

LEADING SAINTS

Recognizing and Responding to the Voice of the Spirit as a Leader | An Interview with Elder Craig A. Cardon

February 5, 2021

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Welcome back to another episode of the leading saints. Podcast if you've enjoyed content on this podcast. It's important that I tell you about the leading saints newsletter that we send out every week this newsletter keeps you up to an all the current leading saints content releases including podcasts articles online events and even live events. That might be happening in your own area in this newsletter. We also recommend some past episodes and written articles that you don't want to miss each week. We include additional leadership perspectives and thoughts. That you can only find in the weekly newsletter. So you definitely don't want to miss out to subscribe to the weekly newsletter simply text. The word lead to four seven four seven four seven or visit leading saints dot org slash. Subscribe again text. The word I. e. hd two four seven four seven. Four seven or visit leading saints dot org slash subscribe. So you don't miss any future leading saints content all right. I'm here with nate nate. Tell us Who you are where you're from. And why do you support leading saints boone from monroe washington. I am just elder scoring president. Trying trying his best. I was introduced to leading saints about a month ago from my wife's cousin in idaho and he just told me about it and said how amazing it was so I subscribed listened and decided that. It's super important burmese. To help it grow. And I just think that no one seems to have the market cornered on good things to say or ways to be better than leading saints offers. Your bits and pieces are insights and knowledge and just amazing principles days that help me become a better person. Become a better leader and all of us. Frankly just be a little bit. Better ni- appreciate that. And I think that the more weed hand try and understand how we can better ourselves the more we will actually become better and so I'm appreciative to mural kurt or the effort you put into this want others to see how they can better along. Hey you found us again. The leading saints podcast. I welcome you back. My name is kurt. Franken I will be your host. And if you're noodle leading saints. We're I'm so glad you walked into this. Virtual form here to learn to engage to hopefully be inspired by some leadership. Content and leading saints is a nonprofit organization. Five one c three. That is dedicated. Helping latter-day saints be better prepared. Delete and do that through a content creation through this podcast. We've got online articles. The very people have have written. We have Virtual conferences that we put on the weekly newsletter and on and on it goes so

definitely jump in visit us at leading-saints.org. Make sure that you're subscribed and everything there so that you don't miss any content and we have four hundred plus episodes that you really should spend some time going back and listening to every single minute okay. You don't have to. But I'm always surprised. I actually meet a lot of people who said Kurt found you a year ago. And I've listened to every episode and that means so much and really helps us perpetuate the knowledge. That's been learned here. And I feel so fortunate that I've been able to sit through personally all four hundred of those episodes now. This episode is great. I mean I always look forward to having an emeritus general thirty on the podcast talk about leadership stock about perspectives on the gospel doctrine. Whatever it is and in this episode. We interview Elder Craig A. Cardon and I'll just read his bio off the church website so that they put it very succinctly in and to the point so Elder Craig A. Cardon was sustained as a general authority. Seventy of the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April, First two thousand six. He was released October, Sixth two thousand eighteen. He has served as a member of the Africa West Area Presidency which we talked about at length in the episode editor of church magazines. An assistant executive director in the Priest and Family Department. He also served as a member of the Pacific Area Presidency. Elder Cardon studied accounting earned a bachelor of arts from Arizona State University. He received a masters of public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School with a methodological area of concentration in leadership and was named Ella Tower Fellow prior to his call in two thousand six. He was an entrepreneur with multiple business interests. Elder Cardon has served in a number of church callings including fulltime missionary in the Italian Mission. President of the Rome Mission from eighty three to eighty six stake. President Bishop High Councilor Counselor in a stake presidency counselor. In a bishopric elders council president institute instructor and gospel doctrine teacher. Elder Cardon was born in December of nineteen forty eight.

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He married Deborah Dana in November of nineteen seventy. They are the parents of eight children and most recently authored a book called *Growing Up into the Lord: Recognizing and Responding to the Voice of the Spirit Living in Peace and Blessing Generations* and had opportunity to advance. Copy of this wonderful book is one of my favorite parts of this job. I get advance copies of books. And I read every word of it loved it really inspirational content with just nurturing a family nurturing individuals leading individuals to better hear and understand the spirit and so in this episode we talk about all aspects of his time leading in the church especially time as a general authority. And then how this of this book apply to the leadership experience. When it comes to praying about callings. Make sure that you're following the will of the Lord in council meetings what if inspiration between two individuals contradicts each other. Right and so a great discussion. I appreciate him allowing dig into some weeds here. That's a great geek out about these leadership concepts and so he was so good at entertaining my questions and just a phenomenal interview. You're going to appreciate it. So here's my interview with other Elder Craig Cardon today. Have the opportunity to connect to via the web with Elder Craig Cardon. How are you? I'm doing great. Curtis nice to be with you today. Very good so do people still call Yeller. Titles in the church had the long traditions. So now that you're in a marriage

general authority What do you usually go by that question to ask often and give us whatever. The individual speaking feels most comfortable with i. Well we'll go with card. And just because i'm used to it so there's no given standard it's and we all recognize. I certainly recognize that. It's a out of respect for the office and that We're honored to hold that office. That's right now. You was it did you. It was two thousand and eighteen. That you were you have marital status. Is that right correct. I called in two thousand six april two thousand six and then as the pattern in the year release released usually the pattern but really snuck. Colbert twenty eighteen. That's great and you've recently written a book called growing growing up until the lord. Which i definitely want to jump into some details there but maybe we can discuss love about your time as a leader. This being you know we focus on leadership topics here on the leading saints podcasts. And so i'm curious you know there's always these interesting stories behind the scenes of how people are. How did that call come to you. In two thousand six to serve as a general authority seventy will as you would understand from your own experience as others would understand for scranton so remarkable thing too when the spirit of lord drudge things and it was I had been released as a stake. President for ten years and had been mashing had been teaching sunday school and institute classes some working with young man and that type of thing during those ten years and was contacted. That was some prior contact. That was very that was Just exploratory and wanting to confirm certain details and understand our status and that contact came from members of the seventy from the seven presidents members of the friendship seventy prior to the call and then in early two thousand six telephone from writing and it was president gordon brinkley and it was the Lengthy conversation was i'm best thing. Remember it was maybe four minutes or so very very brief conversation. There had been as i mentioned there had been some other calls. Nothing committal just exploratory calls previous to that but in the call. He just wanted to confirm that he was really speaking to the right craig. Kardon didn't wanna make any mistakes that way. Yeah and he Then just made a statement. He said the carton you are called to the seventy to serve in the second corn and then because of the circumstances relating to service the second quarter. He wanted to confirm personal. Think that point with regards to financial ability and status cetera but then moved right on and and said others will be in touch with you at that time. The senior president seventy was real candy. Said can you. We'll be in touch with you later and sure. Listen to what they say you wanted to and that was it. There was no there. Were no other questions.

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It was just like maybe four general conference or no it was It was a couple of months that call. You're able to catch your breath a little bit before they announced you so then we were invited to be. Present conference glut flow. After that. i bet you see general and is it typical that they ask you to find a place of residence there in salt lake or depending on your assignment where you'll go or so if you do not live in the salt lake area with this call. The church provide housing recognizing. You've got to move from some place. And so while we were the pattern with us. Although changes in different circumstances according to assignments are pattern was to be in salt lake city for a couple of months for training in salt lake city so we were just placed in a condo. There they made a condo available to us. They're in salt lake city for a couple of months

and then after that we began our service in west africa so they do provide Housing for those. That are not in the solitary. Yeah and then when you have your assignment like 'cause you were were you in the area presidency for west africa's Nigeria pregnancy boy sack for five years and is similar like maybe if emission president was called out there they have a home there that the president lives in an giang together in the same home. But you have exactly exactly. Yeah so those homes are provided and they Do what they can to make them safe from. Comfortable mice accommodations. Yeah you know. I i remember just for my own experience. Even the you know one week not being the bishop and then the next week you are the bishop and they're sort of this identity transition you go through and you're you know i remember trying to even just find the confidence of standing in that role right. I'm curious of you know going from being in your word in your in tucson. Is that right now in in gilbert gilbert arizona. Okay going from there. And then suddenly you're stepping into this role of maybe you've seen seventies your entire life respected them and now you're the seventy. Does anything come to mind. As far as finding the confidence to step into that role or just getting your bearings there as you experienced with the call bishop and other colleagues had stake presidencies cetera. There is a mantle associated with the call and when that mantel is placed upon your shoulders with a setting apart under the forty priesthood. It really is remarkable thing and my experience with this was that i was buoyed up i was strengthened. And you're always you're always wondering why me and how did this there are so many others that are more worthy more capable to do this. And there's wisdom in council says don't don't spend time dwelling on that because the lord has spoken and you're in the seat you're on the calling and has worked at right. Yeah word i'm so you get busy and listen to listen to what i have to say and i'll direct. You does any. Did anybody give you any specific advice. During that time or maybe a different time when you're called into position that that you've reflected upon interesting that the the training in salt lake city for the two months just to make us more familiar with the all of the various committees and working and how how things move through and are developed to church headquarters so that we would know once we were in the area Serving area presidency. We would know people that we would communicate with and we'd be familiar with the operation that type thing it was it was. It was a familiarity as to other matters on council on how to deal with things etc. Everyone pointed to have him. It was the training was listened to what the lord has to say. And take your concerns to him. And you are a general gordy of the church to regulate set an an order. And i'll be about the lord's business and do whatever he drinks do. Yeah is consistent with the words of the prophets. Of course sure. Yeah so so. Your first segment is in west africa. And i know you mentioned your book. You serve dizzying missionary in italy. So i don't know if you're a maybe crossing your fingers album. Europe areas it open but was that i mean africa would was completely foreign to your experience. Had he been there before. What was that transition like a wonderful question. Prior to this time prior to my call. I'd been involved in some Philanthropy work and had been involved within non governmental organization.

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Ngo was doing some work in africa. That was doing some training on various matters relating to some of the challenges that with education exists there wish after and so i had been to africa

and quite by coincidence. I happen to be in accra. Ghana at the time of the dedication of the acros gana temple in two thousand four. And so i just happened to be there at that time it was. It was a remarkable experience. But i i had had some experience with that good and some didn't go through this. Ngo group is working with nice. And then as you get one of these areas assignments did they tell you plan on five years unless something comes up or did you go there thinking you'd be there about five years actually. There's usually assignments like that. You think in terms of three to five years sometimes very in that regard. It's not a set time in west africa. The at the time most of the assignments were for about three years and sometimes going to four years and it was unusual that i would be there five years. I think they just wanted to learn and so they left me their little time to see if i could ever figure out nice nice so tell us about your time there. What did you learn about the church and especially from the from the perspective of leadership there because we we've all heard you know. The church is growing rapidly in africa and with with any growth. There's various variables that come into question but one of those do we have the priesthood. Their demand available to step forward and lead anything. Come to mind as far as your time there in africa. Kirker we could. We could spend weeks talking about different. I bet i it was. It was just A marvelous marvelous experience. It is a it is truly a life changing experience. I think i think one way to describe this just to try and give some context There was a senior missionary. Couple ivan's visiting with who had been in africa about six months at the time. And i asked him how they were doing. And what they were experiencing and the sister the wife in that senior couple express something that really captured the essence of this and and her comment was simply this in speaking about the people and the beautiful people west africa. She said they have so little of what is not important and so much of what he is and she was speaking of the reality that there are difficult. Temporal circumstances in west africa but the people are remarkably spiritual receptive to spiritual things. I and they are intelligent capable people and when the light of the gospel comes to them it is. It is remarkable to witness and to see what happens now as you mentioned the the challenge in west africa the the church is growing exponentially in west africa. And it is it is Remarkable to witness in the challenges to have the priesthood strength and the leadership strength within the organizations among the sisters youth. And all of these things that that can sustain that and that can that can help foster the girl so that people continue to understand the significance of the ultimate the the objective of being with our heavenly father. He's turnley which requires temple ordinances and and being able to enjoy the the lessons of eternal life and so it would be easy. What one of the one of the challenges in west africa was to have the discipline to always grow from centers of strength and this was council. That was coming from the problems. They saw this clearly the senior brethren as they would Work with the stay with countless and encourage us in this regard but that meant drawing from senators and strength meant what while it would be possible to just go throughout the countryside and to to go out into the far reaches of africa and find groups of people that would receive the gospel in with whole villages and tribes coming into church. It would defuse the church and would not provide the basis for growth and development with that type of girl that would allow the church to sustain itself favorably so the emphasis was to stay with considers of strength and to let those centers of strength to continue to grow until they encompassed these more outlying areas in a natural growth pattern growing out of centers strength and there were wonderful capable men and women wonderful area seventy that were called just had had the spirit of the lord and the vision and understood what needed to be done

and would go out and train and teach and and it was necessary to to address a lot of things regularly that new.

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Yeah but They just people had not seen. They were not used to. But in the restored gospel they were able to grow. And learn with that spirit of the lord and so to focus on these centers of strings that typically. I mean as far as the application of that was at disorder where missionaries replaced. So they didn't go to some remote village baptize a bunch of people. That don't have a church to go to die. Think exactly that was that was part of it. Working with mission presidents and making sure that the missionary stayed within certain areas and and part of that occur. Frankly was this is so second nature to us. We don't even think of it but we recognize the priesthood keys are exercised within geographic boundaries. Yeah so you recognize added the former bishop member state. I mean there are keys are exercised within geographic boundaries and in a place like west africa where there is this a positive there are. There are not many maps. They just don't have the resources to look at things and and see them. In terms of mapping things out on a map so it was necessary and consequently you might see a stake president with priesthood. Keys in an area who family members that lived in a village one hundred and fifty kilometers away and he wanted them to enjoy the blessings of the gospel as well so he would he would with his priest in keys he would work with the mission president and says since missionaries out to my village one hundred and fifty commodores away and teach them the gospel baptize and then my family will have the gospel and so it was teaching them say no now your your priesthood keys and president even mission president you need to work together and enhance recognize that their geographic boundaries and that is outside and authorized jerry crossley the day will come when they will receive the gospel but that day is not today the same sin west africa waited for fourteen years from the time that they i received word and began having dreams and seeing seeing the book of mormon and visions and when they eventually received copies of materials from the church the mormon and other saints they faithful men and women in west africa talked to gospel. They didn't have authority to baptize. Anyone didn't have authority to organize anything but they organized officially under in the name of the church but they organized churches and they gave them the name the church and digit christ latter-day saints even though they weren't organized authorized to do so and and create congregations waiting just waiting for the time that the church would come from arguing that When that occurred. What a glorious day it was. Yeah wow the faith just inspires me. I love it some curious you know with you know like you talked about the helping. Even state presence understand the workings of keys and boundaries and jurisdiction and so forth. You know the benefit of growing up the united states with the churches sort of know even though i was called as young bishop seen it modeled most my life so i probably Like too many things on fire. I could sort of figure it out but you know with this. A lot of these individuals. Don't have that you know the growing up with that model of the church and so maybe can't just hand them a handbook and say just the question. Look there it was there. Is there anything to say to that. Dynamic of helping you know. Eager young leaders elite accordingly. That was that was the importance of the work of the presidency in the area. Seventy in bringing that about the there are. There is now a generation

of saints in west african. So what you speak of now. Seen the example is occurring because of the descended was exercised in growing from senators strength and as young men and women in west africa go into the mission field serve and work with mission president. And there's now a generation there now several decades of the example where people are beginning to see this and so it is beneficial in that regard but back in it. It was still a challenge. And i'm sure it is a challenge. They're stealing though. I haven't been there for over ten years but it is still a Well it's not been tenure.

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It's been yeah while it's been awhile to see that the The saints wandered learn the bishops stake presidencies. They wanted to learn and they just say they just hadn't seen it and so they were. It took extra effort to help them understand patience as sometimes there's were made but it was When and when the temples were built in west africa and abandoned jerry and accra ghana and with others. Now being built it is it's remarkable blessing to see how the spirit of award blessings and drexel snakes. I bet i bet so i'm just thinking back keno obviously is your role as a journal thirty of different assignments over the time. And i think back to my time as a young missionary when transfer calls would come. You know sort of this this epic moment that we'd we'd wait for that phone to ring or whatever so did they usually give you a heads up that a transfer is coming. And then how do you find out where you're going requisition. The normal pattern again there occasionally but the normal pattern that is that assignments among the general. Gordon's usually begin august first and go through the following july and so in april conference of year. They're following general conference usually on the tuesday following the close of general conference. There's a meeting of the general stories where the first presidency and the twelve identify. What assignments will be beginning in august. So if there's going to be a change in your assignment you will know about that. They're in april. And you'll know that beginning in august you'll be in a not location or conversely if there's knowing change indicated you know that you'll be continuing the year. Does that make sense. Yes does and so after west. Africa's that i know you spent some time in the pacific. Is that right yeah. After west africa we were assigned to headquarters salt lake so we lived in salt lake city and we were there for five years so we are in west africa five years. We then we're in salt lake city for five years and then our final two years. We're in the pacific i headquartered. In auckland ezekeiel gotcha. And so this is your time in the headquarters in the priesthood and family department. You know that sort of a priest and we generally think of the doctrine of priesthood or or whatnot. What what do people may not realize as far as a the department that's actually called priesthood and family. that's another great question here the Do we hear of the missionary department and we know what they do right now. We hear the temple and family history department and we know what they do. And so we we We hear these things. We know the church history department. We know what they do with pre student family. It is a huge responsibility and a huge part of what is involved in the church. So think of all of the work of the organization's relief society young man young women primary sunday school. All of that is within the precinct. Family department think of all of the development of the training materials that go on apart from unique things that are at the at the unique to each organization. There are things that That they may get into the Training but

the preparation of the all of the the handbooks. The general handbook for example the development of the curriculum the new church curriculum that all happens within the priesthood and family department and it is a there are just all of the departments of the church. These wonderful people stand the just aren't fired and make things were beautifully. And then there are general forties that are charged to Give us some oversight to the work and to see that it's proceeding according to the lord's will according to the words of the prophets and the first presidency and the work very closely and giving direction taller goes matters and all of it occurs under their inspiration direction but it's really a marvelous instruction a marvelous schooling on not the process of revelation and how the lord governs his church so my those five years in church headquarters were just as rewarding as they could be the entire sure this yeah and really low the work of the family department we take for granted you are apt is updates overnight and there's new handbook content right and we think wow this just came from heaven but now there's a lot of people working behind the scenes figuring out how to write this information or whatever it is and and a couple people yeah that's great and so typically is at three general thirty seventy s who make up a presidency who sort of manage that department or again a very good question.

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There is a an executive committee for each apartment. The church and those executive committees all have generally again. There might be some difference occasionally exceptions case but they have three members of the twelve that served as members of the executive committee. Then there is in each department. There is a managing director which is a fulltime staff person who manages all of the personnel and at giving the department. So there there's that person and then there is an executive director of the department who is a seventy and then there are maybe five or six other seventy who are assistant. Executive directors the department so in each department. You'll have an executive committee that is comprised of three members of the twelve occasionally members of the presiding bishopric will be part of those executive committees. Actually ever instance. They are apart of and then there will be managing director and an executive director that form the executive committee but then outside of the direction and working executive committee you have assistant executive directors other seventy other general stories that are working with those departments. Not i don't know if. I confuse you with that explanation. No no i think that helps. I mean i find it helpful because just knowing the you know the people who who are getting together and talking meeting and seeking deeper revelation. you know. This isn't just another department meeting or this guy's an accountant. So he can you know. Obviously some of those things come up but you know as you meet. I mean there's a lot of revelation. I would imagine that you witnessed come to the surface in those in those meetings. It is remarkable regulatory processes. And it's interesting. Kurt that everyone comes to those meetings seeking the direction of lord trying to understand what the they maybe should contribute and there will be times when thoughts will be presented and there may be things that seemingly that may seem not to be consistent but as the committee or as council continues to work with and just gives a time. The lord molds that and as matters are presented they will be presented to these executive committee so for example decade committee of their

appreciate department. Matters will come forward for example relating to the curriculum the development of the curriculum and as they come forward the prophet would sit there and hear what was being done and then they would comment and at times. They may give some specific direction in other occasions. They may just say that doesn't seem quite right to ship. Go back and work on it. Some more and no one can really perhaps know exactly why it will just be something that says. It's not quite right yet. Keep working on it and come back and talk to us more later. Yeah i appreciate that because it's not that they're dictating like well actually chapter to chapter six and even though they may from time to time find but it's sometimes it's just like now let's just keep on this and there's more that we discover here right and it's i think it's important for For all of us to understand that that is a process of revelation that is can be valuable also in local units in presidencies eligible and presidencies class presidencies. Different ways we hear each other but then we and we counsel and we take things to proper authorities to see how things work and then we await. The lord's direction comes through those who are authorized. Yeah for sure anything else about your time in the department. That would be worth mentioning again. That's another four or five episodes but Anything that you wanna make sure we hit on before we move on. I think i want to just bear witness of what occurred in the development of come follow me and with the church is now experiencing with this under the direction of the prophets once again. The lord prepared something that how could any of us have anticipated the significance of that was going to be during a time of pandemic. Yeah or how could we have anticipated the significance of that.

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An individual lives just in terms of what occurs in the so fully within home in terms of conversion and i witnessed in working with such capable people within the organizations the church the sunday school general presidency the The general presidencies of all those organizations the the staff at headquarters that are just inspired men and women and Just washing this come together and and seen in committees where the lord just didn't roll that out and say here's the photo. Now take me and duplicate it. It was a development process that was a revelatory process that was a very fulfilling for everyone involved and it was always directed by the prophets ultimately. When it was right it was put in place but that took a lot of doing that was not a simple process. Yeah and my my witness. My testimony is that is of god and it's a tarp a blessing. If will you pull utilize it. Yeah i really appreciate your perspective because a lot of times with a revelation we sort of you know. We wanted to be miraculous or simple that you know. This is from god. He's gonna tell us where he connects to be in beacon ecstasy and there it is but sometimes it takes a while and it's messy at times or but nonetheless it still revelation and what. I love about that process. Is that those involved. They grow and develop individuals much more than if god just said well. Here's what come follow me. Looks like and run with it right. I think the problem. Joe the experience that even as the church was the restoration was occurring and as president nelson is so beautiful taught. Continues as registration continues. It's just you work in fate. You exercise fate in the lord. Jesus christ and he directs. These things is yeah. so i'm curious is as a journal three seventy year. Any seventy i guess for that matter. They there's weekends are typically filled with some state conferences. Right as you're assigned by the the

twelfth to to attend conferences around wherever area you're serving in and i'm just curious i'm always curious especially as a leader who's had several callings what they'd say themselves. You know way back when maybe you were a bishop or beginning of stake president because he learned some things you gain some wisdom that may be share their and so on that note like i'm just curious of your approach when you get assigned to a state conference in your to preside any specific method or approach that you would keep in mind as you walk into that stake and hopefully serve them well and part of it came from what i experienced while i served the state president from those who visited the general visited my states while i was presided. Mistake whenever i would Get an assignment. My hope was to find a way to understand and know what inspiration to state president had been seeking and receiving what he was feeling for his stake to understand it and then while i was with him to try to do what i could to sustain him in that responsibility in calling and whenever there were things that i felt could augment or could perhaps redirect some of his efforts more profitably share them but the intent was to try and the best i was able to sustain the state president calling because i knew the reivers gonna be there for a relatively short period of time and for a couple of days sometimes just today and a half and then i would be gone and it was highly unlikely that i'd ever receive an assignment to be back in that state in And so the state president was staying there and he held priest keys and that gave him the opportunity and responsibility to seek the direction of the lord. So when you say. What perspective was there i. I know that while. I should've stayed president how richly i was blessed by general forties and it came into the steak and while they were there built me up and at knowledged the inspiration that i've been attempting to receive and supported efforts consistent with what we were focused on and when i had the assignment to be the one going into the steak i tried to remember that there was i considered while you're involved in all the meetings are that the prophets have identified to a part of a state conference.

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I considered my time with the state president and with the state presidency to be the most important time of the state conference the leadership meeting the saturday evening adult session. The general session conference important meetings. Where the saints ratified and we're we're you. Try to invite the spirit of the lord to be present. She lives blessed but the most important influence. I felt it'd be with the stake president personally and with the state presidency and so let's spend a lotta had a lot of focus on them. Yeah you know if you just leadership principles. I want to underscore. There's i just loved the approach of walking in there knowing that it could be easy may be less effective but it could be easy. Walk in there say. Hey listen mr president. I i've been around the block a time or two. Let me show you what you're doing wrong and give you some advice here and all. That doesn't look good and these numbers could be better and instead of come in with the marching orders but to really respect that you know their priesthood keys. Here there's some inspiration that the stake president his. He's been thinking about the state a lot longer than than you have right. So to walk in there with that and it just to relate that to more local leadership level like having the bishops sort of walk into the primary the same way the primary presidencies there really about these things and we can just sort of lead out with Inspiration do you have rather than like let me let me just handle this

and get a handle right kirk important point exemplified i think by oftentimes what happens in a ward council meeting where there's just wonderful blessing when at bishop can see himself as a means of giving voice to the inspiration that is coming to members of that council and with his keys and responsibilities to see things proceed. According to the words that he allow some things to be emphasized other things to be refined but that he encouraged that he recognized that everyone in that council is entitled to revelation and when that sense is felt by members of the world council. But they feel like here what. They're they need to come to that. Meeting prepared spiritually prepared. Because of what's going to occur there it's going to be revelatory experience dan when they They come and and the bishop sustains them and if there needs to be some correcting moves we'll so be it but received received will and it just fosters more more revelation. Yeah the fostering of revelation for sure. I wanna continue our discussion. I think the direction. I'd like to go and questions at ask relates really well. Two year the new book that you've just published in it's called growing up until the lord and maybe just introduced us to that and what was there a specific question returning to answer. What the book or what inspired the book to be the for you to sit down. Well thank you for that question throughout to my wife's and my experience has parents from the time. When i had a child come to our home. We felt the need to do what we could connect them with having to find a ways to connect them with heaven and so we had a lot of experience with that and we we were not perfect parents by any means we made the heirs and did all those things and in and as opportunity serb within the church that seemed to be a a continuing need. That people just need that connection that have coffin senate. It was the as the come follow me. Curriculum was being developed as this whole concept being developed it was blessed by the realization so beautiful emphasized the prophets that the conversion occurs most generally within the home where there is a family that has sent the gospel. They're exceptions where there may be. Individual members of the church is the only member senior homes and that the church provides wonderful support in that regard but it is in the home that we learn grow. Experience these things and the While i was General theory oftentimes in state conferences as we would have discussions about some of these things and there would be opportunities to address them in some of the meetings there always lots of questions loss of interest in it and there were always lots of questions following saying. Have you written anything about this. And i i never had written anything about it.

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And after my release is i was talking about it Frankly i thought that it might be beneficial to write something for the family and so i an essence. The basics of this book was something that i wrote that i kind of road initially with family in mind and as my family thought they suggested that it could have broader base and to maybe should have a broader base and so i pursued that but the intent was to to try and help people recognize that as youth as we go as we grow all of us and as we experience adolescents. There are so many things happening there that that sometimes there's just an exasperation people you know people say what happened to my nice be child. That now is Experiencing the i'm extremely experiencing with them and addle essence and helpful. I think to recognize that. All of this is part of a divine plan. There's nothing that we can engage it in a way that becomes very positive and very helpful and all of us need to have

reinforced lives. This notion this understanding this truth this reality that god speaks to us and we can trust that morse and so this book is about ways that can happen no matter your age action and i love the emphasis on trusting that voice because sometimes you hear this from a lot of youth groups you know. How can i tell if this is just my brain talking to me or if it is the spirit and that's something that questioned that really wrestle with early on as you're trying to decipher what the spirit is what not and then in a leadership context. I remember as a bishop with so many decisions to make and some of them. Were more daunting than others. I just met i think. Trust that voice. You know. I think the direction i'm going and sometimes like i don't think it was supposed to go so from a leadership standpoint as far as like hearing that voice in engaging with it what comes to mind as far as refining that skill a leader. Well i don. I don't think the lord expects us to go to the produce department of the grocery store and asked him whether we should buy green beans. Your sleep now. If it's important. I suppose he'll somehow get word to us on that but what i'm trying to communicate. Is that the more expects us to do our best to study things out to look at them to understand what the options are to at potential consequences to try and anticipate what's gonna develop but in leadership within the church. The underlying question needs to be what is going to best blessed the life of that individual so questions about assignments or questions about callings your questions about these things with that underlying question. The lord will give impressions about those types of things on matters on planning activities or things like that. He'll expect us to do our own work and and he's given the promise that if we start to stray on some you'll let us know so you said you just gave the example. That is a bishop. You start to do something. You'd make su decision you start going down a certain road and then say whoops said that. That didn't look like the road. Yeah that ought not to be reviewed. As having i don't think having aired necessarily yeah i think it can be looked at as a continuing process revelation so you stay tuned. You don't just get inspiration and then closed ward off and say okay. I've got an not. I don't wanna hear anymore. You stay tuned you start going down the road and then you open yourself up to receiving correction and directions you go. Yeah no that's really helpful. And i'm just digging in the context of like calling for example. Because i'm sure you were involved in many reorganizations of stake presidencies and whatnot and that i mean talk about a daunting task when iraq into a stake in. You've gotta decide who's gonna be leading this this steak for for nine years and you definitely hope that you've got the lord's inspiration. There can be tough to handle on your own but as a leader many times. you know. there's this interesting dynamic. And i don't mean to make light of it but it's a real real thing leaders deal with is that sometimes. We think that i called the chalkboard in heaven fallacy. Where god has the stock board heaven with every calling in your ward listed on this and he has a specific name next to every single calling in your ward and it's up to you as the leader to determine what god's thinking right and so we can put so much pressure on ourselves to think okay. Who is going to be. The second sunday sunday school teacher for the youth who has got one right and sometimes i i see lot leaders.

00:50:05 - 00:55:02

Put extra pressure on himself say well. Actually you've got the keys like you could make some decisions and move forward and it's not like you have to read god's mind in every aspect of it

but maybe i'm wrong. What what are your thoughts. As far as like that the pressure to call the right person right. And i'm sure you felt that going into a stake that i've got a call the right person well first of all this using your example with the bishop and looking at the callings in the ward etc. I think it's good. The priesthood leaders are concerned about it. And pray about but as you are suggesting so beautifully it's not helpful to get overly anxiously will really anxious about it once again. There is an opportunity where you try to do. The best you can and understanding circumstance and there will be occasions definitely occasions where there is a cop screen. That says that sister is to be in this calling and it's to happen immediately. I've had those and so absolutely and so those common you acknowledge them and on many other -cations it is. Here are five different people that could serve and they would all be blessed by it. And i think in in A little many circumstance like that. You can say okay of all these that are worthy to serve and willing and able to serve at this time. Which person would be most blessed by this. And how would it help them in whatever may come to them in the future. Yeah i think that's about consideration. Yeah i appreciate that that you know realizing that because i would imagine there are some states that you walked into your thinking you know. There's there's three men. Here that would be great stake presidents and i'm going to consider all the options and usually it was many more than that but once again i am a witness to the marvelous lesson revelation as it relates that occurs every weekend on this or with General all over the are seeking the lord's direction on someone that is to be called as a stake. President it occurs in real. God speaks and he sends to witnesses. He sends whenever there's a stake reorganization. there are two brothers. And their two seventy generally could be a member of the twelve and seventy or something but there are there to witness there and those two witnesses seek confirmation and it needs to come to each one of them as to who independently as the lord called council together they consider things together but ultimately each of them respond or accountable to the lord insane. We've received that direction and we were great before and then acting and it is real and in my experience it was. It was as varied as could be in terms of how things unfolded but it always was ultimately a clear direction on how to proceed with things being confirmed. It oftentimes took a lot of work but it was The lord eventually made his will and it was a great lesson. Yeah any advisor perspective. Give leaders who feel like maybe a stake princely us trying to decide on the next bishop of award and that just is just isn't coming in there they're not settled with it obviously in in in your role as a general authority you had till sunday. Tanner whenever i mean you needed to have a name you know so you sorta had that pressure. Unlikely that revelation come but for those leaders who just aren't feeling like they're they're settling on a certain name something well if something isn't settling and and so. They need to make sure that they have all the information. They can't available to them. Both is to the individual and to family circumstance and marital relationships and and all of those things they need to. They need to have as clear as possible everything that they they can. All they need to give the lord everything they can to work and then once that is those things are known and they look at the options. If it's a case of there being several men anyone from it so i think it's helpful to ask the question in terms of what lies in the future trying to understand what the lord maybe doing here for. Which man would this calling. I bless is life not only for what he will experience as. They should what he made screens. Your after whatever. That may be. And i think asking that question helps bring some clarity to the consideration at times yeah.

00:55:02 - 01:00:10

I'm curious it. And i don't mean to belabor this point but it's such an interesting dynamic that i feel like doesn't get talked about a lot just with this sometimes as a leader you know you want to call people or you want people to be called her fisher. Bet right that you can depend on that are stable and so you naturally default to when you start considering names you default to a list of people who sometimes they get termed the same ten people right or the the people we always see in these certain callings is that I can see in in one sense that could sort of limit that revelation inspiration process. Was there anything you would do or process. You take to make sure that you weren't just defaulting to you. Know the leader. That seem stable. Had a good job. That wasn't there. Were less variables for to go wrong. Absolutely i don't know how to describe this other than the way i've been i've been trying to you. You gather the information you can you see what and you're asking the question what's going to best less. These lives how this is going to unfold. And i think we can all turn to experience where men and women have been called physicians at times when i suspect those. That were sustaining. I'm wondering how in the world this happened to but it was a part of a process. Laurie was engaged in In blessing to life. So i i don't know what i can Say you're to address the need that you're that you're trying to help. Help us all recognized here but we need to look at those that are not in the normal seats. There's such a vast resources are so many blessings flow and the can be extended to so many people if they're willing to respond and the lord correct how that happens and it's ranking this one. Yeah i bet. I appreciate that. And thanks for me a believer that point little bit. But it's a fascinating discussion for sure. So shift gears a little bit to another interesting story in your book that i found really really thought provoking is you gave this example of when you were stake president I think it was a youth conference. They sort of had this concluding testimony meeting in sort of the dynamic that happened. There would might telling that story and seeing what we can learn from it. It was a marvelous use conference. We had a very large active stake. So there were big numbers involved in all this with the largest an active stake with issue conference it had it had been planned will lots of adults Appropriate adults involved with this and in this closing testimony meeting that we were having. It was being directed by the us and we were in a bit of an amphitheater in the venue that we were in and so we were. We were able to see everyone and it was It was very nice and those of us that were seated in front. We had a podium setup. We could see with the youth. They were coming up and bearing testimony but the not very testimony they were coming up and talking about how much they loved each other and how much they loved the leaders that that were there and there wasn't much being said by way of testimony of award jesus christ or recognition of his hand and wondered occurred this marvelous experience. We'd had a few days and so it was not appropriate. In that sense. It was just missing mark but as it preceded it was clear i felt clearly a spirit that was developing that was not consistent with the spirit of the lord as the youth were beginning to sob. They were starting to hug each other in the congregation. They were trying to several of them. Sit on one seat. It was emotional but it wasn't spiritual. I don't know how to express that they were. They were focusing on the sorta the camaraderie of the group right. They loved each other. They had a great time. They had some experiences together but that was different than a testimony of christ or the gospel and things like that was that was happening as one of speaker concluded

another was coming to the podium. I stood up podium. And i just instructed. The utah drew their attention to what was happening. I instructed them to hulk it back in their own seats and two. Now listen as we talked about. What testimony was and why and what that meant and as we did. I felt impressed. Promising that if they would from this point on paul it would be appropriate to express appreciation for one another in for leaders if they would give attention to bearing witness of the savior and how they hit witnessed his hand in what had occurred in this conference in their lives and other instances as they feel impress to do so they would feel something different and they would be able to discern distinction and what they had previous single.

01:00:10 - 01:05:05

They were feeling now. And we're able to talk about that. The fact that emotion does not always coincide with spirit often does but not necessarily and that happened. The usage started during testimony of the savior. There was a different spirit prevailed. And as i mentioned in the book to this day there have been people that have commented on what they remember that experience. And they remember. The distinction state built medication. So it is that was part of a lesson of learning to discern learning to know how to invite the spirit and some cautionary things about things that may lead us astray with some emotion. There are times when we when our responses are more emotional than they are spiritual. I think in our council meetings. I don't want this to be misunderstood. But i think at times in our council meetings. We sometimes attempt to validate what we're expressing by adding the description. I feel really strongly about this Yeah no it's good to feel strongly and and that is a means by which the war does communicate with and teach us but other people in that room are also searching and feeding and where that expression is used to try and supersede. Someone else may be expressing. I think we need to be cautious and recognized that the strong feeling maybe motivated by a private agenda that we don't fully knowledge it. yeah and So we just need to be cautious. And i appreciate that. You are titular. That in the book is that just sort of recognizing that you know like in that testimony meeting there is maybe some some camaraderie and love for each other. That was getting the way of what the spirit is there to do. And then counsel setting sometimes. There's there's passions there's a focuses. Their personal experiences. Sorta leads us to feel very strongly about things but not assuming that that strong feeling is the spirit in some form wanting to communicate through you in a strong way right. i think that's that's so helpful to recognize step back and let it unfold naturally while it may it may be that strong feeling is the spirit but it's important to acknowledge that there may be other strong feelings among others and can't with your strong feeling invalidate the feeling of another. Yeah yeah but oftentimes it is just. It is more emotion and when it is that there's value in some introspection insane is private agenda. That i'm tractors. Yeah so this. In the context of this you know better hearing the spirit understanding the spirit and trusting that voice from your experience in those settings of council meeting. What process do you go through. Or how do you keep yourself in check to make sure that that is not just a strong feeling that from a secret agenda any any advice you give their let me back up just to step okay and say that in a council meeting. Oftentimes everyone is just looking to the bishop ward council meeting for example. Yeah everyone is just looking to the

bishop to make the clarita word to just tell us what we're supposed to do and we'll go on we'll we'll salute and we'll go on and there is great value in the council and with the bishop that is able to dry out from the group the thoughts and feelings and recommendations of others and then to see what be an and as in real time as just occurring to rather than stepping in and directing it let that flow a little let it see where the spirit of the lord takes that and as it develops if it starts to go off on a different track then find some way to Say something to bring it back but don't feel like there has to be a declarative authoritative expression on every matter. Yeah now in. As that is fostered a council begins to gain greater confidence in itself and the members being raider conference in each other. They listened more to each other and eventually a decision needs to be made but in my experiences as a stake president i remember state prints to meetings and and high council meetings and those things there would be times when we'd be discussing matters not be disagreement and people would say well president.

01:05:05 - 01:10:34

Just make a decision and we'll beside and we'll go from there and we'll do whatever you want to do and my response would be. No we're just gonna let this restroom while we'll bring this up again and other time and it was remarkable. What would happen as we would come back together. On sometimes more than two or three occasions to address the same matter as the spirit of the lord would begin to allow a direction to rest with everyone where everyone comfortable that is the spirit of unanimity which lord speaks in the doctrine covenants that the general forty to work with. And it's a great pattern for all of us in church to consider how that's so helpful in terms of the you let it flow a little bit like i. I love that perspective. Because i remember being the bishop and suddenly the you know the primary presidents as kind of disagreeing with the elders corn president. And there's some passion there and sort of god like let's diffuse this and just make a decision move on but you know. Let us see where this is heading. You know obviously you don't want to go off the rails too much and you might step in at some point but just letting it unfold a little bit and and being curious about the dynamic where the council's going in there deeper revelation they're and helping both the primary president and the elders corn president to respect corner other than to acknowledge that enter. Just see where the spirit of the word will picked up. yeah awesome. Was we wrap up just sort of question with in regards to being in a leadership position. Oftentimes people come to you for advice and They want to know the answer right. This sort of the dynamic is shared about in counselling bishop. Just tell us what to do. Tell me what to do bishop. But i'll do it and solve my problem. And then i can blame you if it doesn't work but you know this and give some great examples many of them in your book with regards to your children of how you help them develop their own skill and ability their own experience with the spirit in here in recognizing so. I'm just curious when how can we better help individuals instead of just giving them our advisor will what i would do is but instead of helping them guide an how to seek out their own inspiration and spirit of that whatever question or concern the half by asking inspired questions and asking them the individual show with me. What you've experienced this. what have you done. What have you considered. Have you looked in these areas. You considered these things and asking questions and she inspire questions. Invite people to think more deeply and perhaps through question to oakland avenue

of thinking that they have not previously considered but ultimately with the questioning and with all but discouraging to continually turn them to the lord because he does live and he does speak to us. It is real. It is something on which we are dependent and as we help each other turn to that and feel it. It's like in our families when we are there have been times every child son and daughter of god is accountable to god and according to their circumstances and sometimes things people just are rebellion scott but in our families as we read the scriptures as we pray together it is not that. We're just trying to get children to or youth in the church or as we're working with investigators missionaries working with investigators. Elders corn presidents working with families that have been less active. It's it's not that we're just trying to get them to check the box and say i read the book of mormon. I read today where i said my prayers. It is what have they felt. All they've done that in that process. How do we help them. Feel and recognize it. They're feeling something because with that recognition challenges come they can exercise faith in the lord and turn to him and receive answers and receive. That's just loved the idea of 'cause sometimes the question is it seems easy to answer and just say here's my advice and this was really worked for me every time and you should just do that but to just continue turn them back toward the lord through the you know. The power of questions is is remarkable so ellerker and this has been awesome. I appreciate you entertaining all my questions. Some of a bit too in the weeds. But i learned so much so much for this anything. We're missing or point or concept. You wanna make sure we we hit on before we wrap up. The hierarchy of heaven is amazingly flat. God speaks to all of us and We can have great confidence that he'll speak to a simple listen nipple worthy to hear him and helping one another to understand that and she looked even in troubled times and important in the title of the book growing up until the lord comes from keenum and chapter three where mormon gives a description of human sons nii finally high and in the midst of all all of the sidled trouble that they were facing everything that was going on inside that time mormon says of elements boys and finally they began to grow up unto the lord.

01:10:35 - 01:14:30

Now what does that mean emit more than they were just. They were checking boxes. It meant that they were making connections with lord they were learning how to approach him and hear his voice and cough. And that's the message. That's the name that we that we trust that and that we help each other recognize it and read respond to love that. I've got one more question for you but Where this book just released for recording this at the end of january and it just Just dropped any place specific people if they want to check out the book and read on amazon in electronic form eagle forum now it will be also available from amazon in hardcopy paperback copy within a week or two i'm untold and it's data from the publisher cedar ford. Yeah see your hearts are available with hardcopy paper bag from cedar pervert the great publisher that's well respected and published a lot of great titles from individuals like yourself so we'll Thank you in the last question i have for you is as you reflect on your life as a leader in various leadership callings how his being a leader helps you become a better follower of jesus christ. It just helped me to see it is provided a form. We're and i've been able to observe witnessed the handle. Lord made powerfully manifest in the lives of other with his children and it has strengthened my

testimony of who he is and what his work is and how we can be involved. Everyone of this in helping him and competitions work. These last concludes my interview with trae carton a big shout out to him for being willing to come on the leading things podcast and have me fires from questions out to him and also just a shadow to his daughter who originally reached out to Suggest that we get him on the podcast and hopefully he sees great success with his book again. The title is growing up unto the lord recognizing responding to the voice of the spirit living in peace and blessing. Generations will link to it in the show. Notes definitely check it out leaving a review at amazon to help them get this good word out there get more people reading it and exposed to these great doctrines and concepts. This is like a great book if you need book together the family and read a chapter and talk about some of these concepts because he gives some great anecdotes within the book with his children and they're just inspiring fun to read and would really apply to any latter day saint family. And if there's anybody else that you would recommend that we reach out to interview at that's how a lot of these interviews get started. We get an email at some point that recommends somebody and it turns into a fantastic interview so we would love to hear from. You know who that is. Obviously we can't interview everybody but we would love for you. Email us at leading saints dot org slash contact. Let us know who we should reach out to. Maybe ideally if you have a connection to them. That always helps handout. See what other future episodes weaking lineup to inspire us. All and remind you once again to text. The word lead to four seven four seven four seven in order to subscribe to the leading saints weekly newsletter. It came as a result of the position of leadership which was imposed upon us. Either god of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of jesus christ when the declaration was made concerning the own and only true and living church on the face of the earth we were immediately put in a position of loneliness loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor runaway and a which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.