

Following in His Steps with Dave Noden

Season 2 | Episode 12

Opening

Josh Yates: Welcome friends to Sonlife everyday disciple makers podcast.

And I'm excited about today's conversation with Dave Noden and before we get there, Wayne, it's always great to have you in studio with me. And today's studio is a little bit different.

Wayne: Yeah Josh, I am excited to be in the studio.

And just so you guys know by studio, Josh means his dining room table, which is lovely by the way. Thank you.

Josh Yates: Yeah, we're, we're talking today with a friend who has deeply influenced my wife's side of the family our marriage, and even me before stepping into full-time ministry. And it kinda got me thinking about just, you know, who are the people who have influenced us and maybe how they've influenced just our perspective of following Jesus together.

And so, so Wayne, I love to just chat with you about who are maybe some of the people in your life that have influenced your followership of Jesus.

Wayne: Yeah, one guy that comes to mind his name is his name is Michael goes to our church. He's not the small group leader, but the small group, I've been a part of has met in his house for years.

And it runs through the school year. And, and when it's not the school year on Tuesday nights, he still has people his house has a potluck from five 30 until whenever people leave. And you know, it's not the traditional, this is how he's read the Bible. And this is how he's prayed, but just to see. True generosity.

He, you know, a lot of people say that, like everything I own belongs to God, right. I think they believed that. But Mike, michael lives that if, if there's somebody in need

like he doesn't have a ton of money, but in the last year, he's given away a vehicle because there was a family in church that needed a vehicle and he had an extra.

His home is always open. His snack drawer was always full and I leave most Tuesdays with a little bit of a stomachache, because there's just so much good food in and he's just happy to have people in his home, sharing everything. He has really using that to, to provide a place for us, to have community and to share God's love with others.

Josh Yates: That's great. You know, that's what we're passionate about. actually highlighting kind of the everyday disciple makers, people who may not be the, the point people have maybe written a book or. Maybe never even interviewed on this podcast. But people who are influencing others because they're, they're passionate about following the ways of Jesus.

And so that's kind of today's interview with, with Dave Noden and he and his wife, Darlene served 40 plus years in ministry. Most of that in Africa, with Africa Inland Mission. And even today serving as a. It kind of in their retirement community and Dave is in his eighties and his commitment to follow Jesus.

It's refreshing. So I hope you enjoy today's conversation with Dave Noden.

Conversation with Dave Noden

Josh Yates: Dave, I'm so excited to have you join on today's podcast. And one of the things I've noticed about you over the last 20 years, as you have invested into my life, is you go straight to the heart. And you ask these penetrating questions about how are you with Jesus. And so today now that you're the guest, I will ask this, that question.

What has kept you fresh? What has helped you stay in ministry all of these years?

Dave Noden: I think that would be the things that becomes very, very important to both of us is something that we started out with many, many years ago was a sense that God was leading our in our lives. When we were married. 61 years ago, we had written over our heads in large banner United for Service.

And that was one of the things that has been the guiding principle of our lives that we've worked together in Christian service. And from the very beginning, when we started working in churches, And in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, we worked as youth pastor there and came down to Eastern Idaho. That has been the guiding principle and that our own lives.

And we prayed together. We sought the Lord's will together. We worked together to make sure that what we did, we did together. And that's what also brought us in and gave us the steps, led us to Africa. But one of the things I think is. We used a little word. Now we just by wife and I just finished a little book.

We call it Nyayo. N Y a Y oh, nyayo. It's a fight. It's a Kiswahili. But it means following in his steps. And that's the name that's you might say that's the banner over, which we feel our lives have been. Following his steps as he's gave them, as he put them in front of us, we followed the steps that he gave. And we feel very confident about that over the years, we look back to that and realize that that has been a tremendous truths that we have followed all these years, and we're very grateful for it.

And that takes us all the way back to the years that we've worked at local churches before we went to Africa. And then when we went to Africa with that sense of working together in the same place, doing the same kind of work, because we were both teaching. We talked at the Illinois state. I mean, we taught in Bloomington right before we went to Africa and then we taught there, but then we got into local churches as well.

And I think that that's one of the things that really stirred us more and getting involved in the end, the local church, but we did it together and we made sure that what we did, we did together.

Josh Yates: Yeah. That's one thing that, that I think drew me to you and Darlene, as a, as a young young man, and I'm looking at what does a future marriage look like?

What's the future of ministry look like, and, and Dave, you and Darlene had a deep influence on, on Katie and my wife's family. And. And it's been a joy to see you influence the plan that as well as my own life, as a young stepping into ministry 25 years ago.

And has you guys served together that partnership and that heartbeat of saying, Hey, we want to follow in his steps.

And so why don't you take me to those? Some of those early years of ministry, you guys were one of the, if I understand when the last missionaries that I know that went over to Africa on, on a ship. And so how, how, how long did it take you to get to Africa? It is. Tell us some of those, maybe this little stories and ministry, background experiences in your ministry and Mozambique.

Dave Noden: We were one of the rare individuals that decided to go by boat. They gave us that option. We were told this is the, is the little miracle in our lives too. We were told in January, 1967. And if we wanted to go to Africa at all, we had to pick a day. If we really wanted, if we really meant anything, we had to pick a day.

So in January, 1967, we picked the date July 15, that we would be on the ship going to Africa. Now that was absolutely crazy. And in fact, it's sometimes been considered a bit foolish. In April we got a telegram saying that there was a. And I said, I wrote back and I said, no, I'm right in the midst of my, my dissertation for my master's degree, I can not do that.

Darlene was teaching and I said, you're going to have to give us something else. They wrote back about two weeks later and said, we've got a ship bound for Africa on July 14. Okay, well, you take that one. And I said, yes, I will. All said and done. We arrived on that ship on the 14th. It rain. They could not fill it.

We left on the 15th when we, when we go back to that event and realized God was that specific in answering prayer in our lives. We could not doubt his presence. And neither could read out his hand that this was the direction that God had for us. It wasn't easy. It was very, very tough. Darling was pregnant.

She was five months pregnant by that time. And to go out by boat that took five, five weeks. Around the cause we could not go through the Suez canal at that time because of the war, we had to go around the south South Africa. It took us a long.

And it was five weeks when we arrived in the Mombasa at that time, that that was another one of those very serious tests because we got a letter say, no one will be there to meet you.

You just simply get on a train and come to Nairobi whenever you can. And that's 400 kilometers away. And I didn't even know Kiswahili I'm. And we had, we had goods and we had a pregnant wife and I leaned on the Lord. I went up on the top of the ship that booked that night and I left. I stayed there and I prayed that the Lord would guide our steps.

He brought us there. It's his responsibility to get us where we're supposed to be. It was the very next morning that we woke up and we heard our voices, or we're names being called for the dock. We looked down and we saw four special missionaries who cleared all of her goods, who got the tickets on the train.

And we were on the train that night and we arrived in Nairobi. And I, those, those kinds of confirmations that God was there at that point, leading where we needed to be. And he guided us through that assignment of teaching in a, in a big, big boys school at that point. Boy, was that a challenge? I'm glad we had experiences in teaching in the U S but then that was the challenge that got us there.

We were there for just a short time, but two years and a half, then they transferred us to a large girls school. That we were under the Kenyan government working at that

particular time. And it was very important to stay with. And we had a lot of freedom and we taught all of the Bible in their classes as well.

So the Lord gave us a lot of freedom and gave us a lot of opportunities. And we had every single conceivable kind of group that you can imagine in the schools. And. Well, I could go on.

Josh Yates: Yes, I can. I'm I'm pulling back memories, all these stories that I've heard you tell over the years. And, but one of the things that fascinated me, Dave is in terms of your leadership is just kind of what you described is just leaning and waiting on the Lord and trusting him for the next steps.

Okay. And so as you look back over your years of ministry there whether it be in Africa or here state side, has there been any kind of, you know, mountaintop pieces where you go? That was a defining moment when, when we were waiting and we, we heard from God and he gave us the assignments for the next, the, the next outpost, so to speak.

And what are some of those mountain, top pieces that you can, that you can share?

Dave Noden: You know, I think it's made up of so many, many little pieces that define who God has been in our lives. It's not been one of the largest ones. I think one of the biggest tests I ever had was to come back. After 20 years in east Africa, teaching and working, and actually was a, did a lot of pastoral ministry in a local church as well.

And performing all kinds of interesting weddings, and what have you. I just, I had found that to be very, very rewarding. But to come back to the United States was very challenging to us because I did not have any definition of any kind of ministry here. And when I did arrive in New York, I went through, you might say two full years of depression.

I was tremendously depressed. I had no idea what God had in mind. I thought this very, very much. Until one afternoon, my wife and I both are sitting down, we were talking about this issue and I was working this thing through a, my mind because I had to define for the first time. That God was present where I was not where I had been.

Yes. Kenya was a great place. God was there. He made sure that he was there. He showed himself there and there was a lot of that demand is there, but was he in New York. And that was the question. Was he there? And I had to redefine the position in place of God in my life at that point. And that was so hard. And finally, after it was dealt with, I had our freedom that I had never had before.

But it, you had that it's a crisis moment. You might say where God had, did redefine his presence with me. My presence was God, not one idea. I was very happy with what I did. In fact, in some respects, I was defining myself by what I did rather than who God was. And I think he had to remind me once again, I'm he is the one not me.

He is the one that had to be defined in my life. So from that point on, it made a big difference, in fact, so much. So the Lord confirmed it, that every single supporter that we had raised their support to do a work in the United States. That was a confirmation and,

Josh Yates: sure. Yeah. And then when you came back to the states, most of your ministry then shifted towards kind of recruitment and traveling and, and going to college campuses and working with younger leaders.

And as you were spending time, With future candidates. You know, what, what were the things that you're looking for? You know someone who's been in ministry for a long time kind of looked for the it factor, so to speak, how do you know, okay, this couple or this individual is going to do well on mission field and pursuing them and investing into them, coming alongside them.

So what are some of the things you and Darlene kind of saw come to the surface as you spend time with young college students around, around the nation.

Dave Noden: There's one thing I've had was I was thinking about that earlier. It was the one thing that made a big difference in the way we, when we talked with the young people, we were looking for the position of Jesus in their life.

Nothing else. I don't care what major you were. I don't care. What skill you had, where does Jesus fit into your life? Because it is the Jesus factor that holds you in your assignment. It's not your profession. Your profession could give up on you. You can have, you can be replaced by somebody else. You can get sick or whatever, but if

Christ is the center of your assignment, you'll stay there because he's the one who called you there.

And that was the thing that we found missing in so many of our interviews. Because it's what I can do. And then such and such a context. Hmm. I'm not interested in what you can do so much as can you do it through Jesus Christ as your focus? Because if you don't have that focus, you will leave. I call that burnout.

You will not burn out if you have that focus, but you will burn out if you don't. And that's what, that was the one that was the. Another factors, but that was one of the major factors, particularly on the college campus, the older adults, we looked at something else, but the w w we looked at several other things, but particularly on the college campus, and we interviewed something like 400 kids a year.

And in that, those interviews, that's what we look for. Are you Christ focused or are you professionally focused? Where are you.

Josh Yates: So Dave, it was, it was 22 years ago. And I don't want to make this podcast about kinda my experience cause But it was in a parking lot of cracker barrel. You were the last conversation I had and I was moving, taking my very first ministry assignment in Washington.

I was packing up all the little earthly belongings I had in Illinois and had a small little moving truck. And it was the last breakfast at cracker barrel. And that's exact message you gave me. You said, Josh, I don't care about this assignment. I care more about is Christ in you, whereas Christ in the middle of this, and that's not what you do, but it's who you are in Christ.

And so it was 2,500 miles driving across country and this moving truck that had no radio, nothing into it. And I just sat for three and a half days. Letting that sink into my heart. And so you planted a significant seed in my life. And so for that message, I thank you.

Dave Noden: Thank you. I really appreciate that because I've seen it.

I see it. So keenly adults, families. I asked many times that we would ask families, why are you going, what did I need to go to Africa? Well, I'm a doctor. Well, I'm a pilot. I said, I don't really care what you are. It doesn't matter what you are. Are you really

going for the right motive? Is Christ there? Is he giving you a passion for him to do your work?

There was one pilot out in California. I'll give you a brief one illustration briefly one time out in California, he was a missionary kid. He called me up and said, I want to go out as a missionary. I said to him, Jeff, do you really want to go? He said, yeah, I do. I'm ready to go tomorrow, said, Jeff, you don't sound very passionate.

You sound got all, like, you're interested in doing anything but piloting . And I said, until you get that passion beyond the piloting, you're not going to go anywhere. I'll guarantee you. And he didn't for six or eight months. And finally he called me almost weeping on the phone and he said, I found it. I found it.

And finally his wife and children by now and spent years on. Doing the work properly because Christ was the center of their family. That's what's missing. It's got to be there. And if it doesn't, you'll pack up and quit. I know you will. Now there are the reasons of course health and everything else goes along with that.

But so often it's the lack of focus on who else, who brought you there, who took you to Africa? And that's the one we'll keep you there.

Josh Yates: Yeah, I love your, your resilience and even stamina in ministry, as you are even currently, God has a released you from another ministry assignment. He thought you were retired a couple of years ago, and then you, you moved into a retirement community. And then what happened next in terms of God's new assignment for you, tell us a little bit kind of what's current in your life.

Dave Noden: Well, one of the things that I have always said that we're always under assignment. As a believer in Christ, we are always under assignment. We're never out from under, as an assignment for Christ. Never, regardless of how long I live, I will always have that assignment. So when we came down here, that's what we prayed about.

We said, Lord, if we're under assignment, what is the assignment you have for us? And almost immediately over here in the chapel, we were met by the administrator and said, look, we've, we've have a chapel here. The room is here. It's got all the pews in it. It's got pulpit and everything in it, but we've not had any chapel since this building was made, built because we've had nobody to do it.

I said, okay, Let us, let us think about it and pray about it. And we'll give you an answer within a couple of days. And we've taken that over and for the last, a little more than five years now, we've had that chapel every Sunday. And I just, no, no, Josh we're under assignment and I pray that we will always remember that, that we are never out from under assignment because we're his, we don't belong to ourselves.

And I, I pray that from my own life, because there are things I want to do. That I have to remember. Lord, you've got first, it's your agenda first? And I, I, you know, that's always a little tension between me and God sometimes

Oh that's for sure.

Josh Yates: So over the years of ministry Dave I want to, I want to camp on this a little bit more is what, what are the things I've kept you and Darlene just healthy vibrant in your walk with Christ. I mean, I get that. Yeah. When a Christ central, but how do you fan that flame over the years and how do you keep that perseverance to say, God, I, I, I want to serve you even in this assignment to you, but it's not my own, like you say, I'm wrestling with God and wrestling with this, but can you let us maybe a little bit more in to just hi, how are you preserve that over the years?

Dave Noden: And one thing that we'd have found to be very true since, especially since we've come down here, we meet the Lord every morning together. We have a long worship time together every morning. Where we, we meet him with the scripture and we talk about that and discuss it together. We, we feel we both of us feel tremendously in harmony.

With our thoughts about Christ's presence in our home and Christ presence in our work. And we want that to always be because we want our home to reflect him and we want our lives to reflect him. In order to do that you've got to get into the word so that you reflect him, you don't know who he is unless you spend time there.

And that's what we try to say in the chapter. You know, if you want to really reflect Christ, you've got to spend time there and find out what else, what is like, and that's what we pray for so much.

So we spend that time every, every single morning spending that time praying together, and then making sure that we end the day with prayer together as well.

And that way I think it begins to, it keeps us focused where we need to be. Otherwise both of us could be very distracted with things if we're not careful. And I think that's one of the, that's one of the things that keeps us focused.

Josh Yates: Yeah, I think there's beauty in that simplicity, Dave, I think don't we do, we kind of complicate that or we try to, we, we start looking at the world around us and we start to.

Whether it be, be on one side of this conversation or this side of politics or this type of things and environment, which really we're living in, you know, that simplicity of Christ being central is obviously it's evident in your life, but what would you say to younger leaders, younger people who are just struggling with the context which we're living in and how do we keep Christ the main thing.

Dave Noden: A lot of prayer, Josh, I don't know anything easier than that. Anything harder than that, if you do not contain, if you do not maintain a relationship with him, there's not much else that's going to do it because there's nothing else out there that's going to help you be focused on Christ. Nothing. That's where it has to begin.

It's not, we both of us really have to think very carefully that we, we can't focus on what we do. We've got to be careful that we don't focus on what we do. If we do that can easily be become the reason why I identify who I am. I do it because I am this. No, I am a follower of Christ. Then I do, because he tells me I'm under assignment.

And if that is made clear to both of us, every the beginning of every day, then we opened the door, front door, we walk out and we do that. And that's what we're praying for because we, we know how easy it is for us to become, and I don't, I know that I, you know, maybe three right now and I, I can be dull in many ways, forgetful and everything else.

But I'm asking the Lord every day to keep us sharp. You know, one of the things that really hit me was last Sunday, I was speaking on faith, whether it's a great faith or whether it's a little faith and it's not built on quantity, it's built on believing God's word.

Do we believe is truth? If you simply believe it, you've got great things. If you believe it or not. That's a little faith. So with this, my chapel talk last Sunday, I don't know who was blessed me or those. Okay.

That's where it was. And I am very, very grateful for just the reminder that by the Spirit of God, that that was the thing that really became very clear to us. I want great faith, but it comes simply by believing his truth and walking in that truth. And I want to do that every day if I possibly can and not be distracted from it.

Josh Yates: Yeah. Dave, is there any thing on your heart as you look at, you know, ministry leaders today, as you, as you kind of look back over your years of ministry and service, That you wish to say something on your heart that you're like, wow, I think you've already said enough. I think you've already, what you've said is powerful.

So I just want to give an opportunity if there's anything else that can kind of squeeze the sponge. So to speak of your years of ministry experience,

Dave Noden: There's one verse that comes to my mind. It comes to often to us. It's a very simple one. We know it very well, whether we practice it or not is the other question, but it's very simple.

I will instruct you, I will teach you in the way that you should go and I will guide you with my eye upon you. I have to believe that I have to believe that God is instructing me for today. If I believe that, and that is the truth that I'm following, that I will accomplish his will today. What is his will?

His will is simply taking one step at a time. It's not a big program as well as not a big program. It's simply one little step every day toward what he sees as his will. And so often I'll get mine in there and I'll get all kinds of other things in there, but it's just simply taking one at a time and allowing him to instruct me and teach me.

But I have to spend time there though. I've got to spend time there. And in our culture today, we have a problem spending time there. We've got so many distractions anymore that we don't have any idea what it means to be quiet, and just get along with God and let God talk to me and let his will let him tell me what to do.

We wait upon everybody else to tell me what to do, but we don't wait upon him to tell me what to do. And that's hard, Josh. I've never found that easy. I've never found that easy, but it that's where it has to be. And I look at young people today and I say, if you're going to lead, make sure you're following.

Make sure you're following. If you're not following, you're not leading. You got to be a follower first. You got to get behind him and then nyayo following in his steps. He'll show. That's it, it's simple. It's not complex. It's not complex. It's nothing, there's no big miraculous stuff here. It's just a simple, old stuff that you've known and I've known all our lives.

You know, Lord just helped me to put it where it belongs in my life and believe it, you know, Anyway.

Josh Yates: Well, Dave, you you've dropped so many just practical and timely insights to the wisdom of the heart of a followership after Christ. And so we have many younger leaders that we're trying to come alongside and encourage. And so I'd like to end our podcast maybe a little bit different than we've done maybe in the past is I like to ask you just to pray a prayer of blessing over our listeners.

And so would you just wrap up our time at a word of prayer?

Dave Noden: Oh Lord, we thank you. That you're the one who listens. You know our hearts very well. We thank you Lord, for your precious grace to us every day, guiding our steps, seeking us. Oh Lord, help us to seek you. Lord, we thank you for your precious word. You've made it very clear. Those who know your name, put their trust in you.

You never forsake those who seek you. Lord, we pray that we'll be always seekers. Many times we go after our professional fields, many times the Lord we we seek those things that are from people's advice around us, but oh God, we pray that we may not forget. And we seek you first that you must be the one who comes and comes into our lives and hearts first.

We seek to do your will first. And then you will guide us according to the purposes of your will and the way that you train us and the things that you give to us to do, but whatever you give us to do, as I pray Lord for these young leaders that Josh works with all the time oh Lord, may they not lose the fact that they belong to you first. They are under your assignment from you first.

And then they were, are to use the gifts that you give to them, to communicate you. Oh God give them like, give them a God focused first so that they know you. And then from that seek continued to seek you and to seek showing you through

everything they do. Thank you for these moments. And I pray, oh God, for your blessing upon not only what they do, but the young men and young women that they teach that they work with, that they will see you in them.

And then they will see the value. Of having you first in their lives or thank you for these moments and thank you for your loving grace in Jesus name. Amen

Closing

Wayne: Josh it was a really cool just to be part of that conversation to watch you and Dave reconnect. And more than an interview, more than a conversation for a podcast, just to see you connecting with somebody who's had that influence in your life.

So that was, that was really neat. And something, something you said kind of early was that. Temptation to define myself by what I did and not define myself by who God is.

I think in ministry, in life, it's so easy to slip into wanting to perform, to do good enough, to be enough for, for God, to be happy with it's for God, to smile upon us.

But, but I'm not defined by my ministry failures or by my ministry successes, but I'm defined because, because I'm God's child and he loves. So that was just always such a good reminder to focus my identity on where that identity comes from.

Josh Yates: Yeah. I think it was so many pressure points and things around us that we were trying to build, you know, our ministry influence and what are the voices we're listening to.

Right. Listen to the voice of the father and, and loved days reminders like, you know how you spend time with Jesus. And I think the, the impact of my life really he cost talked about the very beginning is the idea. He and his wife, Darlene, that they they've been working in ministry together.

And the kind of banner over that is that they're, they're following in his steps. And so their ministry partnership, I mean really as a couple has been has really been a model for, for Katie and I, as we look at our marriage, how, how, how do we do ministry and life together, but as well as how do we pursue Jesus together in our marriage?

And so Dave and Arlene, no, I haven't been a ministry example for us, but as well as a marriage examples, what it was a marriage, a healthy marriage and ministry that is still vibrant and still saying, God, we want to serve you. And even in these, these, this final

assignment who knows where, or God's still has him like, Hey, we're willing to serve you even.

You know, they didn't plan to become a chaplain and then this and this, this adult community that has moved in, right. And just their influence automatically they're saying, God, this is where you have us. We'll, we'll be faithfully obey. And so there are radical obedience. The call and finishing strong has been a huge example.

Wayne: Yeah, that's that's so, so good. And I think you guys so much for checking out the episode today. If you have any input, any feedback, you can send us an email at podcast at Sonlife dot com. We'd love a rating or review wherever you listen to your podcasts that helps other people to learn about our podcast and join in on our conversations. So that's what we have for you this week. And now here's our disciple making moment.

Disciple Making Moment

Val O'Brien: Hi everyone, I'm Val O'Brien area coordinator in Cleveland, Ohio, and this is my disciple making moment. Sometimes we just need to ask for help, you know, as ministry leaders, we get to be the keeper of people's secrets and that's a really high and sacred honor that we have. It really is. And we need to do everything that we can to protect that to protect that trust in that way.

But sometimes we just need to ask for help either because the burden that we are bearing is just too heavy. Or if we just genuinely don't know what the next step is.

I've been doing ministry for over a decade now and student ministry at that. So in like student ministry, dog years, that's like, I don't know, 300 but not too long ago, just to just a couple of weeks ago, there's a young woman I was working with and I genuinely was talking to her about a situation and just didn't know where to go with it or where to counsel her, how to move her along.

I was really torn up about it. I was praying about it. I was asking the Lord what I needed to do. Just didn't feel like I had a lot of clarity. And so I reached out to a friend of mine.

Who's the wife of someone I've done ministry with a long time ago. She lives a couple cities over. She has zero connection at all whatsoever with the ministry that I'm involved in. Literally knows no one. And I texted her and said, Hey, can I meet up with you? Can we go for a walk? I just have a situation that I would just love to hear your, your thoughts on and your input on.

And I left that conversation with her I'm feeling so incredibly blessed. Not only was she able to give me some really good insight and how to deal with it, but just feeling so thankful for the body of Christ and the beauty of how God made us to need each other and to depend on each other.

A ministry in this way, man, it really is. A team sport and no matter what church we're part of our ministry we need to have this bigger perspective that we are pulling in the

same direction towards Jesus, towards the gospel of Jesus Christ. And so who are those people in your life who you can reach out to who can help you when you need it.

You know, this just the tip to leave you with is if you do have somebody like that in your life, if you do have somebody who's just removed from your sphere of ministry, from your town, even from, you know, the, your friends, the people you rub shoulders with that really loves Jesus and knows ministry and is wise, if you do already have that person in your life pursue.

Maintain that relationship, maybe text him today, send him a phone call, set up lunch. Maybe you haven't seen him for the last year and a half. Set it up, pursue that relationship. Don't let it slide. It's really valuable. It's a really precious gift. And if you don't have people like that in your life pursue that, pursue that in a really intentional way.

Maybe it's somebody that you met at a conference. Maybe it's an old college friend or someone from seminary who's really following Jesus and you can kind of reconnect with, maybe you need to say yes to go to that networking group. That's always sending you emails about going and see who you kind of connect with there and strike up a friendship with them and be a resource to each other of prayer of encouragement of help when you need it.

But do you think. Because the body of Christ is wide, and we can learn to lean on each other too, as we all together lean on the spirit and on the word of God in this task that we've been given.