

# S5-E7\_Podcast\_Gluttonous Monst...rs and Self-Worshipping Pagans

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Dave Leake, Jeff Leake, Josh Leake

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**D** Dave Leake 00:02

Hey, what's up everybody welcome the spark leadership podcast, where we have culture creating conversations. I'm one of the hosts. My name is Dave.

**J** Jeff Leake 00:10

My name is Jeff and of course, we're on staff here at Allison Park church. I'm the Lead Pastor Dave's the Northside campus pastor. And we have, we're bringing back one of our faves special guests. So actually, this is Josh. So we are all family as well as on staff together. So Dave, my oldest son, Josh is our third born. Josh is the assistant campus pastor. And so we're going to have a conversation that's going to involve so I always say one of the things that that creates the menu of why we talk about what we talk about is that normally, it's something you're bothered about Dave. So like, you've heard something, it's stuck in your Craw, you're wondering about something theologically, culturally, church wide, whatever. And so Josh, you got bothered about something? So we thought, This is good.

**J** Josh Leake 00:56

It's been a year from the last time I was on was April of last year, okay. There was a different tagline at this time. So I've been fanboying off to the side. And now boy, I get to listen to all of them. And I think part before we

**D** Dave Leake 01:10

before we get into, we still got to do some Thank you. So you finish your intro, but that's the end of my intro. Okay. Welcome, Josh. Welcome to our listeners. And we always have to say this at the beginning, we're so thankful if you are a faithful listener, or if you're brand new

welcome. Glad to have you as part of the conversations. Typically what we do at the beginning is we give gratitudes anybody that was kind enough to leave us a five star review on Apple podcasts. We would love to do that. For all Spotify users, you're a huge deal as well. But Spotify doesn't show us your name. No new reviews this week to shout out. However, I'll just ask as we always do, it would make a huge, huge difference to us. If you could just take a couple of minutes. You know, click on that thing on the podcasts app, leave five stars. We would love to shout you out. And it really helps us to kind of spread the word about who we are and what we're trying to do, which is help people navigate some difficult tricky conversations and waters and if you're if you're a Christian leader, maybe have some culture setting kinds of conversations because

**J** Jeff Leake 02:11

and it's talked about and or like or subscribe on YouTube. I hear that well and or like my podcasts I listened to they always say that so Alright, So Josh, you're disturbed about something. That's why we're bringing you on Josh

**D** Dave Leake 02:21

is disturbed.

**J** Jeff Leake 02:25

came across something that made you not not offended, but more just like curious and wondering what's the right approach here? So tell us

**J** Josh Leake 02:34

some I've been reading some different stuff. And specifically, I came across a post that somebody shared with me by Pastor theologian, I don't know exactly what his title would be. But Nathan Pinocchio, who I'd also heard a really great message from him on holiness. And that's how kind of some of me and some of the people I know got turned on to his content. But he shared something last week that really got me thinking about kind of a follow up to last week's. So last week, you guys were talking about or I should say, last time you recorded? The episode was about discipleship, and how does this work and methodology? One of the things that has been bothering me is how this plays into online church. So I'll just set up with a little bit of context. We started when we've had a couple of conversations in this podcast about online church and how does it work? And in this podcast started in COVID, is that was the middle of it in the here, but we're talking about like, what even is this? And we started online church because of necessity. And then we moved out of it. And we were talking about like, the good and bad is this, should this be a substitute or supplemental? And I've been listening to other people who talk about that same idea. Is this a substitute? Can this be our is online church, real church? Or is this just a substitute, but I think like in supplemental meaning, supplemental meaning, like it's not a replacement for me, and that's what I see most people saying, Now, this is not a replacement for in person church, but it's a really good, there's a lot of good things that come about that. And we can talk more about that. But really like even less

about that, because we've had conversations about the good and the bad of this tool, and does it replace or does it not and all of those things, but the thing that I came across was specifically about Nathan Pinocchio, saying why they choose not to engage online in a lot of ways, which got me thinking less about like, is this good and bad and more about what is our responsibility to communicate to the people in our church, about what it means to be healthy and growing Christian in relation to things like engaging in online? Right now, the way that it works is like I think a lot of people are like, Yeah, we encourage people to be here in person, maybe the way that we encourage that is in different ways. But I have been feeling heavy about? Man, I feel like we have a responsibility to communicate something. And I don't know that we're always clear. A lot of churches in America, because we're in a new phase. So what is it? What should it look like for us to communicate? And

**J** Jeff Leake 05:15

so this is new territory for everybody. Right? It's so most people had some kind of online broadcast, that was just like putting your services on Facebook or something before the pandemic, and the pandemic hit. And then we all had to make it our primary for a minute, where most churches weren't meeting a person, but that meeting, meeting through the online avenues. And then you heard voices like Karen Neuhoff, who has a great leadership podcast, he was constantly saying, online is the future, right? So not only is it a part of what we do, it's got to be a major part of what we do, because a lot of people are going to engage with everything we do online. And I always felt a little bit like a little bit of a pushback from that particular angle. Now you're saying Nathan, for Nokia was saying, we're gonna go exactly the opposite, we're gonna make online unavailable, because we want to send the message to people that it is not enough to be online, you gotta be in person. There are actually some churches that for a while, I think, wasn't it Judah Smith's church that out on the West Coast decided to go all online, like we're staying online, and we're not going to come back in person. I don't think that's where they are anymore. But there's been so many iterations about this, you know, questions about like, for a little while at Allison Park, we called it an online campus. And we made it like, this is a campus just like all of our other campuses, for the people that feel too afraid to come back out of the pandemic, or maybe just this is their preference. And then we went away from online campus to this is our online broadcast. Right. So some people will still choose to jump in on the online broadcast. And now what you're asking the question is, is it enough to make that a menu item? Or do we need to distinguish and say, This is not the same? Like it's something but it's not the same as in person attendance? And do we have a pastoral obligation to say to our people, this is not the same, that's

**D** Dave Leake 07:12

a good way to set it up. I was thinking all the time, like, feel like it's two questions. One question is, like, because this is not a biblical matter of right and wrong. It's a protocol, or procedure. So we're asking one, what is a healthy amount for online? Or what's healthy perspective? For online to take in the life of any believer? Yeah. And then what's our responsibility? In terms of clearly forcefully communicating? What's the need, you know,

**J** Jeff Leake 07:42

this brings up a covered there's like an underlying conversation to this conversation that you

and I, Dave, especially I've had over and over and over throughout this podcast, which is, so how can I say this? What is the role of a pastor in bringing the heat on? Yeah, yeah. And how do you bring the heat without shame it bring the heat without guilt? But how do you bring the heat in such a way, so that you're actually leading people? Because a part of what it is to be a shepherd is to make sure that the sheep end up in Healthy Places, which involves the, the, you know, the rod and the staff, they comfort me, right? So the staff is used to yank sheep back into a place where they're healthy, in love and tenderness, but yet with some degree of pastoral urgency, urgency and authority? Yeah, yeah. Right. And so you oftentimes are coming at it from the younger generation, saying, We should be a little bit more intense on this, which is, I think, one of the entertaining parts of this particular of our podcasts because many people find that funny that You're tougher than I am on some things. And so I actually have people who remind me, Dave, of how you've called me out on something and they'll say, Don't give, don't get wishy washy on that.

**J** Josh Leake 08:57

I mean, I think,

**D** Dave Leake 08:58

I think some of probably my, my stronger takes are just probably less experienced. And some of the stuff that you have is because you've been through a lot, maybe,

**J** Jeff Leake 09:08

maybe, but there's some times I've actually corrected myself on maybe things I haven't been tough enough about. So Josh, you brought up the good question, which is, have we been clear enough? First, I guess what is our conviction? Yeah. Have we defined it? Yeah. And then secondly, are we being clear enough about that? And so, so. So, before you go,

**D** Dave Leake 09:33

can I ask you to potentially say what did Nate Nathan

**J** Josh Leake 09:36

who had some great hot that's what I was about to read some excerpts?

**D** Dave Leake 09:40

I love love to hear that I



**J** Jeff Leake 09:42

love Nathan Pinocchio is not a pastor of a church is he? I don't think I know he is part of one but as part of what I don't part of the teaching

**D** Dave Leake 09:50

team or something. He's part of the teaching team and then he has his own university. He runs FiOS, right. Yes. As you as

**J** Jeff Leake 09:56

you okay. Yeah. And he's right. really insightful, funny, in a lot of ways. Sure.

**D** Dave Leake 10:04

He's got he's a very brilliant guy. He's

**J** Josh Leake 10:07

what I like about him is that he's an instigator. So he'll say things and he'll take and intentionally, like, find ways to get other people's skin so that they're bothered. And they have to think about some. So if

**J** Jeff Leake 10:19

Nathan, your, if anyone ever forwards this to you and you're listening to this, we would love to have you as a guest on this podcast. So fun. That would be a great future future guest app. But go ahead and help us, Josh. But

**J** Josh Leake 10:29

so I'll just share a couple of the things that he said this was an email, by the way, right to subscribers. Yeah. So So one of our pastors subscribes to like a, basically blog that he has, where he posts a bunch of stuff. And he showed me this and so I took some screenshots of some of the different parts of this. But he's talking about why they don't have why his church that he's a part of doesn't have a huge online presence. So he says, if your church streams and socials great, but here's our underlying philosophy at the moment and some things we are reacting to, because there are some problems with socials and streams. They are creating a kind of congregant and Christian, that we really don't want to come to our church.

**D** Dave Leake 11:08

You say? Two things. Just

**J** Jeff Leake 11:09

take your time. Take your time. Slow down with these because this is heavy dropping truth bombs here. Right. Okay.

**J** Josh Leake 11:17

It's like it's really good. So yeah, and I'll read this next part. So he says, firstly, I think the biggest problem with with the congregant is consumerism, which is part of what we I've heard he's another one of the themes. Yes, themes. Last week, what we were talking what you guys were talking about. consumers think that Jesus, and he mentioned his church's name, holy saints, but the Church exists to serve them. They become gluttonous monsters who create a multiplicity of problems communally. And so I could share part of the the next part of what he's saying, but I think that's probably a good place to pause for a second because the, yeah, consumerism and casual and cultural Christians. And even part of what we were talking about yesterday is individualism. Before we introduce the idea of this podcast, when we were discussing yesterday, individualism of people who take from the buffet of what they want from Christianity, and how they want to engage and what's best for them. That's why talking about online church isn't good or bad. It's like, Well, part of it has to be done through our context of where the America is at and consumerism is such a big prevalent part of

**D** Dave Leake 12:33

So can I ask you a question, Josh? Yeah, from what you're saying? In summary, I'm just trying to make sure I understand. You're saying Nathan's proposition is that he thinks online church, when it is the focus creates those kinds of people with those kinds of issues. Like it turns people in to gluttonous, whatever is it? Or is he saying that attracts those?

**J** Josh Leake 12:58

Well, he was clarifying that he's saying I don't think these things are bad, but I think they need to be handled extremely responsibly. Because I think already a problem with the average American congregant is consumer mindset of what's in this for me or the individualism. So he's saying we have chose to significantly limit how we engage with this because we want to make sure that everybody who's coming here fully understands what where we draw the lines, and the boundaries of what it means to be

**D** Dave Leake 13:27

so this caters, it caters to that mindset is what he's saying. He's saying, We think online church, if it's not very carefully, done, caters to the mindset of consumerism is the basis of

**J** Josh Leake 13:41

**J** Josh Leake 13:41

the American consumerism, which is we meet you where you're at, and you can engage with whatever level you want and whatever is good for you. That's his instigation. Yeah, good moment. That's

**D** Dave Leake 13:51

a good it's a good Instagram.


**J** Jeff Leake 13:52

Let's do let's do history. Now, let's do a little bit of history because I think there is a little bit of a difference between the medium and the message. Okay. So, back in the 1920s, there was a, one of the most intriguing evangelist at the time was a lady by the name of Aimee Semple McPherson, and she was huge in so many ways. She led many enormous healing revivals traveling all over the country, planted a church called Angelus temple that still exists today in Los Angeles grew the church to over 20,000 people. She was one of the very first people to get on radio, because radio is brand new, was brand new medium. And there was a lot of people that felt that radio cheapened the message, okay, then came the era when television was invented. And there were early pioneers of Christian television and Christian television that was being broadcast on Sunday morning. And so the question became, does Christian television undermine church attendance and church participation? And you could see some of the perversions that happened through Christian television where you have people raising money in unhealthy ways or, you know, stereotype of the, of the television televangelists, which caused the massive damage to the represent rep, you know, reputation of Christianity. And so now here we are with another medium like, I guess there's one coming, which is AI. Right I, by the way, I just happen to see this is a little detour, I happen to see our good friend Johanna barometer on social media yesterday, using AI to take one of his messages delivered in English, and to translate it into Swahili. So you could, you could watch him and it actually moved his lips, just like Swahili. So now he's translating himself into another language, which that's great, say, AI is a medium that has potential dangers to it, as well as potential benefits. So we would have to say the the ability for a local church like like ours, or smaller churches to be able to broadcast to an audience online and reach people, that's actually a medium that created a very positive opportunity. Yeah, that wasn't there. 10 years ago. Right. Right. And so that has to be something that is, that is not, that's the medium itself. Online. Ministry is not necessarily bad, just like radio wasn't just like television wasn't. But with each one of those inventions, there came potential downsides. Right? So. So we're talking about the downside of it. And some of it is how we frame the proper use. Well, you


**D** Dave Leake 16:43

know what, you know, what else is a really interesting analogy. And I don't, I don't have enough history to tell you the timeline. But I honestly hate this. But you ever do this, you read something, you have no idea where you read it. But this in the last few years, I was reading about the how the production of food changed America, like in the last century, and it was like, it was like, in the early 1900s, everybody only had home cooked meals, and it was limited what you could have, like everybody had like, there was a very limited variety. You know,

restaurants were limited, because, you know, we're all access to stuff. Yeah, you get in New York, it was a common Christmas present to have oranges, because there were so rare there, you import from Florida, they're expensive. But then like as mass food became produced differently, you know, the production lines and all this different stuff, and you can buy anything on any shelf. The variety increased. But what also probably increased was the kind of awful food that you could live on a diet of Yeah.

 Jeff Leake 17:44


Because as a new organic, fresh home cooked, roast. Yeah, you had with all the vitamins and nutrients. Now you're ending up with something that's processed and packaged TV dinners that has, you know, carcinogens, which is bad for your body, which is I guess a good comparison, right, where you have the convenience of online, but is it processed food? You know, I mean,

 Josh Leake 18:06


here's what I would love to jump in? Because yeah, I have, I feel like in some of the circles of people I talk to on staff, I have sort of become known, like the anti to this, because you're like your high food guy.

 18:23

Yeah, yeah. But I don't even eat organic.

 Josh Leake 18:29

We will joke around a lot some of the people here because I Yeah, because I, I have recognized in my own life problems where I was complacent with just the junk food. And it was so significant for me that sometimes I can have intense takes that are probably too far. But I'll just say before I share it, because eventually we're going to go again is our responsibility. I am so grateful for it's obviously like it's not all just junk food. It's terrible for you, because there's been messages that I've watched online that have brought me to tears, sure, a place of surrender. And I have met with other pastor friends over zoom that I can there across the world. And it's been really great conversations. And I love what our team does here. Yeah, they poured their

 Jeff Leake 19:14

backs, to what we do online church really, really well for our Punching Weight and our team size of our churches over

 Josh Leake 19:21

it. And they believe in it.



**D** Dave Leake 19:22  
To Brendan and Michael Oh, yeah, Miller and all

**J** Jeff Leake 19:26  
and all of our MC hosts and yeah, the money that people have invested at Elsa park so that we could buy the equipment necessary to do this. Well.

**J** Josh Leake 19:34  
So it's not just a simple thing like online is junk food or digital junk.

**D** Dave Leake 19:38  
We're not throwing the baby out with a bath, right? Yeah,

**J** Josh Leake 19:41  
but it definitely is like we're looking at your spiritual diet here. Sure, is a big part of the question of as chefs as shepherds and looking at a church with the people that are coming, what's our responsibility to be like, hey, this diet of of or just sort of drawing the line For people of like when, what does it mean to be really a part of the church? Like, can you be a part of Allison Park? If you come once every two months? Sure. What's the answer? Forget about

**D** Dave Leake 20:11  
Allison Park.

**J** Josh Leake 20:12  
Church?

**D** Dave Leake 20:13  
I think in general, it's a really good question. Like, what does it actually mean to be a part of a healthy church community? Because Okay, one thing I'll just we do the soapbox sometimes. But, you know, I do think we tend as Americans to think about everything through the lens of individualism through. So from my perspective, who am I, what's my personality was my passion. And we tend to think less from a group identity perspective of me as a part of a body or a family. But the church family is how we're constantly described. It's not it's not an

individual. There's a degree of that. But it's more often talked about from a whole body. So what does it actually mean to be engaged in a church family? Why don't we just the whole foods guy, we want to have him start with this. Let,

### J Jeff Leake 21:02

let me mention a couple things, though, before we kick it back to Josh. Yeah. If you live in a place in the world where you get no food, let's use your food example. Processed foods better than no food at all? Absolutely. So if you're in a place where you don't have access to a healthy local church, and all you can actually get is something online, you it's better to eat junky food and have and starve and God God can bless that and God can bless, right? So. So it's not the fact that it's not the fact that online is always junk food, but But you're saying it, maybe it has less nutritional value, because of the lack of two things, the lack of being able to be in the room where the you can be in the tangible, the place where the tangible presence of God is more manifest, because people are there together in agreement, yes. And then to you miss the body life, you can't really do body life without face to face, moments of relationship. So you need to be seen and known. And you need to be connected socially. So that's why it's missing those two components, which makes the diet a little less than what it would be in person, by the way, I'll just say, I have talked to I've been in rooms with pastors of large churches, and all their response, like, online will come up, and they'll say, let's just face it during the pandemic, I'd be watching my own church service, and that wasn't all that engaged. And then and then or they would say, Yeah, I would just skip the worship. You know, I would get to your worship or skip velour, skip the worst. Yeah, sure. Yeah. Because like, there was so much going on, and everyone was talking, and, oh, we tried to sit our family down, and, you know, sit in front of the TV. But there was always something someone was fighting with each other there was. So now some people are able to zone in, it's just them and, and in the in the in the service, they turn out all distractions. But I think another factor is because of interruptions. And the Easy Ease of distract distraction. I think a lot of times people are maybe half there. I guess, I guess the balance of that is some people can be in the room and half there. That's true. But either way, I mean, that's another one of these things. So yeah, Josh.

### J Josh Leake 23:19

So the reason that I feel so particularly burdened by this at the moment, is that I've been reading and studying a lot over the past couple of years about just a lot of different books and podcasts and different stuff like that messages about spiritual formation, and just have experienced a couple of key moments. And I would say past three years of death to self and self sacrifice of God, convicting me and that and the life and the freedom and the joy that comes from when you like, recognize the value of these things, and you put them at the front of your life. So I feel a heavy burden. When when talking about this, and I'll share I guess maybe somebody pays in second. Not from people need to be here. I heard a just a quick money trail, I heard a different podcast, great podcast, but they were talking about like, some some people beat down on online because they're insecure, that they're gonna lose followers to like Steven Furtick, or like, not as many people will come online, and they're insecure, but what that does to the church, and I'm like, that's actually not what I'm focusing on. I feel a burden for the people of Allison Park church, because I know that like, again, the the animal that we're up against consumerism, casual Christianity, individualism, like the antidote for that is understanding death to self and self sacrifice. So I do think there are some responsibility to

communicate to people you have to be here. And I don't want to put a number of like, it has to be this many times. But I feel like burden to figure that out of what does that mean? To draw clear line for people, and to not be money, because I feel like where we're at now is, come whenever you want, engage however you want. God loves you. Obviously, that's maybe an extreme version of it. But guys, so

**D** Dave Leake 25:11

let me ask. Let me ask a question before we move on, from what Josh just said, Josh, when you say, you're burdened, that we fight the monster of like, worshiping yourself, like, you know, however, you want to have it your way, whatever you take whatever, like, and so you're, you're concerned about online? How does being in person, in your opinion, combat that? That monster? Does that make sense? Yes.

**J** Josh Leake 25:41

Well, I think there's a lot of different ways. But I think like to sum it up, I think if you're going to be a real follower of Jesus, it comes from the understanding that you owe Jesus the best of what you have. And this is what we've talked about in the past of like, this is why, like, tithing is a thing. But I think like tithing kind of with everything that you have, it's not just money. Yes, it's money. communicating about that, but it's, it's understanding that God deserves the best of what you have. That's like a starting reason of it. But it's also what was the question one more time just so I can make sure I made

**J** Jeff Leake 26:15

it? Well, I was how does it involve you dying to yourself? And by being a person? Why

**D** Dave Leake 26:20

could you guide yourself online?

**J** Jeff Leake 26:23

Because I'm serious. It sounds funny. Yeah.

**J** Josh Leake 26:26

Well, in some ways you can because you can, let's say you're not giving at all, and you're really protective of your money. And you hear a message where, you know, somebody says, you give God your best, and then you start tithing. Okay, that's death itself. So but But what I'm talking about is also just recognizing that I think a lot of Americans view church as content driven. And so they tend to because of social media, and because of online church, think about, what do I

get out of this message, and there is a huge benefit of what you get out of messages. Absolutely. But really, church is it is so much about showing up for people, even when you have nothing showing to serve God.

**J** Jeff Leake 27:02

So it's Christ centered, not content driven. And it's community based. Right? So it's designed to be relational, like church in and of itself as a people. It's not a it's not an event. It's not a building. It's not happening. People, it's a people, right? So if you belong to a people, and you belong to a family, and but you never show up to family gatherings, then you kind of wonder, do you really want to be in this family? Because it's one thing to be online and watch the family gatherings? Now, if you have a job that prevents you from being there, if you're if you're always working on the weekends is your only way to engage if you live in another part of the world, or if

**J** Josh Leake 27:40

you're sick or sick kids that are going through things. Yeah, okay.

**J** Jeff Leake 27:44

So say I couldn't be at the family gathering, but I wanted to, I'm so loyal to it, that I wanted to make sure that I was aware of what happened and all the aspects of the service, not just the sermon, so that I can continue to lean in consistently. Because I value my church family so much, that would be in my mind a really healthy use of an online experience, right? But if it's a substitute, like, I'm not going to do community, because I'm really not interested in it. But I do want to get the content because I think the content would benefit my life. That's consumerism. Is that right? Yeah.

**D** Dave Leake 28:18

Well, can I let me add a couple of thoughts that come to mind as we're talking about this. So you talked about manifest presence of God? Because he does manifest differently in locations where you're all together? I mean, literally, that's scripture, two or more are gathered. Just about body life in the community, a couple of things that I think, help fight against self worship that you were talking about that come up to me. So one is, I think you're getting at this, Josh. But when we show up in community in person, we're choosing not just what's most convenient for me or my schedule, or what what do I feel like doing today, but it's who might need me there? Because when we attend with purpose, like I'm a part of this family, a part of this body, and we go with open eyes sometimes, like I think we tend to have a viewpoint that pastors are the ones that do ministry and attenders, the one that's that receives ministry, but all church members are there to do ministry.

**J** Jeff Leake 29:16

And so you can't really work in the nursery online. No, I mean, yeah, right, I mean, we do

And so you can't really work in the nursery online. No, I mean, yeah, right. I mean, we do broadcast some children's program, but you can't really get in the life of an eight year old and tell them how much you love and believe in them. Right? From an online perspective, at least not to where it's felt to that degree.

**D** Dave Leake 29:34

And even even like the difference of I'm in I'm in the lobby, and I noticed someone who looks down and God says go talk to them that that it can happen online, it happens far more when you're under in somebody's presence

**J** Jeff Leake 29:48

and a mature way of approaching your, your weekend experience is to come not so much to get but to give exactly when you when you show up to church saying I'm going to give worship to God Odd with all my heart, I'm gonna give, I'm going to give my gifts and talents in some area of service, I'm going to give myself being and I'm going to be present in the moment to listen to someone who's going through something. And to minister to someone in need, I'm going to be present by bringing my family with me, because I want them to see the priority of what it is to be, you know, putting God first in your life. Yeah. And then I'm gonna listen to a message in experience worship, which is good content. But I think the what you put in actually makes you grow more than what you take out anyway. And if you're not putting anything in, you're not really gonna grow. I mean, you're gonna get good information and inspiration, but you're not gonna have that growth component. And

**D** Dave Leake 30:38

I think there's sorry, go 45 More, there's one more thing that I was thinking about with community, when it comes to dying to self and stuff. There is like, so when you're online, you can be as vulnerable as you choose to. But your anonymity is 100%. In your control, right? I can be 100% Anonymous, nobody would know if I'm a real person, or I'm a bot. Theoretically, you know, I

**J** Jeff Leake 31:04

don't make a confession. Sometimes. I've had a message on a soccer game on another screen. Sure. Yeah. Right. Right. Like it. Nobody knows. I mean, what are you gonna do? Nobody would know. So you can be

**D** Dave Leake 31:14

100% Anonymous, or you can be you know, more engaged, and then you could theoretically be vulnerable. But the less that you're in person with other believers, the less vulnerable you are that goes beyond your choice, because you're around people. And there's a degree. I wish they

didn't have to see that. You can't hide it. They're like you can try. But there's something that comes off you too, are people can see, I think I think anonymity is a really dangerous thing. It leads to isolation, it leads to stagnancy. That's why we're meant for community. Let

**J** Jeff Leake 31:57

me bring in a totally different article now. Great, okay. This broadens beyond Christianity. There's an article that was written April 3 2024, Derek Thompson, Derek Thompson, staff writer for The Atlantic, he basically writes and says, I'm an I'm an agnostic, not a Christian. And I have been celebrating the decline of organized religion in our country for a long time. Okay, that's, that's how he starts it. And then he goes on to say, but what I've come to understand is that so here's here's what he says suddenly, in the 1990s, the ranks of non believers surged an estimated 40 million people, one in eight Americans stopped going to church in the past 25 years, making it the largest concentrated change in church attendance in American history. According to the religion writer, Jake meter, in 2021, membership in houses of worship fell below a majority for the first time in on record. Now, what he goes on to then say is that isolation, especially amongst young people, has become epidemic. And while people are no longer involved in community organizations, or the church, there is this problem that's happening. That is a not a good thing at all. He says, for example, young people who are fleeing religion faster than older Americans, have also seen the largest decline in socialization. Boys and girls, ages 15 to 19, have reduced their Hangout by more than three hours a week, according to the American Time Use Survey. There is no statistical record of any period in US history where young people were less likely to attend religious services, and no period where young people have spent more time on their own. So he is he saying, maybe the fact as an agnostic who doesn't like Christianity, maybe the fact that people aren't going to church anymore, has been bad for our culture, because so many people are isolated and disconnected. And that doesn't even factor in the change that happened with the pandemic. And 2020 are a lot of people who are self identifying Christians are not going to church either, which means the problem of isolation has gone through the roof. And we aren't socializing enough. Our families are not socialized enough. There's something about being engaged with a community organization, especially a church family, that's healthy for everybody there is and you can't do that part. Only online. I agree. Yeah.

**D** Dave Leake 34:22

I also think there's something about the prioritization of being in church over other family activities or work activities. I understand that that's not always possible. Yeah. But our whole society is moved towards like clubs, programs, sports, achievements, work, whatever that is like, well, this will supersede church church can happen whenever this is important. But I would question that, I think the day and age that we're in, I think everybody should be able to take a look and say, What is it worth missing church for? Because just because something competes doesn't mean that you're should always lose. I'm not saying this from like, let's build our own church. I'm just saying this from a pure your own personal discipleship. You know, well

**J** Jeff Leake 35:07

seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. What does that mean? Does that mean it's, its first? I mean, okay, well seek, seek the kinqdom first, that doesn't necessarily mean

seek a church service first. But these are good questions to be asking ourselves. And now let me just say, Okay, so. So one of the things we we mentioned yesterday, was how maybe we need to start. Because we're in a no way looking to go the Nathan Nokia wrote and wrote and eliminate the online presence. And we, we believe it has other purposes that have got great value. But when we acknowledge the online audience, because I do that every week, how should we do that?

**D** Dave Leake 35:50

So now we're opening it up best practices. So now, now, let's

**J** Jeff Leake 35:53

talk about bring the heat part of the

**J** Josh Leake 35:55

conversation. It's so yes, it's doing that online. But it also is doing that for people who come in person, right? Sometimes,

**J** Jeff Leake 36:03

so to say, hey, we're really glad you're here, meaning, because this is a value. That was what you're saying, Josh, I'm

**J** Josh Leake 36:09

saying, to make it clear to people Yes, who are joining online, how we view it and how it works, but also to people who are because my concern, when we're addressing this is for people that come once a month, and I've talked to people like this and you know, I the conversation goes something like, Oh, I haven't seen you all? Yeah, no, I come usually like probably three weeks online. I love watching online. It's just easier with my life. And then I come once a month in person. And it's not like I can't come it's just like, it's just more convenient.

**J** Jeff Leake 36:43

You're gonna pull up what's the day since the Nokia line, we don't want those kinds of congregants.

**J** Josh Leake 36:53

The kind of congregant that we don't really want to come to our church so intense. They're creating the kind of congregant and Christian that we don't really want to come to our church.

consumers think that Jesus in the Church exists to serve them. They become gluttonous monsters who create a multiplicity of problems communally. Oh, my goodness. But but it really is this like, I think, is it Hebrews five, where it talks about like maturing? Yeah, like if people just stay there, and we let them stay there as pastors thinking this is okay. Now, so we would agree

**J** Jeff Leake 37:25

that that statement isn't instigating? Yes, absolutely. It doesn't represent. I mean, the way we will talk about

**D** Dave Leake 37:31

He's not wrong. The thing is, he's intense. It's I was monster. Yeah, yeah. It's, it is. Okay. What I love about Nathan Pinocchio's approach is there is a hunger, especially amongst so I hear this all the time. Now. Gen Z wants it straight. They want it. They want it raw. I think I think my generation does too. And I think especially going younger, that kind of statement is helpful. Because it's a dividing line. It can be triggering, like a gluttonous monster creating a multiplicity of problems for the community. But um, but I mean, it can go into that he's not, he's just intense.

**J** Jeff Leake 38:10

Yeah. All right. So so we want to what Well, I guess we're searching for and this is not just what this issue but for issues in general, how to bring the appropriate amount of pastoral protective heat. Yeah. without calling people monsters. Right.

**J** Josh Leake 38:29

Just really quick. Another thing that makes not sure that that's drawing a line,

**J** Jeff Leake 38:33

I think the monsters part is a little triggering, but it's probably not necessary.

**J** Josh Leake 38:42

But it gets you thinking it, that's

**J** Jeff Leake 38:43

the internal balance. That's what may be asked to see the pastor of a church because there's, it's some it's, it's, you can be a commentator, or an activist or a prophetic person who feels like they need to speak the truth and be instigating things. But when you actually have to lead a



family lead a church, you think different. Because you there's a certain tenderness, like that person you just described Joshua that shows up and says, haven't seen in a while, and they say, Well, I attend three weeks online to come one time a person. There's a certain pastoral tenderness to that conversation.

**J** Josh Leake 39:14

My desire is definitely not to say your gluttonous monster what you're doing. Yeah,

**J** Jeff Leake 39:19

so but we don't want to just for tenderness. Skip over truth. Sure. So speaking the truth in love, what is our messaging? How would you talk about this? What should we say?

**J** Josh Leake 39:31

Here's the last part of this that makes this complicated is that we are constantly making room for new people to come to the church. We want new people to come in. We don't want to water down what we do, but we also don't want

**J** Jeff Leake 39:45

to don't want them to jump over 10 hurdles to get here. Yes. We don't want them to feel like look, come just like you are who you are with wherever you are at this particular moment in your spiritual journey. Yes. And we want you to know when you show up here, we love you. We're for you. We are not going to shame you. We're on your team, we want you to succeed. Let's somewhere in the journey where they say I want you to be my pastor, something else has to happen. Yes.

**J** Josh Leake 40:06

So let me read you the last one of the last parts of his article. That's just another intense statement. He says, when people come here, nobody is getting greeted with Welcome Home signs. You don't even know what we believe yet. So he's poking fun at the churches who have this welcome home. It's such good news and good natured and he's instigating them. But he says, nobody's getting greeted with Welcome Home signs. You don't even know what we believe yet. You aren't welcome home. If you're a self worshiping pagan, this won't be home if you don't repent. It's so intense. But okay, here's the point is that we have so many new people coming into the church, and we don't want to beat them over the head. First, we can call them gluttonous monsters. But we do have a responsibility at some point, to draw a line where we say you are part of the body of Christ. And here's what that means. Or to say, you are not part of the body, and it's okay, you can still attend. But like if you want to be part of the body of Christ, here's what that means. Sure. I don't know the answer to this.

**D** Dave Leake 41:07  
So we can talk it through. I think what I was going to say is you're dead you're talking about? What do we say? Probably before

**J** Jeff Leake 41:16  
what because some of this is about language. Like obviously, Nathan is saying welcome home may not may be totally correct. But it's probably not theologically it's not.

**D** Dave Leake 41:27  
Okay. So but what I'm saying is, before we talk about what we say, or even the tone, we probably need to have a general idea of what we

**J** Jeff Leake 41:34  
believe. Okay, because so what do we believe?

**D** Dave Leake 41:38  
So let's just process then with the grace the umbrella of grace to be wrong.

**J** Josh Leake 41:44  
No, it's okay. Yeah. Believe specifically about what? What

**D** Dave Leake 41:47  
do we believe about a healthy diet of online as a supplement, not a substitute for church? But what do we believe about a healthy diet? I think that's it as best practice. I think that's it, I think. So what does it mean to be a supplement? And when does it become a substitute? Okay,

**J** Jeff Leake 42:03  
it isn't, okay, substitute in the, in the rare occasion, that it is impossible to be in person, okay. Okay. Otherwise, it's supplement. It's like, I'm going to eat healthy foods for the most part. And I and I also have other stuff, too. So

**D** Dave Leake 42:18  
what's the most part? Let's say online is TV dinner. You know what I mean? prepackaged pizza

with little broccoli thing on the side.

**J** Jeff Leake 42:31

This is I'm talking right. So let me let me interpret. Let's see, I'm not the pastor of the church. And I have a job that takes me out of town several times a month, I have a family with small kids. There are some times that I would feel like I would like to engage online. I'm traveling, and I could search to find a church in the community that I'm in. But I'd rather engage with my own home church. So I'm going to sit in my hotel room, and I'm going to fully engage in that worship experience because it allows me to stay in the flow of what's happening in my local church. I think that's a good healthy thing. My three year old sick, and I and I have to be at home, I think that's a very healthy place. We are on vacation together and we were gonna go to church, we're gonna say, You know what, let's take some time on Sunday morning, have a worship time together. Maybe it's inferior to what we would be if we were in person. But it gets us centered. And we have a conversation about it later in the day. I think those that's all great. If I moved into a new town, I probably would watch every church, I was thinking about attending online three or four times, which is one of the great parts of where I would decide to where I wanted to go in person to check it out. I think all of those are healthy things. I roll over on bed and Sunday morning. And I'm like, I don't feel like getting up today. I'm just gonna watch it online. I don't think that's a healthy decision. I think that's an unhealthy decision. I don't know. Can you get away with it once in a while? Sure. probably can. But if that's a consistent, I don't feel like going today. That is probably the the equivalent to like I'm training right now for half marathon. And today's a nine mile run, because we have one month to go before it. I really don't want to run up one miles today. Like I really don't. If I chose to skip it, I wouldn't be ready for what's ahead. So indulging yourself being soft on your flesh is just not a good thing. Sorry about that. So I would just I would say you have to almost look inside to your motives in a way. Why am I on line today?

**D** Dave Leake 44:31

If it's inability, inability, and that's probably supplemental, if it's out of convenience, and you don't want to reschedule things, then it's probably

**J** Jeff Leake 44:41

a lateral substitute. Yeah.

**D** Dave Leake 44:43

Now what I would just quickly also say in case somebody is unaware, at least that Allison Park church, if you're like, well, sometimes I have stuff in the morning, we'll come to come at night and I have a 6pm service or there's one on Saturday or there's there's Saturday come on Saturday to Hampton or come on Sunday night at 6pm The north side. There's There's enough options to where I think most people if you choose to make it a priority to be there, you can be there it might make take you a little bit farther but driver. So

**J** Jeff Leake 45:09

back to my exercising right now since this is weighing on me, the only way we made it melonite is that several months ago, we sat down and we put because you to get ready for half marathon we you have to you have to run distances, five, six miles, okay, that's, that's time to drive to the place you're gonna run you run. So we had a conversation, I said, if we hadn't put that on our calendar, and prioritize that, as this is the time we're going to run, we would have never found the time. I think we can church is one of those big rocks, you put it in first and you say, this is a block of time, we are going to do this every week. And if it doesn't work here, we're going to move it over here to an evening space, because we're going to be there, this is a priority to us. This isn't just a habit we have if it works out, it's a priority to it. And that helps you get in spiritual condition to be what you're supposed to be for God.

**J** Josh Leake 46:02

Yes. And I think that comes from my desire to help people understand primarily, I exist to serve God and to serve his people. Yep. And everything else surrounds that. So it's not about church attendance, to be easy. Exactly. It's about church attendance, as a worldview and a perspective on my existence as an act of worship. Exactly. So so the person that I would want to challenge in a very pastoral way would be some of the conversations I've had, which I understand the idea of, it was a really long week, I was exhausted, I went through through some, maybe not like crazy personal tragedies, but work was, it was hard, it was really frustrating. I feel overwhelmed, I feel burnt out. I'm like, be in church. That's what you need is it and you may not leave and feel like that was so good for me. But it's like, all of the best things in life. Marriage is a great example. We don't get married because of what we get out of it. Marriage is a covenant or we should have so you but some people do. And then it ends up not working out in the long run, we get married and we show up every day, whether we feel like it or not. Because it's a covenant of self sacrifice and death to self of saying you are more important to me than I am to myself, even when I'm not feeling up to it. Viewing the church in that kind of way is. So how do we figure it out? We communicate it

**D** Dave Leake 47:29

right? No, but we have to start with like, where were we were I believe? I think I'll summarize. We just said in a second. Can I close a loophole? Because I'm seeing a gray area that somebody's like this account for me. Here's here's how it is. Why don't go to church, buddy have a life group. I'm like, That is not a substitute? I think so let me be a both. It should be both. Having a great community. That is a small thing that you're part of to have life on life connection. And iron sharpens iron with believers is great. But I don't think that's a good loophole to be like, well, as long as I watch online and have a life group, I'm fine. I think there's a healthy thing to orient our lives and our schedules around a community gathering of worship, like we do on Sundays, or on Saturday nights to be together and a life group as a supplement life group needs to be part of it as well. But I think we need both. And I would

**J** Josh Leake 48:19

actually argue that life group isn't isn't even I think both are critical. I think it's really important

to not just be worshipping with other people, but to be studying and encouraging. And I guess I could happen on a

D

Dave Leake 48:30

weekend saying we don't we shouldn't that's not a loophole to get to as

J

Jeff Leake 48:33

well. And there is a certain accountability with the weekly rhythm. Yeah. Right. So, so anything you don't have accountability with, you will tend to be able to slack on, right. So I just, you know, turning 60 I had some health blood tests and stuff like that. And I discovered I have a pre diabetic which means I got to start watching what I eat a little bit more. So I was offered by the doctor to get a health coach. So I have a call every couple of weeks with a lady who's my health coach, and she's helping me learn how to read food labels and counting calories and and every time I'm checkup with her, it provides a level of accountability for me of how am I deal with my diet, right? Okay. When when I have exercised and had a trainer, the trainer has, has challenged me, they've kept me accountable. So if I don't show up for my workout, they say, Hey, where are you? And if I say well, you know, I had a really hard week. There's there's little sympathy that comes from the trainer. Alyssa. When we were running this half marathon on the last time the trainer was on the I remember one time in particular. We were doing a five mile run and he was riding his bike next to me. And there's like in the North Park Lake where I run there's like a little shortcut where you can avoid a big hill. Oh yeah, I love that. That's a great sign hit the shortcut moment. He's riding next to me and I got ready to turn you go. No, no, no As I said, what he goes, You're not taking the shortcut, there's a hill for you to climb. And I was like, I'm not climbing it like, yeah, yes, you are. I'm here to challenge you. So there's a certain level of pastoral authority and accountability that we should carry. And if we are here, if we are here, just serving customers, yeah. who attend our church? Yeah. Then the customer role is how can we serve you? What can we do for you? How can we make this experience better for you, which is really good, from a customer service point of view to pastor that way, but at some point, it not really good. But But what I mean is, well, there's a balance at some point, you have to be the trainer, or the or the accountability partner. Like you're primarily that if we're a clippers, yeah, we weren't for people to do the works of service. We had to say, take the hill, like, we're way more coaches than we are customer service.

D

Dave Leake 50:52

I actually think that's a huge mistake that creates the gluttonous monster.

J

Josh Leake 50:58

Is the customer service approach, enabling enabling

D

Dave Leake 51:01

through another situation that we've discussed in the past. I think that's a

through churches, it's pastors that are acting like hey, we're Disney. How can we make this better for you? Excellent, excellent. You come in and you're attracted to or excellent and you have a great experience? Yeah, but are you growing? Because that's that's our main thing.

**J** Jeff Leake 51:15

Because if all we're doing is customer service, we don't train champions. Exactly what happens is you what you train is you train consumers, right? Instead of champions but if you have a trainer, Pastor, then that trainer pastors Come on. Yes, dude, you got more in you than this. You can give more you could pray more you can worship worse, like you're capable of being can raise your family. Yes, you can sacrifice as a husband or a wife like come on be more like you Yes, like you. And if you're if you don't ever get that trainer, pastor from anybody in your life. Now Nathan gotta come across a little mean, and I guess you can that may be the in the in the pendulum swing, it's better to be mean and direct in our consumers to culture than to be soft.

**D** Dave Leake 52:00

I would rather Yeah,

**J** Josh Leake 52:02

yeah, the customer service part of this is that like, even subconsciously, it, it feels better, because you keep your church, it's growing healthy things grow. So my church has grown with me, and I know that I'm not, I'm not. I just want to say, if you draw the line this way, growing is dead. But if you if you stop thinking as customer service, and you start doing this, it means that your some people who are looking for the customer service thing are going to it's going to be painful, for sure. hosters. Sure. And it means some people are going to leave and you may have a smaller group. And I think that's what he's getting at, which I do agree with. It's a smaller group, but a group that is fully living,

**J** Jeff Leake 52:47

okay, but here's the balance. So let's go back to the conversation that you had with the guy who came in and said, I attend online three times a month, and I come once. Okay, I do think there's a conversation here. So let me go back to my trainer, my trainer asked me, Do I have the permission to train you? And I said, Absolutely. And he said, Then, all right, we're gonna do my way. And I'm gonna push you. And I said, I need to be pushed. And that agreement allowed me to be aggressive, allowed him to be aggressive with me. I do think there's a there's a conversation that allows for us to pastor people by asking their permission before we get in their face. Like to say, if if you consider me your pastor, like, I know, You've been coming down to the park. And and so is this your church home? Sure. And would you consider me your pastor? Would you allow me the opportunity to speak to you about this particular thing you just mentioned? Because listen, man, if I'm if I'm really your pastor, like pastoring means I can talk to you about stuff. Yeah. So they give you permission, okay? I don't think this is healthy for you. Maybe Maybe you need to flip this three times in person and once online, but like, I don't think

you're gonna get you're not going to become what you need to be or give God what you need to give him. If it's convenience based. Sure. And what I'm hearing from you is, this is something maybe you're fudging a little bit. And I want to I want to challenge you, I think that I do think getting permission from people is important. Well, let

**D** Dave Leake 54:22

me challenge that. Okay. I think that's the right level. Yeah. But there's a difference between Disney World and the gym. And then the next level is a personal trainer. Like okay, now, that Disney World you go in, it's like, how old? Were you magical Okay, don't break character. Everything is clean. You know what I mean? Like, yeah, it's like, your experiences our bar, you know, our priority kind of a thing. Then there's a level of like, oh, you're coming here to get fit. This is a gym. Like we want things to be clean and stuff, but like everybody here is working out because this is a gym, right? You know what I'm saying? And then there's the now I'm at the gym and I really want to go further? So I'm gonna hire a personal trainer? I think a that's a really good analogy.

**J** Jeff Leake 55:04

Yeah,

**D** Dave Leake 55:06

I think our church service so what are we? Uh, we were

**J** Jeff Leake 55:09

not we were at

**D** Dave Leake 55:10

some point a little bit Disney a little bit.

**J** Jeff Leake 55:16

Where are we now?

**D** Dave Leake 55:17

I think we're trying to become is just a dumb sounding I think we're trying to become clear that following Jesus means it's a lifestyle where you're working out. So

**J** Jeff Leake 55:30  
we're we're moving from Disney the disney world experience to the gym.

**D** Dave Leake 55:34  
I think we're trying to get there and occasional Disney World moments like Yeah. And that's

**J** Jeff Leake 55:39  
that's okay, yeah,

**J** Josh Leake 55:40  
but you're but we're talking about two things that are needed, which is like the deep dive into your nutrition and your exact things, which is separate from the general communication of like, what this is both are needed. Like we can't just be like, every converse, all of this needs to happen in interpersonal conversations will never handle general health standards. from a public standpoint, I think both are really needed. Yeah, maybe the more aggressive pastoral standpoint needs to be the one on one. Yes. But what are the what are the Okay, this is the nutrition guideline. Yeah, the health guidelines for your.

**D** Dave Leake 56:13  
So you've now brought us to the point where we just need to discuss so how do we talk about it? Because I think we generally know we've talked about what is a substitute? Again, it's not good. What supplemental? So then in person or online? How do we talk about who wants to take the first step? I can take first step or you I don't mind I got I have ideas? Go

**J** Josh Leake 56:37  
for it. Okay. Yeah,

**D** Dave Leake 56:39  
I think that one of the things that would help. So we were having conversations that this is probably a separate podcast, maybe at some point in the future, we're having conversations about how to be clear, when we're presenting a gospel message, you know, what that actually means the choice to give everything that you have, and repent and turn in exchange for everything he has, which means following. Anyway, all that to say, I think that sometimes one of the one of the things we can do is be a little bit clearer when we have our talking moments in our church services. So that could be in our worship moment. That can be our emcee moment. And maybe it could sometimes be our sermon intro, where we talk about what it means to be a



part of the church community. It's not just an anonymous thing where you come, but if we, you could we can say things like, you know, we're so glad that you're here. And I think there's a way for us to address those who have decided to come and

**J** Josh Leake 57:36

I give a specific example is that please, one of the things that I have felt convicted about personally is, as I would share as part of the prayer moment, or as I would lead worship, I out of a desire, a genuine desire to see people surrender things to God, I would say, no matter what you're going through, God sees you, which is true, yes. It wasn't balanced with what I felt, as I was praying about as I led prayer this past weekend was, God wants you to know that he is holy. And if you're going to follow Him and worship him, it demands a response from you. Yeah. So it's not about Yes, God sees you. But sometimes we need that balance of that side, where it's like, if you're going to do this, this is what this requires of you. Yeah, I think that's an example of

**J** Jeff Leake 58:18

that. Yeah, I let me take my shot that got so my shot kind of say, Hey, my name is Jeff, this is the typical introduction that I do at the beginning about my name is Jeff Leake, I'm so glad you've joined us today. First of all, to say if you're here in person, this is the best way to do church right here to be able to be with your brothers and sisters in Christ and be in a room and worshipping and ministering to each other. We realize that not everybody can be here, for instance, our God behind bars, campus Europe, video based campus, and while you cannot be with us, we want you to know we love you. And we are seeing you in the spirit as if you're here. And if you're joining us online for some reason, you cannot be here in person today. We hope that you'll get here soon. But we're really glad you're part of the online audience today.

**D** Dave Leake 59:03

That's great. That's perfect, because inherently baked into there is we really would like everybody to be here because there's something you're missing out on otherwise, I think there's been a hesitancy to say you're missing out on anything. Yeah.

**J** Jeff Leake 59:18

You know, honestly, the whole world got turned upside down and shaken. And for a little while was all online. Yeah. So everything was online. Like you're like, Okay, we're glad. And we were saying, you know, while we can't be together in person, we're able to be linked together in this way. We're still the body of Christ. And by the way, the church isn't a building and it's not an event. It's us. Right? Okay. So we had to lean into that messaging. Honestly, I have preached and talk more about ecclesiology, which is the theology of the church in the last four years than I ever have in my entire life. Because I realized now we've never really put the proper frame around what church actually is, theologically. And so what we're wrestling through is this new

technological opportunity and where it fits in into our ecclesiology. It's true in the way that we do practical ministry here. And we have had the pendulum swing a little bit. And I think now we're landing on this space that's a little more balanced. Yeah.

**D** Dave Leake 1:00:09

And I think it's one of those, like, we've talked about this in the last, let's say, four years. I don't know when but I know this has been a conversation. Like, like, why do we have membership? What's the deal of membership? Isn't that kind of like a club? And at one point, we're like, yeah, I guess, you know, we have so you can vote on certain things and a certain level of accountability. But like, the further we get into these conversations, and like, oh, it's actually a big deal. Yeah. Because like, Isn't membership like, in a sense, when you're deciding to follow Jesus? It is such a commitment that you're deciding to become a member of heart of the Body of Christ. It's an international expression.

**J** Jeff Leake 1:00:44

Yeah, a local church. Right.

**D** Dave Leake 1:00:47

So I

**J** Josh Leake 1:00:47

think that my thing that I'm thinking about would be taking all of our talking moments through the filter. If I'm going to follow Jesus, what does this require of me? So I think if it's like, that's probably a way that we can talk about that NRMC moments that doesn't which to insane, which is

**J** Jeff Leake 1:01:06

which we put it through the filter of customer service prior? Right? Yeah, we had before we had been everything was from the talking point of customer service, because why would this benefit you, the church, the church, had not done very good at customer service in my generation. When I was growing up, they were exclusive talk to people, it just were clumsy. Okay, so, so the church became good at customer service. But then we realized now that talking about everything from a customer service point of view, is it is counter to the gospel. Yes.

**J** Josh Leake 1:01:45

But so like, we wouldn't say, if you're gonna follow Jesus, you have to show up to the marriage conference, like yes, like, specific? Well, and we do want to explain why the marriage

conference is beneficial for you. Like, we remove that. Yeah. But we start to think in terms of when we're leading prayer or promoting something, yeah. How can I talk in a way where I make it clear, like, if you're going to be a Christian, this is what it requires of you. If you could sell a

J

Jeff Leake 1:02:09

marriage conference to say, look, being a Christ follower as a husband, means that you do everything within your power to learn to love your wife properly. And the marriage conference is here to help you equip you to do that, right? Like, because we all need help to figure that out. So it's, it's going to help your marriage but it's really going to help you do what you have committed to do as a husband. Right, which is to love your wife. Okay, that that is the filter of for sure. followership rather than consumer or not consumers customer service. Yeah. So Well, yeah. We probably would go a little long in this way.

D

Dave Leake 1:02:41

Okay. People always liked the long. Yeah. So I guess just like, I'll say one last thing is we're kind of closing just to wrap it all up. I think this is probably evident. But just in case, I think we're all talking about this not not from an Allison Park church commitment level, this is more, we have realized that we're not always clear about what Jesus himself requires of Christians, right? Jesus has very clear things that he asks from us. And so if I'm going to follow Jesus, regardless as to what part of the world or what church I belong to, or even what time period we were born into, there are the same general things that means if we're going to follow Jesus, and as as a church movement in the West, and in America, in particular, we've not always been as clear as we need to be. So because people are making commitments, we want to help you understand what it is you're actually committing to, in the most sensitive, Grace filled way, but full of truth so that people can grow spiritually the way that God wants them. It's not a good way to good summarize that so great. All right. Well, that was a good conversation. Thanks for joining us, Josh. Good to be back. Yeah, glad having you. And thank you, you know, whoever you are right now for listening and being a part of this, you can actually help us as well. One thing that we would always love to ask would be to help share the word in a number of ways. It would really mean a lot if you could leave us a five star review, wherever you're listening to this. If it's, you know, Spotify, or Apple podcasts or different podcast platforms, you can leave us a five star review. That'd be very kind, very helpful. You can also share on social media with friends, or you can like and subscribe on YouTube. All those things make a big difference to us. So thank you again for joining us. We'll see you guys again next time.