



## **How I Lead Leading Saints | An Interview with Kurt Francom**

January 1, 2025

Kurt Francom:

It seems like struggles with pornography get most the airtime these days since it is so available in modern times. However, drug abuse and substance addiction is growing at shocking rates. As a church leader, you need to be prepared. We have a library full of resources focused on this topic. The presentation I would recommend you start with is Joseph Grenny's presentation about what we can learn from Captain Moroni to help our loved ones overcome struggles with drugs and alcohol. His story of how he loved his son through his addiction is powerful and redemptive. You can listen to this presentation in the Recovering Saints Library by going to [leadingsaints.org slash 14](https://leadingsaints.org/14). Put your information in there and that will give you 14 days at no cost. I made it easier for you and put the link in the show notes. Or you can go to [leadingsaints.org slash one four](https://leadingsaints.org/one-four). If you wanted further insight into a Come Follow Me lesson, you'd probably search in YouTube or get the We Believe app. Tough church history questions? You'd reach out to the B.H. Roberts Foundation. But what if you wanted to learn to be a better leader? Well, I'm glad you asked. you'd come to Leading Saints. That's why we exist, to help Latter-day Saints be better prepared to lead by being familiar with others' leadership experiences, understand the latest leadership research, and finding a community to share ideas. That's why I'm glad you found the Leading Saints podcast. We hope you will dive into the archives and visit [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org) to find out what are the top most listened to episodes on the podcast. Welcome! You're gonna love it.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

The good folks at Leading Saints are so busy working on next year's content, they have agreed to let me, Carlos L. Chacon, Jr., host what I believe will be the final stream of this year.

Kurt Francom:

Probably, unless I get ambitious for tomorrow, but we'll see.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

There we go. So because you come to Leading Saints for great content, we've gone out of our way to find an engaging guest full of great insight. Unfortunately, she was not available.

Kurt Francom:

Oh, come on. Oh, burn! That was good. I like this. I like this.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

We did, however, manage to score some time with someone near and dear to your hearts, our very own Kurt Francom. Hey. I'm not sure if this is the first time you've ever heard this, but welcome to Leading Saints, sir.

Kurt Francom:

Well, thank you. I feel like I'm at home, you know, in my own podcast here. So this is good. I loved it. Loved the intro. So your audition is good so far. We'll see how it goes from here. But yeah, you just emailed me and you're like, hey, why don't we turn the tables on you? And I thought, hey, it's the end of the year. Why don't we try something crazy? And here we are, right?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

And here we are. That's right. All the vetting that happens here at Leading Saint. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

The deep background check. Yep.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So Kurt, I know we kind of touched base on what's happening next year. So I would actually like to start there. OK, you know, we've mentioned some plans for next year, but I'll admit I don't know them all. I did hear from another stream something about some remote worksites you'll be putting on. The BYU Cruise I know has been mentioned as well. I think you're still doing some podcasts, right? So maybe let's start there and take us through what you have in the bag for 2025.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, you know, with each year, as I think most of us do, we always envision it being the next year being, you know, better planned and organized and all these things. And then suddenly it's July. And you're like, Whoa, here we go. And so, and we have a lot of people may not realize behind the scenes, we actually hired two consultants, who've been immense help behind the scenes, really getting things organized everything from our financials to the way that our circle community works and just sort of picking up these tasks that I run out of bandwidth for and are not able to keep up with. And so that's been really valuable and they've helped me, you know, we meet once a week and have a You know, brainstorm meeting or just get together and make sure we're on track with things. And so that's been really helpful. That's why maybe I'm more optimistic that 2025 will be a little more organized. But yeah, one of those things that we want to do is And we don't have a specific name, you know, I've called these types of things Leading Saints Live before where we actually get a venue, invite people to come, invite speakers and have workshops. And because what I've noticed, I don't know, Carlos, I've ever been to BYU Education Week, but it is it's it's incredible. I mean, the the lists of classes they have and people are so excited but it's it's really not promoted well and um i don't know if they want to promote it well just because they get so many uh sure you know word of mouth and that have come for years and years get a lot of retirees but you get a lot that are taking time off work to be there and i've just seen more and more that people really appreciate not only content and not only leadership content but they appreciate in-person content where you can talk to the guy next to you and you know, find out where they're from, what brought them to the event and ask questions live, have more interaction in some of the presentations and things like that. So, and it's really easy, you know, for the most part to do is to find a venue and, you know, and these aren't church venues as a independent organization, you know, the church generally doesn't, want all sorts of different organizations using their building. So we would, you know, we're looking for four or five locations, one of them being your neck of the woods, just south of you and in Raleigh, North Carolina will probably be, I've already been in discussion with some people out there. We'll just find a venue, could be a community college, it could be a local college, an auditorium, a place that we can invite people, a couple hundred people if that's what they want to be, or it could be 50. Really, I've found success in whatever size these types of events are. And I'll speak, I'll bring some other speakers, people like Robert Farrell, I mean, let's go to some of the big speakers that, as long as they're not on missions or occupied elsewhere, but some of the past guests that have been very popular. I'd love to just bring sort of a small array of individuals and it's not going to be anything too complex. We're not going to have like, a speaker every hour because a lot of speakers have a lot to unpack or they want to work with the audience maybe more in a workshop setting and really make it more engaging so that people leave feeling like I had an experience here, I received some revelation, I took some notes and now I can return to whatever leadership capacity I'm in and hopefully see benefit come from that.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, that'll be neat. So you so those are still kind of in the works. And then in terms of I get it, you know, we'll just have to wait with anxious anticipation to the social media accounts in terms of when that stuff will get announced and whatnot.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, and hopefully, you know, it says we're further down the road with with North Carolina folks, I would hope that that's in the early this the second quarter of the year, you know, maybe maybe even before that, but I am doing that BYU cruise experience, which has been cool to see people sign up for that. There's still some space left if people are still interested. I think people underestimate that type of experience when you're on a ship full of 4,000 or 5,000 Latter-day Saints, and we're having workshops. you know, laying by the pool having discussion out this or that cultural dynamic. I mean, I've had, it's been remarkable. And at first, I thought it was kind of weird when I first did it. But once I experienced him, like, Okay, this is cool. We got to keep doing this. Yeah.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, the ability to ask a question or to be able to follow up, right? Because it never, well, I shouldn't say never, but it often, the thought doesn't enter your mind until after you've been processing it for a little while. And you're like, Oh, man, I should have asked this. And those types of events do allow you to circle back and be like, Hey, I was thinking about this. And you know, kind of work it out a little bit. Yep.

Kurt Francom:

So yeah, once I think once we get through that, I mean, but we'll start planning some things before then, but definitely nothing before April. I don't think so.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Okay. Okay. Very good. So, um, okay. So, so the, you mentioned the cruise, the cruise, excuse me, the podcasts already. Uh, so anything else that you can share or want to share for the coming year?

Kurt Francom:

You know, we're, um, I'm always mulling over these ideas and talking them with people. And so I'll state some of the things, but not with a promise that they're not gonna happen, but I want to give you a tour inside my brain, right? And have you look around a little bit and you can ask further questions. But one thing, and I don't know if this would necessarily be under the leading saints umbrella, but somewhat related to it, definitely in the LDS umbrella of content is I feel like there isn't, You know, just long-form interviews are becoming more and more popular in the secular world, you know, secular podcast world, everybody from Joe Rogan to, I mean, you see it a lot in politics, right, where two, three, four-hour interviews, which seem like a lot, however... it really gives you an opportunity to dig into some things and understand a person more. And bringing an author on for an hour, which is good, and we can hit this and that topic, but I always feel like I have to cut down my questions and things like that. So I would love... to, and I've had people encourage me to do this, to start a podcast feed that is more of a long form interview style, where I'm sitting down with, you know, Carol Givens, or former General Authorities, or,

you know, people who maybe we see out there in the in the latter day Saint universe, and but we really don't have their whole story or their background, I'd really love to dig in. to some of these conversations and understand them as people, as Latter-day Saints. Some people maybe rattle off one or two, but I feel like there's more of an opportunity there to do so. That's one wild idea, but coming back to leading saints, I would love to have more, because right now I'd say 95% of the content is I find a guest, they come in, we have a great conversation, maybe they're an author, a PhD, a therapist, and so there's some sort of topic that we can rally around and talk about and it's interesting and hopefully leads people further into their research or content. But I would love to take more of like, I don't know if like, a documentary approach is the best way to frame it. But for instance, there's certain leadership talks in our history, that often gets referenced and had such an influence on our culture and on our leadership culture today. For example, I think it was 1996, Elder Packer at the time, went to BYU and gave his unwritten order of things. And this is a phrase you hear a lot kind of thrown around of like, oh, that's not in the handbook, but it's in the unwritten order of things. Or there's a certain way that you conduct sacrament meeting. Like, you know, if the presiding authority speaks, you should never have anybody speak after, even if it's the bishopric member. Like, again, I don't necessarily am on board with all these things simply because nobody's written them down. But they still get like churned up in the culture of like, no, that's the way you're supposed to do it. Well, like who says, like, where's it written, right? So it's interesting to see a talk like that, given at BYU by Elder Packer, have such an influence on our leadership culture. Or, you know, the one I play clip from at the end of every episode is The Loneliness of Leadership by then Elder Hinckley, back in the 70s, maybe I think it was 1969, actually, BYU. And when you get the full context of that talk and why he wrote it, and you find out that he actually was sort of speaking off the cuff, or he wasn't planning to give that address, and that things were happening, he mentions President Nixon in the talk and things like that. So I would love to take an episode and really say, let's dig into this event that happened, or this dynamic, or I'm trying to think of some other ideas there, but definitely more that are episodes that are more thoughtful as far as research-based or that maybe I have a team. And if there are people out there that would love to contribute and volunteer to help us research some of these things and put some information together. In the past, we haven't had that bandwidth. And so that would be cool to have maybe more thoughtful episodes that give us some component of leadership history or leadership doctrine or things like that. And I'll just smelly we can go into these if you want more detail. But so right now we have our online community through circle, which is the we call the was the leading saints community. But within that is the core leader library. And the core leader is anybody who is a subscribing donor, right? So, and they, if you donate to Leading Saints on a recurring basis, you get access to hundreds of additional content hours of, you know, focused on specific topics related to leadership. Well, one thing that we've discovered in this journey of Leading Saints is when I started Leading Saints, it was more of like, I want like the five cool ideas of how to motivate people, or give me the three tips on having giving a great sacramental talk, which we do that. And it's interesting and really helpful and people love it. But what we found is that we uncovered this whole new demographic in the Church, which is not just leaders with callings, but Latter-day Saints who, at their core, they identify as a leader, regardless if they're in a leadership calling, regardless if they're you know, running the show or not, but they identify as a leader and they want to play a role in the influence of their ward, or the influence of their community, or they

want to show up differently. And, you know, this is such at the core of our doctrine, you know, we literally go to temples of God to be endowed from power on high as kings and queens and priests and priestesses, right? There's something, we're not all just created that maybe some of us have opportunity to lead, maybe some of us won't. No, we've all been endowed with a higher order, in a higher order to really have influence. And so with that, we're sort of figuring out how to shift our offering. Of course, we'll always do the podcasts and the leadership, geek out sessions and things. We've recognized that people don't just want to be a good leader, they actually want to help establish Zion. And so there might be somewhat of a rebrand coming with the Core Leader Library being more geared towards, like one working title we're playing with is Zion Lab, like a laboratory where people can come together and say, hey, you know, this is what I'm doing in my ward, or this is what I'm doing in my young men's program. And, or this is what I'm doing in my community, you know, and coming together as sort of a laboratory sharing ideas, saying, how can we not only be effective leaders, but establish Zion as we do that? So anyways, that's, there's a lot there, but that's, that's another one.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Sure. Well, so that all sounds, you know, really neat. And of course, it's easy for me to say, because I don't have to do it, Kurt, but we wish you well in those journeys. First, Madeline, I want to join Madeline's question. She was asking, are you going to do another live event to watch The Chosen at the movies? Oh, yeah. Apparently that must have been a local, right? A local thing.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, yeah.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, so that was cool. That sort of went in conjunction with my book release earlier this year. I thought, man, you know, sort of trendy to have like a book release party type of thing. And you kind of want to celebrate when you write a book. You're like, oh, man, like this was a long, hard effort. And so, yeah, let's celebrate. So it was in conjunction with when The Chosen was releasing their, I think it was season five, In Theaters. and showing two episodes at a time. And so we booked out a movie theater, invited people to come, everybody got a free copy of the book, and then we watched The Chosen. And I am sure with season six, The Chosen is going to do that. And yeah, I would love to do that. And maybe that's something, you know, we could do all over the country as well, but I love The Chosen. So might as well get together and watch it with some good friends. So.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, yeah, there you go. That's neat. Okay, so I know that there's going to be some folks who are new, right? We're all we're trying, they're going to be new folks that are going to engage Leading Saints over time. So maybe let's just look back for a moment, right? So give us the brief history, right, on how Leading Saints got started. And maybe, you know, you've mentioned some of the consultants and whatnot, but who, who are the Leading Saints at the moment?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, that's a great question. So Leading Saints essentially started in 2010. And I guess the story leading up to that, you know, I bought the domain, May 26, 2010, I bought the domain leading LDS.com. And I thought, I'm gonna start blogging, because that's what we did back then. I'm gonna start blogging about leadership, you know. But leading up to that I came over my mission, 2003, a couple years later I went to a single adult ward, student ward I think is what we called it at the time, YSA ward. We met in the, I was living at home with my parents in West Valley City, we met in the Salt Lake Community College Institute building. And there was just a ton of wards there, student wards that met. And thankfully, this is this actually the ward where I met my wife. So a lot of good things came out of that ward. And And I was called as the Elders quorum President, and I had really not experienced leadership to any capacity other than I've been a district leader on my mission and maybe a couple of companionships ran some district meetings. But this was like, oh, you know, and there's sort of this feeling of like, oh, well, finally, they asked somebody who's actually going to try, you know, finally, they got somebody in the chair that cares, you know. And so I'm going to do this, and we're going to see remarkable results. My ego was just raging in this conversation. And so I did all the typical things. I had a great guilt trip lesson about home teaching, and I remember a Bishopric member was there and just got up after and applauded my words. This is what, you know, blessings in heaven will be stripped from you if you do not go out there and home teach, right? I spent, you know, hours in the clerk's office because back then you couldn't arrange home teaching or ministering in a fancy app. So you had to go to the clerk's office and I was just burning the candle at both ends, you know, I was memorizing everybody's name and the director, which, you know, some of these things were good. But I was just overwhelmed, right? And I remember I looked at the report the first month as far as home teaching, and it was 39%. You know, that's disgusting. And I remember in that guilt trip lesson, like getting up there and writing it on the board, like 39%. You know, this is awful. What are we doing here, people? Yeah, that's right. You know, this righteous indignation of calling them into repentance, these elders. And there was probably a hundred plus elders in this quorum you know, in this huge YSA boards. And so I went to work, you know, like making sure everybody got assignments, making sure I would mail the assignment to people if they didn't show up to church, you know, so they had no excuse. Not getting their assignments and and I remember the end of the month. I'm just working so hard and and You know just doing the thing right and got to the report and looking where we have, how much higher of 39% do we go? And I calculated it all and it came up as 38%. So I had lost a percentage point. That was like my reality check of like, oh, so like leadership's really hard and complicated and you can't just like talk at people and make them feel guilty and then they just do things, right? And I was Elders quorum President for maybe nine months before my wife and I got engaged and married and moved out of that ward. But I just left that experience really discouraged, thinking, man, that was not fun. I tried really hard. Nothing changed. And then I

was called into a bishopric soon after our marriage, a year or so after. And then that bishop got released, and I was called as the High Priest Group Leader. And I thought, here I go again. You know, this is the same role as kind of the elders quorum president. Why do I even try? You know, what's the point, right?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Exactly.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, I can see why people kind of just coast to some of these callings. But I remember being intrigued walking through Barnes& Noble. I've always loved to read and especially like organizational behavior books, like leadership books like that. And I remember just being so intrigued by the bookshelves full of life leadership, business leadership, family leadership. Like there's so much research there, but nobody's really talking about it in the context of the church. And so I thought, well, maybe there's an opportunity here. Maybe I can find some of this, you know, academic research and learn about it and then blog about it. And so that was 2010 when I bought leading LDS.com. And I just, it was just like a hobby blog for years and years for three or four years. And then in 2014, And I should say, as I was doing that research and studying things, I would try things in the high priest group that I was leading, and it was working. I was seeing great success and unity, and I felt more trusted by those men. And I was a 26-year-old high priest group leader with a bunch of 60-, 70-year-old people looking at me. And then I served as high priest group leader a couple of years, and then I was called as the bishop of that ward. for five years and then into the state presidency. So it was suddenly like I was blessed with this laboratory of like, oh, well, this is an interesting problem. I'm going to go chase that down, you know, figure something else there. And then 2014, sort of podcasting was becoming a thing. I had no idea how early I really was. I mean, I almost felt late to the game in 2014, but little did I know how it would explode.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

And- 14 years for you, I think, right?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, for sure. And that's really when I got some traction. 2014, started podcasting, figuring it out, interviewing people. And it was just fun to listen to these different experiences and expertise. You know, the How I Lead series and things like that, hearing how the other guy's doing it. And then in 2016, we became a 501c3 nonprofit organization. I went full time with Leading Saints with a bunch of side hustles on the side for a while, just to make ends meet. And then it's just grown ever since then. you know, now in 2025, just now, or, you know, we're just about at 20 million downloads and been broadcasting for 10 years. And just I get emails from all over the world from people that are intrigued by the research and the the content and all of that, that is the payday. When you get the email from a mission president in Guatemala, a relief society president in Australia saying, man, this stuff is working. I feel so encouraged by it. I walk



into these roles with more confidence, more ideas. That is so awesome to hear. That's the general story. I don't know if I missed anything.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

There you go. Okay. Would you say that And again, I guess even going back to that whole concept of the loneliness of leadership, you know, the Hinkley reference. So, but carrying this on for so many years is a challenge, right? Like just having, you know, that focus and particularly kind of a labor of love, right? Kind of an effort. So is engagement the thing that helps motivate you to get up, respond to the emails, prepare questions, right? And keep, you know, curating content?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, I mean, I guess motivation has never really been a problem for me. Like, definitely focus is at times, you know, I always, I'm trying to write, you know, at least 1000 words in a manuscript every day and work on this episode, but I, oh, there's new emails coming in, or, you know, I, and I have a little bit of ADD that way. To me, I don't know why or how God wired me, but I am so intrigued by leadership, especially in the context of our faith. I mean, just like all of us, we love our faith, we love our culture, and it is so intriguing to me that when I get these emails, from people saying, you know, I, there's this thing going on in my, in my ward or stake, and, you know, I just don't quite know what to do, or there's this problem, or I've tried this thing, and it works. I'm like, wow. So for some reason, God bit me with that bug, that leadership bug. And I just love diving in. And so I anticipate, you know, I am mortal. And maybe at some point in my life, I just run my course with talking about leadership, but man, I don't feel it. It is any any time near so I just keep going and and yeah, hopefully he gets to a point that I can, you know, others can step in and do what I do.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, that's neat. Okay, well, I appreciate that. So so circling back to some of the comments that are in here. Let's see. This is going to be a tough one. I think it's Amy, Amy Earl, right? Because all as a podcaster myself in a completely different genre, all your guests are your favorite, right? They're like your children. That's right. But Amy Earl asks which, and I guess, and I'm going to expand that to be like perhaps either a topic or a subject that you have enjoyed covering that maybe surprised you or Or even that you were just tickled to death to be able to get, right? You never thought you'd be able to talk to that person, but this has been a platform for you to be able to have that conversation.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, so this is, I get this question a lot, and it's really hard, you know, what's your favorite kid? What's your favorite, what was your favorite month of your mission? You know, I mean, they all have their flavor, right? So, I mean, this year, I think back, and that's the other thing is, you know, we have 800 or so episodes, just so hard to remember some of these episodes sometimes that, I'm sure if I heard some of the top interviews from year two, three, four, I'd be

like, oh, that one was so good. But they fade on you, right? But I just think like Bishop Devin Pope in Southside Chicago this year, talking to him, the most baptizing ward in America, and just hear what they're doing, just love hearing what many would classify as everyday people, right? Lay leaders that are trying different things and seeing such great success. And the fact that it almost seems like the success is their problem, you know, where his word is bursting at the seams and they can't split the word or get a language word going fast enough. You know, and I sit down and I'm recording with people like Kurt Brown. And it's just like, wow, what he's saying is so helpful. This is a really special episode. I pray that my recorder is still going, you know? And so, but as far as topics, I just, I'm intrigued by, man, just for some, I've turned into somewhat of a therapy geek, like understanding therapy modalities and thoughts and, you know, everything from addiction to codependency to you know just the reason why we tick is people is so it's so hopeful to me when because as a leader you can get so discouraged with people of like why do you act like this why do you sin like this why why don't you just live your life like me and then i don't have these problems so just do what i do right um But to then realize, oh, actually, there's maybe something deeper. Maybe there's some trauma in their past that I have never experienced, or there's certain talents or abilities I have that they don't, or vice versa. And so we just live our life differently. We live the gospel differently. And so that brings up so much empathy and encouragement. And so yeah, terrible answer to the question, but it's sort of an impossible question.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So there you have it. That's fair. Okay, so in terms of topics, right, and other things, so this is the Madeline question again, so summary of topics. And I guess I would even kind of break this out into, so I know on the website, you know, [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org), you can go through and you can be like, okay, well, I have this calling, I kind of start here. I know we've talked about perhaps morphing that into something a little bit different in the future. But in terms of how you would suggest people navigate 800 episodes of content and kind of finding what they want, is there a better answer than just leading saints and then the topic in Google?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, and I think you alluded to this in an email about using AI for some of this, right? And that's, you know, I use AI every day with all sorts of tasks and things, and it's remarkable the capacity can do. And yeah, that's one thing I would love if there's smarter people out there that can help me figure out how to connect an AI engine to the Leading Saints catalog and episodes and things, because I know it's possible. And so I would imagine the next year, That just being more of a norm, especially with podcasts, because every podcast is struggling with this problem. It doesn't matter if you transcribe the episode, you tag the episode, you write a summary for the episode. I mean, you try and give as much out there that search engines can ping and hit on. and websites and it should be easier, but it's just not. And so I recognize it's really hard to navigate some of these things. But hopefully we can, and it really comes down to either artificial intelligence or organic intelligence, where if I have people who could sit with an episode and be like, oh, you know, this is a, there's definitely 10 minutes here, they talk about sacrament meetings, so I'm gonna like tag that and put it in the catalog, and then it will like take

you to that exact minute marker and things. So I recognize it's a little bit difficult, and to me the best way is going to Google, typing Leading Saints with a term, And so Madeline, if you go to Leading Saints and type Deanna Murphy, you will find that episode that you're talking about. It was Deanna Murphy that she talked about. It was during COVID about teaching online and breakout rooms and things like that. It's a phenomenal episode. So I don't know, Carlos, with your technical expertise, how would you respond to that? Or how would you coach me on dealing with databases of content like this?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, that's a that's a great question. And we're going to get technical here just for a second. But what would you use for your like your website? uh, your, is it a WordPress WordPress?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah. Yeah. Um, so the correct answer is, I don't know the WordPress integrations, right. To do that. But, but I would be, I imagine that there are plenty. Um, and in fact, I will ask, I will ask and, uh, and see if I can, it might be helpful. Yeah. Yeah. Which then kind of, so leads into right. Uh, maybe the, the idea of their question of, uh, so. if you wanted to engage or how you go about selecting topics and things that you want to interview or find more. So this is the Helaman's Army question. So in terms of either giving you feedback or topic suggestions, how do you want to curate some of those pieces?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, this question here, you mentioned that people who see themselves as leaders without a lead for calling, how do you find and reach out to those who would be willing to be on your podcast? A variety, I mean, I get probably a dozen, half a dozen emails a week from people saying, hey, you should check out this guy or this person. You know, that helps a lot with our how I lead segment, which we publish every Wednesday. That's where we want, you know, the everyday people and just hearing how they how they lead and things like that. I'm always trying to, sometimes a desert book has been a good resource as far as with authors. They have a natural turnover like any company with their employees. And so sometimes I'll have an employee that's really, you know, they'll email me and say, these 10 books are coming out in the next, you know, three months. Do you want to interview any of the authors? And that's been really good. I need to be more in touch with them, but you know, I'll see a book come up or I'll read a book. Like right now I'm reading this phenomenal book, just started it, called The Other Half of Church, and they talk about spiritual development in the context of neurology and your brain and how we often approach, and I see this so much in in our faith, where we approach, like, come follow me from such an intellectual basis, right? Let's just sit down with a PhD and talk about what does this word mean in Hebrew, when in reality, conversion often happens on the right side of the brain, in a more creative fashion, right? And so that's so intriguing to me. So

I'll read that, as I'm reading that book, it's written by two, I think, evangelical Protestant guys. But I'm already like, I got to reach out to these guys. I got to get them on the podcast. I really want to dig into this. And so authors that way or therapists will reach out. This is another thing that I hope to do more 2025 is revisit some of our virtual conferences we've had and kind of do a new fresh run through on them, you know, as far as the new research out there, or if there's other speakers that should be included or inviting some of the old ones back to do a new session. And so I guess a lot of it was with, I'm just always always looking so I and people email me and I appreciate anybody who emails me even those that say, you know, I think I might be a pretty good guest on your on your podcast. And I don't Some people are hesitant to do that, but I don't know why, like, let your light so shine, right? So even what you did, Carlos, with this, that's great. Like, yeah, this would be a lot of help to have somebody interview me and talk about Leading Saints stuff, because sometimes I feel like I'm just talking to the wall in my home office here, you know? And so, yeah, reach out. We need, like, Man, there's so many tangents. But there is something in our culture where we go to temples to make covenants to give ourselves to the kingdom of God, and then we go to church and make jokes about how we don't want to give ourselves to the kingdom of God. Like this, oh, I'd never want to be bishop. I'm like, what are you talking about? Do something, serve. Well, it's not my place. You went to the temple. This is a tall soapbox I got. And so if there are people out there who can contribute to Leading Saints, like reach out, or if you're doing your own thing, or you want to start a podcast, or if there's a way you can contribute, like reach out, or you have an idea, or you know, there's so much there. So a concise answer is like, yeah, people email me. I'm always just like constantly searching for resources. I'm inviting old guests back, you know, it's fun to have Dan Duckworth on and Ryan Gottfredson, Tony Overbay. I'm always trying to kind of keep them, you know, circling back and we always find something to talk about. So anyways, hopefully that is, what am I missing in that question?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Anything? So correct me if I misspeak here, but I feel like you're open to people helping you in any way that they can. We've actually mentioned some technology components. Obviously content is going to be something, but even assisting and organizing some of these live type events. So very simple, perhaps, but by small and simple things are great things come to fast. And so sharing the content. Now, I myself came to Leading Saints because I was a big fan of a college football coach, and that's how I ultimately found Leading Saints. But as I started talking with other people, people were like, oh yeah, I know about Leading Saints. Aren't they great? And I would share that. I would share specific episodes based on a conversation we had. They'd always come back and be like, oh man, that was so great. Thanks for sharing that, right? And they kind of dig into it. And so I think there are multiple ways in which you can contribute. So if you don't want to engage Kirk, sharing is caring, all the way up to drop him a line, give him some feedback, and then the leadership team can decide to go from There.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, that's awesome. That's really good. And another thing that came to mind as you were talking there is, I get so many emails from people saying, I wish you could do some more

content on, I don't know, insert issue, like how to do ministering interviews or how to lead the youth or, you know, how the bishopric can best work with the young women's presidency or whatever. And I'm like, okay, well, like, do you know somebody I could talk to? Like, I don't just I don't see the topic and then go find the person. I typically find the person, then we realize they have an answer to the topic. And so, yeah, just having everybody's ear to the ground as far as like, all right, this leader that I'm seeing in my stake is something special. And another thing that's helpful is if you approach them first and talk with them and saying, hey, I would like to submit your name to Leading Saints. I don't know if anything will come of it, but are you okay if I do that? That's much easier than you coming to me and then they have some strange podcast boy that's emailing him saying, no, please will you come on my podcast? And they're like, who are you? So it helps if you kind of help them get convinced to be on the podcast.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Which then, so let's jump into it. And this is gonna be one that you can edit if you need to later. But so one of the questions was like, right, so what do the Brethren think about leading saints, right? And this is this, like, hey, are we delving into territories that we shouldn't be? And, and I know that you've, you know, even talked a little bit about priestcraft, you know, and like, hey, that's not us, right? Yeah, don't don't think of me too poorly, Kurt. But that's, like, my very first interactions, I was like, who is this? Like, what? How do I feel about this? Right? Like, what's going on? So there is, for whatever reason, right? Because I've experienced it, that, like, Again, is this OK kind of a thing? And I guess let me let you kind of address that, and then I have a take.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, so what do the Brethren think about Leading Saints? Well, I guess if you mean the Brethren as in the Quorum of the Twelve and First Presidency, I have no idea. I don't talk to them. I would imagine... No, and I would be like if somebody saw them or related to them and said, hey, have you heard about Leading Saints? I would be shocked if any of them said, oh, yeah, I've heard of that. Or I vaguely think I've heard. I got to be shocked if they've even vaguely heard of it. Right. But so, but as far as our relationship with, as the leading saints institution in relationship with the church institution, we are, I would say we have a very good relationship with the church. We are what they frame as a independent advocate. And so I'm, you know, communicating with them regularly. You know, for example, Bishop Pope, interview came because someone in the communications department reached out to me and said, Hey, I found this, we were aware of this Bishop in Southside Chicago. He may be a good guest. And I was like, Yes, let's do that. They made an email introduction and lo and behold, he was on the podcast, right? So, and I get that, you know, I've mentioned this before, leadership is such an interesting topic in our, in our culture, because I mean, who doesn't write a book about the atonement of Jesus Christ or about some doctrinal dynamic, and they're just like, oh, good for you. You wrote a book about the core of our doctrine and theology. But then someone starts talking about leadership. It's like, wait just a minute, buddy. What gives you the right to talk about leadership, right? And I don't know, maybe it's my temperament, my personality over the years, but we've definitely, you know, built that trust with the church. Again, I don't claim that

we're endorsed by the church or any of that. I would never claim that, but obviously we have communication with the church. It's very positive communication. I get nothing but encouragement from And again, these aren't the Brethren per se, but again, they've got – they're not worrying about podcasts about leadership at this point. And again, I could take a left turn and really make this a headache for the church, but I consider myself an orthodox, faithful member of the church. I'm not looking to do any damage to the church. And I talk with, you know, in private settings, I talk with a lot of members of the church who are very frustrated. You know, there's a lot of tension there. And I try and hold a lot of space for that. And I could lead out of like, let's start a campaign to get this changed and this policy. You know, it's like, no, that's not what we're doing here, nor would that be helpful. You know, so hopefully that answers the question. We've got great relationship with the church, and I'm always straightforward with them. Like, the day you want this to stop, you just let me know. I'll let everybody know that you asked me to shut this down, and we'll move on. You know, that's fine. But I think there are things that leading saints can do that the church can't do, and people sometimes have a hard time believing that. But just the structure of the church, the purpose of the church, The politics of the church, the public relations, I mean, if the church funded and produced a podcast like Leading Saints, there would be newspaper articles about so-and-so said this on the church's podcast, right? there is strength in independent advocates like Leading Saints, like Scripture Central, like Morgan Foundation, North Star. And a lot of members don't realize that I'm just one of many, and I say I, I mean Leading Saints, is just one of many organizations surrounding the church that are trying to help the church and move their mission forward and things like that. So hopefully that answers the question.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, and I hope that, so again, my experience is that as you get in there and then you start listening to the content, right, it will become immediately apparent what the intention is and how it can be beneficial. I think being able to have those conversations in kind of non-threatening ways, but also admittedly, right, kind of outside of the thou shalt do this, You know, approach is also helpful, right? Because you get to kind of pick and choose. And we believe in following after good things, right? And the spirit will then kind of work on you. And as you educate yourself and expose yourself to different ideas and whatnot, then you can make your choice on how you want to incorporate what you've learned or what you've heard.

Kurt Francom:

Lillian says, pretty sure President Nielsen has listened to at least one episode, because I did interview President Nielsen's daughter Marjorie, and I would hope that she'd pass along the link, but we'll see.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

There we go. All it takes is one, right? That's right. Okay, so I want to get into, I guess, a question, and this is You have said, and I'm paraphrasing here, I'm not trying to, I'm not, it's not gotcha. It's not a gotcha question. I promise. You can try it. We'll see if I can work my way out.

Let's see. But, uh, let's see. Where did I, where's my question all of a sudden? Oh yeah. Okay. So in several episodes you, you have mentioned, right? Like we don't want to give the formula for how to implement XYZ concept. Right.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So I, um, But it always feels like I'm left waiting for, okay, well, what is it that you want to hear? And so maybe my question is, is a lot of this tends to evolve around implementing change, right? Or, you know, either changing your thought process or changing how you approach a problem, you know, changing culture is talked about a lot, right? So things of this nature. I'm interested, right, how do you go about, because now you're another foreign president again, right, for the second or maybe third time, who knows, right? I guess high priest group leader, you count that. So how do you go about implementing change now? You can, you know, the answer might just be like, oh, just go do it. But I'm also interested in hearing, how do you balance that with the principles of counseling with your counsels?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. So there's a few things that come to mind here. I see this come up a lot. individuals and trying to think what setting but the point being is that a lot of people want the five-step plan like okay like or and I've seen this in live settings where we'll have a guest a really dynamic guest speaker talking about some principle and someone will raise their hand and say wait wait wait what did you say like how did you phrase that question and they want like I just need to go to my bishop and tell me exactly what I should say, and I'll write it down here and I'll just go say it to him, right? And they're like, okay, well, then they'll tell him and do the best. And so the human nature is we want like the five-step plan. Just give us the roadmap and I'll go do it, right? However, one thing that I've learned so much, especially from Dan Duckworth and others is that Leadership, effective leadership comes from a place of character, of identity, of who you are, not necessarily from a tactic. And so I could tell you what to do. And even, and I do share those things, you know, in elders quorum, things that I've tried and do and, and you can go do them and like likely they'll work. However, you also need to figure out how, how can I develop myself as a person, as a character? How can I further my being so that when I show up, it doesn't necessarily matter what tactic it is, it's just the way I'm showing up that feeds into that I suddenly have a response to this problem or that problem, or I'm more likely to raise my hand in a meeting and disagree or try something new, even though it's likely to fall on its face, right? And so I know that's all very vague, and this is the tricky thing about leadership is it's not about tactics, even though they're fun to talk about. And so that's why I stress so much of the men's retreats that we do, or the Leading Saints retreats, and we're still trying to figure that out a little bit. And that's what we want to accomplish with some of these as we kind of go on tour. We don't want to create just a conference that people come and take notes, but a place where people can talk with one another and have an experience where they leave there and they're

changed as an individual, not just intellectually, right? And so it is fascinating. If anybody ever gets a chance to come to the Warrior Heart men's retreats we do, On paper, it shouldn't work. Like, I could show you the agenda, and this is partly why we don't show the agenda, is people look at me and they're like, that looks boring and stupid. It probably would be a waste of my time. I'm not going. But when they come, by the end of those three days, it is remarkable how they've changed in character, and they're ready to return home as different beings, not just smarter beings. Anyways. And then, oh, then talking about like culture change, maybe get me back on track with your question. But that was a caveat I wanted to answer.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, no, no. So yeah, so in terms of like how you do go about trying to implement some of these things, like you don't want the five step plan, right? So then how do you perhaps decide, okay, here's what I want to do. Yeah. Or here's here's my idea. But I have this idea. Versus, you know, counseling with my counsels. Unfortunately, not every idea that comes into our mind is a good one, right?

Kurt Francom:

And this, I maybe don't have like a polished answer for this, but we'll just see what comes out here. But this is sort of the journey I'm on with being an elders quorum president, right? I've been the color commentator guy on the podcast for so long when it comes to leadership. And now suddenly I'm on the court, I'm on the field and I've got to make that first down or whatever, right? Like it was so easy to talk principles and critique from the sidelines or from the radio booth, but now, is it actually gonna work, right? And I'm intrigued by it, and it's fun to do that. And so for the last three or four months, I've had my opportunity to do those things I've been preaching and wanting to do. And for the most part, I'd say it's been extremely successful, right? But now I'm to a point I'm thinking, okay, this has been the Kurt show, the Kurt Francom show for the last several months. How can I begin to loop in my counselors? And then once I loop in my counselors, how can I begin to loop in the whole as a quorum? Because right now, everybody up to this point, I feel like, has been along for the ride. This has been great. Keep doing it, Kurt. I love coming to Elders Quorum. I hear the sisters say, my husband talks about Elders Quorum and how much he's loving it. I'm like, great, we're doing something. But then two weeks, two, three weeks ago, whatever, I invited my counselor. I said, this lesson is yours. You go with it. Now, he was much more prepared because he had seen me model an effective core meeting up to that point. And he somewhat followed the same model, but tried some of his own things. And I was just like, great, this is wonderful. So now he's developing. So the culture is shifting. because I've modeled something, people have had an experience, they're more likely, they felt more safety to be like in the room and not sit towards the back saying, oh, this is getting weird, right? And so now as we're counseling together, I'm much more open to any ideas now that they've seen not only me succeed, but they've also seen me fail. Many parts of that I'm like, how that didn't really work, right? And we've talked about it. And so, um, as far as like shifting culture, I think there is, um, you know, to start with, there's this component of, you have to go, you have to find the edge of the culture and push on it and see how hard it pushes back. Right. Cause I could do something really crazy and be like, actually, we're going to hold Eldridge Corp



in a different building. And it's going to be on Wednesdays and we're going to eat ribs instead. And people would be like, what are you doing? Right. Like, um, And so, but you have to go to the edge of the culture and push on it and see how hard it pushbacks. And what you'll often find is it doesn't push back very far. In fact, that there's nothing behind it. And so you can take a step further and starting to change things. And, and I hate to say it's change for change sake, but there needs to be some type of disruption, a shock factor. Right. Um, and, and the elders in my quorum feel that when they, when they come, they feel this, Okay, we're not sitting in the lines and there's no one teacher. Okay, like I'm intrigued, what's gonna happen next? But now we're starting to get into a rhythm and a routine a little bit. But then I'm also doing a weekly gathering at my home every Thursday night. And that's sort of been a new component. I'm testing and trying some things out. So anyways, I don't know if I have a solid answer, but does that help or what follow up question goes in mind?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So I guess the, well, okay, so I guess my question would be then is, what makes a good college try, right? And versus like, okay, this is just gonna take a while, right, to kind of set in, right?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, because maybe you could try something and you feel like, oh, that didn't work or people,

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Almost going back to the Bishop Pope's episode, right? Which I have a different question on, but, you know, his, he kind of went through that process of like, hey, we just wanted different ideas. We're just going to throw these activities. And he mentioned like the cups, right? And he's like, nobody liked that. I, you know, come across really well. Didn't work, right? So it could be easy to be like, oh, well that didn't work. So therefore, you know, let's ditch the activity idea.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Versus like, I just have to find, like, this idea is good, just have to find the right ingredients to put in here.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, and I guess that's a little bit of my marketing background. I hear so many people, like I see a lot of online platforms, they'll ask, they'll survey their audience. Hey, do you think we should create swag? Or do you think we should do this or that? And I look at it and be like, why don't you do it and just see how they respond. Or if you make swag available and only two people buy it, just refund those two people and say, that didn't work, we're not doing swag,

right? And that is why Leading Saints really doesn't have swag. Nobody bought it. And so yeah, there's this thing of like, you're setting a culture of like, we're going to do something different, right? And in fact, I should have announced this, like, I'm breaking some rules. But what I'm doing, I'm not breaking rules, how I see it, I'm using the keys of authority I've been set apart with. There we go. And in elders quorum here in two weeks, I'm guest speakers going that's that's it. I'm having somebody come tell their story about recovering from sexual addiction. And that's it. And now, what about the general conference talk? We're not doing a general conference talk that week. But you're supposed to, I guess so, but they can release me, I guess. But I am in a cadence of like, we got to try something different to engage these men, because I know if that person comes and tells his story, there's four people with similar stories in the room buried in shame, who then begin to raise their hand and say, Wait a minute. How does this work? You mean there's hope for me, right? So, so yeah, to me, it's just, you just have to try some stuff. And you can't be afraid of that failure. And I just sort of played off a lot like, okay, that just didn't work. Or what feedback did you see? And oftentimes, they'll say, actually, Kurt, it did work. But here's one or two things we could adjust. I think we should keep doing it. I'm like, okay, that's where the power that counsel comes in, right? Because it gets you outside your, your own perspective.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So there you go. Yeah. So it is, I think, amazing that you even like having that idea of having a guest speaker is like breaking the rules. Like, but again, maybe things are just different in Richmond, Virginia. It is interesting that ultimately you're trying to do what you feel like is best for your quorum. And, you know, I think sometimes this is where leading faith, I think is valuable in the sense of, just being able to connect with other people's like, hey, I've tried this or, you know, these are things that I've done. And it's, it's okay to do that. I think, you know, with the ongoing restoration of the gospel of the church, right? We've seen some, hey, let's shake it up, right? Like, let's, you know, let's try a different approach. And so why wouldn't, you know, why, why would we be constrained?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Yeah, and I'll give you another example. So like I mentioned, every Thursday night, this is the sweet spot for elders quorum. Thursday night, 845. The young families, they put their kids to bed or they're near there. So the wives don't have a problem with the husband sneaking out. It's a little late, but like, that I get so much more of a response for Thursday night, 845, because tomorrow's Friday, I can be a little tired at work or whatever. And I invite men over to my house for about an hour and we get anywhere from, I don't know, seven to 15 men from the quorum to come. We have about 25 to 30 on Sundays in a quorum meeting. And so I tried some things. At first, we tried to watch this video series, but it's late. I felt like men were more interested in talking and socializing a little bit. So I thought, okay, I'm not going to do the movie every time. So I'll shift that. And then I just did one where there was no agenda and we just talked and then I did another one where a guy who's like super geeky about 3d printers and has like four printers and you know builds all sorts of cool stuff he brought all his stuff over and the guys were just like wow like asking questions oh I've done this and that like okay now we're doing something right

so you're just constantly trying different things and seeing what works, but I think the trap is when you try and just do what the last guy did. Like, well, the last guy did, you know, they had two set apart teachers and they would just trade off every, you know, every other elders quorum to teach. I'm like, nah, we're not doing that. And it's been, and we do conference talks to be clear, but what we do is we have, yeah, we have four people that come prepared to share about a conference talk and then we break up in four groups and have a small discussion with those four. those four facilitators. So we're not like totally off the reservation, but we're trying different things. You realize you have a lot of wiggle room in there to discover some remarkable things that shift culture for the better.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Absolutely. Honest. Excellent. Let's see. We, let's see, just to kind of wrap up, and I'm not sure, Kurt, I want to be mindful of your time.

Kurt Francom:

I've got time, so we can keep going, whatever.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Here we go. So then I will So Sam asks about added I don't know that I realized that your is God disappointed on you under you was that that was published under the leading saints label.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, so that is one of our long-term ideas or efforts is that we want to have like a publishing arm to leading saints. And so – and I've talked with people that does our book, like why don't you publish leadership books? And they don't really know why they don't. It is, again, it is sort of the sacred topic. Yeah, yeah, exactly. But I want to go into a desert book because, you know, you go into a church bookstore, they got the missionary section. Oh, you know, I got a missionary, look what's in here. They got the come follow me or Sunday school, you know, they got the doctrine, right? And so there needs to be a leadership section in there, especially in our lay leadership faith tradition. And so we want to kind of be the trailblazer of leadership books and even with the fact you look at so many dynamic leadership thinkers and authors from Liz Wiseman to Greg McKeown and Stephen M. R. Covey, the list goes on and on. And I would love to be able to approach, you know, Greg McKeown and say, okay, you wrote the Essentialism book, but what if we did it, what if we wrote a version for Latter-day Saints or for church leaders or, you know, those types of things? And, you know, they may be intrigued by that to say, you know, and usually when I interview these type of people, they're excited that I get to share my research in the context of the church I love. Like, yeah, absolutely. What can we do, right? And so, yeah, that book has got disappointed to me. It was technically published under the Leading Saints label. But that's why, right? Yes.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So then Sam's question then is, he wants more. Sounds like Sam wants more. And he's like, it took you three years to write this book. Anytime we can get it, like the next one in 18 months.

Kurt Francom:

Right, right, right, right. And that's that is my hope, actually, I'm hoping by fall of 2025, I'll release my next book, because I did learn a lot. And it shouldn't take quite as long as that book did. So the manuscript I'm working on the working title is Men in Elders Quorum. And I'm writing a book about the masculine experience in our faith. So which is deeply needed, because if you look at like the broader Christian World, there are like hundreds of books for men. in just the general Christian world. And there's, I don't know, maybe there's one or two about priesthood or something you could find out. I think Robert Millet has written a few books about priesthood or holders of the priesthood or something. But really, this is a gaping hole. And, you know, as I've talked about, that if we can figure out elders quorum, it would do more for a ward than fixing any other organization or improving any other organization. Um, that's, that's my belief anyway. So I'm going to put it on paper and see if I can argue that belief.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

So there we go. Okay. So it sounds like there is something, but I think you said to 2026 or what?

Kurt Francom:

No. So fall of 2025, I hope to release that.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Right. You'll have a Christmas present for next year. Right. That's my hope. That's my hope. So, um, okay. So let's see. Um, So the scriptures are full of what I would call, we probably could have handled that better situation, right? So from Moses and the rock, Joseph and 116 pages, Peter and the paying of the taxes, to the Martin and Willie Hancock companies, right? So why do we as modern leaders and congregants, for that matter, have sometimes weird standards. I don't want to say impossible, right? But we have a certain like, hey, you've got to be, you know, picture pixel perfect, right? Standards of leadership. Where do you where do you think that comes from? Where does it come from?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, that's a tough one. I hear individuals say things, and bless their hearts, I always try to be overly critical of those who've left the Church, and I try and empathize and understand those things, in the shortness of words, I just don't get it, where they'll say things like, well, you know, the church hid information, or they tried to control their message, or they lied to me. And if you go back to the 80s and 90s and study any organization, whether it's Ford, Walmart, you know, any, or the government, can we start there? The government of the United States, right? Any government, like everybody, And those early pre-internet times controlled their message because they could, right? Then that's part of marketing and things like that. And so during

those times, we got a lot of hyperbolic statements. or understandings of things. And I think it was from my interview with Joshua Coates from the B.H. Roberts Foundation. You know, he did this vast research about different demographics in the church and who's most likely to leave the church. And it's actually my demographic, the millennials, who are most likely to leave because they're caught between these two worlds where they were taught, kind of, they grew up learning in this very structured, formulated message of the gospel, such as follow the prophet, he knows the way or, you know, that's the way it's going to be. And then they grew up and then they, you know, sprout into adulthood during this time where internet and information was so available and messages are much more loosey goosey, you know, and so there's create some cognitive dissonance there they really wrestle with. And so I'm not surprised that my demographic the most likely to leave the church because of that. And so we get, you know, unfortunately there, you know, we start looking back on times of Brigham Young or Joseph Smith and been like, if they were Moses, why didn't they just know? And then I say, well, because Moses didn't know, like, look at Moses' journey, right? Like, and there is just beauty and people hate, like they, A lot of people, maybe who are more black and white, they have a hard time sitting with this, where, you know, Brigham Young is often the person who's thrown under the bus, which is completely unfair in my opinion. But God tossed Brigham Young the keys and says, you got the keys, drive the car, right? And he made some decisions, right? Now in my 2025 perspective, I don't like a lot of those decisions or opinions or doctrines that he ran with, but he had the keys. And to me, it's a beautiful, organic process that led us to where we are today, that we're a strong church. And of course, there's always a critique or, well, the current church should do this or that, right? To me, and I recognize going back to my interview with Jason Hunt, which is, you know, he talked about moral theories. For whatever reason, the way I'm wired, I'm just okay with that nuance. I can sit with it and be like, absolutely, Brigham Young was a prophet. Absolutely, Joseph Smith was a prophet. And I don't think they were evil people or dishonest people. But there's just a lot of nuance, and I'm totally okay with him creating things while he had the keys that were later corrected. Now, why didn't those guys in between correct it? I don't know, because they got thrown the keys too, and they said drive the car, right? I think there's a lot of empathy that comes from being in a leadership capacity when you realize, oh, so there isn't a scroll from heaven that just comes down in my bishop's office and tells me what to do, right? Nor should there be, because it's a beautiful, dynamic experience that develops the individual and develops the person that follow that individual, even though it's really messy. So I don't know, did I get off base at all?

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

No, it is interesting, right? So that idea of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ, I mean, I guess I go back to the handbook here, right? You know, it talks about like this is why we have callings right is to ultimately for us to become disciples and learn that process and you know, the Lord is decided for whatever reason and his infinite wisdom that line upon line was the way that he was going to go about it.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, this leads me to one of these topics I want to dive into and do some more research because I want to do a whole concept, a whole episode about this dynamic of the Pharisee because it seems like we almost have unwritten permission to throw the church leader under the bus because didn't Jesus do that? Right? Didn't he go in there and tell them, you know, those types of things, you know, like you better get on straight. He literally went into their area and flipped some tables. So I guess I should do that. I should go in. You're right. So there's sometimes this misunderstanding of what Christ was doing there, that he wasn't going after the Pharisee just because he was too orthodox. I think there was a deeper meaning there of establishing the new covenant, right? Now, we're not trying to establish a new covenant in modern times, so we have to really check ourselves before we become overly critical of church leaders, especially our prophets, seers, and revelators, because they have the keys that Jesus gave them, right? And I get there's like pharisaical moments, and I wrestle with those too, but I think we really have to check ourselves before we become too critical of church leaders, because yes, Christ was hard on the Pharisee, but I think there was a different dynamic going on there.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, and just looking at the church as a whole, right, and what it is in the modern day. I mean, it's beautiful, right? Yeah, it is beautiful. I'm happy to be a part of it. Okay, so I guess I'm not seeing any other questions in the chat. I have been super grateful that you've been able to take a little time and answer some of the ones that I posed. So I think we're gonna wrap up here with your permission, Kurt.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, well, you've passed your first round of auditions, so I would love to do this again, Carlos, and you've been a bishop for how long now? A year. Okay, I'll give you another six months, and then we need to have you on to the How I Lead segment, and I'd love to hear how that's going and what you're learning from that journey.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

Yeah, listen to Leading Saints, and that's pretty much it. Love it. And a lot of prayer, right? So as we kind of finish off here, I know you have kudos on the website, right? But Kurt, let me say, so from Richmond, Virginia, we appreciate what you're doing. We have a cheering section out this way. I know that there may not be too many of us that are engaged, but we'd like to increase that number. So we applaud your efforts and we hope that you keep doing what you're doing. We've been blessed, right, as a result. So we appreciate that. So we are looking forward to what's happening in 2025. We wish you and the team the best of luck. And now, should people want to get a hold of you, right? We talked about some of these ideas or, you know, now they're passionate and they're like, hey, see what Kurt's gonna do. And I have a book I wanna submit. No.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, I'd love to see it.

Carlos L. Chacon, Jr.:

How would you suggest folks get in contact with you? What's the best way to do so?

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, so definitely you can go to [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) slash contact, and that comes directly to my email inbox. One thing, like, I rarely, unless it's just some off-the-wall idea where I'm like, I don't think you're serious, I'm just gonna archive this email and pretend it didn't exist, but I will always respond to you. So if you didn't hear from me, I try and be very straightforward, just saying like, you know, I like the idea of we're just not heading in that direction or whatever. But never take a non-response as a no, like feel free to follow up again. We're still trying to navigate our administrative processes with emails and things. So I do read them, I do get them. So just try again, maybe wait a few weeks or a month or so, and then try again if you haven't heard back from me. But I would love to, and I also get the, I guess I should clarify, sometimes I get like, all right, Kurt, here I am, put me to work, and I'm like, I don't know where to put you to work. So, but maybe just send that, let's just keep talking and follow with me and as different projects come up, I can, I can put you on a project. And I've done that in the past. You know, there's someone who helps, you know, track down guests and make sure that they get on the podcast and things like that. Then she's just volunteering, just loves being involved with Leading Saints. So those do come up and people love them. And they're great experiences to be a part of this work, which is part of the greater work of establishing Zion and helping the mission of the church move forward. So yeah, just reach out and let's get the conversation going. 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 [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) and actually leave a comment on the episode page or reach out to us at [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) contact. Quick reminder, go watch Joseph Grenny's presentation on helping loved ones overcome addiction by going to [leadingsaints.org](http://leadingsaints.org) 14.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley:

It came as a result of the position of leadership which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the declaration was made concerning the only 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.