

Trusting in Transition with Micah Foster

Season 2 | Episode 16

Opening

Wayne: Welcome friends to the Sonlife everyday disciple makers podcast. Josh. It's so good to be with you in the studio today.

Josh Yates: Wayne it's always fun to catch up with you and hearing about your life and what's going on in your world.

Wayne: Yeah, it's a hoot and I love that. We get to get to have these conversations that we get to have for the podcast. We get to talk some really cool people, hear their stories. And I was wondering Josh, if you could sit down and have a conversation for our podcast with, with anybody out of the Christmas story in scripture, except maybe Jesus, because he's a baby.

Right? So besides baby Jesus, who would you want to sit down with and have a conversation for the podcast?

Josh Yates: Yeah, that's a great, that's a great question. Who would, I want to have a podcast interview with. The Christmas story. I have a good friend in a way he always talks about entering into, of entering into the narrative that we enter into the scriptures and place ourselves there. What would we see? What would we feel?

What would we be smelled? What would we taste and kind of entering in. And, and the one that when I think of the nativity story, I think is super fascinating that God and his, his glory is revealed in angels come and they praise God to the S the shepherds, I think shepherds would have a lot of stories to tell. And I'd want to just hear what it was going on that night when they, when they saw these heavenly hosts coming before them and, and the fear they must have had and the stories they were tell from years and generations from that moment.

So I think the shepherds would have some, some compelling stories to tell. What about you, Wayne? Who would you want to interview?

Wayne: Yeah. And, and, and this I think I would go with what those Wiseman. Now I understand that it could have been up to two years before they were actually with baby Jesus, toddler, Jesus, as it were. They probably weren't there at the, at the manger scene. But I feel like it'd be really cool to just ask them questions because they knew that it was revealed to them that they were going to see the king of the Jews.

But did they know like how much of God's plan did they know? They knew enough that they left, where they were and traveled from what I've seen in movies, a really long way to be there. You know, they gave up a significant chunk of their life, used a bunch of their wealth and, and travel to give these magnificent gifts to, to a baby.

Like what, what did they know? And what were they just trusting based on what they knew, where they'd make that trip and lay down, just extravagant gifts. I mean, who, who gives a baby gold,

Josh Yates: or myrrh for that matter.

Wayne: right? Those aren't, those are the things that most babies are looking for. You know, even, even on my kids, like fifth birthday, I'm not getting them or,

Josh Yates: Right.

Wayne: But these guys brought extravagant gifts and traveled so far to worship the newborn king,

Josh Yates: Yeah, I w it would be very fascinating to hear their stories and what how do they know they're going in the right direction and how they know they are bringing those gifts was a very specific gifts to seemed very

unusual gifts. And you know, there may be able to interpret and understand what was going on there.

And that, that, that is a very fascinating part of the, of the story. Absolutely.

Wayne: Do you think that Joseph and Mary registers at babies R us for like gold and frankincense and myrrh? Or how

Josh Yates: This is what I need. Yeah.

Wayne: All right, this is, these are diapers. You know, this gold.

Well, Josh, we couldn't get, we couldn't get the shepherds. I mean, think of the Wiseman for this week, but this week we have a conversation with my good friend, Micah Foster, he's a church planter.

He's walking through some seasons of transition in his ministry. So I would love our listeners to check out this conversation with Micah Foster.

Micah Foster

Wayne: Hey, Micah, it's so good to be able to talk to you today.

How are you doing, man?

Micah Foster: I'm doing well, Wayne, thanks for having me on the podcast.

Wayne: Yeah, it is so great to have you. Micah it is actually the only person from a YouTube like learning group of pastors that I've met in person. I had a chance to drive an hour and a half each way early in the morning when our youth was on a missions trip and got to have coffee and hear stories with Micah.

So it's just, it's really cool to be able to catch up and talk to you today, man.

Micah Foster: Yeah.

Wayne: So the first thing I'd love to ask you about is you, for the last many years have been a church planter. And can you just give us a kind of a brief history of your journey in church planting and what that has been like?

Micah Foster: Yeah, I will try to keep this short for you, but basically my wife and I felt a call with a couple of friends to plant a church and we thought that was going to be in San Francisco. Ended up that that was not where it was going to be. And then we thought it was gonna be somewhere around the North Bay, like above San Francisco or in the outer line communities of the Bay Area.

It turns out that's not where it was going to be. Because there was one instance, there was one kind of moment sort of a tell loss of a moment that God pointed our hearts back to our hometown, Fresno, California. So we eventually, after many years of wrestling with this concept many, you know, weekly prayer meetings with another couple of friends of ours that are best friends, really that, that felt like we should do this.

We ended up moving back to Fresno from Santa Rosa, California to plant a church like the one we were a part of in Santa Rosa. The one in Santa Rosa called new vintage church. Love it. And, and really felt like this community that we grew up in needed, something like that. A church really patterned after a North Point Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia with Andy Stanley and that whole crew.

And so we were part of their network. And so we moved back back to start this thing and and it took us about a year to actually start having services. So we started with small groups and, you know, had a great time with that. Just started at homes, having, having these groups. And then we eventually were like, okay, we need to start building to Sunday services.

We had some Sunday night services, some previews had, had a really great time. Had a few transitions during our time in church planting in terms of location because as you know, when you're church planning, you're

generally portable, unless you kind of utilize a building from someone else, that'll let you usually on a Sunday night, or if you partner with a, like a Seventh Day Adventist Church, maybe they'll let you have Sunday morning.

Cause they're there Saturday night or whatever. But we chose not a traditional church setting because we were trying to reach unchurched people in the community. And we felt like if we really wanted to reach on church people, we should probably not look like every church in terms of just where we meet maybe someplace neutral, neutral ground.

So we ended up being in a veterans Memorial building, which is actually a fantastic facility. In a really cool part of town, and really enjoyed our time there, but then prices raised over time and we weren't able to afford that new price. They got a new CEO and raised it to market rate instead of giving us a stupid deal of \$650 a month.

And so we're like, well, we gotta redo this. So we ended up in a school and then we ended up finding a little spot, the lease for a while. And there's something about going from portable to semi-permanent, you know, where you don't have to set up and tear down. There's a sort of it's hard to maintain the same level of energy and passion from people when they've been doing this thing that you can see it building every week and you can see like the construction of, of the events.

And then when you go into a location where it's just set up for you, there's a tendency to kind of relax. And that's what happened a little bit. And we were, it was, it was a great time for us, except we lost some energy and some momentum in that. So we went back to that first place. We raised some, we told everybody, Hey, listen, we want to go back to our first place.

We feel like that's really where we should be raised that, went back there for a couple of years. And then what happened? COVID hit just like, you know, every, every church in America that, that. Recognizes that COVID hit, COVID hit. And so the facility kicked everybody out, said, we're closing. You know,

we went online, we went totally online for, I want to say it was like a year and a half.

We had a couple of outdoor events at some parks. You know, some of our small groups stuff. But really that really kind of shrunk us to a real committed core. And then a lot of our outer lying people who, who sort of popped in and out. And over that period of time, man we saw a lot of great things.

God did a lot of amazing things. We felt a strong call to this. Like there's a specific moment, or I felt, felt this call, but that, at the same time of all this happening, we had a side business that we call Dream Support, which is really a virtual assistant agency where we match virtual assistants who can help busy entrepreneurs and leaders kind of get dig out of the weeds of business.

So they can get their time in life back with that service. And so we had the, it was very side, like very side hustle from 2018 until the pandemic, when the pandemic hit. Like people started asking for that service a lot more.

Wayne: Yeah.

Micah Foster: And so I found my time actually being taken more by the side business, then my normal job. Which was the pastor of this church. And at the same time, I felt like God was giving me a lot of opportunity to speak into the lives of these entrepreneurs and business owners and people, CEOs, and people that I would never have access to because they weren't in our community. A lot of them are on the east coast.

Found, just having really great, interesting conversations with people you know, and, and feeling like that was a ministry.

And so at the same time, we also recognize there was another church in our hometown called Prodigal Church that was doing exactly what we were trying to do. And they were like a year younger than us, but bigger than us

and having a little more momentum. They were able to do some like outdoor services through the pandemic and all that kind of stuff.

They were able to actually capitalize on, on this period of time. And I don't, I don't know that they actually grew their in like number, but they definitely came out the other side stronger. Then, then they went into it. And so I formed a friendship with this pastor. I knew this pastor from like high school.

We began to go to coffee and talking about, Hey, this is what I'm experiencing is what you're experiencing this, these we're on mission together, really. We're doing, we're trying to do the same thing. And I was just like, man, I just feel like maybe I just need to bring everybody I can to your church and shut our's down.

And combined resources and combined volunteer groups. And we were really strong on systems and processes. That's, I'm kind of a systems guy, like I get that. We once had a, a guest coach. I had a coach of mine. And and hanging out, like on our first year anniversary, he came to our service and he goes, you guys are the smallest megachurch no one's ever heard of.

And I was like, what do you mean? He goes, you guys, if you guys had a lot of people in the building, this would be so amazing, but you struggle to get critical mass for those systems to matter. So. What we were super strong on this other church struggled a little bit with. And so I felt like man, they can get people in the room.

We know what to do with them once they get there. Not that they don't, but I'm just saying we can help them with some of their systems. And so if we could just come be volunteers at their church surrender, like the leadership positions. Infuse our resources whatever we have, you know, infuse those, whether it be people or financial, whatever into what they're doing.

And then that also releases me to pursue this business thing, grow that as a ministry as well. I just feel like maybe that's, that is the next step. And so

some people would look at that and be like, well, you abandoned your call or you abandoned this thing that God put on your heart. And I look at it as.

God, doesn't usually call us into one thing for forever.

Wayne: Right,

Micah Foster: He, he uses things as steps to help us take a next step or another step. And for a season, the church that we created served a really specific and powerful purpose in our community and its season is over and it's okay. And that's that doesn't mean you know, when I look at what has happened and how we've been shutting down, it takes a while to shut down a church.

I don't know if you know that, but there's a lot to it. There's legal stuff. There's assets you got to get rid of. There's proper ways to disperse those to other nonprofits and things. Cause you can't take it yourself. You know, there's proper ways to do all that and it's a process.

And so our board, like we talked through it, they said, you know what, it seems like this is really. You know, they're, they're like, I was wondering what we were going to do. This seems like a good step forward. And so they were gracious and they said, we will, we, we don't wanna, we don't want your family to suffer. And you've done a lot. You've taken a lot of sacrifices. So we want to make sure that you're compensated.

So they said the church will pay you through the end of the year. And then and allow you a runway to build the business also so that you can kind fill that income gap. And then after the year ends 2021, we'll gather all of the money left and we'll write a big check to this new church and be like, here you go.

And I just love the idea that we get to come in there and be like, volunteers who already get it. Volunteers who are eager to do it, volunteers that are excited that we don't have to be like us individually, we don't have to be the

ones to set up and tear down. It is a portable church, but they have a team, right. And so our team that has been doing that for years and is tired of it now gets to reap the benefits of just serving in another capacity.

Wayne: Hmm.

Micah Foster: And coming alongside and being a part of that. So just the whole process has been really cool to watch, become really good friends with the pastor and the rest of the staff. I think at first, the rest of the staff was like, this could get messy, this, like, Church that, you know, we're not really merging their closing and just joining us.

W what's the reason they closed, is there some dysfunction that's going to infect our culture? You know, we just kind of came in. I tried to come in with as much humility as possible and just be like, listen, I love what you guys are doing. Let us support you. And, and I have, sometimes I have questions like, okay, so why do you do this?

Or what, why, why is it like this? And then I always say by asking that question, I am not like evaluating it. And I am not saying you need to do it a different way. I genuinely just want. Okay. So, so don't feel pressured for me, like know you better do it this way, or else there's no one else with me. I'm here, I'm serving, I'm a part of this.

And I'm just trying to learn what the specifics are so that I can best serve it in the way that I know. How so, what have I been doing? I've been, I've run sound twice, you know, like for the band. Our main worship leader has, has led on those Sundays as part of their worship team. My wife has volunteered in children's ministry.

Our children's ministry director from our other church has volunteered in like their check-in and stuff. Some of our main set up volunteers have volunteered and it was special events. So we just are inching our way

forward into this community, joining up with what they're doing and enjoying this new season life.

So it's a new season. It's the same call, different, different spot in town, but the same mission and the same thing we've been trying to do for so long, which is really to reach unchurched people. That's really what our heart's been. So yeah, man, it's been a wild ride and excited to kind of see where it goes from here.

Wayne: I love, I love So many things in that. How many, how many years was your church planting journey with two cities?

Micah Foster: So there's a couple of ways to look at that. There's a, there's a way to look at that from when you launch and from when you first feel the call.

Wayne: Right.

Micah Foster: So if we're talking about, when I first felt the call to church plant, we're talking like 15 years. If we're talking about how long from launch we launched in 2014.

Wayne: So that's a good seven years. It's not like you like started this church right before a pandemic and are giving up. I'm like, I don't see this as giving up in any way. And you guys are, are serving at a church and I really want to drill down on one thing you talked about you talked about God's call.

And I, I know there's probably a lot of young leaders that feel god's call to ministry means full-time paid pastor. But we were talking earlier and this isn't, this isn't the first time that you've kind of wrestled with that a paid ministry. So you can, can you tell us that story of, of a church that you left and when you kind of wrestled through that, God calling you to be a pastor, but not being paid to be a pastor and what that looked like.

Micah Foster: Yeah. So long story short, we were part of another church in our community that no longer exists. W before we moved away from our home, we were part is a very, it was a big church. We met at a, at a high school. And I was so drawn to this church because the pastor would boldly preach things like this.

We are, we love all people. We are for our community. But when, when the rubber meets the road, if we have to make a decision on something that's different, We're going to make a decision to reach people rather than keep people in the building happy. So if we, if we ruffle a few feathers, it's not on purpose.

And, and I'm sorry, but our goal is to reach people for christ.

Wayne: Right.

Micah Foster: And so I just resonated with that. I loved the sort of little bit of rebellion in there. I feel like the kingdom needs a little more rebellious people. And so I, I really resonate with that. I, I like loved that pastor, like genuinely felt such a bond with him.

And then w w they purchased a facility, it was a peach packing plant. Actually, there was a lot you had to do to take a peach packing plant and then make it a church building. Right? So there's a big renovation project, costs a lot of money. Beautiful new facility, right. When it was done, it was amazing when from high school to this thing, it was incredible.

And then but the culture shifted, I think the. The, the board and the staff and everybody felt the weight suddenly of that new mortgage. And so suddenly things became more about keeping people happy who were paying the bills. I get it as a business, you know, thing. I get it then reaching new people.

So that killed the culture for me. But I remained focused as the student ministry guy, like I remain focused. I want it to be about reaching people. So

we, how we had, you know probably 130 kids coming on on a Sunday which was great. And we split them up into small groups and friends, you know, they were bringing friends and we had some kids come in at the time.

You know, it was. The big rebellious things to dress in all black and wear fishnet, you know, you know sleeves and stuff like that. And try to shock people with your comments. In small group and things like that, but they were coming. I didn't understand whether they're coming, if they didn't like to be there. So, so I was just welcoming them.

And then I had a couple of parents getting upset with me because they were worried that their kids were going to be influenced by these bad kids, quote unquote. And I was encouraging them. Listen, you guys are a great family. I'm not worried about your kid. I want your kids rub off on these other kids.

They're showing them the love of Christ. Like this is a great opportunity for them. And that was not satisfactory. So they became a squeaky wheel. They had a lot of money, a lot of pole, and I got fired. And that was a real shocker because I loved the pastor genuinely. I had stood by his decisions that some people.

We're very angry about, had showed a lot of loyalty felt like he was mentoring me and then suddenly that entire relationship was gone. And I think a lot of young ministry guys, if they have a staff transition and transition from one church out or to another church that was not their choice. I think a lot of them find themselves in that sort of a situation where they've had this mentor, like relationship with someone else at the church.

And then suddenly that entire relationship is gone. And, and that can really mess with you. So that's what me and my wife's we needed income. So my wife worked in children's ministry there and she had to stay on staff. And I remember the day that we had the meeting, that my direct boss and the pastor called me in the room and said, Hey, we're going to make a change.

You know, and kinda laid it out that you're not going to be in this position anymore. You know, and tried to try to basically tell me you could volunteer. But I needed income and I felt like I was supposed to be working at a church at the time. And so you know, that wasn't going to work for me.

I couldn't just volunteer because I didn't have any other thing to support

Wayne: Right.

Micah Foster: And, and so it was just a really hard time, but I remember that day so vividly because first of all, I still have the journal that I was taking my notes in. And in there it says like, I'm quoting, I'm just writing, just cause I'm trying to like, not blow up.

You know, I was pretty angry. I'm just writing what they're saying, you know, just trying to take it in. I'm just, I'm sitting there going, okay, what is true of what they're saying and what can I learn from this? And so I wrote something. Don't let your gratitude spoil your attitude. I remember writing that.

I also remember writing a direct quote from them saying this is a failure. Yeah. So that really messed with me. And then it was on top of that it was my wife's birthday. So the staff got taken to lunch right after that meeting. And I had to sit through there trying to celebrate my wife's birthday. So it was pretty awful.

So I walked away from that. Not knowing what to do with that. Not knowing like, is this, you know, have I done something to, you know, create this distance between my call of ministry and, and this opportunity, you know, what's going on here? I was so confused. And so for three months I didn't go to a physical church.

Because not only did they say we're making a change, they said you need to resign. Cause if I fire you, you'll never be able to work at another church in your whole life. Like that's what, that's, what was told to me. And basically

they didn't, they just didn't want to have to deal with severance or anything like that.

We have really good business practices and in the church don't we, so. So anyway, it was just a really hard season. So I ended up going to life church online to experience some sort of community and some sort of a church, because I felt like in my, in my head it felt like everybody in town knew I was a failure.

And so I couldn't, I felt uncomfortable going into public at all. And, and I had to kind of wrestle through that. So I've spent a lot of time in prayer. lot of time seeking God. Like what do you want me to do? And, and pray with pastors from life church online. I mean, this is like 13 years ago or a little bit more so.

No, that was a relatively new thing was online church, at least in the way that they did it. And so I was asking them to pray for me and stuff, and eventually got pulled me out of that and into a new opportunity in Santa Rosa, working at a church up there that I really grew to love and my wife as well, but it was a dark time because I had wrestled through my identity, like who, who, who was my identity is my identity in my job.

Is it in a title? Is it in where I get my income from, or is my identity in Christ? And no matter what I'm doing, am I you know, as, as described in scripture, there's a priesthood of all believers. Like am I really is my call to be a paid full-time ministry person or is my call to lead people to Jesus and follow him in any way that I can and whatever opportunity you brings before me.

Because I think if we, if we kind of say that full-time paid ministry is the only real ministry or as like when I was in youth group growing up, it felt like the only real people following God where people. We're missionaries and foreign countries. That's what it

felt

Wayne: right There There were, there were the A team.

Micah Foster: they, that was it.

Right. And, and I'm like, well, what would happen if all the Christians in all the wealthy communities or all the middle-class communities in America chose to go to a foreign country as a missionary? Well, all the money they make in their wealthy jobs is suddenly gone from ministry. And so we, we can't fund all the missionaries anymore, you know number one, number two, they probably are having a big impact in a certain industry or field because God placed them there for that.

So, so the idea that, that that ministry can only happen in full-time church employment is ridiculous. I mean when we started our, our side business, I thought of it as, initially I thought, man, if we could kind of grow this and then I could take less from the church, that'd be great for the church.

And so it just sort of remained a side thing for a long time. But then when I realized when God started opening the doors for an increase from the business, I w it's not going to be passive Micah. Like you have to work, you know you're going to have to like actively do things. So you won't be able to do both things full-time.

So I think there's a great, there's a great opportunity for a lot of by vocational people and all that kind of stuff. But for me at this juncture, it made a lot of sense. Based on everything in culture, all the opportunities before me, it made a lot of sense to close the church. We were, we were leading and joined with another church and bring all our energy there and do more together.

The identity is not in church employment. It's not in that church planter, you know, there's there's sort of a alter for

Wayne: Yeah, you guys are the cool kids.

Micah Foster: Yeah. Kind of so you know, it's just, it's just a different way of looking at things that everything you do is spiritual. Every, every job can be a CA there can be a call of God in any position.

Your call is not limited to your employment as what I'm trying to say. I don't know if I said that very well, but I think I got

Wayne: Yeah. Yeah. That's, that's great. I think. I think, especially after we've, after you've served a mission, I know that ministry paid ministry has been a, an idol in my life. Like this is what I feel like I want to do. Like, this is what I feel would be a blessing to do. And, and man, my five years, vocational ministry of three churches was a kick in the teeth.

And, but there's. I mean, cause, cause right now you can, you can serve God in your business. You can make disciples in your family. You can be a stellar volunteer because, because you get it and because your heart is there.

So, so like you don't, you don't have to be a paid church staffer to make disciples and to serve God well.

Like you've, you've proven in, in what you're walking through, proves that like, you can do that in any capacity that God has you. So that's, that is really cool. I love, I love your heart. But I just love your heart for doing what God has called you to do, and not like not letting, being a paid pastor, be in the way of following God's call on your life.

Micah Foster: A long time ago, I thought it was going to be a professional Christian musician, like a singer was in a boy band with some guys. I mean, there was a whole thing. You know, we had, we had some conversations with a couple of records and different things, and I thought that was it. And then I remember meeting a musician who came to our university.

I can't remember who it was. But she was a phenomenal Christian musician. And I had a chance to sit down and talk to her after her concert, just for a few minutes and tell her what I wanted to do. And I was like probably going

to give her a demo CD or something to try to pass on to somebody. And she, she was like, I'll never forget it.

She was like, listen, don't get into Christian music. That's not where the ministry is. Get into secular music and make a difference. And in addition, in a different way. And she goes, and she, she recommended a book called I think it was called roaring lands. And it was all about the idea of being a strong Christian role model in industries that people don't go into as strong Christians.

Not, not anything like immoral, but like you know, just being an influence in a different sphere, instead of focusing all of our influence inside the walls of the church, try to create spheres of influence or break into spheres of influence outside the walls of the church.

Cause you're going to have a bigger impact on more of the world. So she was like volunteer at your church, be involved at your church. Be in that kind of ministry, do that. Absolutely. Yes. And be part of that community, but also don't forget, there's all these other people out there outside, you know, that hour, a couple hours or those times or locations that need to hear about Jesus.

So if you just go, if you're a musician. And you make really great music, really creative music that people really like. And you in, in your backstory when they ask you about it, you're like, yeah, everything. I owe it to Jesus and they're going to be floored. And so I remember that conversation thinking, wow, that makes a lot of sense.

What if more of us focused more of those creative juices and energy outside of that hour, you know, what would that do to influence other people?

Wayne: That's so, yeah, that's so good. I love that, that our focus, because it is really easy, especially as pastors to focus on the time that we have with church people, but to think about how God can use us outside of that, to

impact others. Micah, this has been a great conversation. We're wrapping up. Is there Anything that I haven't asked you that you want me to ask, ask you today?

I don't want to leave anything out. That could be great.

Micah Foster: I, I just, I would encourage, you know, you mentioned like a lot of the listeners are maybe young leaders, is that.

Wayne: Yeah.

Micah Foster: So young church or ministry leaders. And I know that the organization Sonlife has had a long history of serving those people. I have benefited from Sonlife ministries back in the day, they had a, a curriculum called simp students equipped to minister, to peers.

And I was a part of some youth pastors that took that and create an event called youth wave youth with a vision for evangelism. And we went, you know, there are some amazing tools and resources that were created by the organization to help students think about how they can live like Jesus in their community.

Serving people in their community with their like hands and feet, like being the hands and feet of Jesus. And so that's, that's incredible. And I think we just need to remember that being the hands and feet of Jesus is so much more than creating a one hour experience once a week or twice a week or three times a week or whatever it is.

Particular group of people and, and mobilizing those people. Inspiring them and equipping them in that time and mobilizing them to go into the community and be the hands feet of Jesus, wherever they find themselves, whether it's in an office or driving a bus or going on a hike or, you know, whatever, there's an opportunity everywhere you go to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

That's why you're there. So don't despise where you're at, if it's small beginnings or if it's, you know, being the CEO or whatever, don't despise where God has you, because he has you there for purpose and reason. And so to have your eyes, ears, and hands open to fulfilling that purpose and reason. And over time, if there's a dissatisfaction with that situation, I believe God will honor that and grow you out of that.

But there's, there's a reason you're there. So I believe for, in my story, Every time there was a big disappointment. Do I think some people made some bad decisions, yes. To have any bad decisions. Yes. But I also know that what the enemy uses or what the enemy wants to destroy you with, God will use to construct you with.

So be open to what he wants to do in those difficult seasons as well, and be the hands and feet of Jesus, wherever you find yourself.

Wayne: So good. So good Micah. And if people want to reach out to get ahold of you, where's the best place to do that? Instagram, YouTube email.

Micah Foster: Yeah, all the places all the places my tick-tock is probably going to change some content. Cause I was so focused on like the pastoral side of content and that's probably going to change. So if you like it now, you may not like it in a couple of months when I start figuring that out. But on YouTube, just Michael Foster M I C H F O S T E R.

Same on, on Twitter and Instagram, you can email me m.Foster@dreamsupport.club. Dream support.club is our website for our business. I also own micro foster.net. So there's a lot of places just Google. You'll see

Wayne: That's right.

Micah Foster: you'll you'll

find me.

Wayne: All right. Sounds good. Thanks so much for taking time to talk today, Micah.

Micah Foster: Absolutely. Thanks.

Closing

Josh Yates: Wayne was great for you to set up that podcast with Mike Foster. And I really appreciated a number of things he had to say. And I think towards the end, when he was unpacking some of his Sonlife experiences through SEMP and evangelism training with the students, just being the hands and feet of Jesus.

And that's why, you know, God has us there and he's moments to be on mission wherever God's placed us, whether it be in the workplace or whether it be in ministry and maybe redefining our terms for ministry. I think, makes sense in terms of conversations, he was saying, and I love his evangelists, like heart coming out to, to want to reach people versus just keeping people and not just playing, if you will kind of church and kind of stirring the pot, so to speak.

And I think that I can, I can resonate with that. Maybe that kingdom rebellious spirit to say, Hey, you know, God's calling us to, to not just a compromise and to not but maybe to a. To rethink the way we've always done church to reach people. And so his heart for evangelism definitely came through and I really appreciate his wisdom and some of the transitions and some of the things that he was had experienced.

So, yeah. Wayne was some of the highlights that stood out to you during this, this conversation.

Wayne: Yeah. He talked about when he was fired from that church and kind of losing all of that community.

And just, I think to me, that just reminds me of the value of having, having multiple people that you can go to for wise counsel. And multiple people that you can go to through hard times. Like I totally understand, as a young ministry leader to be, just wanting to be mentored by that pastor that he looked up to that that seems like a great decision, but I'm guessing he didn't plan to get fired.

And then he got fired and, and it felt like he didn't really have people to walk through that with because so much of that support structure was in his church family. And then that was, that was taken away. I've had a friend and a pastor who, who I have worked with at a church plant, but through my vocational ministry, he has never been my boss or anything.

And it's been so helpful. For me to know that?

I can call him. He's outside of the situation, he's far enough removed from the churches that I'm on, staff have been on staff with, and I can call him and I can pray with him. Like I walked through that. So too, as you're involved in ministry to have mentors inside your ministry, absolutely.

If you're working under a lead pastor, or if you're volunteering in youth ministry, have that pastor, that youth pastor pour into you, absolutely. But to have a support structures and wise counsel, outside of that as well. So if you walk through something with those people, you have people you can turn to people who, you know, will pray with you and walk with you through those situations.

Josh Yates: Yeah, I can, I can resonate with that. I have that same almost ministry expenses. Uh, And transitioned 11 plus years ago. And I felt like many of my mentors just kind of dry it up and my mentoring constellation, so to speak all of a sudden shrunk dramatically. And so I was really praying through how to, how do I have other people in I'll call the bullpen of life other godly men and women who can speak godly counsel kind of like you said, a wider community.

So if you're listening to this, a younger minister leaders. Uh, I think that's some great wisdom that Micah gave to us.

But as we wrestle through these things, we want also help you make disciples. And so that's kind of what Sonlife exists. We're here to help ministry leaders be trained coach and mentored in the life of Christ.

And so at this podcast is as helpful to you please share this like it and have some conversations with, with your ministry leaders or your disciples, but for now stick around for the disciple making moment.

Disciple Making Moment

Val O'Brien: Hi everyone. I am Val O'Brien area coordinator in Cleveland, Ohio. And this is your disciple making moment. You know, years ago, probably man, probably eight years ago now I went to a disciple-making conference in Houston and our speaker for a couple days was a leader of the underground church in China.

It was both a hilarious experience, for many, many reasons and probably one of the most humbling and just insightful, powerful conferences I've ever been to. Particularly because of the speaker and the things that he shared with us. But one of the things that he said over and over and over again, that I still think about all the time is he would go, we don't choose.

God chooses. We don't choose God chooses, you know, but the more that I think about that and the longer ministry experience that I have, the larger sample size I see that is absolutely true. And has been played out in my experience so many times we don't choose who the Lord is going to use, who is going to work through he.

And we actually are really terrible at choosing I, I don't know if you feel that way. I feel that way. I feel like I should be better at being able to pick who, who, you know, God is really going to use and work powerfully through. But it was people we were just bad at it. We're terrible at choosing.

Thinking about Samuel and the older brothers that he definitely would have put on the throne before king David. You know, they're filing by and he's looking at each one of them going like, Hey, this one, this one is really tall. This one is really handsome. This one is really, you know, this one really seems to have some leadership skills, you know and each one is passing by and the Lord's going, not the one, not the one, not the one and a is left going, are there any more.

And finally the shepherd David comes through. And what do we hear at the end of that narrative? There's this line that says, very famously man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. That we do not choose that God chooses. Um, I had a student who I, I disciplined and in my discipleship group for three years, maybe even a little bit more than three years, she was in my group and she was quiet and very sensitive and very, very private.

And I spent a lot of time with her. I had a close relationship with her and our, and our group was, was pretty much a closed discipleship groups. There were a lot of visitors coming and going as basically the same. Four, sometimes five girls for those, those three and a half years. And there would still be times her senior year.

I would ask her a direct question in the middle of a group and she would just shut it. That she might even start to tear up and start to cry because I put her on a spot and she was embarrassed and quiet and all the stuff and I'd have to apologize. I'm so sorry. Let's, let's let's ask somebody else and move on from there, but that's, that's the type of girl that this was, she was also brilliant.

And she went away to school. And I just remember praying and praying and praying for her of just what the influences were going to be on her and anxious that, you know, she wouldn't be willing to go to church or campus ministry or get involved, just praying so much for her. She kind of launched

into that and I am telling you a year and a half later she came back, we went on a hike and the national park here at close to my house.

And this girl I felt like was a different person. She was telling me about how she is leading Bible studies on our campus. Now she's mentoring women, young women in their faith. One-on-one she's got a couple of girls who meets with every single week. She's talking to her lost friends about Christ it's.

She is like a little blabber mouth four mile hike. I could hardly get a word in edgewise. She's just telling me all of this different stuff that she's doing and asking my advice about this and asking about this specific question here and telling me, and describing these different women to me and what their needs are and how she's trying to work with them and all of this stuff.

And I was so humbled when I got back in my car, because I was like, Lord, you have lit a fire in this girl. You are using her so powerfully and I would not have chosen her, but you chose her and she is being used so mightily and so powerfully by you. You know, we talk about people that are faithful available and teachable, and maybe you've heard those three words before faithful available, teachable.

Those are the people that we need to be looking for. And this girl fit. She wasn't the one with the leadership skills with the charisma, with you know, the mover and the shaker of our group. She was faithful. She was available. She was teachable. I poured into her, others, poured into her, invited her to be a worker in the kingdom of God.

And all of a sudden, one day she just took off running. Praise God, praise God that we, we don't choose. God chooses. What'd he asks of us is to be faithful in the mission of disciple-making that he has called us to. And we let him be the one to ignite the hearts of people.