

Announcer: 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. Now, your host, Carey Nieuwhof.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, hey, everybody and Happy New Year. Welcome to episode 236 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and hey, I hope 2019 is off to a great start for you already here on this New Year's Day. I always loved New Year's because not only is it a celebration but it's an opportunity to think about the future, to recalibrate, to start over again. Man, we got a great year lined up for you. I'm really excited about 2019. I think it's gonna be the best year ever for the podcast. We got a bunch of guests coming up that I think you are going to love. We have got ... Who have we got? David Kinnaman's coming up, Lysa TerKeurst, Jon Gordon, Ian Morgan Cron is gonna be on the podcast early in 2019. I have been smitten by the Enneagram like so many of you. It's been great, I'll tell you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Gary Chapman is gonna talk about The Five Love Languages in your life and at work. Frank Bealer, my buddy, is back. The most productive man I know with I think 25 full-time jobs. You can talk to him. Jud Wilhite, Jon Ortberg, Annie Downs, Katie Cole, and so many others. It's gonna be an exceptional start to 2019. I'm so glad you guys are here. You know, we just want to get better together. We want to grow together as leaders, as people, and for those of us who follow Jesus, which is a lot of you who listen to this podcast, we can get a little bit closer or a lot closer on that this year. That's what this podcast does. It's designed to help you lead like never before, to thrive in life and leadership.

Carey Nieuwhof: I just wanted to say, cheering for you, praying for you as we head into 2019. We are kicking off 2019 with some fun stuff today. My guest is Jonathan Pokluda. You may know him as the author of the best selling book Welcome to Adulthood. He is also the campus pastor at Watermark Church in Dallas, Texas, and he leads The Porch, one of the largest young adult ministries in the world, if not in the world certainly in the United States. Every Tuesday night and beyond they've got tens of thousands of sometimes hundreds of thousands of young adults in their 20s and 30s who gather electronically or thousands in person for church. He has his finger on the pulse of millennials and now increasingly generation Z like nobody's business.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jonathan was really great, known as JP, really, really great about digging in to some details and I learned a lot in this interview. I think you're going to love it. If you're a millennial or Gen Z you're going to see yourself in this episode, a lot of you are. For those of us who are little bit older, I'm Gen X, some of you are baby boomers or beyond. Hey, I think you're going to love today's episode. Speaking of launching in 2019 I don't know if you have this problem or not but I know that we talk a lot on this space and also on my blog about being in the digital and analog world.

Carey Nieuwhof: Here's one of the problems a lot of churches have. There's a growing digital presence but 99% of your staffing budget is spent on the analog experience, on

the weekend experience, and a lot of church staff are just overwhelmed or don't have the budget to really move in to digital space in a meaningful way. Well, all of that is about to change. We're early adopters on this podcast. There's a brand new company that just is coming out called Pro Media Fire. You're the first to hear about it on this podcast. It's a cloud-based church creative team. No staff searching, no like, okay, we got to free up X thousand dollars in the budget for a new staff person, no.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's, get this, unlimited graphic design services, unlimited custom church videos for one monthly flat fee that's very competitive. The creative team collectively has over 30 years experience working for ministries. They're great at what they do and Pro Media Fire is offering a limited launch special to listeners of this podcast. As a listener, you'll get 10% off all plans for life and 40% off for the media bundle for life with unlimited graphic design and video services if you go today to this site, promediafire.com/carey. That's promediafire.com/carey. Don't miss it. It's a launch special that's promediafire.com/carey. You'll save 10 to 40% right now, and boom. You're all of a sudden stepping up your digital game in a huge way for 2019. Make sure you check that out.

Carey Nieuwhof: Also, I know a lot of you are setting New Year's Resolutions or you're rolling your eyes going, "Nope, not doing it this year." Hey, I got a new free training series I want to tell you about. I would love for you to head on over to thehighimpactleader.com. I've got some free training for you for this year and yeah, you can check that out absolutely for free at thehighimpactleader.com. We got that for you. Well, in the meantime here we are, episode one of 2019 also known as episode 236 of this podcast. Jonathan Pokluda from Watermark Church in Dallas, Texas, just someone with incredible insights on what's happening with the next generation. Here we go. Well, Jonathan, welcome to the podcast. It's great to have you.

Jonathan P.: Carey, thanks so much for having me on man. It's fun to watch what God is doing through your ministry and so I was a part of The High Impact Leader that you put out and I also have a close friend here that just went through preaching better sermons (The Art of Better Preaching), so way to go for just helping the church.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thanks, man. I appreciate that. I've driven, I'm not with you we're doing this remotely but I've driven by your office at Watermark Church in Dallas numerous times. You pivoted the camera to let me see the highway I drive on.

Jonathan P.: That's right, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Good to connect with you.

Jonathan P.: Pray for hundreds of thousands of cars daily that pass by sometime a lot slower than they want to.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Jonathan, I'm just excited to hear about the way God's using you and your team to reach literally tens of thousands like 50 to hundred thousand young adults, which is just, it's a mind boggling number. Let's go back a bit. Tell us a bit about your story, how you ended up leading what many would call the largest young adult ministry in America.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. Well, I was raised in the church. I have great parents, and I would describe high school as kind of an identity crisis. Everyone says, yeah that's everybody in high school.

Carey Nieuwhof: Isn't that for everybody?

Jonathan P.: Yeah, exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jonathan P.: Well, so for me that look like being a part of agricultural programs where I would show steers and chickens and rabbits, and I had both ears pierced. I got my first tattoo at 14. I drove this 1979 Mercedes Benz with hydraulics that said Superfly on the back. Usually about that time people like, okay you win identity crisis. My senior year I kind of straightened up and I say that because then I went to college and I had all of the freedom that goes with going to college but none of the maturity to accompany that. There were like some semblance of faith. I had this idea of God, but God was this police officer in the sky and I was doing these things I didn't want to be stopped for.

Jonathan P.: So as I just went about what they say drug, sex, and rock and roll, for me it was drug, sex, and hip-hop. As I did that in college I would say my prayers at night. One night I just began sobbing in my bed, my own campus twin size bed, just crying, thinking nobody's listening to me. Nobody can hear these prayers. I woke up the next day and I reached out to a friend out of desperation. I just kind of confessed all of my sins to them. I'm like this is what I've done wrong, this is who I've slept with, the drugs I've done, what I drank, the parties all that.

Jonathan P.: They said, "Well, that's just kind of college." They said, "You go and you go wild, and then after college you kind of get right with God." Terrible advice but kind of prophetic in my experience because what happened next is I graduated from college I moved to Dallas and 16 years ago I was at a bar on a Saturday night. It was a bar that I love. The club on lower Greenville in Dallas, and I was there every Thursday, Friday, Saturday night. On this particular Saturday night I bumped in to this old friend from college and I said, "What are you doing this weekend?" She said, "Well, I'm going to check out this church." I said, "Great, pick me up."

Jonathan P.: She did and she took me to Watermark, and I went hung over and I still smelled like smoke from the club the night before, and I began to wrestle with what do I really believe about Jesus. In fact, I knew there was a God but I didn't know who

he was and so I started looking at you know, world religions, the Hindu faith, the Buddhist faith, the Jewish faith, the Islamic faith, and really what the bias against Christianity because I thought if I was born in India I'd be Hindu, If I was born China I'd be Buddhist. Just kinda had this bias against Christianity.

Jonathan P.: Well, as I explore the world religions I continue to trip over the character and person of Jesus Christ in history and the evidence overwhelmed me, and I ended up surrendering to Christ believing in him, His death and resurrection for the forgiveness of my sins and everything, Carey, in my life changed. As a young 20 something everything changed. What I did for fun, changed. Who I hang out with, changed. Ultimately the way I talk, changed. Ultimately my profession changed as God called me to vocational ministry five years later. That's a crash course, the high level picture of just kind of the journey I was on.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's incredible. That's an incredible story. I mean I want to know did you grow up in Texas? Is that where you grew up?

Jonathan P.: Yeah South Texas, yeah, 6,000 people in the middle of nowhere.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay. I spent a lot of time in Texas over the last 10, 12 years or so. One of the things I hear about it is not true in Canada. I mean if you're going to run away from Jesus you're just gone and you give up but one of the things I've heard from ... I think anybody in the Bible belt who works in church world might resonate with this is there's a lot of kids who go to church but they just live a completely different lifestyle and they just live in that tension. Is that something that's common? I mean you seemed to be doing it. I mean you're basically the way you describe your college years, you're still saying your prayers but it's like yeah, I'm just going to live for me. Is that fairly typical?

Jonathan P.: Absolutely. I mean especially in the Bible belt you see this idea that everybody is a Christian, which just means I'm not an atheist. I have some idea of God. The way you ask that question that's really my story is at that kind of crisis of faith, if you will, I said I've always believed that there's a God but I've never made a decision based on that faith. I had to come to this place where I realized I wasn't a Christian so that I could actually become one.

Jonathan P.: I have that conversation a lot with young adults. In fact, most of the time when I see the Holy Spirit use preaching or evangelism for a conversion the conversation starts with I'm a Christian. Then as I begin to pry in what means, they come to realization well I'm not a Christian, I just say that I'm a Christian, and I haven't trusted in Christ, and then God does the work.

Carey Nieuwhof: I mean that kind of cultural Christianity was big, I think, in my parents' generation maybe in Canada, and I think if you're listening in the Pacific Northwest or California or the North East, New England you can probably go, oh yeah, we don't have that anymore really. Like you're kind of gone but I see that's a big deal. What I really want to dive into, tell us a little bit about the

scope because I think there's a lot of people in ministry who are just be in awe of the reach that God has given you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Then there's a lot of people in the business space and the marketing space who are listening going, yeah, we're interested in cracking the mind of a millennial, and you guys at The Porch and in your ministry seemed to have just been given this incredible opportunity to tap in to so many young adults. Just give us an idea of what you do and the scope and then we'll kind of reverse engineer from there.

Jonathan P.: Yeah, let me say this to your listeners. This is why, one, I'm grateful for you for having me on, and two, the reason I allocate time to this is because I am passionate about helping people reach the future and even more specifically the future of the church. I come from corporate America and so I talked to two companies last week, you know, helping them bridge the gap between the supervisor, the manager, the leader and the millennials that are there. As you think about the church, if we're not reaching the future of the church then our church has no future. I don't mean for that to sound with so much teeth. It's just a math problem. If you're not reaching the future of the church then your church is literally dying.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's so true.

Jonathan P.: What I've seen God do to The Porch, so to kind of continue that story so five years later he called me to vocational ministry, I came on. There was just this crazy almost road to Damascus kind of story. I was in corporate world. I wanted to be a millionaire before I was 30. I was kind of everything wrong with Dallas, Texas in one person most pretentious and what not. I surrendered my life to Christ. He began to work in me and called me to work in vocational ministry and then opened the door in the church.

Jonathan P.: I came in as a young adult community director. I helped them in the small groups. Two years later the guy who started this deal called The Porch, asked me to teach one night. There was a hundred people, it's a small gathering. A hundred people and that was my first time ever to preach. I continued to preach thereafter and God just did a supernatural work, and it grew from a hundred to 800 and from 800 to 1,600, and 1,600 to 3,200. Today, in Dallas just every Tuesday here at this campus, there's 3,600 young adults here. Well, there's actually 4,000. There's 3,600 in the auditorium there's 500 in overflow that are predominantly college students.

Jonathan P.: Then we have another campus in Forth Worth, another campus in Houston, and then 10 other campuses around the country everywhere from Joplin, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Missouri, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Oklahoma City so all around the country they're streaming live from their church. Then also just a large podcast ministry. That's what God has done in the midst of us.

Carey Nieuwhof: Tell us about the podcast. I mean you shared some of that with me ahead of time and I'm like, what?

Jonathan P.: We have two podcasts. So one is just the listening to the actual sermons. We also have a podcast called Views From The Porch listening to the sermons. Those numbers can be anywhere from 50,000 to 100,000 people downloading, streaming, and whatnot. You know as well as anyone it's hard to track the numbers everywhere from YouTube and whatnot. Suffice it to say that God is doing the work in spite of us. I say he uses me to show that he can use anyone. That sounds trite and cliché. Brother, when I go to bed at night, when I lay down, I'm convinced it's true. I look back on my life I'm like what am I doing here? It'd be terrifying if wasn't thoroughly convinced that it was his work.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, we'll link to the podcast and to all this stuff in the show notes but that's an incredible amount of young adults who are tuning in. I got to ask the question like what the heck are you doing, what's going on?

Jonathan P.: Think about how everyone is put out with millennials. Not everyone literally, I don't think you and I are but a lot of people are just like gosh, what are these people doing? They're so pretentious or entitled or narcissistic and lazy and you hear these things. I liken them to like LED light bulbs. If you remember when the lights change from filament bulbs to LED bulbs and all ...

Carey Nieuwhof: I do.

Jonathan P.: We had this kind of spiraled bulbs and if you had a fixture that exposed them it wasn't attractive and ...

Carey Nieuwhof: Those CFLs or whatever they call them?

Jonathan P.: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Compact fluorescent, yeah, we avoided that ...

Jonathan P.: It was frustrating.

Carey Nieuwhof: ... in this house.

Jonathan P.: Yeah, yeah. Well, when you went to the store though it was difficult to avoid it because they were everywhere, and it was like this new technology that's frustrating. I start with that because I think that's the way kind of like millennials is they're ... If you think about those bulbs they're brighter, they last longer, they're more energy efficient, and so while we may see them as a nuisance they're actually a more effective technology.

Jonathan P.: When you think about millennials I think the way that you reach them is the first thing you do is you lead with authenticity, and so they don't want a replica of

themselves. They don't want a replica rather of their favorite celebrity pastor. They want you to be yourself. I've heard that preaching is bible poured through personality, and so this can be true for the corporate world, too if you're there. Like they don't want you walking around, bragging about how great you are and what you do and the car you're driving. They want a humble leader that's honest about their mistakes.

Jonathan P.: A quick story on that is one time I was about to preach a sermon and the night before I had clicked on a hashtag on Instagram that was stupid. It was one I shouldn't have clicked on. I'm a recovering sex addict and was addicted to porn for years that God has allowed me to experience freedom from. I'm pretty open with my story but I clicked on a hashtag that exposed... It was essentially nudity of a female and I was about to preach and I was just convicted by that.

Jonathan P.: I started the sermon with, "Hey, before I dive in I want you guys to know that I clicked on this yesterday. I didn't take further action. I ended up closing it out but I didn't flee the way the scripture calls me to, and I'm really sorry." That night when I got done preaching it was the longest line that I've ever encountered. I was there until midnight talking to people ...

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh my goodness.

Jonathan P.: ... that just came up so I can't believe you said that. I've never heard a pastor say that. I've never heard anyone say anything like that from the pulpit that was so crazy, and me too, and me too, and me too, and me too. I was like wow, okay, all right. Then I told that story. I was speaking at a seminary and they asked me to come and speak about reaching millennials and I told that story. The feedback that I got afterwards, they could write anonymous feedback is was, "Hey, you need to have the appearance of holiness. You said the word pornography in a mixed gender audience. That was inappropriate."

Jonathan P.: I just thought, Carey, I thought man, here's the deal. You're never going to reach them. If you want to keep playing that game and you want to keep pretending that you have it all together you're never ever going to reach them. I think the first thing you do is live with authenticity. Secondly, you expand their vision, and so they want to do something bigger than themselves. They want to be called to something bigger than themselves.

Jonathan P.: When you think about what Jesus said is he would say, "Hey, come and follow me. Pick up your cross and follow me. Well let me go bury my dead. Let the dead bury the dead, follow me. No one who puts their hand to plow and looks back is not worthy of me or worthy of the kingdom. Sell everything you have, give it to the poor, and follow me." He had this huge ask of people. What the church does and I think industry does is they dumb it down. Well, will you just show up at 8:00? Will you just do this? Will you just serve for an hour? Will you, please?

Jonathan P.: It's like no. Come and die. All right be bi-vocational. Listen, I'm looking for the best of the best. The SEALS of this organization. Come with us. Because the corporate America will ask that of them, this is where I think they actually get it more right than the church. They will exploit their gifts. When God has given those gifts to people for himself and so expanded their vision, call them to something bigger than themselves, knowing that God wants to change the world, and so let them do it.

Jonathan P.: Then lastly, so it's lead with authenticity, expand their vision, and lastly, I would call people to deploy them. We say we don't do ministry to people but through people. When they come here and we say, "Hey, we want you to be bi-vocational then we trust them to make mistakes. The Porch has five teams that make up The Porch, 250 volunteers. We give those teams budgets. They go on retreats. They're pastors, they're elders of the ministry, if you will. We allow them to make mistakes and learn from those mistakes and they solidify partnerships in the city and so it's lead with authenticity, expand their vision, and deploy them, and because I'm a preacher that's a good LED acronym.

Carey Nieuwhof: That works so well. There's so much there, Jonathan. Part of what I want to go back to is it sounds like because I've heard the gift thing, and I'm just trying to pick up threads about what's connecting with the next generation. When I look at preaching it's amazing how many times were I'm just sample other people's sermons, people who are actually connecting with young adults. I will hear about gifting like God is gifting you, we're trusting you at a high level. It seems like that whole show up model of church like you can just go sit in the back row and kick your legs back, you know, kick your feet up and listen. That's not what you're doing is it?

Carey Nieuwhof: You're engaging, you're employing, you're challenging, you're doing all that and I think about I got a son right now who is starting out in accounting, and like he's talking about the first half of 2019 and he knows it's what accountants called busy season. Basically, you're going to be chained to a desk for 12 to 18 hours a day for six months, six or seven days a week, that's what happens in the big accounting firms. He's just gearing up for it and I think, you know, I'm not saying we should do that in the church but we have this idea that we're not calling anybody to anything anymore, we're just happy if you show up. You've got a different M.O. going on there.

Jonathan P.: I think it's one of the biggest mistakes you can make, because it's the most common mistake I see organizations and churches make. They think that's the way that they're going to attract young people is just not asking much of them. I'll tell you a quick story. When I inherited The Porch, the biggest problem that I observed was discouraged volunteers. I mean just like looking at the landscape because you would show up ... The way it would look like, The Porch is a ministry that meets at 7:00 PM on Tuesday. The leaders would show up, they would hold hands in a circle and pray, and then you divvy up responsibilities.

You go stand by the door, you help people find their seat, you go in the parking lot help people to know to come inside.

Jonathan P.: They were just discouraged. There was no vision behind that. The proverb tells us, "Where there is no vision the people perish." As I prayed there was just kind of this holy spirit moment where I got all the volunteers together and I just said, "All right who wants to be a greeter?" And about half the room raised their hand. I said, "Hey, no offense. I don't mean this in any rude way but we know longer need greeters. You are relieved of your responsibility." Then I said, "Who wants to be ushers?" The other half of the room is like oh, maybe it's ushers, that's what he's looking for.

Carey Nieuwhof: Fired now, too?

Jonathan P.: Yeah. They raised their hands and said, "We want to ushers." I said, "Hey, same story. We no longer need ushers, okay? Please go hold babies in the nursery or go serve in children's ministry or do something else but we don't need you because what we need here is we need missionaries. We need pastors. I need people that are hosts that are standing at the door ready to leave their post, to sit with the hurting, the minister to someone who just had an abortion or is thinking about it, someone who is cutting themselves, someone who's depressed, someone who's considered suicide last night and someone who can share their story in 30 seconds, three minutes or 30 minutes pointing to Christ and the gospel."

Jonathan P.: "I don't need people helping someone just find their seat. I need someone that's willing to sit with them, to minister with them, to be a pastor and a shepherd to them." I cast this vision. They're all bright-eyed and lean forward. They're like, "We want to do that but we don't know how." I said, "We'll train you up. We'll train you up. If you're up for it I'll train you." What happened, Carey, is before that moment we were begging people, "Will you please come serve at The Porch? It's only an hour on Tuesday night at 7:00. Please come serve with us."

Jonathan P.: After that moment we had people lining up. We didn't have places to put them. More people were coming, wanting to be a part of the ministry than actually were coming to the ministry. What we did is we had to create another team for them to serve on that team before we place them so they go on this call. It's called Team Roundabout. It's kind of like Porch University where they learn the different ministries. They learn how they're wired, what their gifts are and where they can best serve. We place them on those teams. It's because they respond to you calling them to something bigger than themselves.

Carey Nieuwhof: It sounds like spectator church is dead. Is that right?

Jonathan P.: Spectator church is dying. It's close to dead. It will be dead. I think it's dying.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. How did you ... I mean you're still hundreds of people when you fired all the ushers and the greeters.

Jonathan P.: That's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: How did you figure out as you were starting out, how did you figure out how to train them? You're making this up as you go along, right?

Jonathan P.: It's go back to that deploy, do ministry through people not to people. I realized that I had some of the best corporate trainers in the city that were part of the ministry. I had people that were teachers. I had professors. There were folks that worked for Fortune 12 companies teaching sales and communication and presentations. We put a think tank together and said okay, what do we need to do? How can we train up these people? A lot of it when we say the word training it's discipleship. It's teaching them the Roman's road, the basics, Evangelism 101. Teaching them versus that go with some of the biggest issues that we're running into, biggest felt needs in the room. There was that aspect. I would come in and cast vision. I would rely on as peer-to-peer training.

Carey Nieuwhof: How did you figure all that stuff out?

Jonathan P.: Which one?

Carey Nieuwhof: How did you know that this was the direction to move in?

Jonathan P.: Not to sound trite or cliché but it started with a lot of prayer. I think big movements of God do. People have said that but it's so true. I can remember sitting in this room. It wasn't actually this room, I was in another office, and just begging the Lord, "God I see that your people are discouraged. What can we do?" In Exodus 18 Jethro, Moses' father-in-law says, "You can't lead all these people. You have to raise up leaders of leaders, leaders of smaller tribes."

Jonathan P.: I drew I went to the white board, Carey, and I drew a porch because we're the Porch. I drew a porch on a house. We came up with these funny campy names. I said, "You know what, there's gonna be team curbside. They're gonna be the first line of defense. You pull up to the curve. They're gonna be the host and the greeters and the ministers and the pastors and the missionaries. Then we have team sidewalk because there's a sidewalk and they help people get to where they're going but they also walk along side them."

Jonathan P.: "We have team next steps that throw these events and help people plug in and take the next steps. We have team welcome mat. They're the welcome center. They're the know it all's of the church." That vision kind of bled out of that picture. We had later on team roundabout was invented or established to help people know where to serve. It was just a lot of thinking, a lot of praying, and a lot of talking to people smarter than me that were actually people I was ministering to.

Carey Nieuwhof: When you have somebody who comes to the porch for the first time, is there a journey that they go through? Do they have to be there a certain number of weeks before they jump in? If somebody comes they want to engage, what does that journey look like? Back in the day they were the bases, first base, second base, third base. Everybody's got a different model. I'm just curious about what your model would be or what your approach to that would be?

Jonathan P.: Let me talk about Watermark for a minute because the Porch is a Ministry of Watermark. Watermark is the church. Watermark has four campuses around Dallas, Fort Worth area. I'm at the first campus, and so with Watermark, and we do some things different. Every year in January we take our membership roles to zero. You have to re-up and say I'm still here. I wanna be shepherded here. I wanna be under the authority of the elders here. You take a 4B assessment form. You say, "Hey, I'm serving somewhere ..."

Carey Nieuwhof: Sorry. 4B? What is that?

Jonathan P.: Yeah. Believe, Belong, Be trained, Be strong. Those are just four pillars that the church was built on, Believe, Belong, Be trained, Be strong. You take this 4B assessment via online. To be a member you have to serving somewhere and you have to be in community, which is what we call small group or how we go about small groups. To serve at The Porch you have to be a member of Watermark. Again, there are high bars there or hoops to jump through. Here's the secret, I think, to people that hear that and put off by that, I would just say, you have to have easy on ramps though.

Jonathan P.: Every week we give them an opportunity to get into a small group. We could have something called open community group. They can walk into room and say, "Hey, I wanna hear more about community." We constantly have a ministry fair once a month with all the ministry partners where they could say, "Hey, I want to serve there. I want to serve there. I want to serve there. I want to serve there." Every week we have a membership class so if you want to join the church you can jump in here.

Jonathan P.: The Porch doesn't just serve Watermark. About half of our attenders at least here in Dallas actually go to other churches around the city. A lot of them are not believers or lost people. 30% that come in weekly are not Christians. Some of them don't it know it yet. They wouldn't be able to articulate belief in the gospel.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. Wow, that's interesting. It's kind of like a church within a church then. You've got your own systems, small groups, the whole deal. I don't want to say it that way but just so people get their heads around it.

Jonathan P.: It is with the exception that we would just say hey, this is not church. Our hope is that you would worship corporately on the weekend, multi-generational that

you'd belong to a church under the authority of the elders. It's kind of a in addition to church.

Carey Nieuwhof: Got you. Why did you pick Tuesday night?

Jonathan P.: That was there. I inherited that. It's a good night.

Carey Nieuwhof: It wasn't strategic. It's just like we do this on Tuesdays.

Jonathan P.: It was probably strategic for someone before me. If you think about it Monday you're starting the week. Wednesday is the middle of the week. Thursday is kind of college night. Friday is the weekend. Tuesday made as good sense as any.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Breakdown for us as best you can the millennial mind, the mind of the 20s and 30s. We've already talked about authenticity. We've talked about engagement that spectator church is dead. We talked about wanting to give their lives to something bigger than themselves. What else is going on in their mind? Yeah, I'll let you talk and then I got a couple of specific questions.

Jonathan P.: Let me deal with some of the stereotypes, right? People will say, "What are the unique struggles of millennials?" I've got two responses to that. My first one is they don't have any. That's a soft answer and I'm going to expound on that. My second one that I think is legit is potentially technology. That's new. To carry a mega computer in your pocket with the gateway to all sorts of pornography, dating apps, life hacks, all of that right there in my pocket, that's a new thing. Other generations can't say, "I struggled with that, too." That's new.

Jonathan P.: I will say if we just take those individually like pornography, narcissism, entitlement, those are not new problems. Every generation before has struggled with less, has struggled with self-idolatry, has struggled with entitlement. I'll prove it because you think about ... Gen Y, Millennials, think about generation A. Let's talk about the apostles for a minute. The number one question they asked Jesus is who can sit at your right, in your left in glory? Which of us is the greatest? This is an argument arose among them as to who was the greatest.

Jonathan P.: It says this nine times in the gospels that these guys, these knuckleheads, are arguing which of them ... They're with Christ, the Messiah, and they're arguing which of us is the greatest, which of us is the greatest? That's pretty narcissistic, fairly entitled, and they say the number one question Gen Y asks is what's in it for me? That's the same question generation A was asking. I think what happens, Carey, is we go through what I call Older Brother Syndrome. That's where we come in to the faith or to the church as the younger brother. We experience the father's love lavished upon us. We're so attracted to the grace that is extended to us and receiving, forgiveness of sins, and then we grow. We're fed. We're disciplined.

Jonathan P.: We get to a place where we are no longer patient with the younger brother. We forget that someone was patient with us. Any generation that's listening right now I promise you, you are in the faith if you are, you've grown in your faith if you have because somebody was patient with you. As you think about the generation behind you, the generation that's coming up, you're going to have to be patient with them and really be a student of them, and ask some of the great questions that you're asking.

Carey Nieuwhof: You're in the college years as well so gen ... I'm blanking right now.

Jonathan P.: Z, gen Z.

Carey Nieuwhof: Generation Y, thank you, Z. Thank you.

Jonathan P.: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm still recovering from a cold. My head reminds me. Generation Z is now roughly what? Finishing up college?

Jonathan P.: That's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Is that a fair defining line?

Jonathan P.: Yes. Yeah, it is.

Carey Nieuwhof: What are some differences you see between Millennials and Gen Z?

Jonathan P.: Gen Z is the first generation that has always had the iPhone, as an example. That's where I think that technology is really going to play into that. They're saying their brain is actually developing different. Gaming, which has been there for Millennials, has seem to climb to a next level for people. Dating apps, I mean the vast majority of generation Z if they get married I would guess will have met their spouse via an application on their phone, which is crazy to think about. You're seeing some positive stats around sex, but I don't think the reasons are positive. That's potentially the premarital sex declining. I've read some studies that have said that. I really think that's because you're seeing an explosion of internet pornography or online pornography.

Carey Nieuwhof: Even the inability to perform. That's coming up in the literature all the time.

Jonathan P.: That's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: People with porn addictions that real life isn't as interesting or as scary. Or it's more scary than porn is, which is just yeah, that's another level.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. I think those are some of the things that will distinguish that generation from the one before it. Again, they're small. I think the gaps between all generations are not as big as we try to make them out to be.

Carey Nieuwhof: Some of that could be you're a teenager or you're in your 20s. You're going to behave differently like the baby boomers were seen as irresponsible in the '60s and the whole deal and you know. What do you love most about working with young adults? What do you just love about this generation? Because I've got a bias. I love working with Millennials and Gen Z. They're most of my team. I think they're the best.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. It's the future of the church. I went to write one book, which will become more now but if I had to choose I can write on any topic and anything and Welcome to Adulthood was born because I'm so passionate about this generation. The why is because I think they're crazy enough. We made this shirt that says they're crazy enough to think that they can change the world and courageous enough to do it. That's what I see in this generation is they're coming in. They want to do something for Christ.

Jonathan P.: You look at the stats and so they're green. They want to work for a company that is mindful of the environment. They're thinking constantly about how to make the world a better place. They're very in tune with social justice. When you take all of those desires and you attach them to the gospel you get this incredible force in the church. I think they are the strongest engine in the church that's potentially untapped in some churches. To take these guys and girls in and to unleash them for the gospel is something that I would just say you'd be foolish not to.

Carey Nieuwhof: Tell is a little bit more about the book then, Welcome to Adulthood, when it released, what the reception has been and some of the big ideas in the book.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. It has done so much better than anybody thought it would, which is both encouraging and discouraging all at once. We were on our third print run, day two after release. It just continues to do well. It was a best seller. Anyways it's just doing ministry, so much ministry is pattern recognition. You see people make the same choices and get the same results over and over and over, some of those very positive, some of those very negative. Doing young adult ministry for over a decade, I just started writing down some of those patterns. If you do this, if you date this way, if you manage your finances like this it's not going to go well.

Jonathan P.: However, the inverse is also true, if you do it like this, if you do it like this it seems like that's gonna go well. The title is Welcome to Adulthood. The subtitle is Navigating Faith, Friendship, Finances and the Future. It was just meant to be a graduation present. It was meant to be a birthday present. I said use it instead of a card, a birthday card. Give them this book as the title lends itself to that. It's just 11 chapters helping people grow up.

Carey Nieuwhof: Cool. What are some of key ideas? You talk about controlling anxiety. That's a huge issue. I'm actually preaching on it this weekend when we're recording this interview. I'm doing more and more research into it. What are you discovering about anxiety? Because I think every parent listening and everybody whose got someone they care about in that generation, I mean anxiety is just epidemic.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. Let me say this as a disclaimer. I am not a doctor. I am not a psychiatrist or even a licensed counselor. I am a person who has struggled with anxiety. I have read the scriptures. I'm trained in the Bible. I've been really encouraged. I think this is an area where science is catching up with what God's word says where he talks about meditation. Right now, there's such a buzz word around cognitive behavioral therapy, meditation, mindfulness. You have apps flooding the market like Head Space. This is all what God asked us to do from the get-go that would be still and know that he is God. That he would be lead by still waters. That we would reflect and pray and have those things mark our lives.

Jonathan P.: I don't know that we're going to survive this fast-paced world without those activities. What you see is psychology pushing us back to those activities. The scripture calls us to take our thoughts captive, which is so much easier said than done. The book in the chapter on anxiety I just talk about what that practice actually looks like to continue to fight those thoughts and try to replace them with God honoring thoughts like Philippians 4:8 says, "Whatever is true, what is pure, what is right, what is lovely, admirable," and so on. I think that it is an epidemic. I do think it's a growing problem along with depression, along with suicide. As people are looking for hope, I hope they look in the direction of God. It's the only place I think they're going to find hope.

Carey Nieuwhof: I wanna jump back into ... That's a really helpful understanding. Let's talk about corporate America because you're familiar with that, and then let's talk about the church. When you're looking at creating an environment where young adults thrive, what is outdated about corporate America?

Jonathan P.: About corporate America, I think this is what's going to be found outdated I believe is the exploitation of young adults, and just the idea that you just come here, you do your job, and go home. What you're seeing in Millennials is they want to follow their passion. I talk about why that's bad advice depending on what you mean by that. I think I've read maybe something you wrote, too on that, Carey, at some point in time. I think just this idea of hey, how can you create a work environment that is social justice aware, that is contributing to something bigger than just your bottom line. You're starting to see that with the one for one in the market place with Tom's was an early ...

Carey Nieuwhof: Mycoskie.

Jonathan P.: Yeah, exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof: Warby Parker, that kind of stuff.

Jonathan P.: That right. That's right. I think to build an industry you have to be thinking about hey, how can we make the world a better place? Because they care about that with Millennials. Then I'm trying to think what else. What are some things that you're seeing as it relates to that?

Carey Nieuwhof: I would say hierarchical management. This idea that basically you're in the room but you listen to me. I think it's more team-based. I think the vulnerability of a leader is really important, what you said. That seminary feedback you got like you said pornography and you're not allowed to say that. You have to have this era. I think it's interesting because a lot of people would call Millennials entitled. I have seen Millennials really push back against an entitlement culture at work.

Carey Nieuwhof: If you're the entitled boss, if you're the entitled supervisor, you're not going to motivate Millennials, and as I've said when I have written about Millennials, nobody wants to work for me. Nobody wants to work for me. People want to work for a mission that's bigger than me. I think in the corporate field they don't want to just work for profit. If the end goal is a better Q1 than last year, I don't think that's very motivating for people anymore. There's got to be a higher purpose. Those are some of the things I've seen.

Carey Nieuwhof: Really, it's as much a mindset and you've got to ask like do you ... It's not, "Do you care about me, the boss," if you're the boss. It's like, "Hey boss, do you care about them?" If you care about them you can really motivate a work force toward a bigger purpose. If you expect everybody to care about you I think that's got a short shelf-life these days.

Jonathan P.: I'd echo every single thing that you said. I will just add that whole deploy piece, I think they want to be trusted. They want to be given ... Someone to take a risk on them. I've seen them really respond to that. The model that I like is that quadrant if you think about the four quadrants where as you do, I do what you watch. We do it together. You do what I watch, now you go do it. I think more and more you're going to see training in that direction of just like hey, how we can we come alongside... Here, I'll do it first. You watch me. All right. Now let's do it together. Okay. Now you do it. I'm going to watch you. Now just go do it. Man, you got it. That's how we train at The Porch as well.

Carey Nieuwhof: People would sometimes say, doesn't that create unpredictability or chaos or what if they get it wrong?

Jonathan P.: It can.

Carey Nieuwhof: What do you say to that?

Jonathan P.: It can.

Carey Nieuwhof: They can get it wrong.

Jonathan P.: No, it can. It certainly can. You're choosing your problems as with all things. Where I try to set the tones is hey, you're getting it wrong, that's going to be your training and so please, don't ever, under any circumstance, try to hide the fact that you missed it, that you messed up, that you got it wrong. When you do that, let's put a bright spotlight on it. Let's bring everyone in the room and let's learn all we can because that's the best education what we have.

Jonathan P.: There's a story of a guy that ... It was a pool business, a swimming pool business, and he had a contract for a large hotel in the area. He had this minimum wage employee, and he left the water on, and it flooded the hotel pool, which actually flooded the bar beneath the hotel pool and cost a \$100,000 damage, caused a \$100,000 in damage. The employee walked in the boss's office and handed in his letter resignation and said, "Hey, I guess I don't work here anymore."

Jonathan P.: The boss said, "What are you talking about? I just spent a \$100,000 training you. You're not going anywhere. Because you made that mistake and you acknowledge it, you're not gonna make that mistake again. I don't want somebody else to make that mistake so you might as well stay here." I think that is a picture of how we can lead these folks especially through failure.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's powerful. That's such a good picture and such a good story. I want to switch gears and talk about the church, and let's drill down a little bit further about what needs to be different in the church so that it really becomes a place where young adults are engaging, that they own, that they're inviting their friends. Let's go back to that question of what are we getting wrong and what needs to change in the broader church.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. Don't strike the deal and so I think so many pastures today are striking that deal where it's like, hey, you show up. You keep the lights on. You continue to pay my salary and I'm not going to ask much of you in return. We can just hand shake agreement and...One, that's not church and you can take the church off your sign because that's not church and the next generation is not going to respond to that. I think that, you touched on this, I think they do desire excellence. This is different than what you call spectator church, but I do think we should think through hey, how can we do everything with excellence? Because excellence honors God and inspires people.

Jonathan P.: If my gifting is preaching, I need to constantly be thinking through how can I become a better preacher? How can I do that better? Where can I find better stories? How do I hone my craft? If I'm a musician or worship leader, then I need to be thinking through, hey, how can I do that better? One way we do that with The Porch is every message is given a grade, one through a 100, 70 is passing. Then along with that grade, it's given, hey, here's something you can do better and here is something I thought was excellent.

Jonathan P.: What it does is it creates... Now, who's giving that grade is our staff, a team of critiques. What that does is it allows them or trains them to think critically and it makes sure the ministry is constantly getting better and better and better and better and better. I think that church should be thinking. I think sometimes we can think, oh, well that's the work of God, and so we don't need to do anything. I'm like, no. God, the Holy Spirit has an affinity for people who strive for excellence a lot of time. I think that's important.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's so true.

Jonathan P.: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Who grades the sermon?

Jonathan P.: It's our team. It's the teaching team. Because I'm an extrovert, Carey, most of the time, when I start a message, I'll start in a room full of people and just start talking about a passage.

Carey Nieuwhof: Gotcha.

Jonathan P.: Then as we talk through that then folks on the young adult team or their Sunday team will ... They've been selected to review the sermon and so they'll give, send their feedback before 10:00 AM the next day...

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you do this before you give the message, then you have it graded? So it's a ... I know at Liquid Church they call a gospel hour.

Jonathan P.: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Basically, you're giving it to a small group.

Jonathan P.: Both of them. I'll give it to a small group before, they'll grade it, and give feedback, and then I'll also receive feedback afterwards so I can see if they grade me, if the sermon improved.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Jonathan P.: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: What happens if it fails? You'll rewrite it?

Jonathan P.: I guess I'd go back to corporate America. Yeah, I've had rewrites so I'll give it on Tuesdays, so I'll give it at 3:00 PM. I usually finish that process at 5:30 PM. Church starts at 7:00 but I got to meet with the band at 6:30 so I have about an hour to make those changes. A couple of weeks ago, it was just about a rewrite like new open or new closure or new points. The only thing that stayed the same was the

text. You're scrambling at that point. Most of the time, it's tweak. Hey, you kind of lost me here. Can you better explain this? Hey, let's put a new opener there.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's good. Yeah, that is a paradox because polish does ... There's a level of excellence you have to hit. Isn't just that sloppiness doesn't cut it anymore? Or having ungifted people like if you're gonna be a communicator, communicate. If you're going to play, play. If you're gonna sing, sing. Is it like you've got to have people locked into their gifting there?

Carey Nieuwhof: Having a great light show, like okay, here's what I'm trying to get at. Help me solve a problem. Because there are people who have like great light shows, technically, excellent bands, and the guy or the gal can preach. They can speak but they got no young adults in the room. Then there are, I'm sure if you went to The Porch, you would see excellence in all those categories and it's packed with young adult. What's the difference? Can you put your finger on it?

Jonathan P.: Yeah, let me backup and say, because I was going to ask, I thought you're gonna asked, what's the answer with that? I thought you were gonna ask is I do think you have to be excellent because they are consumers of content and with YouTube now and podcasts and they can listen to their favorite pastor, the best teachers of the word with the touch of a button. In one hand, that's what you're being compared to. I do think you want to think through how do I hone my craft and how do I do this with excellence?

Jonathan P.: To your question, when you have two churches that are equal in excellence and the show, if you will, but one is not affecting young adults, it could be a number of things. I don't want to jump to conclusions. It could be location, right? There might not be young adults in the area, but I know that's not right what you're asking. I would go back to that authenticity piece.

Jonathan P.: If a pastor is not authentic. There is a reason I lead with that when I say lead with the limp. If you are not authentic, if you are inauthentic, you are not going to reach the next generation. Just game over. In fact, if they think you're being in authentically authentic, you're not gonna reach them. They think you're just kinda send pornography for shock value and false confessions. That's not gonna work either. You have to go up there and be real and be yourself.

Carey Nieuwhof: I've seen that in bands, too. I'm glad that's where you landed on that because I think that does help me put my finger on it. I've seen it in bands, too and sometimes you think, they're just really good musicians but they're only playing.

Jonathan P.: Totally.

Carey Nieuwhof: Are you really, do you get the words? Are you singing the words? Do you believe the words? Are you leading people or are you just singing songs? One of my theories is that as culture has changed. That kind of authenticity, that kid of engagement, that kind of passion is actually contagious to unchurched people.

That you can walk in and like are you seeing that or what are you seeing? Feel free to disagree.

Jonathan P.: No. In musicians, make sure I know what I'm agreeing or disagreeing to. The first thing you said, I'm over here nodding my head violently. I think inauthenticity in musicians or worship leaders, when they get up there and they're just trying to, they're going, they're buying the skinny jeans because that's what's somebody else did and they're becoming replicas of who they want to be. That doesn't work. It just doesn't work. You have to be you. What's crazy about that is at The Porch, the worship leaders are the Shane's, Shane and Shane, if you've heard them, they're the opposite. They're the antithesis of all of that. Meanwhile, man, I can't argue with ...

Carey Nieuwhof: You mean the skinny jean culture or what?

Jonathan P.: Yeah, just like they don't look like worship leaders. They would joke and they'll say, "No. We look like your mechanic." That's a joke they make. Listen, God's using Elevation and God's using Hillsong and God's using a lot of different places but he's also using these guys and I think a big part of the reason he's using these guys is just because they're honest and real. Is that what you were asking me if I agreed with?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, it's totally what I was asking you about. Yup. Because it's not just a formula to be copied. Another question for you then, celebrity culture. I mean people in their 20s and 30s have pretty much shaped celebrity culture for what it is now on Instagram. How do you look at that like the ... I think you raised some good comparators. More people would know some of the other bands you've mentioned or other preachers. We've hinted at then even The Porch and yet your podcast is consistently one of the top 20 in Christianity on iTunes in the world.

Carey Nieuwhof: How are you straddling celebrity or what does your audience think of that? I ask the question because I think there's a few people who think if we can just get the super gifted worship leader who becomes a star and has an album or if we get the preacher who becomes the hot preacher, then we're all set. What's your response to that?

Jonathan P.: Scary. You're so good at what you do, brother. That's such a good question. Let me say something that I thought about as you were asking. I think all of those things are tied together, by the way. Anxiety, entitlement, narcissism, and the social media, the pursuit of fame. I think that's one big circular cycle of despair in that generation. Meaning, I would say a major cause of what we're seeing is the highest levels of anxiety in the history of history is social media and comparison from that, and the pursuit of fame, becoming a YouTuber. I have people in our body, their profession, what they do for a living and make lots and lots of money are they're YouTubers. That's a new ...

Jonathan P.: I read a study the other day that if you ask the up and coming generation what they want to be when they grow up, that was top three answer was I want to be a YouTuber, which is different then I want to be a policeman or fireman or whatever, teacher. How do I personally fight the celebrity pastor? I think there's such a danger. Let me say this. It is a fight. I got in this, when I got in the ministry, I took a huge pay cut. I could not deny the calling. It felt like all cost but it also felt so real that this is what the Lord wanted. It was maybe the purest form of ministry in that moment because it just was all cost.

Jonathan P.: Now, you get recognized somewhere and people want to buy your meal and you would get fan mail, for lack of a better term, and you got a book out there. The book is doing well and people are telling you, "You changed my life," and it's like, "No. It was God change your life. He'll use a chump. He'll use anybody and you just ...How do you stay grounded and say, how do you stay humble? One way is I've got guys in my life that I've ran with for 14 years that are completely unimpressed and they ask me the hard questions on a weekly basis.

Jonathan P.: Two, you kind of hinted on is I'm far, I'm a far cry from a celebrity pastor, and because there are huge ones out there and you never want to try to be that. If I'm left to my flesh, I will want to try to be that and that will be the beginning of the end. Even if it goes well. Even by going well, I mean if the ministry grows and even if the success happens it's the beginning of the end because I've lost my first love, like the church of Ephesus in Revelation. You have to maintain every single day, this is about the fame of Christ and not my own. I read a book that I was heavily impacted by called Embracing Obscurity. It's really simple read. Have you heard of it?

Carey Nieuwhof: No.

Jonathan P.: Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: No.

Jonathan P.: I'd tell you who it was by. Yeah, that's such a fair question. It's anonymous because they did. They practice ...

Carey Nieuwhof: Of course, it is.

Jonathan P.: They practice what they preach and they embrace obscurity and didn't put their name up there. It was an impactful read for me and something that I return back to. In fact, I picked it up yesterday just in the midst of doing podcasts and interviews. I flew to New York last week to be on TV and all that stuff. I was just like all right. I need to center back around this, and I think that's something really key for anybody who's listening in ministry or not. If you're leading in any organization where people are gonna be tempted to worship you, man we just, we have to continue to point and project that worship where it was intended.

Carey Nieuwhof: I think it's good to have a run in obscurity for a long time, you know, to have done the same thing for a little while and realize that hey, there'll be a day when nobody listens. There'll be a day when nobody reads. There'll be a day where nobody shows up. I have to be okay with who I am in that moment as well. That's so good, Jonathan. You got leaders listening here who are like okay, tons of information, lots of big ideas, and a lot of it, it sounds right to me like it completely resonates but it probably feels overwhelming to some of the people who are listening because they are like okay, I'm back like five decades from where you talked about. Now, where do I start?

Carey Nieuwhof: If there were a couple of gearshifts that leaders in the corporate or church world could make, that would help them connect better with the young adults they care about, they're trying to reach, they're trying to hire. What would a couple of gearshifts that they could start working on in the next 30 days include?

Jonathan P.: Yeah. I think the hardest person for you to lead and when I say you, I mean you, the one listening, anybody listening, the hardest person for you to lead is you and you have to lead yourself well first. Before you can say follow me as I follow Christ, like I would just ask, did you spend time with Jesus this morning? Would you want everyone you're leading to have the same kind of personal time with the Lord that you had?

Jonathan P.: Start there, like start with you and before we run fast, before we go fast, we got to go slow and so start there. There's incredible resources out there for you. Yeah, this was definitely drinking from a fire hydrant but Carey, you're the best synthesizer of information that I've seen or at least one of the best to say that as honestly as I can. Your resources, The High Impact Leader and other things that you've put out, I would encourage people to continue to grow through those sorts of things.

Jonathan P.: Then the thing that the dead horse that we've now kicked 300 times in the past few minutes is you have to be authentic. I want to make sure that you're committed to that. That's more of a change of a thinking than it is a doing. Starting with, hey, am I committed to letting people fully in my world and in my life so that I can lead them and then care for them? You touched on that and talking about corporations. You could ask the question, how can I better care for my people? That could be anything from making sure that birthdays are in your calendar to the scheduling, two-on-one or one-on-one meetings with them. It could be asking them the question, "Hey, how can I better care for you?". That's gonna make you a better leader of the next generation, too?

Carey Nieuwhof: That's good. Okay. I got to ask you this, because authenticity for people who are not used to that, for maybe people who are back in that seminary classroom going, "I'm not talking about porn. I'm not talking about anything. I have to have this aura of holiness." Or if you're in corporate, "I'm the man, I'm the boss, I got

it all together, shut up, right?" I know you've written a book. I've written a book. You preach. I preach.

Carey Nieuwhof: When my last book *Didn't See It Coming* came out, I had numerous friends pulled me aside after they had looked at it and went, "Carey, this is raw. Like you talked about burnout. You talked about struggling suicidal thoughts. You talk about growing cynical, like you're ..." Even when my kids read it who are now in their 20s, they were kind of like, "Dad, this is, you're out there with this." They were just like, it's raw and it's honest and you know, that was a journey for me.

Carey Nieuwhof: When you get up there, like that hashtag thing that you talked about. Because I think a lot of guys might have said to their best friend, "Oh man, I clicked the hashtag. I look at something I didn't runaway from it as quickly as I could have. I got to get out there and preach, pray for me," what goes on in your mind when you go tell the church that that happened? And what gave you the courage to say, and to keep saying, this is just me and to find that level of authenticity that is connecting with people?

Jonathan P.: Here's a better answer to your question you asked earlier on the celebrity pastor thing. Now I just think if humility is the goal then humiliation is the path and continuing to put ourselves out there and be honest and that is humble. It's humbling and it's a humble act.

Carey Nieuwhof: You're right. It is. It must have. Were you humiliated when you told people that, like did you feel that?

Jonathan P.: Yeah, yeah. I felt humiliated. Yes. I think when you get naked in front of people, right? I mean metaphorically speaking, that is the sense that you feel. Here's the deal, Carey. I believe God's word is true, man. I believe 1 John 1 who says confessing, James 5:16, "Confess your sins to each other so that you may pray for each other, for the prayers of a righteous person are powerful and effective." "Be children of the light," it says in Ephesians, all these things, nowhere does it say, hey hide your junk and you can't let that out.

Jonathan P.: You know, I was at a conference once. I was speaking at a conference at a panel and one of the guys said something in really piffy way and I'll butcher but he said something like there's some things you tell to some people and other things you tell to other people, and everything that you tell to no one. Meaning that there are some things that you just don't share. That just sounds like slavery to me, man. I got to a place where I'm like, hey there's not ...

Jonathan P.: I got no skeletons in my closet. There's nothing that I want someone to open that closet and find and hold against me. I just man, I started writing about that stuff and putting it in sermons and in blogs and just say, "Listen, man. If somebody ever comes at me and they're like, 'Man, you won't believe what JP did,' I'm just gonna go back, hey, go read blog number 137 because I wrote all

about it there." I think there's freedom. God gives us freedom. It is for freedom that he sets us free and so, I don't know if I answered your question.

Carey Nieuwhof: This has been powerful and so helpful. No, you totally did and it's encouraging, it's inspiring. I'm excited for what God's doing through you, Jonathan, and through your ministry. Tell us again about the book and then people are gonna want to connect with you. Do you have a website? And then tell us a little bit about where they can find out more about The Porch.

Jonathan P.: Yeah. I wrote a book. It's called Welcome to Adulthood. I don't give a rip if you buy this book. I really don't. I didn't write it so that a lot of people would buy it. I wrote it so that it would be helpful. If it's helpful to you, I hope that you share it. If it's not helpful to you, I hope you throw it away. If it's helpful, I hope you share it with every millennial, every young adult, every person anywhere between 18 and 35 or 39 I think would benefit from the content.

Jonathan P.: It's 10 years of research, packed into a book called Welcome to Adulthood. It's available everywhere. Books are sold. Amazon, bookstores. You can go to welcometoadulthoodbook.com. I get to serve with The Porch Ministry. Our website is the porch.live. We're hosting a large conference here in the Dallas Memorial Day, that's awaken.live. We'd love for you guys to come to Dallas and hang out with us. Man, it's just Carey, keep doing what you're doing, brother. I love the way that you are resourcing leaders.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm so glad we connected. Thank you so much, JP and yeah, really appreciate you.

Jonathan P.: Yeah, my man. Thank you so much. Appreciate you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Those are some amazing insights and JP, Jonathan, thank you so much. Hey, everything you're gonna want from this interview is available in the show notes including transcripts. I know a lot of you have been asking for transcripts. We introduced them maybe four, five months ago. For all the episodes, since the fall of 2018 to this one and moving forward, we have transcripts. They're searchable, printable, the whole deal. I know a lot of you use these episodes for team discussion with your stuff, with your board, with your key volunteers. If that's helpful to you that's an easy way to pull out the extracts as well.

Carey Nieuwhof: All of it is at the show notes. So go to careynieuwhof.com/episode236 or just Google Jonathan Pokluda and my name and you'll find it there. Or go to leadlikeneverbefore.com, click on blog, and you'll find the show notes there as well. Listen, next week we are back with a fresh episode I'm so excited about. Before I tell you about that one, because you're gonna love it, let's think a little bit one more time about what you're doing for your digital media strategy.

Carey Nieuwhof: Here's the problem. You're spending, let me guess, about 99% of your budget on everything that happens in person but 99% of the people you're trying to

reach are online and you don't have the money to staff in that area. How do you solve that problem? Head on over to promediafire.com/carey and get 10 to 40% off a brand new social media plan for your life. They will make your social media come alive. If you head on over right now to promediafire.com/carey, you will get this launch special where you can save depending on the package you choose between 10 to 40% and you're already doing this at a fraction of the price that you would pay for a staff person in this area. Make sure you check that one out.

Carey Nieuwhof: Next week, my guest is Ed Stetzer. Ed is one of those leaders who barely needs an introduction if you're in church world. Currently he holds the Billy Graham Distinguished Chair for Church, Mission, and Evangelism at Wheaton College. He's written more books than most of us have read. He's a prolific speaker, a well-known author. He has planted, revitalized, pastored churches, and he trains pastors, and he's got his finger on the pulse of culture like nobody else. I do a deep dive with Ed, and we talk about how culture is changing, why Christians are losing the culture war, and what's next for the future church. So, if you're setting your course for 2019 wondering what's next you're not gonna want to miss this interview. Here's an excerpt.

Ed Stetzer: So even back, you know, this is a leadership podcast, one of the things when I mentor some of my leaders here I say that a big part of leadership is being willing to lean into the pain. Wheaton College is a very old and established institution, a very state institution, but there are some things I needed to change so we can be successful. I said, "We got to change these things," and people said, "Well, they're not changeable." I said, "Well, we're gonna lean into that pain." Well, you know, just today I talked to one of my key leaders and he said, "You know what, there was a lot of pain but that's changed now." So nothing good happens without some pain in the process."

Carey Nieuwhof: So that's next week with Ed Stetzer. Subscribers, you get it for free. Remember, speaking of free, I've got some free training videos at thehighimpactleader.com this month so you may want to check out again. I think it's gonna help you get an edge in 2019 and don't repeat the mistakes you made in terms of time and energy management in 2018. They're brand new. I'd love for you to check them out at the [highimpactleader.com](http://thehighimpactleader.com).

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, thanks so much for listening, everybody. We are back next Tuesday with a fresh episode. We've also got some extra Thursday episodes coming up later this month and a host of good guests. I really have enjoyed this New Year's Day conversation. I'm cheering for you throughout 2019. I do hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Announcer: 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.

