



From Leading Marines to Leading Saints | A How I Lead Interview with Bart Sloat

May 4, 2022

00:00:03 - 00:05:01

In modern times, one of the most difficult issues leaders are faced with is helping those who struggle with mental health. No longer can we simply encourage a good measure of scripture study and prayer and expect everyone's life to stabilize. This is why leading saints felt it was so important to organize the mentally healthy saints library. There, one can find 25 plus presentations all about ministering to those who struggle with mental health. We cover topics like depression, anxiety, screw velocity, or OCD, we even cover how to effectively refer individuals to professional therapists and make sure they are getting the help they need. This and so much more. If you'd like to review all of these sessions, we would love to have you do so at no cost. You can visit leading-saints.org/14 and get access to the full library for 14 days. You'll also receive access to all our virtual libraries where we cover additional leadership related topics. So click the link in the show notes or simply visit leading-saints.org/14. Today we're headed to Virginia to talk with Bart slot. Welcome to leading saints Bart. It's great to be here. Thanks, Kurt. Nice. Now you were just released from serving as stake president because you got a mission call. What's the story behind that? Well, unexpectedly, as I'm sure most of those callings are, but I'd served as a president of the Chesapeake Virginia state. Since 2014 and this last fall was issued a call, my wife and I to serve as mission leaders to been assigned to serve in the Hawaii Honolulu mission. We're excited. So what's that like opening a call to Hawaii, especially you've agreed to three years of your life sort of dedicated to this service and you go anywhere and you've got some military background. So you've probably seen some scary places. You're ready for it all. And then it says, Hawaii. What's that feeling

like? Yeah. It was very unexpected. I kind of thought, you know, of course, we received a call in October. And you don't find out your assignment until early in December. And so you go a couple months. And so you look back on the mission openings that you know the missions are going to open up this summer. And so then that went through the family and they all made their guesses as to where we're going to be assigned to serve and no one gets to white. A lot of guesses in the Southwest United States and other places, but yeah, and of course I've had a lot of people ask me why, you know, how did you get assigned to Hawaii? Nice. My answer, my answer is I just said, if maybe if you spend more time in Iraq and Afghanistan, you would have got assigned to Hawaii. That's right. Nice. And did you serve a mission as a young man? I did. Served in the Nevada Las Vegas mission. Okay. All right. Back to 78 to 80. And if I remember, they just announced a new mission in Hawaii, but you're taking over the older one. Is that right? Right. Yep. In January, they created the Hawaii layer mission. It's up around BYU Hawaii and the Polynesian cultural center. So they have about 5 stakes up there where that new mission. And we have the rest of the Hawaiian Islands. So we're excited. We'll do quite a bit of island hopping from for three years. Yeah, I bet I bet. So let's just start with a little bit of a foundation of your background and whatnot, because we're going to explore different leadership opportunities you've had from being a bishop, safe president and other responsibilities as well, especially as a marine. But where does it all was a good introduction for Bart slot here? Well, I think it goes to my parents. It's a classic tale that's going to reminiscent of talking about his wife's family's conversion last floor last door. It was two missionaries in 1961. On the cost of Maine had parked the car on the edge of a small town and tracked it all day.

00:05:02 - 00:10:04

This is in March. So march is a nasty month. Especially in Maine. And the wet and cold and they tracked it all day with no success and come back. And we're just about back to their car and there was this one house that was left that long driveway kind of out in the country and one of the missionaries turned and said, let's just go home. And the other one said, no, let's just go knock on that door so we don't have to come back out here again. And get it over with. And so they knock on the door and my mother answered the door. I was two years old. But she answered the door and asked the missionaries to come back the next night when my later when my father would be home from work and came back and a month later, my parents and older brother and sister were baptized. And. From this perspective now, one of the things that I most marvel at is that my parents, Harley and Clara slope from that day, they were baptized April 8th, 1961, and they never looked back. They were all in. From day one. And that's been one of the great blessings of my life. Nice. And then when did the decision as far as your military service come into was that something you always planned to do? Yes and no, my father was a marine. Served in World War II. As a young man, 17 years old, everyone served. People forget that in December of 1945, there were 12 million Americans on active duty. And then he was called

back in for the Korean War. It didn't go to Korea. The war ended before he was shipped over there. And then my brother Greg had gone to BYU for a year and then 67 to 68 and of course the Vietnam War was at the peak of its operations then and he didn't, he just felt a duty and obligation to serve. So he enlisted in the Marine Corps and became a combat correspondent, went to Vietnam in 1970 and was killed in action in February of 1971. Wow. And so when I came back from my mission in 1980, I didn't want to I didn't want to be an obligation to my parents anymore. And so every day when I walked to work, I was saving money to go back to college and when I walked to work, I had to walk past a recruiting office. And so finally, one day I just walked in and see what the opportunities might be. And of course, the only one I talked to was a marine because that was in my DNA. I couldn't walk into any of the other any of the other branches of the service. So yeah, that's what brought me into the Marine Corps and after a couple of years in, I would say able to get into the marine enlisted commissioning education program ended up at the university of Utah. It was commissioned in 85 as an infantry officer and spent 32 years on active duty. Wow. And so it was always planned for that to be your career or early on. I think that when I first went in, it was going to be I was going to do my four years and get out and educational opportunities go back to school. But then I found the educational opportunities in the Marine Corps and essentially they paid me to go to school and that was a good thing. Yeah. So yeah, and then when you finish that obligation, you had ten years in. And when you're at ten, then you're like, okay, it's only another ten to get to 20 years. But it was a unique Marine Corps career because in the sense that I spent essentially 20 years in what I'll call the peacetime Marine Corps. And then 9 11 happened and then I spent the next 12 years in engaged in combat operations both in Iraq and Afghanistan. And I would imagine many leadership opportunities came to you in the military long before they came to the church. Yeah, you know, both, you know, it's called into a bishopric at a young age, so that was a great opportunity. And I learned a lot had a great bishop to serve with. But yeah, the Marine Corps becoming an infantry officer, I commanded, started out with a rifle platoon, who commanding about 40 5 marines. And then served as a company commander, so you've got about a hundred and 60 marines under your command as a company commander.

00:10:04 - 00:15:10

And then at the opportunity in Iraq to serve as a battalion commander with about 1200 marines in my command and then my last tour as a regimental commander and I had about 3500 marines and sailors. Nice. And so a lot of opportunities. I bet I bet. So I mean, as a civilian here in most of the civilians that are listening to this, we just have the watered down version of the Hollywood gives us as far as what military leadership looks like. And from all involves a lot of yelling, I guess. How would you describe just like the process that the military puts someone like you through in order to become a better leader? Well, that's a great question. I think for the Marine Corps, every marine officer goes to what we call the basic school in Quantico, Virginia.

So everyone goes through that. And it's very infantry centric leadership centric. Where they put you through a lot of scenarios. So the famous question and what now lieutenant, right? They throw a situation in front of you and because they're trying to seek, can you function under pressure? Can you make quick decisions? And can you use the process that they teach you as to. Thinking clearly? And making good decisions. And so you go through that. Interesting that you said a lot of yelling. I found that, you know, and I worked for every kind of leader, right? The good, the bad, the ugly. And the outstanding. And the best leaders don't yet. The best leaders are the ones you don't want to let down. You just don't want to let them down. So yeah, I think that's a lot of that goes into the leadership. I find that people that. The best leaders are the people are the leaders that are around people. They know people. There's a great article years ago I read. It was on Abraham Lincoln. And it was Lincoln on leadership is the book and they talk about leadership by walking around. Getting out being Lincoln was famous for insomnia. So at 2 o'clock in the morning, he'd walk down to the telegraph office in The White House and just sit there and talk to the clerk and he'd learn a lot as to what was going on just sitting there listening to the clerk. But I had a great experience once actually going to school in Quantico and we had different leadership seminars that were always part of the curriculum. And the marine colonel came in and taught us a great truth. It just always stuck with me. He said, he said, when you've got a young marine standing in front of you that's in some kind of trouble and affectionately referred to as a knucklehead. And there's lots of knuckleheads, and most of us have been knuckleheads at some point in our life. He said, just remember that somewhere in America, there was an 8 by ten picture of that marine, and he's the most important person in the whole world. Wow, I love that. And, you know, that just always stuck with me. Because it's true. Somewhere out there in America, there's a family, and they looked at that, that young marine, and he was the most important person in the world. And that has application when you're sitting at a bishop's in a bishop's chair or as a steak presence here, right? And you're looking at that person, you realize. And I think we begin to have a little bit of a feel for how the lord looks at us. Yeah. And a little bit better way than sometimes how we look at look at each other. We're there. Just thinking back of your time, especially in those early years as a marine, were there specific or a specific mentor that a lot about leadership more than others? Yeah. I think as I look back, I had some great leaders. And a couple of my later leaders, really, when I was a major lieutenant colonel in those ranks that just taught me some simplicity of leadership and one of them that I've always remembered is that what? He would always say that the road to success is always under construction. And you got to keep it simple. And he believed that and I think this has application in the gospel that people that you're leading only care about four things.

00:15:12 - 00:20:01

This is how simple he liked to put it. The number one, they have to know that you really care about them. That you really care. Number two that you really care about their family. And not

just pay lip service to it. But that you want to make sure their families take care of. And number three that you're fair and number four that you're consistent. He said, if you do those four things, they'll follow you anywhere and do anything. But as soon as one of those four things starts to break down, you're going to start having problems. Yeah. And that's such a foundational thing that obviously you don't figure out leadership when you're in a tough spot in a battle and you're under fire. You've got to build this foundation and connection and whatnot so that in those moments that are the most crucial. There'll be more than willing to trust and to follow. Yeah. I always try to follow a practice of when we talk about giving an order issuing an order would always try to explain why. Because I knew the day would come when I wouldn't have the opportunity to tell why. You just don't have time. You just got to do it. So you just got to do it. And because you've built up a trust because when you've had the opportunity you've told them why, and it made sense to them, and it clicked in their minds. So now when you don't have the opportunity to tell them why, then they're going to trust you and say, okay, he knows what he's doing. Let's just make it happen, get it done. Elder Oaks, president Oates, years ago, gave that instruction on very seldom does a lord when the lord gives a commandment, does he tell you why? There are very seldom in the scripture he says the lord say why. He certainly didn't tell Adam why, right? He just told him to offer sacrifice and Adam didn't know why, but he did it. So yeah, yeah. So at what point did the church leadership opportunities start for you? The real heavy leadership roles. Yeah, it's a standing joke with my wife and I because most of my Marine Corps career, she was the primary president, the relief society president of multiple times in different wards. And I was occasionally in a couple of different places in the bishopric once served on the high council and then we got here to Virginia and things started to wind down just two years before I retired from the Marine Corps I was called as a bishop. And so that definitely changed. And I found that I found that some of my leadership techniques in the Marine Corps did not work as leadership techniques as the bishop of the ward. I definitely want to get into before we jump there. Is there anything else about your military career, I guess, in general do we need to make sure we mention before we move on? Well, there are some really satisfying things that come about as serving. One of the things I just shared with listeners is that I remember in 2004, we opened a girls school in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. And I can still see there are probably 30 5, maybe 40 little girls, ages, maybe 8 down to 5 all lined up waiting to go into the school. And they're all holding hands in this long line. And it was just heartwarming. Because they had never had the opportunity to go to school before. There were no schools and girls. And so just to see that and those kind of things, when you have impact on people's children, their understanding and their view of you changes. When somebody does something good for your child, you view them differently. And I think that's universal across the world. And so when you help the child, it changes opinions. There was a just a quick, quick story. There was a, in 2004, there were, as units would change, there was a Utah National Guard unit that was leaving Afghanistan and one that was coming in. So they have about a two week turnover.

Before, while one comes in, they make an extended turnover. And so that one Sunday in Bagram air base, we had church, we had a priesthood meeting, and there were over 200 members of the church, and I thought this is probably April of 2004. I thought this is probably the largest gathering of priesthood in Afghanistan ever. And probably may never have happened after that. Who knows, but there was this one, he was getting ready to go home. But he and they'd been in a medical unit, and they'd had a setup at a four operating base to support some special forces units. And they would do some medical care for some of the local people from time to time when they could, but primarily they were there for the American servicemen. Well, this one night this, he was actually in imam, comes in with this little girl. His daughter, who was probably about four or 5 years old, and she'd fallen into a fire pit. And burned both of her legs quite significantly. And he'd taken her to an Afghan doctor and he had examined her legs and recommended that they'd be amputated. Because of the severity of the burns and probably didn't want to have to take the leg, so he takes her and brings her down to this U.S. serviceman base and so these two medics from Utah, you know, 6, 6 foot blond hair, blue eyed kind of guys. They treated this little girl. Clean her legs, the best it could bandage them. And they did that. He brought her back every day and, you know, for over two months, they took care of this little girl. Long story short, they saved her legs. And by a few weeks after that, after she was, you know, didn't have to come back every day. Her father came back. Again, use a Muslim imam. And he said, all of everything I've been told about America, I now know to be false. Wow. And because of that experience, he saw these American servicemen very gently very humanely, very lovingly save his daughter and save her legs. And that forever changed his view of Americans and who we were and, you know, it's those kind of things that you realize that's when you're making a difference. Yeah. And then so for these official deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, I did roughly about 9 major deployments. The Marine Corps when we say major deployments that means 6 months or more, most deployments were 6 or 7 months. Yeah. Anything else around that military career that we haven't touched on? Oh, I think. That's good. You don't want to hear too many war stories. Well, I will say though that, you know, this goes back to when you say teaching about leadership and you've heard it before because. Viktor frankl's famous quote on there's a space between stimulus and response, right? And in that space, we have the ability to choose and in the choice in that choice lies are growth in our progress. And of course, you know, in the military teaching that between stimulus and response can be a split second decision and teaching leadership is about that's why repetition is so important. That you do drills over and over and over again so that you can do them with muscle memory. You don't have to think too much about it. And I was having that discussion recently with some youth in course, it's probably lost today because none of them will learn how to drive a standard transmission. I know, right? It's a lost art. But you remember, you remember the concentration it took to drive. I remember I remember thinking I'd never get it. I just thought my brain was not built for this. That's right. And then, you know, at some point, you stop thinking about it.

00:25:04 - 00:30:01

It just becomes automatic. Well, you know, it's those kind of repetition, those kind of drills that you seek to learn so that that space between stimulus and response is that you make the right choice and do that. So there's a lot about leadership in that. All leaders could sit around and think about and revelation will flow. The more you think about just that concept. So tell me about it, just transitioning, you've had this career of just dynamic leadership in the marines and some of the best leadership training. I'm sure that's out there. And then transitioning to being a lay leader in your local congregation. Did you try? You mentioned some of these things. You realize it was very different. What stories come to mind? I'm embarrassed to say it, but I remember the very first word counsel that I sat down as the newly set apart bishop. And I'd been in ward councils before. And this is so I'll just stayed up front that now I realized I was a 180° off. But first time I sat there, I can remember looking around the table, you know, everyone's there, primary side of young men, young women still had young men then. Presidency, elders formed high priest group leader, et cetera. And I can remember saying, look, stay in your lane, okay? That's something we preach all the time in the Marine Corps. I didn't want the logistics officer. Tell me about operations. Okay, you stay in your lane. Just tell me about logistics, things you support the operation. And so I transitioned that into the ward council and told everyone to stay in their lane, I don't need the release site president telling about the elder scorn what they need to do. And now I realize there are no lanes, right? And so at stake president, I can remember repeatedly saying there are no lanes, you know, if you feel broader to say something, you need to say it because there's somebody here that needs to hear it. So please speak up. And then you always look around the rooms, okay, who hasn't commented here today? Let's hear from them. Yeah. So yeah, that was something that didn't transition well. What about just in general, the things that you felt more prepared for were there certain habits or assignments or circumstances that you felt you were more empowered to lead in? Well, funny about that is, you know, marines are young. Most of the marines are leading are 18, 19, 20 years old. So usually not all that mature, right? So the youth dealing with the youth was pretty natural. And being around being around the youth, both a young woman and a young man. And that was to me that probably the most joyous part of and I love, you know, where their brother and have let us in the transition and doing away with a young men's pregnancy and getting the bishopric fully invested. And it's a paradigm shift in the church, right? One of the things I did is take president every time that we'd call a new bishop. After he was sustained and then at the end of the meeting, I would stand up and I would call the bishop up to stand up beside me at the pulpit. And I'd say, okay, now everyone here that's 18 years old and younger, please stand up. So all the youths, the primary children, all the youth, they all stand up in the congregation. And I say, put my arm around the bishop and say, if you're standing up right now, this is your man. This is your man. And if you're sitting down right now, this is not your man. We're getting there, but you know, and you have to teach bishops to bishops, you have to resist. Having those adults come into your office and spend repeated repeated time in your office. You've got to push it off. If that's the right word, maybe it's not the right word, but you've got to reassign it to the other form or the release of site. And let the person know that, you know, they've done what they need to

do. And now they need to lock in with the release society president or one of her counselors or the elders form president, one of his counselors and move forward.

00:30:02 - 00:35:01

Yeah. But it's a paradigm shift. And I love that. Creating that visual that experiential moment in front of the ward of really having those youth and those children stand up and sort of drawing that line saying this is where I want your focus or whatnot. And obviously there's other things outside of that. But to be truthful, I did it more for the adults that I did for the youth. Yeah, sure. What I was doing was if you were sitting down right now, leave the bishop alone. Yeah. Leave the bishop alone. There are times you need to come see the bishop. And you'll know when those times are, but for the most part, yeah, I love where it's going. Yeah, and anything else that you did as far as if there's any question most recently that we've received a leading saints is around this transition, sort of that emphasis of the bishop having higher emphasis on the youth and the elder scorn president, at least say president sort of taking a larger role in award. Is there anything else you did to really make that work? Because I feel like there's a lot of words sort of floundering, trying to stakes as well. They're trying to figure out the best way to execute that. I think part of it is you have to talk about it and you have to we made it a focus in ward counts and I mean more conferences. When we have a relief study in priesthood together and then the youth would be separate in another classroom. And we talked to mostly to adults about the fact that, you know, the ehlers form has elders foreign president has priesthood keys. And he can receive revelation and guidance to help counsel you and help you move along the covenant path. And it really comes down to. Helping them understand that the bishop's main responsibility is with the youth of the church. And when I think we're getting there, at least it feels like we are here. I don't know if there's any magic I know there's no magic. Remedy to it is just, but I do think part of it is just talking about it. Keeping it on top of mind, right? Right. Yeah. So did you go from being the bishop straight into being the state president? Yeah, I served as bishop for about four and a half years when I was called as a stake president. Nice. Nice. What did you find sort of surprising in that transition? I remember similar transition from bishop to the state presidency where I just thought I was going to be a bishop, but a sort of on a higher level. But I realized it was much different dynamic. But what was your experience like? Well, one of the things you realize, I think I'm making a general statement, but you know, have people stakes have warts. And so a big aspect of any state calling is leadership. In training, teaching and training, bishoprics, elders form presidencies, you know, for the release for the stake relief society releases society presidencies. Mistake young women to, you know, that's what we tried to stay on top of was as soon as a new young women's president is called, you want the state relief in the state young women's presidency to be connected with them as quickly as possible to help help them. Because just the way to come in the church, some women are calling to young women and they haven't been in young women's ever. Some have only been in young women

when they were a young woman and a lot has changed since they were in young women's, right? So those kind of so I think callings is about leadership and training. And the best leaders are great teachers. Yeah. Yeah. Love that. Anything else about your time as bishop or state president that we haven't touched on or principle that would be worth discussing in that context? Well, a pattern that, you know, it's very applicable to the calling or moving towards, but it was also a big one for, I think, as bishop and as state president, was that of who you're converted to in the radio scripture real quick. This is in 35 28.

00:35:02 - 00:40:04

So this is after the savior has ascended back to his father. And they're writing about the disciples. And verse 23, it says, and it came to pass that thus they did go forth among all the people of nephi. And it briefly gospel of Christ unto all people on the face of the land. And they were converted unto the lord. And were united unto the church of Christ. I love that pattern, right? First, first and foremost, they were converted unto the lord. And after they were converted to the lord, then they were united with the church. Nice. Sometimes we flip back, right? We convert people to the lord to the church, and then we hope somewhere along the line, they'll become converted to the state. But the pattern there is, if you're converted to the lord, then when the church, people get hung up on policies and so forth. And I say, where is your conversion? If you're converting to the lord, then, you know, you recognize to me that the importance of the church is priesthood keys that allow me to participate in ordinances and make covenants. That's the primary reason of the church. We're having a discussion with the youth recently, we're talking about the purpose of baptism, the article of faith, the prophet emphasized the baptism was for the remission of sense, it doesn't say for membership in the church, right? When Joseph and Oliver were baptized, they weren't, they weren't members of any church. They weren't baptized. It church didn't exist, right? It hadn't been organized. Right. Right. They were seeking a remission of their sins. And so when you make that connection that if the purpose of baptism is for a remission of your sins, then that is the purpose of the sacrament. If we're renewing that covenant, then we go each week, and that's why you don't want to miss church. That's why you don't want to miss the ordinance of the sacrament because you have an opportunity, again, repeatedly for remission of your sins. And I just think that's such an important doctoral understanding. My father in law passed away about 7 years ago, but he was a great gospel scholar and he loved to teach a gospel. And one of his favorite trick he called it his favorite trick question. As chief and sunny school are priesthood or whatever he would ask members he'd say, what's the first principle of the gospel? And invariably somebody will quickly say faith. And he would say, wrong, the first principle of the gospel is faith in the lord Jesus Christ. It's not faith. It's faith in the lord Jesus Christ. And that's an important distinction, right? Yeah, I love that. And the same with, you know, when we say baptism, it's not baptism. It's baptism for the remission of sins. Which again goes, you know, I've been engrossed daily now

in preach my gospel. And the purpose of a missionary, you know, is to invite others to come to Christ and to live the doctrine of Christ. And I was talking to my brother in law who's sewing his mission present down in Mexico right now. And one of the things that he's taught the missionaries there is that, you know, in 35 11, when the savior talks about his doctrine, right? He says, and this is my doctrine. And then in any clarifies, he says, and this is the doctrine which the father hath given unto me. Right? So whose doctrine is it? It's a father's doctrine. Right. And at this point is that the savior lived it. Right? He believed in had faith in his heavenly father. He didn't repent, like we think of repentance because he didn't need to repent. But he did change, right? He did he didn't receive a fullness at first as John teaches. He grew. He learned, and so he was baptized. Do you receive the gift of the holy ghost? And he endured to the end. Perfectly. So he lived it. So he could say this is my Doctrine because he took possession of it, right? And he said, how important that is for us to do the same thing? Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could turn to our children and say, this is my doctrine? This is the savior has given to me.

00:40:05 - 00:45:02

It's a document that the father gave to the savior. And we take possession of that, but I love that they're the brother and I think as we watch general conference and they're teachings, we see that the gospel doctrines of principles are interconnected. You can't teach one. I remember an appreciative leadership meeting here in Richmond back in 2014. Is this about a month before I became state president elder bednar was here. And one of the comments he made was we have to stop stove piping the gospel. We talk about missionary work. And then we talk about temple and family history. And now we see how that has been present Nelson stressed it and taught it. So beautifully, it's all one work. It's all the same. And we've got to stop stove piping it. So I like the thought of it being all interconnected. Yeah, yeah. One doctrine and it's a Christ doctrine and they came from the father, right? Yeah. So I'm just curious, walking into this next role. This is obviously a full-time role for three years and if there's any organization or program or whatnot that is at least somewhat familiar or similar to a military process. Full-time missionaries might be it. In that way, help me grow up and it was an intense experience when not I would assume I'd have a similar or more intense experience with the military, whatnot. But nonetheless, it was a very formative experience for me. And many others. What are your thoughts, we all know that we're completely naive to these roles until we're about 6, 7 months into them. But just for the sake of discussion here, what are you thinking? Walking into this and should your missionaries be intimidated by your marine experience here? Well, interestingly enough, if you've noticed and maybe this have gone against that for doing an interview, but you notice that when they do your bios now, the church news, it doesn't, it doesn't say what your profession was. Oh yeah. Yeah, they used to. I used to talk about your profession, but now with mission presence, they don't, but that aside, I think I was joking when my sons had said, yeah, I was going through the missionary handbook. It says, get up at 6 30. And I'm thinking, 6 30.

Revelry was always at 5. Why are we sleeping in for an hour and a half? Oh boy. You're going to have them running on the beach, you know? That won't be a change that will make. But we had a good laugh about it anyway. Nice. One of my sons said, dad, you'll be the only mission president would be sent home a day after you get there. Nice. And speaking of sending home, I mean, that's a big concern nowadays of just this seems like a larger group of missionaries, obviously with the age change. I mean, there's a lot of variables to look at. But it seems like more and more with mental health and what not to anxieties and whatnot. A lot of missionaries are returning home. And obviously in the military, if you can't, you can't cut it and off you go. I assume, I don't know, but I'm sure the work for you. But what are your thoughts on that as far as helping these young men find success? And young women find success in the mission fail. To me, it's the primary purpose. Is to do everything that we can as husband and wife to help love love them and help them and do everything we can to keep them there. And help them to know that the lord is there and help them find a way to better tap into that. To receive his help. And to feel of his love and realize that they can do it. And there is a lot of help. There's this counselors. And the church has done just the incredible job of making that more and more available and a lot more help to mission presence than there were even just four or 5 years ago. What's out there now? So I think that's to me, you know, I had an experience in the state president. I had a young man that was serving and well, he wasn't out, I don't think 6 weeks in the mission browsing column. We joke about this, but man, as a stake president, he just hate getting calls from mission presents.

00:45:04 - 00:50:18

Because it's never good. They never call you up to tell you. Hey, just want to let you know what a great job this missionaries doing. Maybe you should try that. See how it goes? I've made a note. A lot of them that I've mentioned it to they all say, yeah, we should do that. But they've got their hands full. But anyway, he called and we worked with this missionary. And about 6 months later, he called me again. And I was having struggles. And while the third time he called with this missionary, I remember I said two months at present, I said, you've done all you can, send him home. You know, I'm thinking about it as companion. I'm thinking about, you know, the impact it has to the work. I should just send him home. And he said, well, he said, no, he said, I'm not quite ready to do that. And he made it. He served as complete mission, he served two years. He came home. He was a changed person. He wasn't the same young man that I set apart. And a couple of months ago, I call that mission president and I told him, I said, I'd just done a temple recommend interview with this young man. And he was going off to college. And he's just in a good place. I said, I just want to thank you for hanging in there. And doing all you could. I said, and I had received my call then. So I knew, and I told him, I said, you're a great example on inspiration to me. Every time, I'm looking across at a missionary that thoughts of them going home, I'm going to think of this mission president and say, okay, what else can we do? And I'm

excited about you mentioned some of the military things. One of the fun things in the military was surprising. If you really want to know how things really look, if you tell them in advance, there's going to be an inspection on such and such a day, you know, they're going to get ready for it, right? They're going to prepare for it. So one of the things that I want to do as a mission president is I'll probably give them a little bit of heads up in the beginning, but down the road, I probably won't. I just want to walk in at 8 30 in the morning and say, I'm here for companion study. Let's do it. Yeah. Nice. And I think I'll learn more about missionaries and how to works going that way than I ever will in any zone coffee. Yeah, yeah, for sure. And especially if they're still in bed at 8 30, right? Nice. Well, this has been awesome. I'm just exploring these dynamics from the leadership with the marines to church leadership and these principles and whatnot. What are we missing before we wrap up? I got one more question for you. But anything we're missing before we wrap up. No. You know, I love the simplicity of going back to, you know, you got to really care about them. Whether that's a member of your ward or a member of your mission or your member of your team that you work with, that's universal. You got to care about them. You got to care about their family. And being fair and being consistent with people, you know, most adults have had the experience of working with somebody that's not consistent. And boy, that's hard, right? When you don't, if you've ever worked for a Jekyll Hyde kind of person, you don't know who's behind the door when you walk in in the morning. That's tough. Yeah. And so when you think of following the savior, you know, we know that the savior is consistent. He was loving. He was caring. He truly cared about I mean, we see that throughout his ministry. Of truly caring about individuals and their families. And that makes all the difference. Awesome. Very last question I have for you is as you reflect on your time in leadership, both with the military and church leadership. How is being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ? I think one of the things that I've often thought about by there's a lot of different echelons of command, right? We've talked about platoon company, but giant regiment division, so forth. In the church, you've got ward stakes, so forth. There was in combat operations center from the time from the battalion level on up, we always had a sign somewhere in the operations center there was a sign. Sometimes it was just made on a cardboard box, and sometimes it was something a little more efficient, but it would say, what do I know, who needs to know it, have I told them? What do I know who needs to know it? Have I told them? You can save yourself a lot of heartache.

00:50:19 - 00:54:41

A lot of headache by following just following that. And it's doing the church and it's true. And one of the key things in those that it sometimes took me longer than it should have to learn is that always assume that higher headquarters knows something you don't know. And always assume that you subordinate commands know something you don't know. And because that's the truth that at the ground level are things going on that you don't have a full picture on and higher

headquarters are seeing and hearing some things that you don't and you realize and the church that that's true in all leadership, you know, that's why the councils are so important, whether it's a bishopric meeting or a young men's presidency or award counsel, State Council, it's that. And so when you realize that the source of which we're seeking, that inspiration is the lord and he knows all things. And so the beauty of the councils that I think in leadership that helps me follow Christ better is to realize that in the discussion, the inspiration revelation will come. President Nelson has said, I'm good, good revelation is dependent on good communication. And as you have these discussions, then, and you counsel back and forth, we want another, then the lord is able to steer you in the right direction and you'll hear it. You'll feel it, and you'll see it. By having the discussion, if you don't have the discussion, if you don't have the counsel, that often not going to find it. So I think yeah, I think leadership is realizing that we don't know at all. And the lord does, and if we'll go to him and be humble, prayerful, then he will and his in his timing make it known to us. And sometimes, of course, we want everything right now. And that's not always how he works. In fact, it's usually not how he works. And that concludes this how I lead interview. I hope you enjoyed it and I would ask you, could you take a minute and drop 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, how we develop as leaders, just hearing what the other guy's doing, trying some things out, testing, adjusting, for your area, and that's where great leadership is 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 of somebody, any type of leader who would be a fantastic guest on how I lead segment reach out to us, go to leading saints dot org slash contact, maybe send this individual an email, letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name for this interview. We'll reach out to them and see if we can line them up. So again, go to leading saints dot org slash contact and there you can submit all the information and let us know. And maybe they will be on a feature how I lead segment on the leading saints podcast. And remember to review the mentally healthy saints library, click the link in the show notes or go to leading saints dot org slash 14th. He had came as a result of a position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of heaven who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and when the declaration was made concerning the 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 can not shrink nor run away. And to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability