

Speaker 1: Welcome to the Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast. A podcast all about leadership, change, and personal growth. The goal? To help you lead like never before. In your church or in your business. And now, your host Carey Nieuwhof.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, hey everybody, and welcome to episode 221 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. First of all, I just want to say thank you. I've been on the road this fall on Orange Tour, and some other events, and I gotta tell you, it's been so exciting just to talk to you. I wanted to start off by just saying thank you. So many of you tell me "Man, this episode really impacted me." And you know, the reason the podcast is growing, the reason that we're able to help so many leaders, and serve so many people, is because you're sharing it. I just wanted to acknowledge that, I wanted to say thank you for that. Thank you for annoying your team by saying "You've got to listen to this episode." Thanks for posting it to social, Instagram, to your stories, to, well, everywhere you post it online. And even, you know, texting or emailing a friend a link. I do that all the time with episodes of podcasts I'm listening to that interest me, and you guys are doing that. I just wanted to acknowledge that and say "Thank you."

Carey Nieuwhof: We had the best month ever in September, and that's because of you guys. I love doing this with you, I love partnering with you, and today you're not going to be disappointed because Max Lucado is on. I'd never really met Max prior to this interview, but I mean, so much respect for what he's done. A great legacy of leadership at his church, and we're going to talk about his transitioning into a new role pretty much as we were recording this episode. You know what? Get this, he's written 120 books. Yeah. I've written four. He's written 120. So much respect. We get into his writing, we get into his leadership, we get into his personal rhythms. I think you're going to love it.

Carey Nieuwhof: I want to talk to you today about two things. Number one, health care costs getting out of control for your church, I mean payroll costs, and for you as an employee. And secondly, giving. How are you going to maximize giving at your church? One of the problems, I think, with health care today is that it's just so expensive. It's expensive for churches, it's expensive for employees, and a lot of people are struggling with it. So the question is "What do you do?", how do you reconcile your budget and taking care of your staff? Line items like health care insurance are constantly on the rise, but it can be really difficult, and you know, you get stuck as a church leader going "Okay, I'm just going to give my staff a bad plan, that I know is bad, but it's the only thing we can afford." Is there another option? And the answer is yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: Remodel Health is a brand new organization, a start up, that is bringing health care into the 21st century. They're trusted partners of Brotherhood Mutual and Medishare, and their benefits platform is designed for faith based organizations. They offer an innovative and affordable health care insurance for both the employer and the staff. Here's what happens. If you go with Remodel Health, they allow the staff to choose from dozens of different benefit plans, and pick

the one that meets their needs. I mean, historically what's happened is, you know, you just end up going "Okay, this is our health care plan. Take it or leave it." There's another option. And they want your employees to get ahead, too. In fact, I sat down with Justin Clements, he's the co-founder, and CEO, of Remodel Health, and I said "Okay. The doctor gives you a prescription, and you think 'Well, this drug is really expensive. I don't have any options, do I?'" Here's what Justin had to say.

Justin: When the doctor gives you a prescription, the first thing you should ask is "Hey, thanks a lot, is this a generic, or is there a generic form of this drug that you think is okay for me to take?" 80% of the drugs on the market have a generic counterpart. Generic means that it's been on the market long enough for the patent to wear off. I would almost argue that generic means that it's time tested and it's better. There's no reason to pay for a brand named drug nine times out of ten.

Carey Nieuwhof: If you want to save money on health care as an employer, and give your employees better benefits, go to [remodelhealth.com\Carey](http://remodelhealth.com\Carey). They save their clients, churches, faith based organizations, an average of 34% annually on health care costs. And the benefits tend to be better for the employees. Imagine what could be done if you found out how you could reinvest those savings into your mission. Go to [remodelhealth.com\Carey](http://remodelhealth.com\Carey) to find out more. You'll get a free quote, and a buying guide as well.

Carey Nieuwhof: Now, talk about digital giving, you know what blows my mind? This just completely blows my mind. I talk to so many church leaders, and it's like "Yeah, maybe we get 30%, 50% of our giving through digital giving." Guys, it's 2018. I was at a church recently, and I wanted to give, and there weren't easy digital options. And that stinks. What's happening is, people who want to give, can't give, and then you as a church are not really funding your mission. Push Pay knows that, and they are an industry leader, experts at technology, just like you guys are the experts at ministry. They know that the average American spends four hours a day on their cell phone. And your church is simply missing out if you're not thinking about a mobile strategy to reach members online on their phones. Push Pay has the largest customer base in the entire industry, they work with more than 7,000 churches. Last year, they facilitated 3 billion dollars in contributions. So many organizations trust Push Pay. Why don't you head on over and visit [pushpay.com](http://pushpay.com) to learn more, and see what everyone is talking about. They'll actually put you in touch with an expert. And tell them I sent you. Tell them Carey sent you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, listen, I'm very excited to jump into my conversation today with Max Lucado, best selling author, pastor, and I think you're going to learn so much about how he has structured his life and leadership to accomplish, well, just so much. Here's my conversation with Max Lucado.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, Max, welcome to the podcast. I want to say thank you so much. You've had an incredible legacy over 40 years of ministry, and you've given hope to a lot of people. The website says, I guess it's 40 trade publications, but 120 books, this would be 121. That's insane.

Max Lucado: Well, it's easy to do if you're just focused on quantity, and don't worry about quality.

Carey Nieuwhof: I've written four, I mean, I'm fractions of what you've done.

Max Lucado: Well, congratulations, though. Four is no small thing.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, I appreciate that.

Max Lucado: That's a great accomplishment.

Carey Nieuwhof: What got you interested in writing? Yeah, let's start there. What got you interested in writing? I mean, you lead a very large church, and you have kids, and it's a busy time.

Max Lucado: Yeah. Well, I've always loved writing, I really have. I can recall back in my high school days being fortunate enough to have an English teacher, my senior year in high school, who was writing a book. Now, Carey, I grew up in West Texas, which lives up to every possible stereotype of West Texas. It's rodeo, it's oil, and it's football. It really is.

Carey Nieuwhof: And you're the book kid.

Max Lucado: Yeah, well, let me say just a little bit, I was kind of a rodeo and football guy myself, but I liked books, so I was a bit of a hybrid. I wore the boots, and I played on the football team, but at the same time, I hung out in the library. I didn't quite know who I was. But I say all that to say that I had this high school English teacher who was writing a book, which is a wonderful thing, and curiously, it was a fiction book on rodeo clowns; you know the clowns that help the bull riders? He knew I liked books, and so he would take me to rodeos, and I watched him interview rodeo clowns. He would read me the chapter as he wrote it, each new chapter he wrote. I thought that was the greatest thing. That was the first inkling I had that, where I said "I think I'd like to do that someday."

Max Lucado: So, if we could fast forward about a decade, I became a follower of Christ when I was in college, and then I wanted to become a missionary. And then, in order to become a missionary, I had to serve at a church for two years before the Brazilian government would give me a Visa. So I found a church that would hire me for two years. It was in Miami, Florida. I moved to Miami, and part of their job for any minister was to write an article in a church newsletter every week. So, here I am, I'm brand new to ministry, and there's only three of us on the staff. There's just three of us, and it's a church in downtown Miami. And the

senior minister says "Okay, Max, you need to write an article each week. And I know you're not going to like doing this, because no one does." But I said to him "Oh, really? I get to?" I got excited because I thought I'd always wanted to try my hand at writing, other than term papers. So I started writing these articles, and I started getting feedback from the church. I can remember a letter from a guy in California who got our newsletter, and he said "These are really good. You ought to try to get them published." I thought "Okay, I'll give that a go." Now, we're in 1981, '82. So way back. A long time ago.

Max Lucado: We moved to Brazil in 1983. The first year I was there, in the spare time that I had, when I wasn't taking Portuguese lessons, I would take those articles, Carey, and I began to try to compile them into a manuscript. So I succeeded, I got them all into a manuscript, back then I had to type them up. I mean, this really sounds like pre wheel, and pre fire days, doesn't it?

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm old enough. I did my entire undergrad, my first degree, in history and political science on a manual typewriter.

Max Lucado: We're getting to be a rare species.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, switched to computers in law school.

Max Lucado: Did you really?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yep. I did. I get it. I know what that's like. And if you made a mistake, it's either throw the piece of paper out, or get the liquid paper.

Max Lucado: That's right. That's right. I got that manuscript compiled, and I mailed it to 15 publishers simultaneously. I think the better protocol, they tell me now, is you're supposed to mail them out one at a time, but I didn't know that. I just mailed a batch of them out from Brazil. And I began getting letters back from, back then they were called Word Publishing, Tyndale House, Multnomah, Crossway, Harper Collins, and I began getting rejection, rejection, rejection, rejection. But Carey, it didn't bother me because I didn't have any expectations. I thought, you know, I gave it a go. Well, all of a sudden I get an acceptance. I've got it hanging on my wall. I can show it to you. It's this acceptance letter, it's dated, let me look.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah. This is awesome. So many of you, while Max is pulling it off the way, you get discouraged. You get discouraged. Look at this.

Max Lucado: Here it is. January 29th, 1984. From Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois. Mr. Lucado, and it goes on to say "At a recent publications committee we voted happily to accept your manuscript." So there it was. My first acceptance. Signed Wendell Hawley, Vice President, Editor in Chief. I was so excited. I was so excited. Thrilled. So they did, they published just a little book called On the Anvil. It's still in print. It's not sold a lot. It's not that great of a book, to be

honest. But it got me started. Boy, I gave you a long answer to a very simple question.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, I love it. I mean, there's no problem with that at all. How did, you said the rejection letters didn't bother you. Truthfully?

Max Lucado: Really, they did not. I didn't have any expectations. I was in Brazil, remember, I was a missionary, so I wasn't dependent upon writing for any income, you know, I wasn't expecting to make money writing books. I had had two or three people say to me "Oh, don't try writing. It's too hard." So I had my low expectations. And when that book got published, I sensed a blessing from our Heavenly Father. I don't want to sound over spiritual here, but I really sensed that "Hey, this is what I'm supposed to do." So I began, I already had another idea for the next book, and I wrote that. Then I had another idea for the next book. And the next book. And the ideas seemed to come as fast as I could write them. And the next two or three books really did do better, and that's when I thought "Okay, my calling is really to write books and to pastor." So that's when we left Brazil, in 1988. I found this church in San Antonio, Texas, and I've been here ever since.

Carey Nieuwhof: Isn't that something? Did you keep the rejection letters?

Max Lucado: I do.

Carey Nieuwhof: You've got them in a file, do you?

Max Lucado: What a great question. In fact, it's funny, because really, my primary publisher for nearly all of these books is, they're currently called Harper Collins Christian Publishing, but I've worked with them over so many years, 30 years, they've gone through several name changes. Back then they were called Word Publishing. Does that name ring a bell with you?

Carey Nieuwhof: I remember that. Yep.

Max Lucado: Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: I have the Word Biblical Commentary series.

Max Lucado: Yeah. Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's a good series, man. The one on John, wow. Fantastic.

Max Lucado: Well, they did reject the manuscript, I mean, hands down. I don't even think they looked at it. So I've got that letter, and I've been prone to show it to them a time or two.

Carey Nieuwhof: Remember this moment, guys?

Max Lucado: Yeah. I made a copy of it and sent it to them, and it's hanging now in the hallway of the publishing company. It's a reminder to be careful. I didn't mean to poke fun at them, but yeah, I've kept all those letters.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, that's great. I think people should do that. I had, I'm applying for something right now, and I had to go through all my old files, and I found my first sermon. I found employment referral letters from the 1980s, and when I was a teenager, and all that stuff that was just, it's really fascinating when you look back, and again, Esther Fedorkevich, who you may know, she's a literary agent. Esther said CS Lewis got rejected a ridiculous amount of times. She named it in the 100s. There's that famous thing on the internet where, I think RSO, or RKO Records told U2 that they really didn't have any talent. You know? All those, it is really a story of just wanting to do it, right? And so you did that. And the rest, as they say, is history. How do you write that prolifically? I mean, it's not like you have a church of 40 people, you have a very large church, a multi site, you've got an international ministry, you do all kinds of media. How do you write that prolifically?

Max Lucado: My mind goes in a lot of different directions, but I really do think it's my call. I really do. I have a friend who's a cardiac surgeon. We play golf, and I say "How do you perform heart surgery two or three times a week?" He even does transplants. And he says "It's just what I do. It's just what I do." Really, Carey, I think that's kind of my best answer on a question like that. Now, there's some practical things that I do, but it's just what I do. I know how to write books, and I've done enough of them through the years that I have a routine. I take my, I get an idea, and I try to condense it down to a phrase or two, a promise or two. I try to determine what the chapter flow is going to be. I'll usually preach a sermon series based on that particular idea, and knowing that it will eventually become a book. So I have all of these things that I can do that hone it, and all, but it truly is just kind of the thing that I do.

Max Lucado: I mentioned to you before we began the interview that as of three weeks ago I'm semi-retired, and that just means that I'm not in charge of the staff anymore. I have a little more spare time. Well, probably a lot of spare time. And also I'm preaching about half as much as I was. So instead of 46 weeks, I'm preaching 20 weeks, starting in 2019. As I transitioned into that season, I never ever considered that I would not keep writing. I was very happy to not have to lead the staff. And I just think that's a difference. I mean, there are those, you may be one of them, I know some Godly guys who say "I gotta lead somebody. I've gotta head up something. It's just what I do. I've gotta head up something. I get how it works so much, I'd be wasting my talents." That's not me. But I do need to write something. I need to be a writer. I'm sorry to be so kind of philosophical on it, and I could-

Carey Nieuwhof: No, I think that's a good place to start, because I talk to, as you do, a lot of young leaders, and sometimes the question is "How do you build a platform?" And I'm not sure that's the question. I think there's a labor of love, you and I

were talking about podcasting before we got going, and why did I want to podcast? It's because I was having incredible conversations with leaders, in green rooms, and over lunch, and dinner, and breakfast, and at airports, and I would walk away going "Oh, my goodness. Why couldn't everyone have heard this?" Or "Why didn't I record this?" Now I get to have this. I would do this if everybody stopped listening-

Max Lucado: There it is. There's your call. You would do it if nobody listened. So your call, Carey, is not only did you get excited, but you could see it. It began to take shape in your mind. Now, it probably took shape relatively easily, to the point where you said "Yeah, anybody could do something like this." And my response to you-

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, that's what I was telling you. Anybody could something like this, right?

Max Lucado: The truth is, the answer's no. They can't. My thought is "Well, anybody can write books." You know? And 90% of the people look at me and say "You're crazy. Not anybody can." Somebody else might say "Anybody can do heart surgery." Well, no, they can't. But he is, this is so much his call, that he says "Well, yeah, I mean, I went to medical school, and yeah, residency was hard ..." but he kind of downplays it. I think when you're called, when you know your call, and you're committed to it, it really does have a sense of "Yeah, I could direct this hospital. I could be the president of this organization. It's hard, it's got it's challenges, but it's a juice, too. It's a rush." I tell people a lot, when it comes to writing, everybody's got a book in them. I really think they do. Everybody's got a book. We've all got a story. Not very many of us are called to write 40 books, or 100 books. But, and the fact that we're not is okay, and that's just the way God works.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, you think everybody has a book in them?

Max Lucado: I think so. I do.

Carey Nieuwhof: Tell me more about that.

Max Lucado: I think that Carey has a unique story in his life that would help others to know. God has done something in your life, in your past, in your history, in your family, the circumstances of your life, that is absolutely worth capturing on paper. It would certainly bless a few hundred people, might bless a few thousand people, then it will bless tens of thousands, and then a few will bless hundreds of thousands. But everybody's got a story that would bless a few hundred people. Whenever somebody says "I'd like to write a book." I say "Good. Go for it. Give it a go. It's worth it. If nothing else, for your own kids." You know?

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Max Lucado: But most people will have a few hundred people who will really benefit from the book. And so, yeah, I think everybody's got a story in them.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you walk us through some of the disciplines and routines that you have? You're probably always writing, I mean 40 books over, you're probably never not writing. You might take a break for a few months, or something, but when you, so, you've given us an idea of the structure, you get the big idea, bring it down to a few sentences, but what does the rhythm of a day of writing look like? I would just love to know. Morning? Afternoon? What do you do?

Max Lucado: Yeah, yeah. Okay. Again, to give it context, I come up with the big idea for the book. My new book is called Unshakable Hope, and I've learned through the years to try to give people a certain promise. That's my style, is to encourage people. I want to give them a promise. Last year's book was Anxious for Nothing. So there's my promise, you can live a life in which you're dealing better with anxiety. There's my big idea. Then I try to come up with the structure for that. For Unshakable Hope, I said "We can find hope if we build our lives on God's promises, instead of life's pain and problems." So there's my takeaway sentence. "Build your life on the promises of God, instead of the problems and pain of life." Anxious for Nothing it was built around the passage in Philippians 4, where Paul said "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and petition let your request be made known to God."

Max Lucado: My outline for Unshakeable Hope was I'm going to take a dozen promises, and show people how you build a life on promises. My outline for Anxious for Nothing was Philippians 4, versus 4-8. I took it phrase by phrase, beginning with "Rejoice in the Lord ..." and then ending up with "Meditate on these things." In both cases, I have a working structure, an outline. Here's my big idea. So I put that together, and then I go back and I begin taking each of those chapters and creating either a sermon, or a chapter, for each one.

Max Lucado: A writing and studying day, for me, begins point one is reading everything I can find on that passage. I want to read everything I can find. So if I'm doing a book on Philippians 4, by the end of the day I've probably spent a couple hundred dollars on commentaries.

Carey Nieuwhof: Commentaries, right, to get through it.

Max Lucado: If there's a new commentary out, I want to look and see what so and so said. I'll buy, Amazon likes me, I mean, I'll go online and I'll just say "Best books on anxiety." I'll have a case of books, they'll arrive at my office, and I'll just start reading through them.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, you're a researcher. You research.

Max Lucado: I am. I'm a researcher. I do. And I wasn't always, but I think in this day and age people appreciate if I've done a little bit of spade work. Once then I've kind of

got all of that information that I feel like I've absorbed in my head, then I start digging in, and I will write for about six hours. Six hours is about as far as I can go a day, and then I start getting crazy. I'll write on Mondays and on Wednesdays for sure, and sometimes on Thursdays. And by the end of a week, I will have finished a chapter. I don't want to spend too much time on it, because I don't want to get, I want to finish the whole manuscript, and then I'll go back. If it's a 12 chapter book, I'll go through that process for 12 weeks, and I'll write a chapter a week. And then I'll go back and spend another week on each chapter. Okay? And then I go back and do it again. It takes me about nine months, all in all, to write a book. Sometimes a little longer. Sometimes a little less. And I'll do the writing, and the rewriting phase quite often.

Max Lucado: At some point I send it to my editor. I've had the same editor for 30 years. I'll send it to her, she'll work it through for two weeks. Then the hardest day of my year is when I get the manuscript back from her the first time. Because then I know if I am going to go into a cave and never come out alive again, or if I've, now, there have been occasions, she's prefaced her response letter by saying "This one's going to need a lot of work, Max." And I just groan inside. Then there's some she says "Boy, it's almost there, Max." That's the greatest thing I can read, you know? Then I'll work on it for two weeks, and then I'll send it to her and she'll work on it for a week, and then she sends it to me and I'll work on it for a week. And then she flies here, she comes to San Antonio from Portland, and my publisher comes from Nashville, my editorial assistant in San Antonio clears her schedule, and the four of us meet for a week, and we read the manuscript out loud in a room, sitting in a room-

Carey Nieuwhof: Really? Never heard of that.

Max Lucado: Reading out loud until we're all at peace with it. And then my editor, who comes out of a Quaker background, says that when she was growing up they would conclude the service at a Quaker church by saying "Are all hearts clear?" And so we will read the chapter, and finally she'll say "Okay, are all hearts clear?" It's kind of a neat thing. And then, once we all say yes, then we move on to the next chapter. That will take us a week, and at the end of that week, we're finished with it, and then I'm done. I'll leave it in the hands of my editorial assistant to double check all the foot notes. It will go, then, to a copy editor who will spend two or three weeks on it, and I'll look at it one more time when she raises any red flags, or concerns. And then we're finished.

Carey Nieuwhof: Quite a process. My goodness.

Max Lucado: Yeah, it's pretty involved. As I began explaining it, it's pretty involved.

Carey Nieuwhof: I've never heard of an author who sits down with their inner circle, their kitchen cabinet, and actually reads a manuscript out loud with everyone in the room. How did you come up with that?

Max Lucado: What a great question, Carey. That is a great question. I'm trying to recall when we first began that. We began that back in the mid 90s. I had a book, I think this is right, I had a book called He Chose the Nails that came out in the mid 90s-

Carey Nieuwhof: I remember that one.

Max Lucado: The lead line from Liz's letter, my editor's letter, was "This one's going to need a lot of work."

Carey Nieuwhof: So, your nightmare letter.

Max Lucado: I just kind of groaned, and I think that's when she said "What if I come to San Antonio, and we sit down and work this through together?" And so that's how it started. We did find that reading it out loud, we could hear things that we'd missed before. So we have four people hearing it at one time, and I hear quite a bit that I missed up until that point. We've all got a copy of the manuscript on our lap, we've all got red pens, we're all underlining things, marking things, and then after we've read the chapter, then we're all weighing in on it. Saying "Oh boy, that paragraph was too slow. Max, can you rework this phrase? That didn't work, we've had that verb four times in the last four chapters, it's starting to pop up too much." Just that kind of spit and polish that we get. That's what we do.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's really helpful to know. I mean, everybody's gotta design their own process, I was just curious. I've never known anyone to do that. It's funny, because I think a lot of people, I think this thought even went through my head after 40 books. You know, you begin to wonder "Well, is it just transcribing a sermon series, and you have a ghost writer who puts it all together?" But no, you are personally involved down to the punctuation. Right?

Max Lucado: Carey, those are fighting words for me.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. Go there. I want to hear more.

Max Lucado: [crosstalk 00:31:01] he said "Now you must, all preachers have ghost writers." Boy, I felt an anger come up inside of me. I'll just acknowledge that. I'll confess it. Because I know how hard I work. I mean, I really work hard on these things. And I said "I have never used a ghost writer in my life." I just felt the insurgence of anger. But, you know, I try to take it pretty seriously. I really do like words. I really do. I love the turn of the phrase. But I do think that people are giving you a lot if they sit down with your book. I mean, they're giving you three or four hours of their life. Wow. I mean, what a kind thing to do. So I owe them the respect of taking it real seriously.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's a good perspective. What, because you preach, well, until very, very recently you preach 46 times a year, you gave us a number. You've written books. In terms of the interplay between speaking and writing, what are you

learning, or what have you learned, there? Has writing made you a better preacher? Has preaching made you a better writer? How do those two play off in your life? Because that's a big chunk of your life, right? Both of those?

Max Lucado: What a great question. Carey, where do you get these great questions?

Carey Nieuwhof: Sorry, they're not on the page, I'm just curious. This is why I do this, man. This is the most interesting thing to me.

Max Lucado: Yeah. You know, I think the answer is yes and yes. I think writing makes me a better preacher, and preaching makes me a better writer. I think writing makes me a more precise preacher, because I stick to the manuscript pretty closely, I don't ramble. I try to, it's sometimes difficult to really work a nice turn of the phrase, or poetry, in a sermon, it's so much easier to do on the page, but still I give it an attempt. I try to. And so knowing that I'm going to eventually take this sermon, and it will, in all likelihood be a chapter in a book, forces me to go ahead and go an extra generation or two with that sermon while I'm working on it. Even in the green room before I go out to preach, I'm sitting there with an open manuscript of the sermon, and I'm saying "Okay, maybe I can cut that sentence, or cut that phrase." So I will. I'll do edits right up until the last minute.

Max Lucado: Then, when I am working on turning that sermon into a chapter for a book, I will listen to the audio version of the sermon, I'll listen to the sermon, because inevitability there is a phrase or two that popped in out of nowhere, just as I'm up there talking, and I see you nodding through the Skype, this happened to you, too. You know, you just-

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, gosh, I'm a verbal processor, and sometimes I don't know what I think until I say it.

Max Lucado: There you go. And you see people responding, and nodding their head, so you say "Okay, I'm just going to add another layer. I'm going to say it again." It's not just that Jesus rose from the dead, Jesus conquered death. It's not just that Jesus conquered death, he destroyed the devil. I get on one of those good things that I think are helpful in an audio setting, and sometimes that works well in a manuscript. So I'll listen to it and I'll say "Okay, yeah, I could make that work." Or "No, it worked okay, maybe in the sermon." Or sometimes I'll hear things just go flat, even as I'm preaching, I'll say "Oh, that didn't work." And so I'll know not to put that in the manuscript. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: How has your congregation responded to your writing over the years? I mean obviously every preacher listening is like, yeah, there's pretty much a direct cause and effect in terms of you get mail on Monday, or conversations in the lobby, about what you preached, but that's a lot of books. I haven't written, really, I've written three, well, two leadership books, a parenting book, and then Didn't See it Coming, which is the most general release of them all. Our congregation's-

Max Lucado: That's a great title.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, thank you. I will accept that. I'll receive that. Yeah, we debated long and hard over that. You know, it's interesting, but do you think that they own more of their faith because they've been able to see longer versions, like it's a bit of an interplay? Like a series will stick, and ideas will stick, because some of them are reading the book as well? What are you learning about being a writer/author? Mark Batterson does the same thing, Craig Groeschel's written a lot of books, Andy's written some, so what are you learning about that?

Max Lucado: Yeah, I think the church having, for example, here's the Unshakable Hope book, right? I preached this series last year at the church. So now the book is available in our bookstore. So people are telling me "Hey, I was so excited to see the book come out because I loved the sermon series." There's probably some people who are thinking "I could care less about the book because I didn't like the sermon series." But they don't tell me that.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's right. Mercifully.

Max Lucado: This gives a chance to reinforce the message. Just today I was signing a copy of this book that I'm sending to a guy who's in prison, but it was a sermon series called You Will Get Through This, based on the life of Joseph, the old testament character. You Will Get Through This. And this phrase worked its way, I really think, into the vernacular of our church. You will get through this. It's a promise, you know? And it's not going to be easy, and it's not going to be quick, but you will get through this. I have people say that to me quite often "That that sermon series, Max, I'm so glad when the book came out because I needed to have a chance to go back and revisit all of those sermons."

Max Lucado: What happened to me, Carey, when I came to this church in 1988, I already had three books published and I had a fourth one in the can. And so I talked to our church leadership, and I said "We need to understand going in that I'm a writer, and that is my other thing, other than preaching and leading the church." Some pastors council, that's their other thing. Some pastors do leadership development, like you, and really have a passion for that. And so I said to the elders "If you feel okay with this, I'm not going to be doing that much hospital visitation, or counseling. Not because I don't like it, but because I need the time to write." We had an agreement going in, and it's been a happy relationship all these years.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, and again, if you're good at what else you do, whatever that happens to be, it probably has a benefit. I was a little bit nervous with the release of Didn't See It Coming, and it really helped that I'm not the lead pastor anymore, but Jeff Brody said "Okay, Tony and I were able to donate some books that we were able to give away, and it turned out to be the highest attended Sunday for the church. I said to Jeff Brody, my successor, after that, I said "Man, this was a win all the way around. We had the most number of first time guests ever, the

highest physical attendance ever, outside of Christmas and Easter." I said, I felt like I was able to, because I wouldn't, if I was the lead pastor I might not have done that, right? It feels like conflict. But you know, it was really exciting for me to be able to share a message that I had worked really hard on, harder than any normal sermon series that didn't go into a book, just because they tend to come and go pretty quick. And the church, just, it wins all the way around.

Carey Nieuwhof: And so I think you're right, if the thing that you're working on, if it's like I'm going to do crafts and sell them on the internet, well that's not necessarily related, but I'm sure your church has done well as a result. I want to talk to you about time management, because I said to you earlier, I started just by thanking you, because we hadn't really met prior to this conversation, but you had sent me a really kind note, and people in your position, and to some extent people in my position, I get books almost every day shipped to me by publishers and authors and self published people, but here I get this note from Max Lucado and it's an early review copy of your book "Would you consider endorsing it?" Signed by you. And it's personal. I just about had a heart attack, fell over. I didn't even know you knew who I was. It was really, really gracious, and then again, last week before this interview I get the final copy of the book and a handwritten note, inscribed personally to me, how do you make the time, leading what you lead, doing what you do, to be that personal with people?

Max Lucado: You know, my golf game is not very good.

Carey Nieuwhof: That is a great answer.

Max Lucado: I really do love playing golf, but it does take a lot of time. I've got a great executive pastor. He's just brilliant. And again, I'm semi retired now, so I do have less, I don't have anybody reporting to me, and that's really a delight. But he has done, and is my dearest friend, his name is Steve Green, and he just frees me up. He's a blessing. He's an amazing blessing for me. I don't travel much, Carey. People assume that I'm always on the road, and I'm really not. I don't travel much, and that frees up a lot of time. I understand that some people do travel, and that's their call. I've got great friends who, every weekend are at a different seminar, or church, and God bless them. God bless them. I feel like I do better if I'm in my office, either writing, or somehow focused on the local church, or working on, like what you just said, the things surrounding publishing, like requesting endorsements, and doing interviews and so forth.

Max Lucado: Maybe that's my best answer to that question. I've got a good team. I think that I don't get on the road much. I say that, and I've got my bag packed right here. I'm going on the road. But not very often.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, you don't. Was that a conscious decision? I mean, I'm sure you get speaking requests every single day. I can't imagine there's a week that goes by where somebody doesn't ask you to do something on the road.

Max Lucado: And I love speaking. I really do. The reason I'm traveling is because a good friend has a ministry and they're doing a fundraising banquet, and he's just a good friend. If it's a relationship issue, if it's a relationship or a cause that I feel strongly about, or it's a long time relationship with a church, then those are usually my criteria for speaking. But I turn just about everything down. I just can't. It takes so long to get to places.

Carey Nieuwhof: It does.

Max Lucado: I live so far. If I lived in central United States, or even Toronto where you are, it'd probably be easier, but I'm forever-

Carey Nieuwhof: You're a connecting flight anywhere, right?

Max Lucado: That's right. It takes me forever to get to Dallas or Houston, and then I have to fly somewhere. So I don't. And maybe that's my best answer to that question. I say no to a lot of good things, so I can try to say yes to the more important things.

Carey Nieuwhof: How have you managed the tension, over decades now, multiple decades, between leading the church and, because I mean, a lot of pastors, a lot of leaders, I mean we have business leaders, so a lot of CEOs struggle with "Gosh, I'm in meetings all day. I've got fires that I'm fighting on a regular basis." Pastors have it, and so a CEO would say "I don't have any strategic planning time." A pastor would say "I squeezed my message out." Or, and any regular listener knows how I feel about it "I downloaded this one." Not a great idea, in my books, but it's hard to find writing time no matter what you do. But you've led a very large, growing, multi site church, and a strong team, while carving out, from what you said, sounds like three days a week to write. Walk us through what are some of the trade offs there?

Max Lucado: Okay. And to be clear, I was senior minister leading the church for 20 years, and after 20 years I kind of cried uncle, and we hired a new senior pastor, and I became teaching pastor. I split the teaching with Randy Frazee, a great guy. Randy came in about nine years ago. And then about a year and a half ago, he felt called to move to Kansas. So I stepped back in as senior minister. Just to be clear, I did it for 20 years, and then I was teaching pastor for about nine years, and now for the last 18 months I've been back in the role of senior pastor. I've kind of felt both worlds.

Max Lucado: The last 18 months I've really felt the stress, or the pressure, of what you were describing. Of not very much time in the day to get done what I wanted to get done. And the reason is because of what we were just discussing, that is transitioning our multi sites into independent churches. As you can imagine, Carey, as one who leads the church, and has been in the leadership role of the church, that's a really big decision. It involved assets, it involves leadership, individuals, it involves, really, a change in strategy. So we had to, that was our

big question, when I stepped back in; are we going to continue being multi sites, are we going to transition into a family of independent churches.

Max Lucado: I really felt the stress during these last 18 months of not enough time in the day to work on my sermons, and attend all of these meetings. But I guess I might say that I just asked the Lord to help me, just to bless me. I knew it was a season, Carey. I couldn't keep doing that forever. I knew it was a season. Now, if it was not a season, if I was 40, and not 64, okay? If I was 40 and I was saying "Okay, this is my call for the next 20-25 years. We're going to lead this large church, we're going to preach." Then I would make sure to staff up around me, and be able to help manage all this. And that's what I did after a few months into the last stretch. I hired this, Steve Green came on as our executive, and he has given me a lot of help. I feel like my answers to you today are meandering.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's really good. It's helpful, and it's honest. Eventually something has to give, and you have to structure around it. I think you're right, if you're 18 months into this, and you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel, you're not going to preach well, you're not going to live well. What do you do for relaxation? What do you do just to unplug and enjoy?

Max Lucado: Yeah. We have a lake house, and it's about 90 minutes from, we can be from our door to the lake house in about 90 minutes, and so we go up there and when we're up there, we just really do unplug. It's right on the water, and we thoroughly enjoy it. I do love to play golf. I was teasing about that, but ... Back when I was, I'm almost 64 now, when I was 40, I went through a season of insomnia, Carey, due to stress. I actually had to go to a doctor to help me. And not only did he give me some, my first introduction to sleeping pills to help me kind of get my rhythm back, but he encouraged me, he said "You need an activity that you can really pour yourself into that has no consequences. That if you blow it, it's okay." He said "Do you have anything like that?" I said "No. Everything I do has consequences. The book needs to be a good book, the sermon needs to be a good sermon, the staff needs to be healthy, the meetings need to go well. Everything has consequences. My kids were small, I wanted to do a good job." He said "You need something that has no, if you blow it, there's no consequences." So, I took up golf.

Carey Nieuwhof: You know what? I have never heard it phrased that way. And that is brilliant. It really is. This is a good doctor, whoever told you that.

Max Lucado: Many of us who are leaders, or who are in charge of an organization, we're achievers. We like to achieve something. And so I poured myself into golf, and I would, this is sounding corny, I'm almost embarrassed to say this, but I would set myself goals. I'm going to break 100 by the end of this summer. And I didn't, I didn't. But the fact that I did not, it was okay. I could pour myself into something, and then I worked really hard on it, and think about it, and have something fun to think about, watch on television, but it had no bad consequence if I didn't do well.

Carey Nieuwhof: There's a crazy number of leaders, in ministry and in the business world, who do not have a hobby. Who do not have anything like that. It's interesting, you know, I had a bunch of light bulbs go off in my mind, Max, when you said that. And that's what cycling has become to me, because I live in the country, an hour north of Toronto, lots and lots of friends who cycle, who are in better shape than me, and there was pressure when I started cycling to become competitive with them, and enter races, and my spirit just like "I love those guys, and they're my friends, and I'll have dinner with them." But I'm like "No. Cycling is me alone. Not in a group. There's no Peloton. The only person I'm competing against is myself." I guess I intuitively knew that I needed a pressure release valve, and if I turned that into something competitive it would not be a release for me. My plan, when we're done, I have another webinar later today, is just an hour long ride, and the only person I'm competing against is me. And if it doesn't go well, oh well.

Max Lucado: Oh, well. That's exactly what I mean. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. That is really good advice.

Max Lucado: It's restorative. What do you do in winter time? Do you have a stationary bike? Or how do you do that?

Carey Nieuwhof: In the wintertime, yeah. I don't do as good a job as I could. I think I'm going to probably get a smart trainer this winter. You can have a whole virtual world, and I'm going to try that. Because I'm really good in the summer, not so good in the winter. Yeah. That's what I gotta do. And you're in San Antonio-

Max Lucado: I love biking, too. Yeah. I really love biking, too. And we have the great weather, so that helps.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, you can do that year round. I can go about six months. I can go until November. I've got the gear. But when the snow hits, I have friends who are hardcore, and they cycle all winter, it's minus 20 out, and they're out there. I'm like "Good for you. I'm inside." Yeah. I think that's good for you. You know, you've run the race well, and here you are, as you say, at 64, and you've got a lot of life and passion. Are you going to keep writing? Even in your retirement, semi retirement? Yeah.

Max Lucado: I'm going to keep writing. I've changed the rhythm of it up just a little bit. I, forever, have done book deals with publishers where I would sign a three book deal, or a five book deal, having no clue what those books would be. Just knowing, over the next three to four or five years, I'll write. Some idea will come. I'm not going to do that anymore. Now I want to write the book, and see if I think it's really worth somebody reading and publishing, and then present it to the publisher. What that does for me, Carey, it just lifts one level of stress off me. Because if I've already made a promise that I'm going to write you a book, but I don't know what that book is, then I'm feeling "Okay, I gotta do it. I gotta

do it." I think I'd just rather say "Okay, I'd rather not have that level of stress." But I'll keep writing, and we'll just see if I generate anything that's worth it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you ever get writer's block?

Max Lucado: I never have. I'm almost embarrassed to say that, because I know so many do, but I just haven't. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord. Yeah. I've always been able, sometimes things come more slowly than others, but no, I've always had a good flow when it comes to writing. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you catalog your ideas? Do you have five things you think could be a book at some point down the road that you've got talked in a notebook, or Evernote, or on your phone?

Max Lucado: Boy, you're asking the greatest questions. Like you've been inside my head. My idea file is actually inside my Bible.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh wow.

Max Lucado: [inaudible 00:53:33] in my Bible, yeah. I'll scribble ideas there, and I've got quite a few that never became books. And then I've got some, I'll read that list, and I've kept it going now for 20 years, and there's a book ... I can remember one day thinking "I'd like to write a book on John 3:16. The greatest verse in the bible. And I'm just going to call the book 3:16." The number 3:16.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah.

Max Lucado: Sure enough, I wrote that book. And I was looking in my Bible the other day, and I saw that 3:16, and it just kind of brought me a happy feeling, you know? "Oh, good. Look at that. I remember coming up with that idea." But I've got quite a few there that will never become books. They felt good when, I felt like potential ideas when I wrote it down, but they don't stand the test of time.

Max Lucado: That's another thing about writing. And that is the importance of rewriting. You know, writing a chapter and then coming back and rewriting it, because it always feels good the first day, but the second day you come and read it, it's not as good. So you rewrite it, and then you come back the next day and say it's still not quite there. That's just the nature. I compare it to painting a fence; you put the first coat on, and you come back a few hours later, and realize it's been absorbed into the wood. Oh, needs another coat. You come back and put it on, and then it's been absorbed. There's something about writing, that there's an absorption process that you just have to keep coming back and keep coming back. I don't know if it's true or not, but I read in Reader's Digest that Ernst Hemingway rewrote *The Old Man and the Sea* over 300 times.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Max Lucado: Yeah. That was his secret, he said. The secret to writing is rewriting.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jordan Peterson, who's got quite a platform these days, said in his first book, he's only written two, Maps of Meaning, that he looked at every sentence and rewrote it in the book, and it's a long, dense book, 15 times. And the current one, 12 Rules for Life, something like five, at least a minimum, every sentence was rewritten at least five times. I'm like "Wow." That's crazy. But yeah, that's an artist with his art, right? And there are things, I mean, if you're doing a sermon, that's sort of here today and gone next week, you're moving onto something-

Max Lucado: That's a great point.

Carey Nieuwhof: If you're doing something that you hope is hallmark content, and that's something I think preachers can think more about, because we don't recycle content nearly enough. But if you're working on a mission vision statement, value statement, those can take a long time. And I would encourage every leader to do exactly what Max did, whether that's in your Bible, for me it's in Evernote, but I keep working blog ideas, book ideas, I've got sermon series, I've got usually about 18 months worth of sermon ideas in the hopper at any time. And some of them date back, some of them that we'll do in 2019, I can look at my notes from 2013 and the idea first appeared there, and it stuck around. "Okay, I've had that idea for five years, I think it's worth a series." And then other times you think of something on Tuesday and you're ready to go in a month. It's weird how that goes.

Max Lucado: I'm kind of territorial about mine, too, because I don't want to tell anybody what they are, because I'm afraid they're going to use them. I've got a great idea for next year, but I'm not going to tell you what it is.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, no, no. If I told you, I'd have to kill you, right? Hey, I'd love to talk about Unshakable Hope, because it was really interesting, I think in the preface you say "We are in a really interesting time. A very anxious time." And I know that's close to your heart. Tell us why you wrote this one.

Max Lucado: Well, all of what we've been discussing today really provides a good context for this because since I am a pastor, I'm engaged in conversations with people in the church foyer, or even in the grocery store I'll run into people, and I try to pay close attention to those, because I think those conversations are one way to pick up on where people are. And a couple of years ago I began to notice that many, many people, more people were talking about the lack of hope in their life. They didn't have hope that they could find a job. Or "I don't have anymore hope. Our marriage is beyond repair." It just seemed like there was this sense of we'll never get through these problems. I tried to pay close attention to that, and began thinking "If I were to write a sermon series intended to give people hope, a way to develop hope, how would I approach it?" The idea surfaced. Really, it's an idea that I've had for a long time, and that's to do a sermon series

on promises. Promises in the Bible, and encourage people, equip people to discover promises, and to turn to those promises. That's what I did.

Max Lucado: I really enjoyed writing the sermon series. I really enjoyed writing the book. I was unaware there's over 7,000 promises in the Bible. I thought "Well, I can't do a book that's 7,000 chapters long ..." for the sermon series, it was a long sermon series, which I don't really recommend, but it was 30 sermons. It was pretty long. We typically do six, or eight, or ten weeks series. But I just did it because I wanted to take the church through the whole Bible; looking at promises to Adam and Eve, promises to Abraham, promises to Jacob, to Moses. I wanted to look at it that way. And so I took what I thought were the best 12 of those messages and turned those into the book. And those became the chapters for Unshakable Hope.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. Do you have a favorite book, of all the books you've written?

Max Lucado: Yeah, I do. It's a children's book. You know, I've written quite a few children's books?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Max Lucado: There's one I wrote back in 1993 called You Are Special. It's a story about wooden people who live in a little village called Wemmicksville.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, we read that to our kids. You know what? I hadn't connected the dots. That was a book that made me cry.

Max Lucado: I don't know you intended the pun there, connected the dots, because it's a story about dots and stars. It's a story about a little village, where if you're a good person you get a star, if you're a bad person you get a dot.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, I'm getting goosebumps. Yeah. We read that to our kids over and over again when they were little.

Max Lucado: Yeah. Well, that little story has, I just think there's a lot of, I loved writing that story. And here's a neat thing about that story, I wrote it because I was under obligation. I had told Crossway Publishing, they're out of Chicago, they said "Could you write seven children's stories for us?" I thought I was finished. I thought I had written seven. And they wrote me and said "You owe us one more." And I said "Oh, man." "And not only that, you owe it this week."

Carey Nieuwhof: Seriously?

Max Lucado: Yeah. So, oh man. I just blocked out an afternoon, and I said what could I do? It's a great illustration that God can use inspiration, as well as obligation, to bring about something good. So I did. I wrote that story, and we rewrote it a few

times, cleaned it up, mailed it in, and it became You Are Special. And that book is all over the world. Millions of copies are out there. And that's my favorite.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's awesome.

Max Lucado: And it's not a religious book. It's just kind of a metaphor of life. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's good to know. I recently interviewed Dr. Gary Chapman, Five Love Languages, and one of my favorite stories is I met him in January in Edmonton, like I'm just standing there waiting for the bus, it's minus 600, whatever it is-

Max Lucado: I've been there in January.

Carey Nieuwhof: You've been to Break Forth, haven't you? Yeah. That's the only reason to be in Edmonton in January.

Max Lucado: I've been to Winnipeg in January, too.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow. Well, Canada thanks you.

Max Lucado: Called it Winterpeg.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, it is Winterpeg. No hate mail, please guys. But, you know, I thought "What are you doing here?" And he's like, he's just mission driven, like he's got nothing left to prove. In the start up world, a lot of people, they hit success and they sell the company, or whatever, but you want to write for the rest of your life, and I know it's your calling, but how have you, the question that I want to ask you, because I saw this in Gary Chapman as well, how have you let this not affect you? Because sometimes when people reach a certain level of success, and I'm sure your book sales are far beyond anything you ever dreamed would happen when you were in Brazil getting rejection letters, how does this not affect you in a way that you're like "No, I'm going to keep doing this, and keep helping people."?

Max Lucado: I think I know the sinful nature that I have, I almost hesitate to say that because people might think I'm being insincere or disingenuous, but I have struggles that I wish a man in his 60s who's walked with Christ since he was 20, I wish I could say I didn't have them anymore. But I do have issues, and struggles, and they remind me. They remind me that if it were not for the grace of God, I'd be all screwed up. I have to put internet filters on everything at home because I don't trust myself in a room with a laptop where I'm two clicks of a button away from pictures I shouldn't see. I have to travel with somebody, I have to have somebody traveling with me because I just don't like how I might be if I was untethered from somebody who I know. I don't like being out in a place alone. Sometimes it's not always possible, but as much as possible I do it.

Max Lucado: And so, you know, I tend to exaggerate sometimes. Even in a sermon, I'll be preaching away, and I'll say something, and then after the sermon I'll say "Why did I say that?" I get caught up in the emotion and I say things that are a stretch of what is actual. Carey, I guess what I'm saying is, I know the proclivities and tendencies that I have. I'm really sad, I'm broken hearted when I hear about a pastor who's had a moral failure, but I've never struggled in being judgemental toward that person, because I realize that it's a temptation for all of us, and the Lord has protected me. It's not because I'm strong, it's because, I have the thoughts every guy does, I have those thoughts, and I have to battle those. I have to battle those. I guess I say all that to say, it's pretty easy for me to not get too caught up in the hype of it, because I know the daily battles, and struggles, that I face.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you. Thanks for being so honest. You have a lot of young leaders listening, tons, in their 20s and 30s. Can you give them some advice? Whether that's you look back on Max Lucado at 25 and you want to tell him something, or you build into a lot of young leaders, too, so I'd love for you just to talk to them for a minute.

Max Lucado: Okay. I think the idea of succeeding at home first is a great mantra for leaders. To succeed at home first. There's a reason that in the listings of characteristics of good pastors, that the Apostle Paul would say "He manages, or she manages, their household well. They manage their household well." I don't think there he's talking about getting the bills paid, I think he's talking about, if I were to talk to your kids, how would they say what kind of pastor, what kind of spiritual leader are you? And so succeeding at home first matters. I really think that the investment that we make, and loving our wife, or loving our husband, pays such huge dividends. Huge dividends. Carey, like I say, I've been at the church here 30 years. Everybody knows my wife, everybody knows our three daughters. And the fact that we love each other, I love my wife and she loves me, and that she still goes to church and hears me preach, the fact that the church sees us, I've kind of a had a sense that that's the most effective sermon that I ever bring. When people see me in the foyer and I'm holding my wife's hand, not because I'm supposed to, but because that's just what we do.

Max Lucado: I would really tell young leaders guard your time, put boundaries up so that you're never, I like the Billy Graham rule. Don't be-

Carey Nieuwhof: I know. I don't think it's an over exaggeration. I don't. My wife and I agree.

Max Lucado: Yeah. And now it's the Mike Pence rule. It's kind of resurfaced again. But don't be alone behind closed doors with a female who's not your spouse. Try not to travel with someone, if you're traveling with a female, try to bring somebody else. I mean, just do a few things to keep yourself from being in a position where you would stumble. And then invest yourself in the lives of your kids. You can't make every game, I get that. You can't make every recital, I get that. But make it the exception, not the rule, if you're not there. Just try to be there. Tim

Kimmel, you know Tim Kimmel, Tim says "Children spell love with four letter. T, I, M, E."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yep.

Max Lucado: And just be there to put them into bed. And if the church is putting pressure on you, they're wanting more time, just tell them "I can't do it. I've gotta love my kids." That would be my number one council.

Carey Nieuwhof: Great council. I don't know that there's anything else you need to say. If you're really struggling with that, young leaders, read Andy Stanely's book. He changed the title, I think it's now called *When Work and Family Collide*. It used to be called *Choosing to Cheat*. Just Google that. You'll find it. Max, what a gift this time together has been today. Thank you. It's been a joy getting to know you.

Max Lucado: I can't believe we've talked for over an hour. It feels like 10 minutes. You just do such a great job. You really do. I'm very, very grateful for it.

Carey Nieuwhof: You make it easy. People are going to want to learn more, and they're going to want to find you online, so what's a good website that they can go to?

Max Lucado: We have Maxlucado.com. Just my name dot com, and everything's right there.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wonderful. Max, thank you. We'll do this again.

Max Lucado: Okay, my friend. All the very best. And hello to everyone in Canada.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof: You know, that was such a rich conversation. We had something like 90 minutes planned, I think we went over two hours, just even talking offline. We had such a great time together. You can find everything we talked about in the show notes. Just head on over to [Careynieuwhof.com/episode221](http://Careynieuwhof.com/episode221). And guess what guys? We have transcripts. We asked you "Would it be a good idea to introduce transcripts?" And I was shocked. Over two thirds, 75% of you who answered that poll said "Yes." So there are transcripts to this episode, and last week's, and the weeks before. You can check that out in the show notes. Just head on over to [Careynieuwhof.com/episode221](http://Careynieuwhof.com/episode221).

Carey Nieuwhof: Hey, next week we got a fresh episode dropping, and we are, I've been excited about this for a long time, we are sitting down with Patrick Lencioni. Patrick and I go way back to when we did this interview, but I have been reading his stuff, literally, for 15 years. We get into some really fascinating territory, like why he said no to Steve Jobs. Who says no to Steve Jobs? But chances are, you may never have heard of Patrick Lencioni if he had said yes. How to motivate millennial workers, and the qualities you want to work for when you're hiring and creating the ideal teams. Here's an excerpt from next week's episode.

Patrick Lencion: On the one hand, on the most behavioral level, on the idealistic or behavioral level, there's just humility. And understanding that when you get a leader who truly doesn't think they're important, and is in service to others, and I know we throw servant leadership around, and humility, and words like that, but I mean when they really believe that they are no more important than the lowest level person in their organization, that is the thing. And pride is the root of all sin. It just is. And so humility is the anecdote. When you meet a leader who's humble "I don't really want to be famous. I don't really want people to treat me better." I really want to serve them and see good things come out, because He died for us, and it didn't make sense. So why would we die to others, it doesn't make sense, and that's what makes leadership so great.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Patrick Lencioni next week here on the podcast. That's a pretty good reason to subscribe in my book, so if you haven't done that yet, it's absolutely free, and it's free because of our partners. Make sure you go and check out [Remodelhealth.com\Carey](http://Remodelhealth.com\Carey). Save up to 34% annually on your health care payroll costs. And also make it better for your employees. And go to [Pushpay.com](http://Pushpay.com) and get your church into 2018, maximize mobile giving, and connect with your members all week long. That's [Pushpay.com](http://Pushpay.com), [Redmodelhealth.com\Carey](http://Redmodelhealth.com\Carey). Head on over there, and tell them I sent you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you so much, guys. I hope this fall is going well for you. We have some fun stuff planned, a couple of extra episodes this month coming up, and we are going to be focusing on church growth. That's going to be a lot of fun. If you want to grow your church, you want to get rid of artificial barriers, that's coming up on the podcast. And also coming up, Levi Lusko, Adam Hamilton, Terry Smith, Pete Scazzero, and so much more. Thanks so much for listening, and I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Speaker 1: You've been listening to the Carey Nieuwhof leadership podcast. Join us next time for more insights on leadership, change, and personal growth to help you lead like never before.