

Building Relationships with Nathan Glover Season 2 | Episode 22

Opening

Josh Yates: Welcome friends to Sonlife Everyday Disciple Makers Podcast. And with me is my cohost Wayne.

Wayne: Hey, Josh, I'm just happy to be here in the virtual studio with you again today.

Josh Yates: Yeah, it's always wonderful to spend some time connecting, talking about disciple-making and today's interview with Nathan Glover from Urban Impact is definitely a, an incredible interview, but before we go there, just we're coming up to, at least in our neck of the woods, spring break, spring break always comes up with maybe road trips, family time, maybe in student ministries, missions, trips, or special events you might do.

But on my family, spring break means pizza and movie night. So we can debate all night about what kind of movie we would want to watch. But I think the real debate, Wayne is what kind of pizza would we order?

Wayne: Yeah, absolutely. I think and movies come and go, but pizza is forever. And, and for me for any of my family, we're not really any kind of vegetables on pizza kind of people. My daughter is a cheese pizza girl. My wife is a gluten-free chicken, bacon, white sauce, kind of pizza person.

I'm okay with the cheese pizza and I'm okay with any meats that you would usually find on a pizza. So if I were to choose, I'd probably put some Canadian bacon, which is also just called ham some ground beef, some sausage, some bacon, some pepperoni salami, if you need to, I'm a meat on pizza kind of guy.

What about your family? Josh?

Josh Yates: well, I think, I think pizza is a very contested thing, you know? Cause you have like, you know, if we were in Chicago, would it be ? Is it deep dish? Is it New York style? It's where we order the pizza from, you know, so we like. Kind of like the subway meets pizza, where you can choose your own, get your own toppings, like a Mod it's called Mod pizza here, where, you know, you can basically select what kind of toppings you want.

So that makes our family actually pretty happy because there are some who debate and our family that should fruit be allowed on pizza, such as pineapple and others such as. You know, vegetables like onions and peppers. I kinda like, you know, things that are unique, like curries or or Thai pizzas or when I was a kid I interned in Costa Rica and they put coconut on the pizza.

So I just love exploring, trying new flavors and tastes. And yeah. I liked the, I liked the curveball,

But I don't like the anchovies. So leave the anchovies and how to answer was get on pizzas.

Wayne: probably put them there.

Josh Yates: Well, who was the first person who said, I think this should be, this would be great on a pizza. We should put anchovies on there.

Or mushrooms. I mean, who, who, who was the first person who went into the woods and said, I'm going to eat this mushroom. But who was the first person who ate it in Denton live to tell about it? I mean, these are the, these are the acquiring minds. We, we got to figure these questions out, but besides trying to figure out mushrooms and what kind of pizza toppings, I think it's time to grab a slice settle in for a great interview with Nathan Glover.

Conversation with Nate

Josh Yates: Well, today's guest is my friend, Nate Glover from Urban Impact and coming in from Pittsburgh. Nate, thank you for joining today's podcast episode.

Nathan Glover: it's awesome to be here.

Josh Yates: I've always enjoyed our times that we've shared a meal, been on a conference or even a hike in Montana, a number of years ago. And so Nate, the friendship, the chance for us to connect is really, truly an honor.

Nathan Glover: Yeah, it's a way I think I had to go to the hospital. I don't know if you remember that I got I'm a city boy through and through.

Josh Yates: I don't remember that part of it. So well I knew, I knew that it was a struggle for most of us on that hike. And there's many of us who are just like the goat go on the

top of the hill and saying it was, it was like no big deal. And the rest of us were looking at each other and going, what, what, that's the, that's the average hike in Montana.

And apparently we, we got schooled on what does an average hike in Montana?

Nathan Glover: Yeah. And I did the dumbest thing you could possibly do. I was like, I'm going to, I'm going to be on a diet while I do it. So I was like, I'm sticking to my diet. And Joel was like, you shouldn't do that. And I'm like, yeah, I'm going to do it. We're going to get yourself messed up. Sure enough. I got messed up.

Should, I should've. When I, when I was told and drank, when I was told

Josh Yates: And there we go, lessons to be learned. If you're all going on a hike with Joel, make sure you're not on a diet and you hydrate well as the lesson, as I'm hearing,

Nathan Glover: amen.

Josh Yates: Nate, well, you serve with a ministry called urban impact and that's a ministry that has very fun affection, the history with Sonlife. And so we love what you guys are doing in the city of Pittsburgh.

And can you just give a, kind of a, an overview of Urban Impact as well as maybe even your story and how you got connected to that ministry?

Nathan Glover: Yeah. So urban impact was started in 1996 by my father. So he came to this city of Pittsburgh in the 1980s, late eighties. And he was, he was making disciples. And but what he noticed was that certain groups in particular low-income groups, there was like almost a cap on their discipleship. And, you know, it's like the reality.

If you can't read, you can't learn from Scripture. So you're only ever going to get spoonfed what you're going to learn. And so when he saw this sort of artificial cap created by what is essentially just like a lack of resources, he said, I, we need to do something about it. And so what he decided to do was to create an organization alongside the church called Urban Impact foundation that could help raise people out of physical and spiritual poverty at the same time. And so that's what Urban Impact is. The, the church that he was a part of went from 500 people in the inner city of Pittsburgh. That's a, that's a big church and went from 500 people to over 3000. Because what this ended up doing is it kept drawing people to the church because as they wanted to be lifted out of physical poverty, they also were learning about Christ.

And, and as they were left out of spiritual poverty, having the most important needs of their heart met, they're like, we want to be here. This is, this is home. And people came to the Lord and, and that's, and then Urban Impact started to spread to other churches around the north side of. And so it's really become a disciple making movement in the city of Pittsburgh lifting people out of physical and spiritual poverty.

Josh Yates: Okay. So this is the ministry you grew up in. And, and now get a serve and with that, and I think there's other family members as well serving. So that's what I love about Urban Impact. And and your ministry scope is pretty good size. I'm looking at your, even your website, we'll link to that in our show, but you guys got quite a bit of ministries and things are happening.

So maybe give a lay the land of if I were to come on site, what would I experience? What are some of the things Urban Impact is doing?

Nathan Glover: that's great. So so Urban Impact the first phase of if I were to take so Urban Impact was founded on Sonlife principles. So it's very easy. To kind of talk about how that works. The first phase of urban impact is evangelism through acts, so in the wind category. So we, we we're, we're reaching out into the community in the areas of athletics, performing arts.

Education and post high school development, what we call options. And so we're reaching out into the community and if a kid wants to play the game basketball, we got basketball programs. If you want to play soccer, we got soccer programs, baseball programs. If you need help after school, we got that. If we actually go into the school, During the day and do literacy and math support.

So we're all throughout the week and all throughout the day, they're educational programs in the public schools and in charter schools and in private schools where we are helping I assist the school and doing what they're already trying to do, and then bringing, and then bridging them to our afterschool programs for homework, where they can hear about the love of Jesus Christ, but then performing arts programs.

You have dance programs, singing programs. We have orchestra programs. We have jazz band programs, all sorts of different things that you could be a part of. And if you go on that website, you'll see just how varied it is that there's a million different ways to grab kids and help them know about Christ.

And then, so that's that win called, but then there's the build, call them after that, which is if you want to, you know, if you want to come to an intermural basketball program, you're free to do so. And the kid comes, but then they really want to improve in the game of basketball. We have an AA.

Basketball program travels around the country, playing in tournaments. And that's a place where you can really go deeper because you're not just in the game of basketball, but also in your understanding of who Christ is and the love and the likeness of Christ. And you'll have your coaches there who were strong believers from throughout the north south, or really Western Pennsylvania who are coaching the kids, not just in basketball, but but in the love and likeness of. And then of course the ultimate goal is to bridge them to churches because you can graduate Urban Impact but you can't graduate from the church, church marries and berries you. And so Urban Impact is passionate and it's not just about making Christians, but building up the churches in our community.

And then by doing?

that, we, you know, in the equip station, we want to have kids then come back and be involved in what we're doing. I know. If they, if they become a staff member, then they then eventually to multiply ourselves. But if they become a volunteer to equip them to win and build it Urban Impact and build bridges back to their churches.

And so that's real that if you came to Urban Impact, that's what you'd be seeing. You'd be seeing winning at this level, building at this level, building bridges back to the churches, equipping young people. And since we've been around 25 years we've got a number of stories of people who were kids and are now adults with families in churches that are now doing for young men and women, what was done for them.

And so that's what you'd see.

Josh Yates: Wow. Yeah, I was pleasantly surprised. I didn't, I didn't know all the depths. I knew you guys had some of the, you know, whether it be the fine arts and the Wells, the trades, and it was the homework pieces, but also the love, the depth of that was just a beautiful description of just how you guys are engaging your community, how you doing that.

And your specific role is more tied towards the director of the trainings as a training center or director of training center. So help me unpack that a little bit for our listeners in terms of your role.

Nathan Glover: Yeah. Yeah,

So my, my role has changed a lot at Urban Impact. I have bounced around quite. There was a time where I was, I w I was in, or had led every Urban Impact program. Either as a student or that's not true anymore, but there was a time that was true. And now I'm the director of the training center and basically what this is, is how do we in Urban Impact has been working towards.

Doing ministry like Jesus Christ. Since the beginning, since my dad went to a Sonlife conference back in like 1986. Okay. And so what we've been trying to do gradually is build the Sonlife used to use a cake. Now we use the chairs, but we, we were trying to build the tiers of the cake, right? The tears of the, maybe the stairs, some people. So we built the win tier kind of first. Then we sort of gradually put a build tier on there. And then we really got the equip tier now where we're really, we have this thing called connections, where we bring all our volunteers in and do trainings so that they're starting to feel equipped to do winning and building better.

And then of course we're unleashing them into programs to build relationships with students because the way we see programs is the point isn't to build the program. The program is just a tool in the hands of people to build relationships. And so that's really what our programs are about, but that's gotta be taught.

Right? And so that's what our connections is really all about. We do that quarterly. So every quarter we have our all volunteers and we're about 400 volunteers. We bring them all in, train them in the things that we want them to understand, and we send them out. But this multiplication piece, what that was, was essentially our staff meeting and Urban Impact is now at the point where.

With so many employees now. And we, we, we keep growing that if we're gonna multiply well, it's going to have to be done intentionally. And Pastor Ed, who's, my dad, he goes all over the world. You know, raising support, building connections, doing all these things. And he can't really invest in that. He needed to raise someone else up to take that piece on.

And so that's what I was to intentionally build that multiplication piece in. Essentially, what that looks like is providing training from within and training from without. So the other thing that happened is Urban Impact won an award from a ministry called Epic, that kind of does ministries. And then they have a winner.

We won that one and then Chick-fil-A has their their award. I can't remember what it's called. The founder of chicken. What's his name? Kathy?

Josh Yates: Kathy.

Nathan Glover: Yeah. So it's like the trees awards or something like that. They're like the True awards. And we won that one. And when we won these pastor was flown out to Atlanta on both occasions and what the person said when when he went up there after which he received the award, my dad. Honestly confused as to why he won, because we're not a national ministry, we're a local ministry. And so there are all these national and international ministries there and we were just excited to be there. So we didn't expect to win either of them. So we asked them, why did we win? And the, the thing that they said was our disciple-making model.

So her Ray Sonlife and the second thing that they asked my dad was not to die with what he knew. And so when on, over the course of three years you went to international awards and both people tell you don't die with what you know, the Holy Spirit might be doing. Something might be. And so what my dad said is what, okay, well, we're going to do is we're going to really, as we're building this multiplication piece at the top of the cake or top of the stairs of the. We're going to do that internally. We're going to do that externally. If people want to learn what we do and replicate it, where they are, we're going to give them that opportunity to do that while we're doing it for our own staff. And so that's really my role. So what, what do I do? I'm training, Urban Impact staff, especially our new recruits to help them understand what it is to do ministry in like Jesus.

Teaching them Sonlife and then the second thing is to help give them a crash course on theology and apologetics, because we kind of hire a lot of people who aren't maybe seminary educated, because what they're really good at is basketball. Like that's their expertise. So they need to have a crash course on theology and apologetics so that they feel comfortable, more and more comfortable being missionaries.

And then of course I do that inside and out.

Josh Yates: I love the fact that you guys are focused and changing your will, your org or chart to see a need of training from within and chaining and training obviously within and without. So maybe unpack that just a little bit more. What does that look like? The training for. And as well as that apologetics piece I know that's something you've, you've, you've got some high level training in that.

You went to the center for apologetics and a small little college called Oxford, and you're, you're developed some of those things, but unpack that a little bit more in terms of that discipleship piece from, with them as well as that apologetic. So can you just maybe let us, let us a little bit more under the hood, if you will.

Nathan Glover: Yeah.

So the, the discipleship piece from within is it basically the primary track, we have this thing called a fellows track. So let's say someone wants to come and they want to learn what we do. We make them an urban impact fellow, and they're with us for one year. And over the course of that year in the fall, they're learning the life of Christ.

So they're going through the strategy book of Sonlife they're going to, they're going to be able to train Four Chairs. We start walking through the harmony of the gospels. So we're doing all that, right? We're doing all that stuff while we're doing that. They're actually they're out doing ministry, so not just learning it they're then going out and doing it. Then in the spring we start teaching them theology and apologetics. And so for me you know, like you said, I, you know, I went to, I was, I got to go to Oxford University, which was so fun and study there. And then while I was there, I was at the Oxford Center for Christian Apologetics and got to do some ministry with them.

And I learned so many things that it was wonderful. This was a major part of my life too. I think, you know, apologetics is a big part of why I remained a Christian in college because I had a lot of I had a crisis of faith that I'm not going to go into, but I had a big crisis of faith. And so it was the writings of CS Lewis.

That came to the rescue.

Josh Yates: Well,

Nathan Glover: And because that was such a deep part of my story, I just feel like I have to do that with, with other people. It's just, it's just how God wired me. And so right now, even I, so I've developed this apologetics track and the two questions I get them. And when I'm talking with students, but even when I was at the university of Oxford, the two questions I get the most, the first one is if there's a God, why is there evil and suffering in the world?

And I'm sure you've gotten that if you've been in youth ministry for a hundred days, right. You've gotten that question one time, you know? And so that's a, that's a common

question and there's a, there's a million resources. The other question that I get most often, Yeah.

If, you know, God loves me and cares about me so much.

Why does he just come to talk to me? Why doesn't he in their minds? Why doesn't he do anything?

Josh Yates: Yeah,

Nathan Glover: And so I ended up, so I actually I've, I've developed a sort of response to that, but I, I never, I don't have any books to give people. I don't have any resources. So I've actually been creating. And I'm in the process of publishing it.

It's a book called Divine Hiddenness and it's a, and it's a series of short stories that explain why God has made the choices he's made, why, why he is decided to remove himself in a particular, in particular situations to give human beings meaningful action in the world. And I thought, you know, I could write this.

In, in in argument form, but you'd have to basically get like a master's of philosophy and theology just to read the thing where I'm like, okay, that's going to be useless to me. So what I'll actually do is just tell stories and it'll make the point. You'll see, like, oh, had God done it differently. A lot of the reasons that I love being alive would be lost.

They'd be taken over. And so God's very wise and doing what he did. And then of course, the second part of that is the reality of the fall and why that separates us from God. And that separation is, is more severe than a non-believer at first realizes.

Josh Yates: right, right. The effects of the, of that. So the divine hiddenness all of a sudden I'm hearing this for the first time and as you're processing this, what runs through my mind is that how Jesus even says he's hidden these things right from the wise understood and reveal them to what it's a little children.

Correct me if I'm going down the wrong path here Nate, is that. Imagine I mentioned, God's kind of like, Hey, I, I I've had this. Like we love Easter and with Easter baskets, for little kids, we hit these little gyms, these candies for the kids to what to find.

If they there's love when they find it, like, look what I found, look what I found. And it's like, but if God would had just put it in their plain sight that discovery would be lost. Is that kinda what you're talking about here is like God's hiddenness is so that when we find

them, we celebrate and we're so excited and God's like, I know I'm so glad you found my my treasure here it is.

Is that kinda, what you're getting at is like the Gods purposely hidden themselves, so that there's a, the joy of the discovery.

Nathan Glover: that is definitely a facet of it. Which is why I want to do stories so I could get all those, all the different facets in it. One is the discovery.

Right. But also, and I like so Jesus. Are you talking to his disciples? He said the Gentiles lord their power over you. And they're called benefactors, but not so with you, whoever would be the greatest must be the least.

Right. And the one who wants to be, I can't remember exactly what it says, but one wants to be great, must be like one who serves or be a servant of all. And so, because of the reality of sin, God can't work with the powerful, because our systems of power are broken. He's got to come in and be humble because that's not the way of the world, but that is his way. And so if he doesn't come in humility, then he can't come the way he needs to come to teach us what we need to learn.

And so. It has to be a still small voice. It has to be seeking. You will find because he not only has to come in humility. We have to come to him in humility. There's a component of this, and that's the piece that there's a component of this in the fall, where if God is, is out, making himself abundantly clear, we will systematize.

Using the, the sort of power structures that we are, that we are apt to create that tend to always fail. And we will try to, to humanize the divine and, and now I don't mean human in the sense of, of the image of God. I mean, human in that original sin sense, we will twist what God is doing and we can't have. And so that fell and part of us is why we have to seek. And, but also we're designed to seek but there. But there's a piece of the way humanity is that means God has to come to us in a sense. It has to be that way.

And then of course, there's another piece where so if, if God has any purposes for us where any purposes that are actually going to be meaningful for us, it cannot also be something he does. So for instance, I'm talking to Josh right now, and if I'm talking to you about what I know, God, can't also do this. So God has to remove himself. In other words, he has to hide him. So that Nate can live out his purpose.

And part of God's purpose for humanity. And this is the part of the dominion mandate is for us to take responsibility over ourselves with his help and in his empowerment,

obviously. But we had to take responsibility for ourselves and for the planet that we were given.

And that means he has to remove himself. We have. And so if humans are going to make any meaningful decisions, if we're ever going to take responsibility for our lives, God can't do that too. And one of the most unkind things God could do would be to say, I want you to be a full human in all of the glory that I created you for.

And then go, you screwed up. Not really now. Forget it. Because it would be just giving a gift and then taking it back and God's not going to do that.

Josh Yates: Wow. Well, thank you for unpacking that. And I'm excited to see how that that resource is being used. And thank you for sharing that, putting it in writing for others to kind of understand a little bit more. I really agree with you that that divine hiddenness is an apologetic that I think we miss.

And the other piece that I'm just processing here is gone, man, I love the fact that Urban Impact is committed to beyond just, Hey, we have afterschool program or we're actually going to walk with you to have you be a full train. How could we call it in Sonlife, the kind of full orb disciple-making like, it's the whole person.

And you guys have seen the need that internally, even your staff. You're developing your staff and you're, you're giving them now theological language and training around the personal work of Christ, but as well as having an accurate theological presentation of, of, of truth, having apologetics and seeing that as a full spectrum of disciple-making within, within the context of, of impact.

So I'd love to hear maybe a little bit more what's. Kind of in that urban context what does a full orb disciple-making look like in Pittsburgh?

Nathan Glover: Yeah. so I think the best way to do this, like when, when Urban Impact was started, the goal was to raise people out of physical and spiritual poverty, the best way to kind of see how that works, I think is that. So I'll just going to tell a story of one student that I got to walk with him through his journey. He comes from a Muslim background, Muslim father and his mother is sort of, I think, spiritual and he comes to Urban Impact and I, I think he's about. Five years old and he lies about his age so that he can be a part of our baseball program, which starts at six.

Josh Yates: Yeah.

Yeah.

Nathan Glover: We all know he's lying, but we don't care.

So he comes and he's a part of baseball. And he's dedicated to the game of baseball. He grows up in our baseball program and right around 14, he makes a transition to basketball. All throughout this process, he's hearing the gospel all the time. We're teaching Bible lessons. He knows the Bible stories, he is not a believer.

He would, you know, he would call himself not a believer in anything that's. That would be the words that, that he would, that he used at that time. At 14, he transitions over to basketball. He starts to think, you know, actually this is the game I enjoy playing more. He's a tremendous. And so he transitions the basketball's got to learn a lot of new things cause he hadn't really played much.

By the time he's 16 years old I built a relationship and we're, we're driving home after basketball practice one day. And I said, Hey, the ever wonder why I talked to you about Jesus all the time. He says not really. I said, well, let me tell you, I don't do it because I want you to agree with me on everything. Or because I want, when the pole, the pollsters come by that you check the Christian box on your documents.

The reason I do it is because Jesus is the best thing that ever happened to me. And if I really love you, then why wouldn't I tell you about that? So, two weeks later, I'm preaching in the basketball gym and I asked for a response, He gives his life to. So after that moment. Life begins to transform. Fast forward to senior high school.

He's starting to invest in little kids, just like himself in the area of basketball in our third to fifth grade basketball gym. And he starting to do a little bit of winning. So we're starting to equip him as a. Send them off and send them off to college. He's playing college basketball, he's doing great stuff, but COVID hits, shuts everything down.

He comes back and is a part of our Urban Impact fellows program. And he works for us for a year, learning theology and apologetics learning the life of Christ and the principles of, of Christ ministry. And then now he's back playing and, and he did ministry alongside us. And now he's back playing college basketball with an eye to one day, be in ministry himself. And so that, that's kind of the picture you could see. We, you know, we, we have the opportunity to start really young

Josh Yates: yeah.

Nathan Glover: and walk along side students in life as they pursue these things that they're already interested. And keep giving the gospel. And once they respond, we build them up in their faith. We plug them into a church.

He ended up going to Allegheny center Alliance church, and then after a, a time of building, then equipping them to give back and serve. And so that's, when you talk about the site, like, what does it look like? That's the picture? I think that's a good picture in my thing.

Josh Yates: Well, I think some of that is that it's the long game. Now you realize it starts starting when they're young. W what are some of maybe, you know, in that, you know, there's always the success stories, but what are some of the challenges you guys just continued to kind of like, man, we haven't quite figured this out.

This is what makes it difficult. These are the things that we just hit our head against the wall over and over again in ministry. We know that it's working with people is exhausting. But what are some of the challenges you guys are just continue facing? You're trying to, you're trying to solve.

Nathan Glover: man. There's so many of those that I, I try not to focus on them cause it can get over. It can get so discouraging because there's just so much. And I would say the, of the things that is when Jesus said the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few in the inner city context, at least in ours.

I don't know if every inner city context is like this, but that is the feeling. You know, you, you look around there's right around a million people in Pittsburgh, I think right around that number. And then I get, because we're, I'm involved in Urban Impact. I get to see all the churches. And when I look at the number of churches and the attendance in terms of, again, the attendance is good, but it's, it's just smaller.

And so I there is so many people that are still lost and. And there are so many things in cities for people to do that are not, that are not growing in the love and the likeness of Christ that are not getting plugged into a Christian community. And so when you're constantly up against that, and I feel like this isn't unique to the city, it's probably everywhere, but when you're, when there so many other things, because we're an affluent society, when there's so many other things that you can do.

Trying to help people embrace their, their greatest need, which is their spiritual need is so hard to do. And even when you get them to do it, you know, in, in an inner city

context, you work with a lot of people who are second generation, third generation, fourth generation drug users. Can we talk about fourth generation drug users, like moving the needle is 10 years

Josh Yates: Yeah,

Nathan Glover: like to get a drug use a fourth generation drug user to go. I'm not going to use drugs. And like, even before we do anything else, it just takes forever. So the, the need is so big. There's so many people, the, your, your, your resources, even though urban impact has more resources than we've ever had, it's still tiny compared to the resources that we're faced that, that we're up against.

Josh Yates: Yeah

Nathan Glover: And then also in terms of just moving the needle. So just one story that kind of encapsulates the point. You know, you're, you're, we've got kids and I'll keep it vague, just so I don't say anything, I shouldn't say, but when you've got kids that are given away multiple times to multiple different families, because in every family.

There's some sort of addiction problem that keeps them past where they can't take responsibility for the family. When you're dealing with like 70% fatherless kids. So th the, the, the biological fathers not living in the home when that's what you're up against, it can be exhausting when you're like, I want to get you to multiply. There's just so many steps in between.

Josh Yates: Yeah, thanks. Thanks for sharing that honest reality. I think, I think at some level, maybe not the fourth generations and maybe the 75%, you know, fathers, this and this, but the busy-ness of society, the the challenge of finding more workers, the the hardship of, of really saying, man, it's this. Like, I want to make disciples, but it feels like man, it's gonna take so much work just to even try to try to even see an inch of movement.

And that can that can really tug on our, you know, I would say just a feeling like there's a sense of hopelessness, but it, but in that we know that the Christ is the hope of that and helps us kind of innovate for the moving for the future. And so, as you, as you look at your current realities, what are you guys dreaming about?

What are you're hopeful for? What, what are you guys passionate about? God, yes. We know our current realities are tough and hard, but here's what we're sensing God leading us. And maybe the next month or years later,

Nathan Glover: Yeah.

One thing just briefly just to backtrack and then move forward. Just about what you were saying. My dad almost quit eight years into the ministry walking out of his house and our car was stolen for the third time. And he had just, he was like, I'm almost done. And God gave him this, this picture. How do you eat an elephant one bite at a time?

He's like, okay, that's what we gotta do. And that's where the motto Urban Impact was born to do it. One person, one family, one block at a time because we recognize it was going to have to be that grassroots. And I, and I think that that, that really plays into our vision going into the future right now, urban impact is really excited because we're, we're, we're trying to buy a building.

And one of the things that Urban Impact is all about is getting in the spaces that people are already in. So the way that we, the way that we operate is we go, okay. Let's work. Let's not build a basketball program at the church. That's fine. We'll do that. But our, what we'd rather do is build it right in the school.

So that right after school, you just come down to the gymnasium and we're doing basketball. And then it's so it's, it's outside the walls of the church building bridges back to the church, if that makes sense. And so for years, urban impact had no books. None. We rented some office space. That's it that way.

And what it kept us doing was so that we were always working outside of our walls and being good neighbors, because nobody's going to let you in their space. If you don't treat it with the same respect that they treat it with. And so it forced us to really love all of the community leaders around us and that earned us a great reputation, which is great.

However, one of the things that we are doing in this multiplying phase is we want to bring more people in so that they can learn what we do and then go out. You know what? I, I, I love Robert Coleman's Master Plan of Evangelism. One of the things he says in that book is Jesus' strategy was always global mission. From the, from the go, even though almost all of his time. And when I say almost all of his time, like he made one trip to Egypt and he went up to Syria Phoenicia for like a second, but all his, all his time was in one country, the country of Israel. And he's like, that's why I'm going to spend all my time here to affect the world.

Urban Impact wants to do the same thing. We want to be buried very low. And by bringing people into the local, sending people out to the global. And so what we're doing is we're buying a building that is a dormitory

Josh Yates: okay.

Nathan Glover: in faith. That what that's going to mean is we're going to bring people in and they're going to be able to live in our dormitory.

They're gonna be able to be here for a year or longer, and they're going to be able to learn what it is that. How it works, how we get outside the walls of the church to build bridges back to it. And, and, and then by further impacting Pittsburgh, we then impact the world and cities across the world.

And so that's something we're really excited about.

Josh Yates: Wow. So you guys have your eyes set are in the building and starting that campaign towards that. Is that what it sounds like?

Nathan Glover: We, we have, we have a rule in the middle of the campaign. It's been going amazing. God has done great things. And we, we know we, we are closing on a building,

Josh Yates: Okay. Okay.

Nathan Glover: in the process of writing up the paperwork. The only thing that will stop it is an act of God.

Josh Yates: Wow. Well, I love your guys as faithfulness, your commitment to the full person, a disciple-making founded on the principles of life of Christ. Nate, just as we have a few minutes here, I just want to just throw a last question to you. Is there's anything else that you're learning things you want to just share that's on your heart.

Always love to kind of just. Kind of give you know, my guests, the opportunity to, just to kind of open question. Is there anything here that you just you'd like to share?

Nathan Glover: it's so corny, but it is on my heart right now. And it's, don't give up. Don't. I, you know, I don't know who might listen to this, but I can say that . In our context, there have been multiple times where my family almost pulled out entirely. And that's the, it's the whole, the whole bunch of us.

And for different reasons, you know, early on, it was just how discouraging and how impossible everything. Um, Middle way through, it was like adolescent pains and you're just tired of working with the same people and, and feeling like you're just getting the same results, even though you're getting more results than you had at the beginning, you just get tired of waiting and you want to give it up and get out of there.

And just like, I'm done with this. This is garbage. And then, you know, sometimes you get sick and we all in my family has dealt with disease. And he gets sick and then everything shuts down and you feel like you go backwards a hundred miles a day.

And you're like, what was this all for? And you're like, I want to give up. And then, and then God gives you a breakthrough. And all of a sudden, all the work that you were doing to facilitate a revival becomes important and it blows up and you're on fire and everything's happening.

And everything that you dreamed that God would do is happening. And then you get critical. And everyone takes their shots at you about what they, what you should have done, what they would have done if they had been you. And how they would have done it and all these things.

And, and within the body of the Christ, the body of Christ, it's easy. When people outside the body criticized, you could be like, they're lost, of course. But when people inside the body, you're out there taking their shots at you, it hurts like crazy.

It burns and on all these different levels for us in my family and our. have felt like walking away. Cause it's just, it's just, it gets so discouraging. And in your flesh, you can make it about you sometimes as opposed to saying, you know what, I'm just running the words errands and I don't need to work. You know, I don't need to criticize another man's servant.

And so I can just, I just need to let it go and, and work in my area of the vineyard. But in that entire process, regardless of who you are, that is listening to this and where you are in that, in that world, if you're in that beginning phase, adolescent phase or in whatever phase we're in now don't give up, don't walk away with, from what God told you to do, because it's tough or because you're discouraged, or because people are mean. Just do what he asks you to do, remain faithful to the finish and play the game for the audience.

Josh Yates: Wow. Wow. Thank you. Thank you for sharing that words of wisdom. I think there's probably a couple of books just in that words of, of the progress of, of working through the different phases that we can come into. And so Yeah, thanks for sharing that Nate. And if a church wants to get connected or a youth groups going, man, I would love to come and serve.

And do you have any like summer opportunities or how would a church get get connected and help be part of you guys as ministry?

Nathan Glover: Yeah. I would say the best way we, we do missions trips and we are passionate about missions trips. The way that we do them is really unique as well.

Come and do a missions trip with us, come and spend a week. Eh, if you bring a youth group down, bring it and you can see what open impact is and all the different spheres that we work in. Because one of the unique things that we have for a missions trip is that you get to see how we do I do all these things, and I think it's a great way to cast vision into your people, but also, especially for your youth group to get excited about.

You know, cities and what God is doing in the city. But another thing that we do is we, we train the Four Chairs or Reverb in all of our missions trips. So if you were to come down and be a part of a missions trip at Urban Impact, we're going to go through that training over the course of your week with us.

And so what you'll get over the course of the week is one you're going to get you're going to get an amazing experience doing inner city ministry, the Urban Impact way. And that is unique. And I can say, I can honestly say I have not seen a lot of ministries like ours. But the second thing that you're going to get is you're going to get to see Jesus, his life up close and personal.

And we're going to be passionately speaking to that. Speaking that to your group of high schoolers or young men or, or whoever.

Josh Yates: Yeah. Yeah. I would encourage our listeners. If you're looking for a model ministry that has taken the life of Christ and try to put it in action. And figuring out how to do that. Urban impact is one of those ministries that to give it a second look get onsite come check out their ministry, come to one of our trainings

and as well as we'll put a link to some YouTube videos and things that you have in terms of your ministry, ongoing anything else that leaders can get connected or follow you on Instagram or anything else we can connect with you.

Nathan Glover: We're on Instagram and Facebook. The Facebook is probably a great one to be a part of, but YouTube, YouTube, my favorite of our, of our social media platforms, because we throw all the things that our arts kids do. We throw on YouTube and it's unbelievable. When you see and we have their arts kids at every level of production from videography to sound design.

I mean, literally it just, all of it, I am always blown away when you see our dance performances and the videography that's done behind them, the music that we write, you know, so we have, we have a team of, of musical writers and leaders that lead the kids in doing that.

So it's all written performance. Produced by our students alongside urban impact leaders. And I encourage you. If you, you can go on YouTube and check that out, it will. You'll you'll get excited. I think

Josh Yates: awesome. Well, thanks Nate, for your time, your leadership and a chance to speak to our audience today. I appreciate that.

Nathan Glover: thanks, Josh. Appreciate it, brother.

Closing

Wayne: Josh, that was cool to hear your conversation with Nate catching up and talking through the things you guys have been able to do together in ministry that you've been able to watch him kind of grow into. So that was a really neat conversation. What was something in that conversation that kind of stuck out to you?

Josh Yates: I was always so many things. There are love spending the time with, with Nate or the Glover family, and just the impact that they're making there in Pittsburgh. And there's a number of things. One as love talking to a second generation ministry leader following after the footsteps of kind of legacy, the ministry that his dad has started.

So seeing some of those things, hear him talk about that the idea of training from. From within and also training from without, and as they've building a winning building, equipping multiplying ministry it's based upon really a Son's life and the influence of Sonlife over the years, seeing that their programs are building back into and to back into the community and back into the local church, the bridge building.

So I just always get inspired by them. And if you're looking for a great ministry, honestly, these guys have a great model for.

Wayne: Yeah, it was such a cool conversation. And one thing he said, he said to focus on building relationships and using programs, I think, especially in, in youth ministry, sometimes you have your senior pastor or your. And they're concerned about what programs you're running for the teenagers in your church and in your community.

And it's, it's easy to get just bogged down and lost in the programs and forget about building those relationships with students, with your leadership team. But just that reminder of. To invest in and build those relationships and use the programs to, to share the gospel, to have gospel conversations and to just continue to build those relationships.

If you have any feedback, any thoughts on our episode today, or just want to say hi, you can send us an email at podcast at Sonlife dot com and here is our disciple making.

Disciple Making Moment

Jay Fast: Well, Hey, my name is Jay Fast and I get to serve as the international ministries coordinator with Sonlife. And I'm excited to be here with you today for a disciple-making moment.

As, as I've been thinking about the last part of Jesus' ministry, the last 15 months. Something that we call the leadership multiplication phase in Jesus' ministry.

And I want to focus in real quick on just one event from that leadership multiplication phase. And and think about some lessons that we can learn on on leadership from, from Jesus, the master leader. I know that for me, I always want to be growing as a leader and I'm sure you do too.

And so I want to speak directly to those of you who are in, in ministry in student ministry specifically and have leadership roles as you think about your development as a leader, The opportunities that you have to develop other leaders around you in that role.

I'm sure you're familiar with the passage in Matthew 16 where Jesus goes to Cesarea Philippa and ask some important questions of his disciples. And just want to think about that event with you and what we can learn from that. One of the things that that strikes me in that is just thinking back on my experience.

Going to Bible college and graduating with a degree in youth ministry and feeling like I had things pretty well figured out. And and then actually getting a job as a youth pastor and realizing pretty quickly that I didn't have a whole lot figured out. And. Maybe you had

a similar experience. I have this conversation with lots of youth pastors on a regular basis who seem to have the same experience that I had.

And just, just realize really quickly that sometimes the best place to learn some leadership development kinds of things is not, is not in a classroom setting, but it's really in the trenches. And that's something that Jesus is modeling for us here, as he goes to Caesarea Phillip, I was told in Matthew 16, verse 13 that he's on his way.

There. He gets there with his disciples and and he's in a place that was very much out of their comfort zone, his disciples, and a place that they wouldn't have normally gone to. And he recognizes, man, I, in order to, in order to teach my disciples some things and grow them in this area of leadership, I need to get them.

Maybe a place that's a little bit uncomfortable for them. And so he gets them out of their normal routine and into a different place and leadership training doesn't just happen in classroom settings. It happens in the trenches. And so we need to look for those opportunities as well.

Second a second leadership lesson.

I think that that Jesus teaches us here is in the conversation with his disciples. You know, he asks the question, who do people say that I am. And they respond with various things and then he says, well, what about you? Who do you say that I am? And we get Peter's classic proclamation. You are the Christ, the son of the living God.

And I think as leaders we need to look for and take opportunities to proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus in dark place. Each of us has in our, in our context, in our community, we have dark places. And I don't know about you for me as I think about my community. I think one of the darkest places here, where I live is the local public schools.

And so man, what does it look like? To proclaim the uniqueness of Jesus as the Christ, the son of the living God in, in those dark places where we live and and how can we encourage and equip other leaders around us to, to do the same thing.

Uh, And then just a third point from, from this passage is in.

Jesus' response to Peter, where he says you are Peter, and on this rock, I'm going to build my church. And I don't want to get into all the minutiae of what Jesus means by on this rock. But I do want to just think for a minute about that last little phrase that he says there, I will build my church. That Jesus makes it really, really clear.

That he's going to build the church, that it's his job to do that. And I think as leaders, sometimes we, we get bogged down and we get so consumed with and worried about building our ministry or building the church that we forget that that's really not our. That the job that Jesus has given us is to make disciples.

And in Matthew 28, as he, as he gives the great commission, he says, go make disciples and teach them to obey everything I've commanded you. And one of the things that he had just commanded them was to go make disciples. And so literally what he's saying, there is go make disciples who will make disciples, who will make disciples.

And and so we need to focus on that as our job. And Jesus has given us the, the pattern for doing that, winning the lost and building up believers. Equipping workers and sending disciple makers and then being involved in developing leaders that will continue to take the movement forward. And so just want to challenge you with that today.

Hope you have a great day and take care of.