

# LEADING SAINTS

## Having Difficult Conversations with Youth | A How I Lead Interview with Keith Wonnacott

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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 date on all the current Leading Saints content releases, including podcasts, articles, online events and even live events, that might be happening in your own area wage 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 a Weekly Newsletter. So you definitely don't want to miss out. To subscribe to the Weekly Newsletter, simply text the word LEAD to 474747 or visit [leading Saints.org /Subscribe](https://leadingsaints.org/Subscribe). Again, text the word LEAD to 4 7 4 7 4 7 or visit [leadingsaints.org/subscribe](https://leadingsaints.org/subscribe) so you don't miss any future Leading Saints content. Leading Saints as a non-profit organization dedicated to helping Latter-day Saints be better prepared to lead and we do that through content creation like this podcast which took you subscribe to. We also have a website at [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org) with thousands of incredible articles all about leadership in the context of being a Latter-day Saint. We host virtual summits, live events. I also have a Weekly Newsletter to keep you up-to-date, on, all things happening with leading Saints. Visit [leadingsaints.org](https://leadingsaints.org) for more information. Everyone. This is Kurt Francom with Leading Saints and today sitting down through the powers of the internet with, through this Facebook live, with Keith Wonnacott. Did I say your last name, right? That's correct. And I've been practicing all day. So he was some brief background piece. I'll do some rapid-fire questions here. Where do you live? I live in Maryland, wage just outside of Washington DC. Great and what's your current calling? I am currently the stake young men's president and sit on the High Council. Awesome. which will be home today, is you've recently been a bishop, Hallelujah. I was released the month before covid started, so it's an easy barometer for me to remember. It's just over a year ago. That is a

nice sneak out before the the craziness. That's right nice. And what do you do for work? So I work for Pfizer, I work on Gene therapies and specifically in Regulatory Affairs which job Packed with FDA, because I worked for FDA for thirteen years. Nice. So, you've been part of this this effort of getting Society back on track? Well, a little bit off. I don't work on the vaccine but okay, but we all played our role. Good topics. Yes, that's cool. Well, we were introduced by a mutual friend, Adam home and he suggested I reach out to you because he served with you in various capacities during your time as bishop and he most more specifically highlighted a time, I think it was a 5th Sunday lesson that you gave they're really destigmatize having tough conversations especially with youth and and making The Bishop's office were welcoming. I don't know how you would describe it. Maybe just walk into that that story and tell us how this came to be. Yeah. So it started when my oldest was about thirteen or fourteen years old and a game. You were sitting down and having a conversation with him because of some things that we had found in the browser history in our home computer and slowly the story started to emerge that a problem had existed for a long time and we didn't know about it. And after that we implemented some safeguards and did some more careful monitoring. But the problem came back around and I have four boys my youngest actually just left today. This Thursday morning to fly to Mexico City. He finished his home, empty see but all four of my boys have you know have been touched in one way or another by by pornography. And and my experience has Bishop was that it that's not uncommon, right? That it's it's very common for for young men to to be exposed and it's apparent. I wage. Felt like I was really inadequately prepared to have those conversations when I first discovered it with my youngest child. And with time, I'm being bishop and having these conversations with my own children, and then having conversations with other people's children, I just felt like I needed to do something to help parents to learn how to have these difficult conversations with their kids because I didn't feel prepared.

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When I had the first conversation and it came a little too late. In fact, you know, my son had been exposed for years before we figured it out. And I didn't want parents to have that same regret and and turmoil of, you know, figuring they were a little too late down a little bit unprepared. And so I appreciate that emphasis like helping like not just figuring out how to do it as a bishop a helping and empowering parents to have these different conversations cuz really these conversations And should happen long before any Bishop's office conversation, right? Yeah. In fact, I was just looking today at the the church handbook and noticed that in 31.8 57.1 for anyone who cares, right? It says parents have the primary responsibility for teaching their children. The Gospel of Jesus Christ, they help their children grow spiritually, and prepare to make keep sacred covenants. Parents also counsel with our children regarding worthiness and help them. Repent. And improve Bishops and other church. Leaders support parents in these efforts in Iraq, is the first section under guidelines for youth interviews, right? And so, right up front in what are the guidelines for interviewing youth parents have primary responsibility and it's an update to the handbook, which I think is very welcome and very aligned with the church's current emphasis on a home, centered Church supported well, home centered, Supported gospel live teaching. Yeah. And I love that just because it really takes a lot of that burden off of

the bishop because they're over time, they're sort of been that then tradition off of The Bishop's office is where he discussed these things or, you know, go see the bishop cuz obviously there's a problem here but you know, the bishop should be nothing. Go to source for all of this but a resource especially for parents that he can help maybe facilitate some of these conversations. Yeah, I mean, let's obviously be clear that the parents are not a substitute for the bishop in terms of being a judge in Israel, right? But that's just because we need to utilize the keys of the bishop doesn't mean we can't discuss sensitive topics with our children and know and being aware of worthiness issues with our children. Yeah. So how did it where do you go from here? As far as the narrative here, that you're laying around the same time, the church wage Published the new interview questions for missionaries. It was sometime around 2017 and you may remember that the church updated, the missionary questions and published them worldwide. And said, look here are the the new interview questions for any Bishop that is going to be sending a missionary out to serve. And it also said that these interview questions were available to parents to counsel with their, with their children. And then there was a section at the bottom of that page letter that talked about how church leaders could utilize these new questions. And one of the ideas in that letter said that you could use a v Sunday discussion wage to introduce the questions and talk to parents about talk to parents and youth about how to prepare for a mission and, and how to be worthy to serve a mission. And so I think that dead Sort of planted the seed for me that hey, a v Sunday discussion might be a really good place where we could talk about parent-child interviews and worthiness and the opportunities that parents have to interview their children. Yeah, and so this launched into moving forward with the 5th Sunday lesson, right? So, we discussed it as a bishopric as a word council wage and then the question was, how am I going to do it, right? That was my next big question. And, you know, I like to do things in a way that help people to see a practical application. That helped them to understand that. Oh, if I did it like that, I could do it like that, right? It's like because when you think about it, how do I ask my kid? You know, how long have you been smoking pot or have you been, you know, looking at pornography or if you had sex with your girlfriend? Those kinds of questions are there, awkward, they're hard. And and so I wanted to Thursday In a way that would help parents kind of relate and see how you could do it. And I thought maybe the best way to do this is actually just a set up a role-play and go through it and I thought to myself, but who am I going to get to role-play this, right? And, and I thought and and you know the most common issue is pornography. That was the most common issue worthiness issue. I dealt with with the teenagers of all the issues that I dealt with.

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And so I said you know I'd like to do it on pornography because I think that would be the issue that would be the most helpful and maybe I can get my son to do a role play with me. Let me give that a try, ask him and see how he feels. And as you might suspect, he was a little bit nervous. He's like, you want me to get up there and act like I've been looking at pornography and and part of you know to his credit and without saying anything, you know, it was a real job. You for him, right? Like this was not totally made-up, he had experience going through this and so it was he was nervous not just to be in front of everyone, but because it touched really close

to home for him and we discussed ways that we could do it. So that it didn't expose him as a real situation, we made it clear that it was a role play and we didn't, he didn't use, you know, exactly truthful answers in every to every question. But I think that his participation made made the whole play effective because that's what we ended up doing and it was just real you know, and I think what parents really appreciated as they watched, it was the wrong business of it and and so that's how it played out nice. So I'd like to get into nitty-gritty here as far as a lot of these things cuz as As Leaders or other birth, Brakes. Ward council's, try and do this. It's just interesting to hear the details. So you start the first Sunday lesson and do you give some type of introduction before you jump into the role play, I assume right? So just a little about, you know, I told a little bit, just like I said, at the beginning of this interview or this discussion that we're having that. Hey, I had problems with my kids. I'm learning as a pair off and and I interview a lot of your kids and your kids are good and they want to do what's right. But sometimes they need your help and they want to confess but they're afraid and they need you to ask the first, take the first step, ask them the questions and when you do it, liberates them to be able to share it. Liberates them to be able to take the first step towards repenting and I, so that's how I introduced it to the parents, nice, nice. So yep. Back up because he said something in your outline here as far as this, a lot of adolescents think they they are supposed to follow plan a doctor's actually plan B and maybe break that down for us off. So I heard this as a story from that a general Authority told and it really struck home with me and I wish I could tell you the name of the general Authority that I had one but I can't remember but but he said that teenagers often go through life or thinking I'm going to follow plan a which is that I'm going to be worthy throughout my teenage years. I'm going to make it onto a mission. I'm going to come home from a mission and I'm going to get married in the temple. And then I'm going to live happily ever after and wage. You know, just in case I have a plan B and plan B. As if I slip up and I send or make a serious mistake, all repent, and I'll try and get back on the pass. And all keep going. And then the general authorities said this there is no such thing as plan. A and that just gave me of course there's no such thing as Planet. That's that's what being human is all about. It's about our heavenly father knowing that we would be imperfect and that we would sin and that we would need the power of the atonement. The power that is provided through the sacrifice of our Savior. Jesus Christ to be able to change to repent, the cleanse ourselves and become better. And when I heard that, I just thought to myself parents and teenagers need to understand. This not only wage is that the only way, you know, the expect the expectation that everyone goes through Plan B but it's okay. It's part of the plan. Yeah. And and I love that that way of setting up cuz I think, even as we teach, you throw at each other's, we sort of create that dichotomy of of, there's two plans, like, well, of course, you want to just do everything right and be good and follow the Commandments, like, of course, but if you do happen, I mean, on a rare occasion need, you know, Plan B, don't worry. It's there or you. And that's why we love Jesus and all this. But but yeah, of course, let's see if we can how far we can do plan a and that that dichotomy, we unintentionally set up through these, you know, well-intentioned lessons and whatnot.

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But sometimes creates this like, oh no, like I have to go to plan B, that was never intended. When in reality, there's only a plan B, right? That's right. Yeah, that's really cool. All right. So your June 5th Sunday lesson and you do then, you sort of give an introduction. Yeah. And and invite your son up or and and I invite my son up and and I also explained to everyone, you know I am One of the hardest things and women of the mistakes that I made early on as a parent and as a bishop is when somebody would come to me and say you know I have something to confess or if I found something on the computer or you know, discovered something that my children were doing and and confronted them with it. And we had that initial conversation I would forget to walk or I would neglect to follow up and and just see what's behind door. One. Right? What other doors are there. And and so I am and I said in this role play, I want you to observe you know, a few things about how I interact with my son. May I show empathy to him how I react when he surprises me with a Zinger, you know, how do I follow up wage? We're after the first sin is expressed or or how, and how do I probe deeper and then what do I say to him? Where do we go? Once we have out there that way, we have this in that needs to be dealt with and so that's how I set it up and and then we started the role play and the questions I started with the questions and started you know, just simple how you doing? How are things going but then you know, I took a very real situation and I said, I asked you to come talk to me because when I was looking at the computer, I noticed something the history that was really concerning to me and I said, do you know what that is or do I need to be more specific? And he's I think I know what that one that stabbed and then so we went from there and I started asking the questions and it started with how long has this been going on? You know is this wage Something that happened once or as it happened, many times come to find out. It's been going on for a long time. Well how often does it happen? Is this something that happens once a week or once a month or once a day? And then, you know, I asked what are the things that you've been exposed to have, you just been looking at images or is it videos, and is a videos of just a man, and a woman or is it a man in a man, or a woman in the woman and because, you know, unfortunately right, like I've discovered the hard way that it's not just what you expect, right? And so so I started there, you know? And then I just kept going and I just kept asking questions and if you don't mind I'll just run through some more of the the questions that I asked you. So, so then I started with, who else? It's about this. Have any of your siblings been involved. Have they watched any of this or looked at any of this with you or any of your friends involved? Did you send any image? Just anybody did anyone send images to you that were inappropriate? And then we started down the second. Most common thing that happens which is just was their masturbation involved. And when does that occur, and how frequently a step and happening and is it always associated with pornography or is it sometime not associated with pornography? And then we'd you know, follow up on on that discussion and and then once we were kind of sums up the questioning part of it, right? So but it was it was enough to show parents that there's additional questions that can be asked, and there's a lot more beneath them. Surface. There's usually a lot more between beneath the surface than you initially expect. Yeah, and I think I really want to underscore that because there's this thing, I mean, there's so much involved in the people are feeling as maybe they've looked at pornography, right. And maybe that's progressed additional things even to maybe acting out with a boyfriend, a girlfriend, right? Like and Thursday person walking in with with to talk with their parent order, the bishop. Like they're so buried in that shame and they don't know if they can trust that parent.

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You know, they don't know if they, if what if I tell them all your stuff then they get really mad and I get grounded. I never see the light of day again, right? Like there's all these calculations happening and so a lot of time there's this concept called spotlighting where an individual come in and maybe there has been it's going to be on pornography or or you know, acting out or whatever. And and so, but they'll say, well, I'll just admit to seeing once and then I'll see how long. They're testing the waters right there, to see how you're going to react to say. Are they going to love me and help me? Or they going to reach me and punish me. I mean, let's be honest. That's what they're they're looking. They're testing the waters to see how you're going to react and then like the and once they sort of get that signal of well. Wow, looks like he's handling pretty well. Like, he hasn't gone mad or like as a threatened, anything. And then with his probing questions, it's like becomes, like to become paralyzed with the ability. They can't, they can't even muster up the the strength to, like articulate the words of, like, yes, they've also. Masturbated, and yes, this happens every day and, you know, there's all these things, right? And so asking these questions, if you really are giving them an easy way to engage in the conversation by saying, yes, that was part of it. I'm glad he said that cuz I didn't want to say that. Yes, you know all I have to do is nod my head or whatever like wage. And then and then they begin to as the more information comes out there met with more and more safety. And then it's just like it just builds upon itself and it's just can be a much positive, more positive experience that way with it. These probing questions. Absolutely. And and write the the obviously you're not going to get beneath the surface if if you lose it will not answer to the first question, right? You're you're setting yourself up and and I think they need to be reassured. And so what are the things that I would always do? When interviewing is whenever somebody said something? That was obviously the truth and obviously hard to admit, you know, always start with, oh my God. That must be hard to come clean and say that, but it must feel good to finally get that off your shoulder yet. Thank you for sharing that with me. I'm really grateful you did. We can start the process of of helping you, you know, get that burden off your shoulders now and yeah and you could just see, you know, the countenance change its kind of like I've been carrying this weight and now, finally I can I can let it come off and I would recognize that for them, right? Like how do you feel, like, do you feel like God this is weight lifted off of you? Because I feel like, that's what I'm seeing. And I'm so thankful that you are willing to trust me enough to share that with me. Yeah, yeah, that's true. I love that tip. And and again, cuz in these interactions, it's really not about the pornography or the behavior or know, it's all about the shame, right? And, and figure out how to get through the shame and she can worry about the behavior later or I mean, then the behaviors gets a lot easier. That way once you get through the shame, then you can actually see some progress and another like I love these questions dead. Even like every opportunity an individual can take to normalize or destigmatize D behavior in. This makes a getting removes an extra layer that shame. So saying like God, I hear this a lot and ninety percent of the people who, who struggle with pornography struggle with masturbation as well. Like, is it, was that something that's going on? And then they think like, wait a minute. Like I'm not the only one. I actually had this conversation. A hundred other times like, yeah, yeah, that's me to like that, you

know, again, you're morphing working for the shame of it. You know. One of the things I used to always say and I would say this joking, and it's sad that I could, I would even think to joke about this, but I did it. So forgive me. But I used to say there's two kinds of missionaries that go out on a mission. Those who have confessed to pornography and those who are lying because it is so ubiquitous right. That every young man that I dealt with had had been exposed to it at some some level. Or another. And but yeah like you said it's not about the pornography it's just not right? It's there's no such thing as planet and and when youth understand that, it's okay to make mistakes and it's okay to call on the powers of the, the atonement. Wow. It's it's a it's a liberating thing in their lives. It's a great for parents to, you know, one of the things that wage earned with as parents, you know. I think it was harder for my wife than it was for me, but when our first son, when we found out that wow, he's had this issue and it's been years.

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She was crushed. She was like, I failed as a parent and I'll say that I felt the same way, but not to the same degree that she'd, I mean, like it was it had a physical toll on her to the extent that she couldn't get out of bed for a day or two. After after that first discussion. But, you know, and with those feelings, obviously, it becomes hard to, to be a neutral, a neutral presence. When they start to share these things with you, especially if it's like your first child, like it would, you know. Yeah, obviously I was much better at it going through through with my fourth son than I was with my first son, right. But but that's that's our internet and I think one of the other we we were talking about, you know tips, you know, and tricks that I learned doing these interviews. One of the things that I used to always say is that as you think about Yourself. I want you to remember how Satan sees you. And how he wants you to see yourself and as your heavenly father sees you and as he wants you to see yourself Satan wants you to see yourself off a failure. He wants you to see yourself as someone who has made a mistake and is an awful person. Your heavenly father sees you as long as the person that you can become and you should see yourself as the person, you can become what you have done where you're at, has not changed your potential. Potential is based on where you can get to, and no matter what you do your potential who you can become does not change. And I just thought it was just, I often wanted to remind kids that you haven't ruined your potential by making this mistake. Yeah. And I love going back to that, you know, plan a and plan B that The embassy wants to think there. There's only plan a and you ruined it all. And there's no way to get back. There was there's no plan B to begin with, right? Yeah. All right, so let's go back and show you say you're in the fish Sunday and you go through these questions, just sort of do a role play of this. So, is there anything else to say in the context of the role play or and then, how did you transition out? Yeah, so, so dead, you know, I think, I, I can't remember exactly. But there was one more piece of the 5th Sunday lesson, which was how do you craft the plan to help them? You know, you've, you've gone through this. You are now fully aware of the issue, how do you help? And, and this could be, it could be pornography, it could be anything else, right? But wage, but I think there needs to be a plan for working with it and this is where parents really can lighten the load on Bishop's, right? Because Pepi In the home there with the child every day. They know what the child is doing. They know the activities they're involved in. They can check in hourly if need be right.

And fishing just are not going to have the bandwidth to be able to do that. And so, what is the plan, right? Is it, do you need to implement safeguards? Do you need to set an appointment with the bishop off so that you can access those keys? Right? For as a judge in Israel, do you need to update your goals in terms of? What are you trying to be working on? Do you need to restructure your schedule? So that you take out, compromising situations, right? That you're not in front of the computer late at night or you're not doing stuff off in a locked bedroom or whatever it needs to be, right? And so making the plan writing the plan down and posting, or I think the important thing off Thing is not always appropriate. It depends on like if it's a house full of siblings, then you're going to need to be careful. But there needs to be in my opinion, a written plan that's agreed between the parents and the child, because you need what? What? Often becomes a point of contention is, how do you help, right? Because the child's, especially when they're older teenagers, you need permission to help them. They don't want you to do. They don't want you to help in the way that you want to help. They want you to help in the way that they want to be helped. And, and you, we have to be sensitive to. That doesn't mean that we can't negotiate and find some middle ground, right? Because I thought we need to make sure that changes is affected and sometimes those plans change, right? It's it's like I don't think your plan is effective enough, but we'll give it a try.

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And when it, you know, when dead When it fails next week, which I know, it will will update with the plan and put some more of my suggestions into it, right? And but that, that brings us back to one more thing, which is in keeping with, there's no such thing as plan, a right parents think. Oh, we address this and it will never happen again, right? Yeah, it's done and over with right off and and that was that was one of the big surprises for me is, you know, the kids would have this moment and they confess and they'd cry and they'd get it all off their shoulders and they did find it on the computer again next week, right? Or you'd is there a switched from you? Put the safeguards on the computer. So then you found it on the phone, right? And and it's like just because I thought that you've been through, it doesn't mean that you're done, right? And and for my experience was for some of these issues, they're, they're ongoing issues that you have to work with and and no matter how long Need parental controls and and how, how much you you put safeguards in place. The issue seems to resurface again and you as a parent need to have the same reaction, the 2nd and 3rd and 20th time as you did the first time. Yeah, that's really really helpful. And I love that concept of having a plan in in the that off like a big mistake. I see this in my own parenting is I sort of feel like I am entitled to their permission to parent them. It's like, no, no, you were born into this house down there for I was endowed with permission to parent you, right? And sure. You know, you gotta make sure everybody's safe and all these things but especially as they grow older, more mature. You you really ought to gain that permission to be their Advocate, to be their helper to, to help them through some of these difficult times or else they'll go. They'll give that permission elsewhere even if you don't want them to write. And so long. Really making the this is a, you know, I'm not I'm not telling you how this is going to go, but we're, we're Partners here and I'm your support. We're going to figure this out and wow, that sounds like an interesting idea, why don't we try that? And then next week, it's

like, okay, you know, why don't why do you think that didn't work? What could we adjust, right? And suddenly, they're, they're learning along the way and, and it's more of their plan. And so it's going to have a higher effect, you know, over the long term. But maybe if you let me, I'll just share one Side Story. One of my favorite stories. When we were newlyweds, my wife and I we probably been married like two weeks, maybe three weeks off and we were in our very first state conference as newlyweds. And there was Saturday, evening session and the stake president said, I want to have an open question-and-answer session. Please ask me whatever questions you have and one woman raised her hand and said, how do you get your teenage kids to come to family prayer and he thought about it a second and he said, You know, I'm probably not a very good person to answer that question because my kids just don't know any different. That's all they've ever known their whole life. Maybe I'll have one of my counselors answer that question and that statement struck me and my wife like a ton of bricks, right? We're like God, oh if we want to really help our kids, we need to teach him in an environment where they understand that in our home. This is how it will always be home. And so it just you just reminded me of that. When you said, we need their permission, right? Well, unless you've already set the standard, you know, before they were even born and and took like indoctrinated him from from childhood. I mean but but I think I think it is important to recognize that that we do need permission when it's their life. And they've made choices and they need to repent you know they need to have an ownership stake in that, but when you're setting standards for your family you know you can set the prince power and practiced the practices. Right? There's principles and then there's practices in every family is you know, every set of parents can can set the practices for their household and off sooner. You decide to establish the the practices and and you know, and be consistent in the execution of those practices, the the more solid ground. You'll stand on, as, as your children, get older, and grow up, and, and start making their own choices. And so, I was just a little aside. And again, you know, the emphasis of routines and things especially with starting them yelling and, and getting them used to the these, these routines, and spiritual practices can can go a long way and, and they can in building that trust and having an effective home.

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So, all right, so long Sure, transitioned out of the interview, then you sort of focus on the, you know, how how to actually move forward with a plan that you can come back to and discuss anything else to say around that concept. I think that conclusion was just then to invite the parents to, you know, plan to have conversations with their children and, and not make it an ongoing plan, right? You can call it a parent interviews, you can call it whatever you want, but you should be checking in with your kids regularly. And I, I used to say this is verve conclude almost every one of my fifth Sunday lessons, with, with this statement, you know, which is people always ask me, how did it go off? And and my answer is always, we'll see. I don't know yet how people take the message and implement it in their life and I don't no matter how good my lesson is, it's meaningless. Unless somebody feels the spirit and a crack on it and implements change in their life because of the spiritual problem thing that they felt that they acted on and implemented. And and so, you know, that's that was always my home. Invitation at

the end of the lesson, is to say, I hope that you felt something and you you have that Nephi moment where you know, you see and hear what your father saw and heard and then you have that desire to have your own experience. Yeah, that's great. That's great. And so that sort of concluded the dog, And it was, and honestly, you know, my son and I both walked out of it where, like, breathing a sigh of relief because it was awkward for me. It was awkward for him. I wasn't sure. You know, how well it would be received. It was actually very gratifying to hear, you know, almost three years later. Adam, coming back and saying, hey, you know, the one of the most memorable, this Sunday lessons I ever had, was that time you and your son got up and gave that role play and I thought oh wow, that's cool. Wasn't that bad? Yeah, course she has a, he has boys, too, so he can probably be late now that they're turning to turning into teenagers. Sure. And I want to emphasize that principle of, you know, you could have bought a stellar like slide deck together with all these bullet points of like, here's here's five questions, you can ask and here's some things to consider not consider or whatever, and then wrap up the fist something wrong. I've been pretty good, but there's something about the human psyche and seeing something modeled that it really like anchors in some of these principles deeper. So this I mean there could be a phone number of different V Sunday or teaching opportunities where you take an opportunity to actually model, what's happening? Cuz I would imagine if there were used in the room, they would see that. Like, oh, so would I go see? You know, the bishop. He's not going to yell and scream at me. Interesting. Okay, well maybe I might set that appointment, right, because they've seen a model. And then when they're there, where it's so nerve-wracking off their little more comfortable because like I've seen this before and I'm willing to step forward. So the this principle of modeling things are role-playing Concepts is really quite effective. Now, obviously missionaries do it every day, every morning, right? And so there's got to be something to it and it worked well in that situation. And so it was fun to do cool. Well, we had a few questions to ask From the live audience on Facebook. Nathan says, how have you handled and you sort of touched on this? But maybe there's some deeper Insight, that'll come, how have you handled those who are working with just you are working with that, have struggled with this topic for years. And they are unable to make any kind of progress. They have righteous desires, like receiving them up as a priesthood, go to the temple or off or serve a mission. They just can't seem to get things under control, any thoughts? Keep, yeah. So, I have a couple of thoughts, right? First of all, use the resources that are available, there's an addiction recovery program that's available. And If if you're an adult and you've been struggling with this for years and years, you know, I strongly recommend the addiction recovery program. There are additional resources on the web on the church's website and also generically on the web. And I would say enlist the help of your your family right wage. I think the the one thing that I tell people all the time is and I told my I would tell my kids but I tell people when they came to me as a bishop it's okay to slip but it is not okay to hide it because that's what Satan wants you to do.

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He wants to hide you to hide your mistake to be ashamed. Because here we go again, right, I made another mistake. So I'm going to I'm so ashamed that I committed a sin, again the same thing, here we go again I can't possibly you know confess again and my comment was always

it's okay to be on the right path. It's not okay to hide it when you're not, you know. And I'm so so that's a start, right? I think one other thought is that, you know, I had every Bishop has their own strong And and my feeling as the bishop was that sometimes what people need when they are struggling or when they thought, maybe I should say this, when sometimes, what people need when, they have sinned, is some kind of consequence that's negative, right? That says, hey, I made a mistake, you have a, there's a negative consequence that goes with that. And, and you're going to have to work through this negative consequence. Sometimes people who sin need to be uplifted and something uplifting will help them on the path, to recovery faster than a negative consequence. And so, sometimes I would tell, people don't take the sacrament, it's not appropriate. Sometimes I would tell people, I see how hard you're working. You need the power that comes through Thursday. The sacrament you need. The power that comes from going to the temple. You need to be in the temple and I would tell them like, go to the temple, you need to be there. And so you know I think the fact that you've made mistakes and you've slipped and you've worked and but you've been working on it for a long time hasn't changed your potential right? No matter how many times you fall off the horse it doesn't change your potential and and just keep updating that plan. Keep going to the resources and keep working it because it's okay. Paul had a thorn in his side for his entire life. And who knows what that thorn was, right? And maybe this is your Thorn and maybe the Lord's going to it'll be a little time and maybe it'll be a long time. But it says an ether 12, that, you know, he gives us weakness that we may become humble birth. If we was our part, if we have faith in him, then what's his part? He will make week Things become so long. I think we get confused about the roles. Sometimes we have to be humble and have faith. He makes the weakness become strong on his timetable. And I remember that that that might help also. Yeah, really, really good insightful perspective and this can be really. I remember this as a bishop just had a person just kept coming back. Cuz like we talked about this page like we have the plan. We did, you know, we checked all the boxes. What why isn't this clicking, right? It can be very discouraging know after doing literally hundreds of interviews with different individuals, around this topic. Like what I have found is that if that person, you know, you mentioned these great resources, they're out there. Yeah. Let's make sure we exhaust those resources and see if they help but there just to a point where it's like, well we've exhausted all these resources. Is nothing's getting better. A lot of time. There's probably a deeper level of trauma, wound. A concern that needs some deep work and evaluation from a therapist is skilled at these things. So I should know help. Exactly. Yeah. And and not just like, oh, just send him to a therapist called good. Like these like there are resources out there that can wrong address specific trauma and a lot of times as I have interviewed different people, what they found is that like oh it's actually, I was I was numbing out with the behavior, it wasn't necessarily about the behavior. There was this deeper agitation inside of me that never got addressed, and I was just trying to bury it with the poor nor with these negative behaviors. And once that gets addressed, then these behaviors begin to stabilize and go away but but it can't be very frustrating. So I would just say if you find that it's not improving like search for a deeper resource, a more powerful resource is going to help them rather than Just trying to.

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All right. Well, maybe you should text me four times a day. Let's see if that were like, that's not, that's not the thing. I won't do it, right? So you know anyways, anything where it go ahead and go ahead, I was just going to say, Thursday are the Bishops are not professional psychologist right? Right yeah yeah there's and there's a lot of great help out there. So we'll keep this has been fantastic, really helpful. I just love hearing what the other guys doing, especially with the fist, send a lesson, and how they executed it, and what about it. And obviously, it was just a success and people can do their own thing and make their own tweaks and see how it goes. But again, it's just really effective. So, last question I have for you Keith is as you reflect on your time as a bishop or as a leader in the church. How has being a leader helped? You become a better follower of Jesus Christ. Oh, that's a great question, you know, I think the as Bishop in particular, I feel like I learned to be forgiving an' t of others shortcomings because I felt like I was held up on a pedestal because I had a calling, but I knew that I was not perfect and that I was talking to people about repenting and at the same time I was going through the process every day, right? I was trying to be a better person but I had made my fair share of mistakes. I was not a perfect teenager, I was not a perfect missionary, I was not a, I'm not a perfect husband, I'm not a perfect father, and off and when people put you up on this pedestal you just feel so exposed right as a fraud. You feel like a fraud and and I just and I just thought it took me a while to wage. Be comfortable with the thought that despite my deficiencies. The Lord. Trusts me enough to hold this sacred calling and when I'm released, somebody else is going to feel like a fraud and I don't need to expose him as a fraud because the Lord trust him enough. I don't need to find out what his weaknesses, I don't need to complain about why the next Bishop doesn't do things the way I did them when I was Bishop, right. I can be tolerant and loving and let people be themselves and do what they do. Because the Lord, It's the Lord's work and learning to, to be loving and tolerant of others. Knowing that thought they were loving and tolerant of me. Despite my imperfections was one of the biggest lessons that I learned And that concludes this how I lead interview. I hope you enjoyed it and I would ask you, could you take a minute and thought this link in an email on social media, in a text wherever it makes the most sense and share it with somebody who could relate to this experience and this is how we develop As Leaders just hearing what the other guys doing some things out, testing adjusting for your area and that's where we're great. Leadership's discovered, right? So we would love to have you share this with somebody in this calling or a related calling and that would be great. And also if you know, somebody any type of leader who would be a fantastic guests on the how I lead segment reach out to us. Go to Leading Saints. Org / contact. Maybe send this individual, an email, letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name. For this interview will reach out to them and see if we can line them up. So, again, go to Leading Saints. Org, / contact, and there you can submit all the information and let off. And maybe they will be on a feature how I lead segment on the leading Saints podcast and remind you once again to text the word lead 2 4 7, 4 7, 4 7. In order to subscribe to the song Saints Weekly Newsletter. It came, as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed Upon Us by the god of him and who brought forth a restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the Declaration was made concerning the old and only true, and Living Church upon the face of the Earth, we were immediately, put in a position of loneliness, the loneliness of

leadership from which we cannot trade in or run away, and which we must face up with boldness and courage, wage and ability.