had to be surveyed. And they said, it's an environment where I can be me. I can live these core values. And then we train on them once a month. We have a lot of them. There's 12 at MTN OPS. So, there's one for every month. And then we do a Conquer 90 physical challenge and it's actually physical, spiritual, mental, social and we actually break it into a 12-week deal and you focus on one core value every 12 weeks. But at MTN OPS, every month we trend on a core value and every week it's reiterated and then we have a challenge to go with that. And it starts the year with recognizing God, we end the year in joy. That's our core value. Hoping that as we look back on the year, we've found that our focus has allowed us to experience joyful moments throughout the year. But it creates an opportunity for people to feel like they're a part of something more than just like a transaction. Yeah. We're on a mission and these are going to be the decision-making guardrails that lead us to that mission.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. What I'm learning from this is sometimes we, as we're leaders or running an organization, even a church organization, we have these core values, but they're almost like obscure, maybe abstract that, you know, bringing people to Christ. Like, yeah, like we're all on board there, but what does that mean every day? Or what does that mean in our meetings where I love this, framing of like, well, the first one is recognizing the hand of God, right? Like you could start every meeting with that of being like, what's some ways are you, you saw God this week, you know, or, or these having 12 of them that, cause I think we have like core values and we're like, we're going to be all of those things all the time. And yeah, in theory we want to be, but to then to take space and say this month, we all are, we are all those things, but this month we're going to focus on this one. specifically and see what more.

Trevor Farnes:

And on service, we have one that service that was last month. It's like, Hey, what did we all do? What did, who did you see in the act of service this last week or this last month? And you know, you got the great, the one great commandment of the great core value. Ours is recognizing God. If we just do that, we'll, the rest will kind of fall into place. But it has to be natural and

authentic to you. Like it can't just be like service and that's not me, I don't like service. It's got to be something that's ingrained in who you are, your personality and what you want to go after. So, I would say with anyone, even within the church, like if you're going to bring people to Christ. How are you going to naturally bring those gifts that you've been given to help people do that? And then, if you're in a leadership position, you may have the ability to say, I'm going to focus on desire this month. I'm going to focus on trust. I'm going to focus on this because it's a part of what I'm going after in life and I want to rally the troops and here's how we're going to focus on it. So, starting MTN OPS and you have the leeway to create your vision of the culture and the future, what this organization is going to do, I had the ability to set the ground rules as far as here's the core values that we're going to act on. And every new employee that comes through MTN OPS, I sit down with them the first week. I give them a gift. I actually give them a pair of shoes and I tell them, the choices you make in the shoes you wear today will determine the shoes you wear tomorrow. The blessings, opportunities, responsibilities. And so, the choices need to align with these core values. And opportunities and blessings will come your way, doesn't mean it's going to be easy but we align with these core values and please make choices in the shoes today so that you can be rewarded with different shoes tomorrow and your opportunities can grow. And so, I had the ability to do that and because I was starting something, you know, on my own with some partners and such but when you have that leeway or you're in leadership, obviously keeping it within the constraints of what is right and in the church, we have a handbook that we've got to follow and everything. God gives us these opportunities in leadership because we have gifts and we have, you know, blessings that He wants us to infuse into those. So, even with, you know, my church leadership and as a stake king men's prison, like the young men know all about MTN OPS and what we're doing there to point people to Christ. And we take them up to the MTN OPS gym and we integrate the children and youth program at times with the physical fitness and we talk to them about the spiritual side of fitness as well. You know, so I just feel like wherever we're at in life, God's giving us these experiences to be utilized in different capacities. And so, I try to see it as such. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

And there's, I love just sort of digging down to the nuts and bolts of this. So, as you have these core values, again, it's not good enough to like get in one meeting the beginning year, list some core values, put them on the wall and we're done. But they're like, even as new people enter your culture, there's almost like this initiation process, it sounds like. Like, you're sitting down with me, I'm giving you a gift, or we're having a conversation that's very focused on that, right? And I'm just thinking, like, for the church leaders, say, when you have somebody new move into your ward, or in your quorum, or whatever it is, like, how can we initiate them? You don't necessarily need to give them shoes. Probably not in the ward budget. But what can we give them? What can we communicate to saying, you're in a container here of a culture, and we invite you to really lean in?

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah, and we need you, and we want you, and you're welcome. And then it can't just be that as well. Like at MTN OPS, we follow up every month. There's, you know, there is that core value we're focused on, but we have what we call as our conquer more challenge. It is the children and youth program of the church, but we were doing it before Jesus obviously started. It all started like it was being hit from multiple ways. Yeah, about nine years ago, eight years ago at MTN OPS, we decided to focus our wellness program should be on spiritual, physical, mental, social. It shouldn't just be on the physical. That's not MTN OPS. We're not into the just the body, you know? And we want to help people in life and we want to help them connect in important ways. And so, this is what we focused on and with the core value in the middle. You know, the church has these same quadrants and with Jesus Christ in the middle. Well, our core value is a core value that will lead people to Christ. And so, we do that every month. Every team member at MTN OPS is given an accountability partner. So, they have somebody they're telling like, this is my one goal in the spiritual, this is my one goal in the physical and so on. And it's not a ton of goals. It's first recognizing the good that they're doing in those areas of life. And then it's like, okay, I need to add one more. That's what conquer more is all about. Like just a little bit more, a little better today than yesterday, a little better tomorrow than today, right? And that's what we promote within our culture. And then because we're living it there, we can go outside to the world and we can bring them into this conquer more challenge and it's in my book. And then all of a sudden the church came out with it and it's like, and then I read, I think it's called I Dare You, this book. It's a really short sales book. And it has the same quadrants and it's just like, I was just getting hit. And I was like, there's a method to this. And obviously, Jesus Christ, that's how he grew. And so, we've just implemented that process into our program. And then there's accountability within the culture and always that core value of the month that's there in front of our team members. It's definitely not something that's just written upon the wall, it's written upon the hearts of the individuals there striving to live it. We're all imperfect and so, these are things it's like, hey, this is important to us, this will lead us towards the mission but it's going to take work and it's going to take refinement and it's going to take repetition. I think oftentimes we shy away from repeating things because like I already said that. That's like we as human beings, we either, you know, we might have missed something or we're at a different phase in life now, that's going to hit harder now. And so, it's okay as leaders to repeat, to, you know, regurgitate what you've already done or said or implemented. It needs to be.

Kurt Francom:

So, I want to go to the quadrant and talk there, but anything else about core values that would be important to talk about? I mean, there's a lot there, but anything else for this audience?

Trevor Farnes:



I just say like, I always say courage to the core will give you courage to conquer more. It gives you an ability and you know, our core values at MTN OPS is the recognizing God. It definitely causes us to stand out, go against the current and that's maybe by design, but it's just a natural for us. It's natural to live that way, you know, recognizing God. For us, we don't operate on Sundays. We don't open up. We're at major expo halls at the Salt Palace for the Hunt Expo and whatnot. We're a big attraction there at 80 by 100 booth and we've got a stage with ambassadors that there and people are lined up and on Sunday, you'll find a closed booth. And there's a story about my parents and how they met and how the Sabbath day has impacted my life. And I can't look at those stories and think, you know, I'll just let those pass me by. I know blessings come into the lives of individuals who follow what God asks us to do. And so, that has been a moment where I've had people sit down to me if they're like, hey, you're in business, you're a for-profit, isn't there risk in that? Like you're closing down on Sunday at a big event where you're a major attraction. And my response with core values, especially that one with recognizing God, the bigger risk is always with God and I do not want my connection with Him interfered. And so, I want to send that signal to God through the core values of an organization or in my life. They're just natural core values that I try to strive and live in my life that my connection can continue to grow with Him. And I would just say anyone that's trying to build that way or trying to understand what their core values are, figure them out, talk to God about it and then draw the line in the sand. Just make it a non-negotiable. Your connection with God is more valuable than anything else and let them be core values that drive you to connect with him. That's powerful.

Kurt Francom:

All right, take us to the quadrant because, I mean, you know, the lay of the land here is this children and youth program was introduced, you know, we're kind of figuring out COVID hits, it really turns everything upside down. And I've been the, you know, I think during the last few years, been the Deacon's Quorum Advisor, right? And, you know, we've all tried these different activities of like, okay, we're going to get all the kids or all the youth to write down, you know, fill each quadrant and let's get some goals. And then we don't really know how to do accountability or follow up, or we don't want to put too much pressure. We just want them to show up on our Wednesday activity. Right. So, if you're speaking to a room full of youth leaders in the context of this quadrant, like how can we better execute on this dynamic?

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah, I think that's such, I mean, I'm having this conversation all the time. Anytime I'm with somebody that like has some I'm like, what are you guys doing? Because it seems to ebb and flow, like it just picks up momentum and then it's like, it's off. And I think that, I don't know, there's no like, I don't have the answer exactly, but we've done one When this first kicked off and people were coming back together after COVID and such, at my building at MTN OPS, we do

have a fairly large gym and we talked to each of the bishoprics in our stake and just said, in order to do this most effectively, we can't tell the kids what to do, but we need to influence this a little bit. And we've been doing this at MTN OPS. This seems to work for our team and it's a team of adults. What if we bring these youth up and I'll kind of explain what we're doing at MTN OPS, but we'll put them through some exercises that kind of get ingrained within them like, okay, this is what it looks like, this is what it feels like. And so, as a stake in men's presidency, we broke out into the four quadrants and one of us ran the physical, one of us ran the spiritual, one of us ran, you know, the mental or intellectual and the social and we each had a little message prepared. But for a quarter, we had every ward's young men's come up and they brought their whole youth group. And so, we'd have anywhere from, you know, a smaller group in our stake is about 30 to a larger one. We've got 80 young men in one of the wards. And so, they'd bring them up and we'd split them into four and we just did this rotation. And we gave them a little sheet to fill out as they did. It's thoughts that would come to mind. And we told them from the beginning, first off, we want you to write down in each of these quadrants, what are you doing good like right now? what spiritually you're doing because we wanted them to know that this isn't all about improvement, it's also about recognizing the things you're doing and how it's drawing you to Christ. And then each of us would take a section and we did this rotation for about 15 minutes. So, this was their mutual night, their youth activity night. And we gave them some experiences that would help them understand because sometimes if we just talk to them, then they're just being talked to and it doesn't always get through to them. So, you know, we did for the spiritual and combining the physical, we did a hang challenge from a bar and these boys loved it and they were hanging from it but then you apply the iron rod, you know, and it's like How do we hold fast to the iron rod? There's those that commenced in the path, there's those that were clinging to it and then there's those that continually hold fast and there's a reward and there's a blessing that comes from that. And so, we tied that together in a way where they were visualizing something or they were experiencing something and then at the end, it's like in each of those sections, just like write down one thing right now that you can do. And then I bore witness to them of like the one thing in my life when I was their age that made all the difference, that helped me hold on. And it was opening up a page of the Book of Mormon every day of my life that I was challenged to by a leader and I think we need to be involved in asking and challenging them inspired questions or inspired challenges that will get them holding fast to that iron rod a little more fully. And I talked to them about what that has meant in my life because when you're hanging from that rod, man, there's something working against you. There's gravity and it's pulling and there's an adversary and it's pulling us in different directions. But if we can keep our grip on that through simple exercises, behaviors like in your book, sometimes we need behaviors but then they need to turn into connections, right? They need to then be not just a behavior that okay, I'm getting, I'm checking off the boxes. It needs to be leading to connection ultimately obviously with Jesus Christ who will be the source of bringing us home. And so, that's one way that we've done that. And then we've had to like as a stake humans presidency, we loved it because we got to interact with the youth, which sometimes in a state calling, you don't get the regular interaction.

Kurt Francom:

And like all the wards were there, right? So, it's sort of this stake activity.

Trevor Farnes:

Well, we brought one ward up at a time. So, we did it like every week, we'd bring a new ward up with their youth. Gotcha. And we would focus in on that ward and that bishop and that bishopric and how do we help them. And it was incredible to experience that with each of them. Then that gave them a connection with us. When we go around to their wards, it's like, hey, Brother Farnes, you know, we have this bond and we just hung from the bar together. And we did this spiritual exercise and, you know, So, it gave us time with them and to connect ourselves and I feel like with the youth, they need to feel a connection to their leaders and they need heroes that they can look to, that they can say, this is the life that they're living and I want that and this is the example and obviously, far from perfect setting that example but we're with them. We try to be as much as possible and that was one thing I craved. I've been the young men's president in our ward, I'd been in the bishopric and I'd worked with the youth quite a bit and then when released, you know, you don't have as much of that opportunity and then you get put in a state calling, sometimes there can be a little bit of a distance. So, we've worked with the bishops to find ways like, how are you okay with us ministering to your young men and can we do this with you? They were all for it and it's good. And then, obviously, we then the bishops do their thing and they follow up and, you know, some of our bishops in our stake will do, they'll go through those goals that they set at the beginning of the year with us and then they'll follow up. They'll do the follow up. We ask them when we see them, but it's now on the ward level, you know, so.

Kurt Francom:

And I love that just, I think a lot of ward youth leaders would appreciate the stake leaders come and say, hey, why don't we take a Wednesday? Like we'll do that. Yeah, they love it. You know, they're like, oh, really? Yeah, let's do that.

Trevor Farnes:

Absolutely love it. And then a few of them have brought their youth back up to, you know, to the Mountain House gym and we'll do a cold plunge with them or we'll do an exercise where it's like let's put ourselves in a hard situation. And the biggest part of that is once you experience something, gathering them back and helping them process it. Because I've seen so many like you do an experience, you have an object lesson, you speak to them or whatnot and then see you later. But it's like you need to help the youth process what they've just experienced and how do you apply it. And then it starts to get ingrained and when they're talking about it and sharing, it's like wow, that's what I just experienced and I feel it now and while I'm explaining it, it's sinking a little deeper. Yeah, that's awesome.

Kurt Francom:

What can you teach us about the concept of accountability? I mean, because you have in your business, you have accountability partners as you focus on different challenges and things, right? And this is a principle I've always struggled with for maybe that's a whole another podcast, but like they come to this experience, which I want to underscore that, like you gave them an experience to come through. You didn't like have a lesson, everybody sit down, let me talk to you about intellectual, why this is like important, right? You have an experience and obviously as they see you, they're like, it ignites something in them. That was a cool experience. What do you hope like leaders leave that experience, those war leaders, how can they perpetuate that and have that accountability without it being so heavy? I don't know.

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah, I would say first and foremost, live it yourself. And so, you know, this is a youth and children thing, but I hope that parents and like we have our little journal at home and as a family, we sit down and we go through those same quadrants and we set goals. But the leader should be doing this as well so that they're accountable to the same actions and the same principles. They can speak from experience and that's what happens when they come up to our business. They see, okay, we're actually doing this as an organization and I'm living it and this is and it's working and we're seeing success in different realms of life. But ownership and accountability is interesting. Like the reason why we first have them say, here's what I'm doing good is because they need to own the fact that they've got some good things going on. There's accountability in that as well, you know? And so, sometimes accountability we just think about reporting or I did something wrong, I need to be accountable to it. Sometimes it's like, own the fact that you're doing great in life and you should celebrate that and you should feel good about it and when you focus on it, you'll feel the Holy Ghost teach you that, yeah. I'm not lost, I'm okay, I'm doing some good and they need to have accountability with that and ownership and that will create a connection with God. And then after that, it's you know, having somebody they trust. At MTN OPS, we put people just randomly like, this is your partner for the month and then they get to know each other a little better, you know? So, it helps our culture become more connected but... I don't know if, you know, in the church they'd be allowed to do that and to create accountability partners within their quorums or their youth groups or whatnot, but it's good to have somebody. It's an eternal principle we learn in the temple, this return and report, you know, and it keeps our focus on things that matter and things that will drive us to that connection with Christ. And so, I think, you know, however leaders are inspired to do that, I think it's important to at least create an environment or a platform or some facilitate a way for these young men to share and to report back on. I just focused on this quadrant this month and it was really interesting to see that when I read the scriptures every day, like that scripture power they talk about in primary, like it's actually real and I'm experiencing it as a youth, you know. But I just feel like there needs to be a way to bring it back, to talk about it. And whether it's teaming them up with accountability

partners or just giving the opportunity for them to have a voice. And then as a leader, if you speak to it yourself, I think that gets the ball rolling on. Okay, he's doing it, I'm doing it. Maybe it's your quorum presidencies that you're making sure they're sharing and they're living it so that they can influence the other young men. And if they start to talk first and share, then there's some accountability as a quorum.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. And again, it's just part of the culture. It's in the conversations and things, right? Is there anything you do in the context of, because you have the accountability partners, like, is this something you're constantly focused on like staff meetings or group meetings or, I mean, is it coming up as a greater group or just in between those?

Trevor Farnes:

They're tasked throughout the month to follow up with their accountability partner. That's part of like, We're interdependence, one of our core values that you know, we can do more collectively than we could do independently. So, understand each other and how do you help grow and then service is one. So, reach out in service and how do you offer a hand when they're trying to accomplish something in the mental realm and they're just struggling like you need to get to know them. And then at the end, we actually have a reward at MTN OPS. So, I know that's not like, maybe in the church we're not doing that, but we have like gift cards and such. So, at the end, anyone who's participated in it, we put their name into a drawing and we do the random.org and a number comes up and that person and their accountability partner, they win or lose together. So, if their name's drawn, then them and their accountability partner, they get a prize for the month and you know, even as adults, we love rewards that way, right? And those that have 80% completion throughout the year, we do a big either dinner or lunch and an activity with those that complete 80% of the year at the end of the year. So, those that completed every month, they might not have gotten the monthly rewards but they get to go celebrate with each other. And so, there might be something, I don't know, I don't want to prescribe anything for the church, but like recognizing that, okay, we're doing this. It's probably bringing everyone together and celebrating any type of accomplishment, any type of focus. And there just needs to be that validation and recognition that, hey, we're on the right path. And if you did really well in one realm, then maybe it's time to add something to the next realm or give some focus there. But let's recognize and celebrate the journey along the way.

Kurt Francom:

And I think that's the key word is that celebration component. Oftentimes we're like, all right, last month's over. What's the goal this month or last year's over, right? And I think that celebration stimulates that community.

Trevor Farnes:

And sometimes when you end one month, it doesn't mean you're onto the next goal. Sometimes that goal continues. When I wrote this book, it was the mental quadrant. Every accountability partner I had, I would tell him I'm writing 400 words this week in my journal. I didn't tell anyone I was writing a book. This year in January, we did our kickoff meeting for MTN OPS and I said, if you've been my accountability partner over the last eight years, like raise your hand. So, all these right hands are up. How many of you did I tell that I was writing in my journal in the mental quadrant? They rose their hand. It was that way for like five years and I said, all that was doing was putting my book together. I was writing a book during that and they're like, what? Like I thought it was just a journal. And so, I spent five years writing my journal, but my conquer code and it came down to those quadrants. Those quadrants in life and what the church is promoting, just helping us focus in our lives in those realms and completing goals, that's what allowed me to write a book. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

Man, that's awesome. That's powerful. Anything else about the quadrant or stimulating culture that way? Anything else that would be helpful to mention or we do a good job? I think we did a decent job, yeah. I think so too. Let's talk about it. So, as the stake young men's president, you are, you facilitate mission prep. Yeah. How did that come to be? I mean, I guess I would have met, I've never been in that calling. So, is that part of the handbook that that sort of falls on your shoulders or how did that come to be?

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah. In our stake, they used to have somebody called from the stake as a mission prep teacher. And sometimes they'd have a couple do it or a pair. And In our stake when we were called in as the Staking Men's Presidency about four years ago, the stake president said, I want the Staking Men's Presidency and the Staking Women's Presidency to teach mission prep together. So, you guys work on the curriculum through Preach My Gospel. You guys create the schedule and do it in, you know, do it in the mornings. That's what we've been doing over at the church at 7 o'clock. I think it was 6.45 or 7. And that's how we started. And so, we just took turns, you know, and it was great because that gave us an opportunity to be together. I had been in a previous staking men's presidency where there was somebody called from the stake. So, we would just show up every Sunday morning and they would use us. They would ask us

about our missions and such and have us share, but we weren't the ones leading the discussion. You know, we had a decent response from a stake for a period of time. It wasn't what I was hoping for as far as attendance goes. In the morning, they're walking in kind of quiet. They're sitting there with their heads down. They're trying to wake up. I understand I did early morning seminary for four years.

Kurt Francom:

Especially on a Saturday, they're coming out of a Saturday. They're coming out of Saturday.

Trevor Farnes:

They've been out, you know, to the dance or whatever. So, we wouldn't- the attendance wasn't super great, but we were getting people there that were sacrificing their time and they were trying to, you know, prepare for their missions and, you know, we'd get 10 to 12. And we have a large stake with youth and so I just like this doesn't, it's not enough for me. I want to be with them. And so, we toyed with the idea of let's move this to the afternoon and maybe let's take them out of the church. Let's go to a different environment. Let's take them somewhere else and see if that works. And so, the stake presidency allowed us to do it in my home one afternoon at like 3.30. And that first time we had about 50 young men and young women show up. That's great. I was like, this is awesome. So, we kept some in the morning and then we did some in the afternoon for a period of time until it was time. It's just like, we should go to the afternoon. Now we do it twice a month instead of four Sundays. Just breaking it up, not, you know, we want to keep the novelty a little bit of not being every Sunday. But we've actually got a routine now where We have a youth committee with the young men where they're the ones coordinating like getting the word out to their quorums that hey, mission preps this Sunday, everyone come, they're recruiting and then they conduct the meetings. And then our stake in women's presidency now is teaching more emotional resilience topics and they do for like 10 to 15 minutes. And then the Stakeholder Men's Presidency takes over and we do the mission prep. And I'm pulling in, you know, return missionaries all the time. They come and report to the head council. And so, when they do that, I'm like, hey, we need you at mission prep. And they'll come and just report like they did to the head council for seven minutes or whatnot. And then sometimes we'll have like a Peter Vidmar who's a good friend of mine and one of his responsibilities on the general young men's committee is to go out and teach. And so, we've had him teach at our, we call it Camp Helaman, we had him come teach there and we had him come to a mission prep and we had about 90 kids in our home. And so, them coming to our home in the afternoon, it's still a sacrifice for youth because they're going home and they're taking naps and they're, you know, it's Sunday afternoon but they're It's hard to teach them about sacrifice if you're not with them. And so, I want to be with them and I want to teach them, what do we sacrifice for and why? How much love do you feel for the Savior? And that's going to drive your ability to do more for Him. And so, we're with more of them now, which I love. We're able to

influence that. And my wife, you know, with about 15 minutes left in the class, you'll start to smell some pancakes and she's back in the back cooking pancakes. So, some prepping pancakes every two weeks at the farm is what we do. And the kids hang out after, they kind of linger longer, you know, and they discuss and we get more participation in the afternoon than when they're tired in the morning. So, we've just found by, you know, doing some A-B testing that that's working for our stake and we're, you know, we're getting 40 to 50 of the young men and young women. Probably a third of them young women right now and I've got a daughter out on a mission. A lot of her friends are out. There's so many young women serving right now. But it's incredible because that gives us another touch point as a state king men's and state king women's presidency to be with them every two weeks. So, we've got a pretty close bond with these young men in our stake.

Kurt Francom:

And is it typically, they do this a year before their mission or is there a certain age that you invite Them?

Trevor Farnes:

We have, we invite the juniors and seniors to come and we do it all year round. Oh, cool. So, we're, we just, we don't stop. Just so that there's consistency. If my family's out on vacation, the counselors have the code to my house. They use my house still. So, we can check on the cameras and yep, mission prep's going on. But we just keep it consistent so there's no question. If there's holidays or general conference or whatnot, obviously it interferes with that and they should be doing those things. But We do it throughout the year and they're invited to come for two years. So... That's great.

Kurt Francom:

That's awesome. Anything else with the mission prep that you do that would be worth mentioning?

Trevor Farnes:

No, I just think that it's been really powerful to add the Staking Women's Presidency teaching on emotional resilience, especially having a daughter that's now out in service and there's, yeah, these kids are, they're learning, they're growing and they're in such a connected environment with media and everything, but then they go out and they're You know, this disconnection from



some of those things, it's good for them to understand and know that things that they feel as far as homesickness and whatnot, it's normal and they're not out there like trying to just hide it and they're, you know, thinking what's wrong with me. So, we talked very vulnerably about emotions and such they're going to experience as they go out and serve and as they go out into life and that's been a powerful component of it that not only helps them prepare for the mission but also just for life in general and the things that are coming their way.

Kurt Francom:

So tell me about this, what's this Camp Helaman? I've heard of different stakes doing it, but like, what is it in the context of your stake?

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah, we've been doing it for about 25 years. I've been involved in it for about 10 years from a, and it gets the whole stake involved. It's pretty cool. Every summer, it's like the second or third week of June. It's a Thursday through Saturday, three days, two nights. We bring the, if they've been a sophomore, junior, senior in high school, we just do it with the young men. And so, we get about 80 young men out to this Camp Helaman every year. And it's a mini MTC experience. We used to go off to Weber State or to Camp Williams and do it there. During COVID, it kind of forced us to say, hey, let's just keep it close to home and it's been so much better. Because these young men will be put into districts and then they have- and they find out that night who their companion is and who their district is. We call men from the stake to be district leaders who are going to train them. And so, there's usually about 24 men involved in the stake. They come and they get trained by zone leaders for about five months prior to the camp and so, it's teaching these leadership principles to the men that have become you know, elders quorum presidents and bishops or bishopric members and such and they're in these really awesome trainings, usually with a member, a previous member of a stake presidency or return mission president in our stake and they're being trained by them on how to teach and it kind of brings back their mission experience and And it's all taught from Preach My Gospel. So, they're involved for a handful of months getting ready for this camp. And then, you know, camp comes around, we have mission conferences, zone conferences, district meetings. My brother just came and spoke at this last mission conference, he's an area authority. We'll have guys like Peter Vidmar, we'll have return mission presidents in our stake that come and train. And we set it up like a little MTC experience with their companions and everything. At night, they walk home. So, in our neighborhood, see like all these kids in white shirts and ties walk into their, not to their home, but to a district home that they're assigned to as a district. So, then there's families in our stake that are now involved. And when they get home, they teach that family like what they had learned that day and they have a place to sleep. In the morning, they come back and We do a service project up at MTN OPS. We pack meals for hungry kids in the local area. We do a hike one day with them. And they're learning principles of teaching. We're not trying to

teach them to be master teachers. In three days, you don't get that. Our goal is to help them feel God's love and to help them feel the Spirit. And if they can have those moments and this excitement for missionary work and just for the gospel in general and a connection to Christ, then they're going to start making decisions. And a lot of times our stake president will say, when I'm interviewing these young men, it was Camp Helaman that brought this fire into their life that they were like, I'm going to go. And we've heard it from the pulpit when they have their farewells, they're sharing that can't be them and I felt this power of this and what I wanted to do. The last day of it, they actually are training with their companion to teach the plan of salvation and they go out into the neighborhoods and there's a home they're assigned to go and teach and they go and have that teaching experience and they're nervous and they're knocking the doors and they're looking at each other like, okay, who goes first and what do we say next? And they have this experience, they come back and then we help them process that. What just happened? What happened here at camp? It's not just like, okay, testimony meeting, stand and bear your testimony. Let's have a discussion. What did you experience there? What was that feeling? Were they feeling it too? Okay, was that the spirit? So, there's teaching opportunities through these discussions to help them process what they've experienced and having it back in our home ward or our stake boundaries gets the families that they're staying with involved, gets all these men involved, teaching them from the zone leader and district leader level. They get some training with the stake presidency while they're there as well that during the camp Helaman, we bring the bishops in to sit down with each district and talk about when you're being interviewed for the mission, here's the questions that are going to be asked. So, we're giving you forewarning that here's what we're going to talk about and some of it might be uncomfortable for you to hear. but know that it's coming and know that it's out of love and so we're prepping them for that whole experience and obviously there's some mission, there's some temple involvement as well that we want them to know we're preparing them to be endowed in the temple as well. It's not just all about mission but we've seen incredible success with almost zero missionaries returning during that MTC experience where they used to, they'd have people belated confessions or whatnot or homesickness and they're coming home. This gives them this experience that it prepares them and our stake has seen incredible results of keeping missionaries out on their mission from doing this and so... Yeah, one of our stake presidents was inspired to do it. I've heard that there's a lot of other stakes doing similar things and it's just been a blessing to be a part of for so many years now. When I was a district leader about 10 years ago, there was three return mission presidents that were the zone leaders and they were rough on us. Like they would put us on the spot in our trainings as district leaders to prepare for these young men and they would say, teach this principle right now, Brother Farns, and you'd stand up and you'd have to teach something and I was scared to death. And then after they'd say, okay, what did he do wrong? It's like, can we focus on the good stuff first? But it was, I created this bond with these older gentlemen in my stake who had served missions and they have become my heroes. I mean, a few of them have passed on, a few of them are still in our stake. One of them is our patriarch right now and that bond that I have with him, Patriarch Rogers, it's just incredible. It started in this Camp Helaman, you know, where I was taught leadership principles that I needed throughout my leadership in the church so far as well.

Kurt Francom:

So, this Camp Healing, I mean, like it started somewhere else or there's a curriculum online or?

Trevor Farnes:

It started, well, I just know that where it started within our stake was with one of our stake presidents years ago and they created a curriculum around and it's been adjusted with Preach My Gospel Now and everything to just hit on the lessons from Preach My Gospel that they will be teaching. And these district leaders, they come prepared to lead a discussion on those chapters of Preach My Gospel and teaching these young men in some role play and such as well. And then giving them an opportunity to teach and preparing them to go out and teach.

Kurt Francom:

So, there's not necessarily like this curriculum online that people can go get and follow.

Trevor Farnes:

We've got a packet if people wanted to see what we do. Like, it's all like we've got a Dropbox folder and it's like, here is Camp Helaman from the Farmington, Utah State. And I love, I've shared it with a few other stakes that have wanted to sit down and see what we're doing because it's this well-oiled machine now and it works. And some stakes have brought the young women in. Our stake hasn't yet. The young women do some of their own camps. Our stake president doesn't want the young women to feel the pressure from that being like a responsibility that's required of them. And young women, I've watched my own daughter like have her own revelatory experience to know if she should go on a mission or not. And it was powerful for her to have that. I think for these young men, yes, they're supposed to go on a mission, but some of them are still saying, should I go on a mission? Is it right? Yes, it's right. Yes, you should. But they need to have that experience where they're, you know, convicted that I'm going to go do this. And yeah, I might need to change a few things in my life right now, or I don't know a whole lot, but I'm seeing that most of these young men are in a similar situation. As I'm at Camp Peliman, we're kind of all on the same page. And a lot of them are having their own revelatory experiences through Camp Peliman as well.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. And I think this is somewhat of a theme of our conversation is this, the power of experiences, of creating. Because you can, I think, the natural place to go is like you sort of just passively, aggressively harp on it, you know, week to week as you're meeting in your church meetings or whatever with the young men, but say, no, we're going to have this experience. It's going to be a tradition, you know, to expect it's going to be hard. It's going to be fun. It's going to, you know, we'll be together in this. And that really as a way of stimulating transformation.

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah. I mean, even as an adult, that's where I learned best. But as a youth, I look back the things that I remember, I don't remember what brother so-and-so said on this date, but I remember like this moment that we had, this experience we had and how I felt, you know, and we talk about that all the time. So, experiences give that, you have to be careful that you're not shoving too many experiences down their throat because then it does, the novelty wears off. So, you got to hit them with the right moments and in the right ways so that they can feel the power of that and So, yeah, experience in my opinion and connection to each other, you know, even just the trust they can build with another leader and they're like, okay, I like this guy. I see how he's living his life. I want to try to follow that. Right.

Kurt Francom:

And so, this is a three-day experience, you said? Three day, yeah.

Trevor Farnes:

We start on Thursday afternoon and we end late on Saturday. Okay. And it's not in lieu of like youth conference or... We do it every year and they'll have youth conference, they'll have FSY, they'll have all that still, but Camp Helaman, we don't stray from it.

Kurt Francom:

And you don't go anywhere.

Trevor Farnes:

Everybody sleeps in their own bed and... Well, the leaders do, but the young men, they're in districts, about six to eight of them. They walk to a family's house in our ward. We usually, we

call 10 or 12 families and say, hey, could we send a district two nights to your house? They'll get there about nine o'clock. Give them a little treat but they're going to teach you what they learn that. They help them process it. These are powerful homes that they're going to. These are individuals that like these young men also form a connection with and they're like, you know, when I bring people in, the youth into my home for mission prep, I want them to know this is a place you can come. This is a safe place. You're always welcome with brother and sister Farns, Trevor and Jenna. But this gives them another connection in the stake of another family that will do the same for them and they've got places to go, they've got people to trust in, they've got leaders to look to. And so, these families, usually older couples in our stake they're going to, they've had some experience and they can share with these young men and there's bonds that are formed there, there's bonds that are formed with their district leaders, there's bonds that are formed with the zone leaders, with their stake presidency, with the staking men's presidency. It's giving them every ample opportunity to yeah, I connect with Matt Howard better than I do with Trevor Farns and they've got Matt Howard and I connect with Brett Anderson and Johnny Deeds and this and that. They've got all these people and they're all going to connect in one way, shape or form with somebody there and these are role models in their life that can help them to that next phase of life, to those new shoes, you know, the next shoes they'll choose to wear and we're hoping they put on those mission shoes because for me, those were some of the greatest shoes in my life. And then they led to the great issues, you know, with my wife and all these things that I want them to experience, you know, better, bigger and better things than I have. But some of the same things that I did that have just been a blessing in my life. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, like one thing I want to underscore here is just, you know, going back to maybe leadership principles. When you develop, you know, a great culture, which is awesome, we often do it in these containers, right? But when that culture like spills over into the greater culture, like you're talking about a young men's experience, but you've figured out a way for it to spill over into families, you're involving people in it, whether they're called to a young men, young women, you know, role and that stimulates the greater culture of the ward. And sometimes it's like, you don't know, why is this ward so good? I don't really know, but just these things are happening that's really feeding that overall positive culture.

Trevor Farnes:

Yeah. And then speaking of feeding, we feed them at this and there's a food committee. You know, and then that food committee reaches out to the ward mission leader in each ward and they put together a committee to come serve at each of these events. And so, then they're there. And yeah, it engulfs so much more than just like a few young men's leaders doing this and that. It's like the whole stake. They know like Camp Helaman is coming up. This is a big

deal. Many are going to be called, similar to a trek. Not as many, but it's right there at home and a lot of people get to participate in different ways.

Kurt Francom:

Love it. Anything else about Camp Helman?

Trevor Farnes:

No, just do it. If you want some information on how to do it, please just let me know.

Kurt Francom:

And really, what I'm learning is like, just like, don't feel the pressure of doing it how your stake does it. Make it your own, like figure it out. Counsel over, what can we do on day two that would be a great experience, right? And you'll improve upon it and maybe even do it better than your stake, right? A hundred percent. A hundred percent. It's really good stuff. Tell me about the approach you've taken with your speaking assignment, because you're technically on the high council, right? As the young men's president as well. So, you have these speaking assignments and you've involved the youth in that. And I think that's pretty common to involve youth or have them speak here and There.

Trevor Farnes:

But how do you do it? Yeah. So, when I was called into this position, you know, told I was going to serve as a state king men's president, but also on the high council and I've been in there for about four years now, but they gave me a list of names of when you're speaking on the high council each month, here's a list of qualified and capable individuals. Usually they're, you know, state callings. You can call upon any of them or return missionaries. And I looked at that list and thought, wow, there is some really powerful individuals. I've heard him speak. This is awesome. But I just had this very distinct impression to ask my stake president if I could take a young man with me to speak as an adult, not in a youth portion of the meeting, but as an adult, eight to 10 minutes, you know? And he gave me the thumbs up, said that would be great. And so, over the last four years, I've probably spoken with 27, 28 young men, usually in their senior year. This last week, I spoke with one that was a junior. I meet with the bishops and I talk about young men that are either on my mind or young men that are on their minds. Like, who could use this experience? And it provides multiple different purposes. Obviously, me, I'm trying to connect with these young men and to be an influence in their life. And so, it gives me some time to be

with them. When I ask them to speak, I tell them, hey, let's approach this maybe a little differently than you've seen in the past. Maybe it's how you have used it in the past, but I'm going to give you a conference talk that goes along with the topic. But I don't want you to give a book report on this talk. I don't want you to give a talk on the talk. I want you to read that. Allow that to get the spiritual juices flowing on that topic. And yeah, if you want to pull from quotes and such, that's great. But you're going to need to fill 8 to 10 minutes and you're speaking in that adult section and I know you can do it. And you know, there's a First Timothy, it's like no man despise that youth. That's one thing that I've shared with them. You have so much to give. You've got a gift that I don't want you to neglect. And part of that gift is your personal experience in life that applies to this topic. And so, I want you to really think about a personal experience that you can share that applies to you or maybe a family member or whatnot and utilize that and share it and see how telling that story feels when you share it and feel the spirit when you're doing that. Because I think that obviously the Savior taught in parables and in stories and I want to teach these young men that sharing personal stories or experiences, there's something that can be felt by them and by the listener. And then, you know, I tell them that they need to use the scriptures in their teaching and then they need to issue a challenge at the end before bearing their testimony on that. And so, they kind of have some guidelines when they're speaking and when they're trying to fill that much time. And I was worried at first that, you know, the young men are going to get a text or a call from me and they're going to shy away from it, but it's almost become one of these things where like, Okay, Brother Farns is calling me now, it's my opportunity and I've got this connection with them. It's powerful where it's we're going and that yes, they're nervous and I'm nervous and I tell them, hey, I get nervous every time and I speak every month. But I think those nerves are because we're excited about what we're going to share. And we want God to use us as a tool and an instrument to share a message with his children. And that's why we're here. And we're here to add to the spirit of the sacrament. We cannot detract from that. So, we need to make sure our message brings to the spirit of what we're here for. So, it gives me opportunity to just talk to them about what we're experiencing that day and what our responsibility is. And then I'll... So, it's been one of these things. These young men seem to be pretty excited about the opportunity to go in and share in this. And there's a quote that I share as I stand and I've shared it in every word that I've spoken. And I've spoken all these words about four times, but more than, you know, some of that repetitive nature. Somebody might not have heard it the first time, but it's more for this young man that's with me, that's a priest. that Elder Maxwell once stated that in the economy of heaven God does not send thunder if a still small voice is enough or a prophet if a priest can do the job. And so I have a priest there with me who's done an incredible job to fulfill his responsibility to preach, to teach, to expound and to exhort. And we're giving them in our stake this opportunity to fulfill that responsibility. And God will utilize them. They've got a work to do. It states that in their theme. What is that work? They need to teach, to preach, to expound, to exhort. They need to represent our Savior Jesus Christ. And this is just one of the ways that we've been able to do that but it's again, created connection and experience that I'll always remember and I remember the things that they teach and I you know, I'll follow up with them at times and let them know, hey, I'm remembering this and that was powerful and I know that this person was blessed or whatnot but... It's been one of the portions of my calling that I'll miss when I'm done with this calling, you know. And because it creates a bond, creates an opportunity to really teach these

young men that that work that God has for them to do is powerful and they have all the capability and ability, especially as they rely upon their Savior to fulfill those responsibilities.

Kurt Francom:

I love it. I love it. And another thing that's coming out for me is, you know, I've gone from a lot of ward callings to state callings, and you kind of feel separated from the people, the relationships, the interactions. And a lot of these examples you've shared, like as a state young men's president, you've really been able to connect and have that relationship, been that mentor for young men in a way that doesn't step on the toes of the ward leaders or whatever, you're just looking for other ways to help out and involve and that's really cool.

Trevor Farnes:

And that's our responsibility is to minister to the bishop and his counselors and wherever they need our help with these young men. And so, yeah, I felt prompted to ask the stake president, but then the bishops, they've got to buy into that as well. And they're all for it. And yes, they'd love to send one of their young men to have this experience and to be put in that environment where it's not easy. They haven't spoke that long. This isn't normal to go to a different ward and now they're in a ward where it's not their family ward. They're looking at other people. And so, the bishops have been all for it but yeah, it's got to definitely be something that the bishops can buy in on and make sure that they're all for and they tell me what names to call upon and so, it's been a wonderful experience. And then the connection with the bishoprics that way as well is strengthened between us as a staking as president and them and they taking us presidency. And they know that we're there to support their youth. So, they can call on us. We're not just sitting in the background just waiting. We want to be present if they'd have us. Perfect.

Kurt Francom:

I think people really appreciate this, enjoy it. And I encourage people if you've, you know, love Trevor's, you know, stories and perspectives to check out his book, *The Conquer Code*. And I think there's even more inspiration in that you can learn from. So... Last question I have for you, Trevor, as you think back on your time as not just a church leader, but a business leader, a life leader, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Trevor Farnes:



That's good. And I've heard you ask this on all your podcasts. You know, years ago, it was a busy time in life and we were starting a business after multiple business failures, trying again. You know, we weren't willing to give up. We just had another child. I went back to school, called into a bishopric and life was really busy, but I felt like God was utilizing me in each of these realms. And I had an opportunity to lead in my home, to lead a business, to now be in an ecclesiastical leadership role. I wanted to fulfill these responsibilities to the best of my ability and with God's strength and I remember calling my dad and asking if he would fast with me and if he would come give me a blessing. You know, I felt like there was God was preparing me for things in life and he was giving me leadership opportunities. And I wanted to really focus my life on that and learn how to lead the best way possible. My dad's a little long-winded like me. I can talk for a long time. And when he fasts, he'll fast. My dad passed away this last year. And so, I'm sweaty eyed already. But when I talk about my dad, it definitely makes the eyes sweat. He was my hero. He served in multiple leadership capacities, a bishop, sick presidency. a mission president when I was a youth and got to go and watch him fulfill that role and responsibilities, incredible. But he came and gave me the shortest blessing he ever gave me in life and it kind of shocked me a little bit but it was exactly what I needed as a leader but also to help me know how to be a follower. And you know, he laid his hands on my head and he blessed me to study, understand and apply the characteristics of Christ more fully as a husband, as a father, as a business leader in my church responsibilities. And that if I would just do that and focus my life on that and the characteristics of Christ, I would be able to lead. in a more fulfilling and impactful way with those that I come in contact with. And so, it was His blessing and His counsel to follow Jesus, just to learn more of Jesus, to focus my life and my learning on Him and His characteristics. And if applied, I could lead in a more impactful way. And I'm striving to do that far from where I want to be, but I love the counsel and the blessing from my Father. And it all comes back to our Savior, Jesus Christ, that if we just learn of Him, walk in his footsteps, follow his light, we have an opportunity to not only bless and impact our own lives but the lives of those around us.

Kurt Francom:

That concludes this episode of the Leading Saints podcast. We'd love to hear from you about your questions or thoughts or comments. You can either leave a comment on the post related to this episode at [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) or go to [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) contact and send us your perspective or questions. If there's other episodes or topics you'd like to hear on the Leading Saints podcast, go to [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) slash contact and share with us the information there. And we would love for you to share this with any individual you think this would apply to, especially maybe individuals in your ward council or other leaders that you may know who would really appreciate the perspectives that we discussed. Remember, check the show notes to listen to the powerful presentation by the general Young Men, Young Women Advisory Council members or go to [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) slash 14.

SPEAKER\_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. When the declaration was made concerning the only true and living church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness. A loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away and to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.