

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 and now your host, Carey Nieuwhof.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, hey everybody. And welcome to episode 291 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof. I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Well, I am thrilled to have David Platt back on the podcast. It's been a great week. Max Lucado the other day, David Platt today. David Platt is a New York Times bestselling author. He is also a pastor of McLane Bible Church. We talk a little bit about the succession that he was a part of at that church. This is a huge issue. Succession is a big issue in the church. It's a big issue in business, so we talk about that, but mostly in this episode we talk about something that's really interesting me.

Carey Nieuwhof: I've been studying, I'm a Christian, obviously. I have been studying atheism and the objections to Christianity in some great detail over the last couple of years and really intriguing. And so David did this trip to Southeast Asia where he really ... well, he'll ... I don't want to spoil it, but he just hiked and did these incredible climbs into some of the worst poverty he's ever seen. And he has been all over the world. The place where he went was the birthplace of Hinduism and Buddhism. And David and I talk about like, "Okay, in the midst of all that and the most challenging questions to Christianity, if God is so good, why is there evil? What about poverty? What about hell? What about eternity's existence?" I mean, why? Why has his faith not crumbled? And it's something I talked to NT Wright about, later on this podcast, this fall.

Carey Nieuwhof: And I love David's answers. So I think you're really going to enjoy this. And plus we talk about a brand new book that releases this week all about something needs to change, where he talks about those trips that he made to Asia and the impact they had on his life. So I think you're really going to enjoy this, regardless of your faith perspective or whether you work in the church or the business world. Love bringing you these conversations and love also answering your questions. So we're going to start something new in a couple of episodes called #askCarey, and that'll be at the end of the podcast where I just take your questions. So if you've got a question you want to ask me, I'm going to be selecting one per episode and all you have to do is jump on the social platform of your choice, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, use the hashtag #askCarey, post your question.

Carey Nieuwhof: Me and my team will comb social media for that. I'll do my best to give you my best answer, to whatever question you happen to be asking. So excited for that. Also, you ever looked at a health insurance company, benefits for your faith organization and had no idea what you're reading? Man, it can be confusing. And one of the challenges with health care, particularly in the US, is that most companies go with a one size fits all. And as you know, if you have 10 employees, not everybody's the same. So that's where Remodel Health has entered the picture. They want to help you understand your benefits. Also help

you find cost savings solutions. So, so far they're a brand new company. They have saved non-profits and charities, churches around the country \$7.2 million in health care.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. So that money has gone directly back into the mission. Listeners of this podcast alone in just a few months, have stewarded over \$625,000 back into their mission. Just that is the raw savings of you guys so far on this podcast. So Remodel Health recognizes the intrinsic value of keeping healthcare costs sustainable without sacrificing the level of care you provide to your staff. It's not like, "Well guys, you know you're going to pay for everything yourself." No, sometimes the benefits increase while you save money. So if you're interested in learning more about their innovative solutions, which are technology based, visit [RemodelHealth.com/Carey](http://RemodelHealth.com/Carey), C-A-R-E-Y, to download their church buyer's guide today for free.

Carey Nieuwhof: So that's at [RemodelHealth.com/Carey](http://RemodelHealth.com/Carey) to learn more. And did you know that if your website is over three years old, it's outdated? Yeah, you kind of know that, don't you? But you don't know what to do about it because it's so expensive to get it rebuilt, and maybe it's a little bit beyond the teenager who used to do your website for free. That is just how fast things are moving today. So your website needs to be updated to stay up-to-date with technology, with design trends, so that you can impact more people. That's why our friends at Pro Media Fire are launching a brand new service that I'm excited about. It's called Pro WebFire and it's a subscription based service. They're launching it this month and you guys are the first in on it. They will build you a custom website and update it weekly as per year plan. Yes, weekly.

Carey Nieuwhof: And they're also including digital outreach and longterm strategies to reach people online. So it's not just like you have to do all the thinking. They will think with you on this. So because you guys are special, the listeners of this podcast will receive a free custom website build for the plan you choose. So that's a free custom church website to help you with your church growth. It's a pretty cool launch special. So how to access that, go to [ProWebFire.com](http://ProWebFire.com). [ProWebFire.com](http://ProWebFire.com) and use the promo code Carey2019. C-A-R-E-Y 2019, when you check out at [ProWebFire.com](http://ProWebFire.com).

Carey Nieuwhof: Well guys, I'm so excited to bring you this conversation with David Platt. And again, I know a lot of you are faith-based or church-based if you listen, but if you're not, I think you're going to really enjoy this conversation as well because we kind of really get into it. Particularly, I think about a third of the way through. So here's my conversation with New York Times bestselling author, David Platt. David, welcome back to the podcast. It's good to have you again.

David Platt: It's great to be back.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, thanks. So a lot has changed, since we had you. I think that was 2017 maybe, you were on the show. It'll be in the show notes anyway, and you're

now leading a church again. So tell us a little bit about what's changed in your life and then I really want to do a deep dive on some of the questions you're raising in your latest book.

David Platt: Yeah, sure. Yeah, a good bit has changed since we last talked. So I was leading the International Mission Board at that time, International Mission Organization, just supporting and 2,000 missionaries around the world and places where they're at least reached by the gospel and loved doing that. Was so honored at the opportunity to do that. Loved serving those missionaries and the churches they represent at the same time really, really missed being on the front lines, shepherding God's people on mission as a pastor. And so I started filling in preaching at McLean Bible church, in Metro Washington DC during that time. And I was kind of doing both for a while and then I realized through a variety of circumstances that that was not going to be possible longterm.

David Platt: And sensed the Lord leading me to jump then fully back into pastoring and shepherding ... Yeah, people on mission from the local church and particularly even from this church. I mean, it's a pretty unique setting here in Metro DC. There's like over 100 nations in the church. So the nations are here to reach and there's people going out from here over the world. So God's been really, really gracious. And so I loved my time with the IMB and I'm loving pastoring.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's interesting because you hear a lot of people these days talk about getting out of pastoring. You don't hear a lot of people saying how much they missed it. What did you miss about it?

David Platt: Oh, so much. I would say I love the ... I mean, that picture, that's kind of my understanding of what it means to be a pastor. Like shepherding people, people who've got on the mission of God with the word of God for the glory of God. Like that's just kind of my framework. And so obviously, there's preaching and teaching God's word, which I love doing, involved with that. But it's not just that because I could do that even when it was, I was at IMB or other places just traveling around teaching, but it's like walking week-by-week through with the word, through life with people, seeing life transformation, seeing people come to relationship with Jesus. People grow in relationship with Jesus. People experience who he is, walk with him. And to be able to walk people through that process, there's just nothing like it.

David Platt: So it's interesting because I don't have any less zeal at the same time to see the gospel go to the ends of the earth, that I did that and the way that drove me to the IMB. But I also know, and said this the whole time I was at the IMB, it's actually the local church that is the front lines for how that happens. And so I really missed being, in that sense, in the front lines. That's not in any way to say that there's not a place for IMB or people to lead in those kinds of settings, just thankful the Lord gave me that opportunity for a bit. But that's part of what I missed, that kind of drove me back, is just that walking with people on mission in the world, there's just nothing like it.

Carey Nieuwhof: I think you just filled up a lot of people's balloons, so to speak. It can be pretty defeating sometimes in ministry, there's lots of challenges, but it's just wonderful to hear your passion for it.

David Platt: Well, and I just think about it, I just got back from some time in the Dominican Republic, in Ethiopia, we had taken a variety of our folks from the church here over on a couple of different trips. And I spent a good bit of time with different pastors there. I mean, I'm out with these pastors in remote rural villages, they've got 20 people gathered together in their church, but just ... These are like heroes of mine. Nobody will ever know their names and see what they ... But they're just faithfully, week by week by week, shepherding this group of people in this remote area of the world, to know and delight in and love and exalt Jesus. It's a pretty awesome picture. And so, yeah. I got a lot to learn as a pastor for sure, especially from ... Yeah, pastors and settings like that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, when you came to McLean, McLean is not exactly a small church and a long time ... Was Lon the founding pastor?

David Platt: He was not the founding pastor-

Carey Nieuwhof: How many years, 30 years?

David Platt: He's shepherding just 37 years.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah.

David Platt: Yeah. So I mean just about as long as I've been alive. So that's-

Carey Nieuwhof: Longtime predecessor who was loved, and led it to new heights, and made a multi-campus. So how many people would attend McLean Bible on the weekend there?

David Platt: That's a good question right now, I'm not sure the exact numbers. So we'll just say ballpark over 10,000.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's a lot of people. What if some of the opportunities and challenges been as you've moved into that new role as really the teaching/lead pastor?

David Platt: I have challenges. There are many. I mean, there are so many evidences of grace here, especially when you step into a setting like this where, by God's grace for close to four decades. This church has been faithfully led and through all kinds of challenges. And so I think the challenges are more that which is akin to any church when it comes to, "Okay, praise God for his grace, in past years that have gotten us to this point. So how do we move forward into the future?" So we're not going to always do so certainly the most basic things, we're going to teach

God's word, we're going to pray, we're going to love people, we're going to make disciples.

David Platt: So those things obviously never change, but how to best do that? Especially in a context where you have this many people. We did like a survey about a year ago, and just on a Sunday morning in the church and just asking people kind of where they were spiritually. And it was pretty eye opening. Three statistics that stood out. One, 11% of people said they feel like people know them at McLeanBible church.

Carey Nieuwhof: Only 11?

David Platt: Yeah, only 11%. So that was pretty eye opening. Second one, second statistic that stuck out, was 43% said they were growing either a little spiritually or not at all. So almost half said intermittently "I'm not really growing spiritually." And then the third statistic, 62% said ... So about two thirds, said that they hardly ever, if ever, share the gospel. That was defined as a less than two times over the last year or so, either zero or one time. So you put that together and say, "Okay, so if we're not careful, we can have a crowd of people on a Sunday, but if we don't know and care for each other and we're not growing as disciples and making disciples, we're kind of missing the point.

David Platt: When you say what are the challenges? That's the challenge. So how do we, how do we change that? Especially in a culture that can be, as we know, pretty consumeristic. I mean, there's a reason why some people are glad not to be known. They actually come to a large church because they want to be anonymous. They don't want to have a bunch of people looking into their life. And so, but so how do you shepherd people to see the importance of this? How do you put in place, a picture where there are systems, structures, whatever, so that we are able to care for one another and know each other and grow together in Jesus, and actually do what Jesus has left us on this earth to do?

David Platt: So we're walking through all kinds of things to say, praise God for what he's done in the past. How do we stand on the shoulders of those who've led in the past and go into the future with as much zeal for those three things, like knowing and caring for each other, growing as disciples and making disciples?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. So I really appreciate you sharing that. And you asked the question well yourself, how do you respond to that kind of challenge? What are you ... I know you're not through it. I imagine you're not through it, but where's the compass pointing right now in terms of how you're going to address that?

David Platt: Well, so structurally I would say that the compass pointing and we've got to foster community in groups, in places where people can know, and be known, and belong. And so we've gotta strengthen that big time. In order to do that, we've got to simplify a variety of things we're doing in order to focus on that. At the same time, what I don't want to do is just jump into, "Okay, yeah, we just

kind of fixed this structurally, it'll all be figured out." I was, a few months ago, was in South Korea and I've been there before, but God did a fresh work in my heart there, when it comes to prayer and the history of the church in South Korea.

David Platt: I mean, the quick of it is in 1900, the Korean peninsula was less than 1% Christian and then by 2000, so one short century, over 10 million followers of Jesus and South Korea alone. And not just following Jesus, but second most missionaries sent out from any country behind the United States, which is pretty amazing when you realize it's the size of Florida and California combined.

Carey Nieuwhof: Man.

David Platt: I don't even know how to think. Imagine a country that right now is less than 1% Christian, like take Afghanistan. Can you imagine 100 years from now there being 10 million followers of Jesus in Afghanistan? Like you would say, "That is miraculous." That's what God has done. So how has he done it? You look at the history of the church there. I mean, they have been serious about prayer and they still are like. They get up, there's prayer meetings every morning in these churches that I was in, at five in the morning. They pray all night on Friday nights. They've done this for you decades. There we are, we're facing variety of challenges at church and in the culture we live in. Right. But I just said if we try to fix these things without like desperate prayer, we're missing the whole point.

David Platt: And I mean, I'm ashamed to say I had never done all night prayer, never in my Christian life, my as life is the pastor and I just came back, I was like, "Church, we're doing this.." And so we got together on a Friday night and started at 8 o'clock and went till six in the morning. And it was awesome just being with God, pleading before God. And it was really encouraging because we have just a lot of people from different backgrounds in our church, different nations. Some of them grown up with this kind of thing. And have been like, "Why don't we do this here?" And so, and we've continued doing that with late night prayer and I mean it's ... The last thing I want to do as a pastor is I'm kicking myself that as a pastor before, I've not led the church in this way.

David Platt: But the last thing I want to do as a pastor is kind of program my way through challenges, without like desperate dependence on God and prayer. Hours, just pleading before him as a church.

Carey Nieuwhof: I don't mean to be facetious at all, but I think a lot of people listening would, would be like you. I've never done all night prayer and I've done, some long prayer sessions, but one of the questions is always; well, what do you pray about all night? What is that actually, how do you fill the time? How does that happen? So fill us in a little bit, what do you pray about all night?

David Platt: I would have asked the same question. And I remember the first time we were like, "Okay, what are we gonna do for-

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, I know.

David Platt: 10 hours. Okay, I don't ... Yeah. So what we did just on a practical level is we just split it up into one hour blocks and we planned to go 45, 50 minutes and then just take 10, 15 minute break and then just kind of cycle through. And so then you think through 45 minute blocks, then you're like, "Okay, we're going to pray." And so I mean, how to describe all the different ways we pray. So there's times where we're praying in small groups, there's times we're praying all together out loud at the same time, there's certainly singing and worship through prayer that's happening in that way. There's people praying on stage as leading everybody in prayer and hopefully modeling prayer.

David Platt: Oftentimes we'll just take a passage of scripture and just be like, "Okay, let's pray to this. Either in small groups or so put it on the screen. And so take the great commission, like just pray the word and pray according to how the spirit leads through that. I mean, that'll last for a little while and then you go on another passage. And so this last time, I mean, there was a lot going on that week. I didn't have time to prepare it. Like we got to ... Now, we weren't doing all night. This was just an eight to midnight. But I got in there, I was like, "All right, what are we going to do for four hours?" And seriously, I've got a few other leaders, a couple of our pastors and some of our other leaders up there. And I'm like, "Okay, right. we're just going to ... Here's the general plan. And we just ...I walked our church through just across the P-R-A-Y praise, repent, ask, and yield.

David Platt: And so I said, "We have four hours, we're going to do an hour on each of these." And we did and it flew by and it was amazing, Carey. I mean, God met with ... I just think when God sees like a people who've gathered together to seek him, it's not going to be a disappointing time. It's not going to be like, "Oh, what do we do?" The Lord blessed it. It was, one of the most incredible times I've had in my Christian life in prayer, without question. So anyway, that gives you a little hint.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's amazing David. And I really appreciate you breaking that down because I think what happens often is, you know, particularly in Christian space or spiritual space, you hear about these things about people praying all night and you're like, "Yeah. it's just ... I don't even know what that would be like." Right? I got my three minutes and that's done. And that's ... I appreciate your honesty. When you think about outreach in the community and before we dive into your new book, which I really, really enjoyed. I want to talk because I mean, your church is like so many other churches.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's got strong history, strong history of outreach and growth, and yet clearly this is not the 1990s, the 2000s or even a decade ago. What do you think some of the challenges are for reaching DC and the whole DC Metro area as you move into the future? Like when you're looking at connecting with unchurched people, what are some of the challenges and even maybe some of the, I don't

want to say strategies, but approaches that you would be looking at? Like, "Guys, something's got to change in that too."

David Platt: Yeah, sure. I would say so, the first challenge that comes to mind, and this is partly based on where I was in my time with the Lord just yesterday. So we're walking through a Bible reading plan as a church together, but as in John 4 when Jesus just says to his disciples after this conversation with a woman at the well, one, she makes it look pretty easy. She just goes back, right and says to everybody in the town to come see this man. And as they're coming out, Jesus just says to his disciples, "Open your eyes, look at the fields, they're white for harvest. I think, so yes, and I'm about to talk about just some of the specific challenges in the culture and the context in which we live. But I think before that is the challenge to personally the way I think about it is I pray.

David Platt: I was actually just with our other pastors right before we jumped on this, this call to ... We were just praying for boldness and the people that in our our lives and the people God's entrusted us to shepherd. We can't control a lot of things that are going on in the culture around us, we can control like our confidence in the gospel to actually change lives. And I think there's a reason why two thirds of the people sitting on a Sunday, hardly ever ... If ever share the gospel and the church I pastor, I think it's either one, they don't actually believe the gospel or two, they believe it, but they just don't have confidence that when they share it with somebody, it's going to lead to something good. They're afraid for a variety of reasons.

David Platt: And so I just, I want to give them a confidence in the gospel. And even when I think about when we have just intentionally, I mean I shared the gospel every week and that way try to model even how to do that. But just try to make eye contact with unbelievers who are in our gathering. But even like on Easter, like, and this goes back to, we were just talking about with prayer, like we had one of those prayer nights. Then we had Easter and just gave a call for people to like come forward and respond and trust in Christ. And I mean, the spirit moved. It was amazing that I couldn't wipe the smile off my face all day long. It just felt ... I don't want to over exaggerate but it was like Pentecost people were getting baptized. But all that to say what it did, the reason I share that is it gave people confidence in the gospel. Like people will respond, obviously not everybody, but people will respond when this gospel is shared.

David Platt: So that's the first thing that comes to my mind is I want to make sure to do everything I can to shepherd people to be emboldened, encouraged by the gospel and boldened with the gospel. And then to be intentional. So that's where we're just always talking about, "Okay, look at your sphere of influence. Let's identify, I think about what our young adults specifically had done. And the brother leads them, has done an incredible job just of helping them identify who were the people in their sphere of influence right around them and how can they be intentional through about sharing the gospel with them through taking the lunch, writing a note, just different, different avenues.



David Platt: And so I just think, okay, so I want to foster that, knowing that we live in an increasingly ... Well, I was about to say increasingly secular picture, atheistic and just uninterested in religion. At the same time when I look around me and Metro Washington DC, I have opportunity to share the gospel with tons of people who are very old. Like a lot of Muslims, Hindus, people from different backgrounds who are very open and talking about God. And so I think the most challenging conversations are the more ... Yeah, conversations with people who have gotten pretty hardened toward even the idea of God apathetic.

David Platt: But that's where I just think ... So one of the things we were just working on is some intentional outreaches we're doing specifically when it comes to a title one school community, so this would be lower income communities that we're going and we're doing tons of work and working toward church planting and. And again, sorry man. I just keep going on and on, but different things going on-

Carey Nieuwhof: No. I'm the listening,

David Platt: And this kind of attaches it together. What I find, so I just went with hundreds of our members to some different countries to share the gospel. And I find people who are like totally emboldened to do that. It's like, "That's why I'm here. I'm on a mission trip, I want to share the gospel and I'm never going to see these people again." It's like less fear. So what I think is helpful is giving those kinds of opportunities and even some different places right around us. So going into communities where we went out, but then realize that, okay, I can do the same thing here.

David Platt: Now, not doing that though in a way that's just going to be disconnected, we want to tie all those intentional outreach events to church planting efforts that are going on there. But I find it helpful and equipping our people to do evangelism and disciple making to share the gospel maybe in context or it's a little easier, right, where they live now and then, then saying, "Okay, you can do the same thing in your workplace."

Carey Nieuwhof: No, this is so helpful. David, how do you, when you share it personally, I mean, not behind a platform or puppet or whatever when you're preaching, but just can you give us an example of how that would show up in your daily life these days?

David Platt: A couple of things come to my mind. So jumping in an Uber, which I do very often and I just jumped right in. I've only got a limited time and so I just say, "Hey, do you ... I'll ask, do you go to church anywhere? Do you know anything about Jesus?" Oftentimes, there are people that I'm talking with from different backgrounds who maybe have never been in a church, don't know much about Jesus or have ideas about Jesus that are just completely wrong. And so yeah, we'll just dive in and just ... I'm working like to share the gospel intentionally. But those are kind of one off, so to speak. I think about probably the primary

consistent evangelistic outlet I have is through where I exercise. I do CrossFit and so there in the gym.

David Platt: I'm constantly looking to ... The way I, I try to equip our folks to share the gospel is we just talk about sewing, uh, weaving threads of the gospel and the fabric of our conversation. So just think about ... And I got this from some missionaries in the Middle East who are living in a country where it's totally illegal to share the gospel. It's illegal for anybody to convert to faith in Christ. And I said, "So what do you do?" And they said, "We share the gospel all day long.

David Platt: And they basically said in this business they run with Muslims in the Middle East, they're just constantly weaving threads of the gospel, talking about who God is, his love, his holiness, his justice. Talking about sin, the seriousness of sin before God, talking about Jesus. Like who Jesus is, what makes him unique and what he's done. And then faith, trusting in God's grace, not trying to work to earn the favor of God, eternity, why this matters forever.

David Platt: So basically way they described it is we just want to continually weave threads of the gospel into every fabric of all our conversations with Muslims and then look for opportunities to bring all those together and just pray that God will open eyes to this tapestry of grace has been woven in front of them. And so, that's what I'm doing at, at the gym. Like I'm just looking for every-

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you do that? If I'm working out next to you, talked to some guys on a regular basis?

David Platt: Yeah. Maybe not right in the middle of a workout. But yeah. So I'm talking about the character of God. I'm talking about, "Yeah, God did this in my life. God's doing this to my ... Like I'm not talking like an atheist. I'm talking like I actually believe there's a God who is leading, guiding, directing, not just my life, but things around me. And then, I'll look for opportunities to talk ... I mean, Jesus, like just to say yes. I mean I'll just outright, "Yeah, what do you think about Jesus?" And just start conversations about Jesus. So it's kind of before working out. After we're working out, I'm talking about by God's grace, this happened in my life by God's grace, this happened.

David Platt: So I'm not trying to be like annoyingly super spiritual, but I am trying to talk like, "Jesus is actually my ... I'm dialoguing the gospel continually instead of just looking for an opportunity to get a monologue, three minute presentation, in which ... So I want to look for those opportunities too, but just constantly dialoguing the gospel and then inviting them to come to the church that's right down the street to see this gospel made visible in the church. And so like for Easter when we had that day, like we invited a bunch of people there and then brought them over to the house afterwards for lunch. So just looking for potential opportunities along those lines. But then even I think about ... Yeah, just a couple days ago I'm working out with one guy. We're kind of doing some

lifting stuff together, so we have a good bit of time in between lifts and I'm totally ... Yeah, getting to know his story.

David Platt: He's like, "Man, we need to talk more. I need to get in church. I've got some things going on in my life." And so that lead is going to lead to getting together with him outside of the gym to dive in deeper.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's so good. That's so good. And you're finding ... And I think this is what scares so many people, David, but you're finding a receptivity to it. You're not the weirdo in the gym. You're not the, "Oh, don't talk to that guy."

David Platt: I would say some people probably think that, I'm not like under illusion everybody thinks I'm cool or anything. I mean there's a lot of reasons they don't think that, but ... So I'm not, and that's what I would say. That's the thing though, right? That's going to happen to anybody. Happened to Jesus. It's going to happen to anybody. And so at some point we just kind of have to get over that and just realize, "Okay, not everybody..." And I think that's actually helpful.

David Platt: I was talking with a group of Muslim guys just two weeks ago, and it was pretty clear they're not really open to believing what I was sharing with them. And I got up next to them really close. I said, "Well, we can work together on some things that we were talking about and do it joyfully together and have a great time together." And then I smiled and I said, "The whole time I'm going to be encouraging you to trust in Jesus and I'm going to do that because I care about you." And they kind of smiled. They were like, "Yes, we understand."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, you're doing what you're supposed to do.

David Platt: It was almost kind of like they would have been disappointed if I didn't want to share with them if I actually believe this.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's fair. I appreciate you going there because I think you put your finger on something that is changing in the culture, that kind of dialogue felt easier a decade ago than it does today, in today's climate. And I think you helped a lot of people with that.

David Platt: I think that's true. And there's no question. I mean, we live in a changing climate, but again, we can't control that. What we can control is our trust in the gospel. So I pray for that continually in my own heart. Like, "God, give me confidence like Romans 1:16 kind of confidence in the power of the gospel. Like somebody shared it with me and my life is totally changed for all of eternity. It helped me to have that kind of confidence to share with others.

Carey Nieuwhof: You've got a brand new book. It's called Something Needs to Change. Great title by the way. And I love how early on you say, "It makes me wonder if we've lost our capacity to weep." Do you want to talk a little bit about why you wrote the book and what you mean by that?

David Platt: Yeah. So basically to summarize this book, it's different than in format than anything I've written. It's an eight day trek through the Himalayas. So I go overseas a good bit, but out of all the places I've been, these mountains and villages way up high in these mountains more than any other place I've been in, represent this collision of urgent, spiritual and physical needs, like urgent, physical need. I then did some research in these mountains and found that half of the kids were dying before their eighth birthday. I've got four kids, God willing another one on the way. One of my biggest fears is if something happened to one of them. I can't imagine that being an expectation for half of them and they're dying of preventable diseases.

David Platt: So just all kinds of pictures of extreme poverty and the byproducts of that and children being sold into slavery, like young girls being trafficked. And so you just ... You're walking those trails like you come face to face with those physical needs and spiritual needs. Like you're talking to people and you'll meet someone on the trail and say, "what do you know about Jesus?" And they'll say, "Who's that?" They've never heard his name. It's like you're talking about somebody in a village nearby that they've not met yet. And so they've never, ever heard the gospel. And this collision of urgent, spiritual and physical needs. So my first time I ever walked through those trails, by the time I got out, I got back to this small little place we were stand. And I just ... And something happened that night in particular, just walking by basically some brothels where these little girls were taken.

David Platt: And I just found myself on my face just weeping, like literally weeping. I haven't cried since my dad died. I mean, it was just, I lost it. I couldn't ... It's one of those things you just can't control it. Like it's just ... But what hit me and so why I wrote the book and what I'm saying there at the beginning of the book is like, why is it that I can preach every week as a pastor? I could lead a mission organization for that matter. Like I can, I can talk about urgent needs in the world, but why is it so rare that I would be so moved with compassion to just fall on my face weeping for those in need? I have seminary degrees, I know biblical truths, I've written books about need in the world.

Carey Nieuwhof: About this. Yeah. It's not like this is your first visit to the subject. Yeah.

David Platt: What's missing in my heart that that's not happening. And not just in my own life. Like when was the last time I was in a church gathering where we were like weeping for those in need? And it just caused me like something needs ... I mean, the reason I titled this book Something Needs to Change, was well, was partly because after that we ended up here, we go to the airport and we leave. And this friend of mine is on the trip with me, said, "David, what's your takeaway from this trip?" And I just said, "I just know something needs to change." And I think about that on two levels.

David Platt: Some of these changes, those mountains, people need to be able to live and girls need to not be trafficked and people need to hear about Jesus, and people

don't need to die without ever hearing about Jesus. So that needs to change. But I think maybe on a more fundamental level, something needs to change in my own heart, that can lead the change like that in the world. So anyway ...

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, and you talk about that. I found in a really compelling way. So I've been on multiple mission trips, not to the Himalayas but to Central America. Probably a disproportionate number of leaders listening because we have a lot of church leaders listening, have done something in Africa, India, you name it, they've been there. And then of course you have probably the majority of people listening who haven't, they're like, "Okay, I've seen the pictures, I've watched videos on YouTube, I've, I get your newsletters. Thank you. I write a check, but it seems rather surreal and meanwhile I need to buy a new car and I don't have money in the bank." Right?

Carey Nieuwhof: So whatever the issue is, you know suburban issues. There is that, because I remember the first time I saw a real poverty and I remember my heart breaking and I came back trying to explain it to the people at home and like they just can't get it. It's like I was speaking a different dialect. And then as you point out in the book, you quickly reacclimatize to your comfortable North American life. Now some things are permanently different in my life, because of my experience with the poor. And the way we spend our money. We sponsor kids and it's part of my rhythm, but I don't know whether I've had that breaking that you describe like something something just really got you on that trip, didn't it?

David Platt: Yeah. In the way I describe it in the book because part of my goal in this book, is come out from behind the podium that I like reached behind and stage where I'd stand in front of people like, and just to be honest with ... I mean, when you are in those mountains and you're face to face with urgent need like that, you can't help but to ask some pretty heavy questions and wrestle with some pretty heavy things. And that's why in the book I just try to open up my journals and say, I just gotta be honest. I wrestled with the things I preach and truths I believe.

David Platt: Let me come out from behind like my breaching for a minute and just ... I'm asking the question where is the goodness of God and the justice of God in the midst of poverty and oppression? You can't help but not ask why are some people born into earthly suffering, only to move on to internal suffering without ever even hearing the name of Jesus?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. If we believe in the doctrine of heaven and hell, then they suffer on earth is your point. And then they rot in hell. What is that and how can there be a good God?

David Platt: How can you not wrestle with those questions? And so what I try to do in the book, is honestly bring those questions fore front and not in a way that I hope to tie a tidy bow on them. I want to ask those questions humbly before God. I don't want to ask him with pride as if I know better than God. At the same time,

I think we've got pictures in scripture, whether it's Job or Habakkuk, or even Jesus on the cross asking questions.

David Platt: So to ask those questions with the Bible open, wrestle through them and then let those questions, the way I put it is to let a lot of why questions that maybe we don't know answers to, although we ... Yeah, so one way I try to dive into what we do know, but those why questions quickly lead to like what questions because okay, I may not be able to explain this or that, but I do know like my life needs to look different as a result of what I've seen. I need to look like something does need to change. I know that something changed my life, my family, my church. Like we can't go on with business as usual if this is a reality in the world we live in.

Carey Nieuwhof: So I'm going to go back to the why questions. First of all, I just want to nuance something I said. I mean, I said, "Rot in hell." And that is a stereotype I should say. I've read C.S. Lewis on eternity, if you listen to or read NT Wright on heaven and hell and so on, that there are far more nuanced understandings of what the scripture would say about eternal separation and what that means than simply that metaphor.

Carey Nieuwhof: So I just want to step back and say, "No, that's a wrong choice of words on my part." But I want to read from your book. You say, "In a universe governed by a good God..." And listen, I'm doing a lot of reading in the secular space these days, so I'm really, really glad that you're addressing this, but... "In a universe governed by a good God, is hell really a place and does it actually last forever? If it really exists and really won't end, then why are so many people born into an earthly hell only to move on to an eternal one? And will billions of individuals who don't believe in Jesus recalling going there, even if they never had a chance to hear about him, really end up going there, even if they never had a chance to hear about him?"

Carey Nieuwhof: So those are the kinds of things Rob Bell wrote about, about a decade ago and drew a lot of attention. Exactly those questions. Those are the questions that some of the evangelical atheists today would ask, and secularists. David, I want to spend a little more time on those questions, because I think it's a really honest framing of the question. How did you wrestle those questions down while you were on the trip and then processing the trip after, because you saw desperate poverty?

David Platt: Yeah, yeah, yeah. On both physical and spiritual level, I think where ... So some of those questions, kind of came to a head most and I share about this; just at one particular place where we came to this river and there was bodies burning on funeral pyres. These are people who died like 24 hours before. And yeah, friends and family members bring their body there, place it on a funeral pyre, set in a blaze as ashes go down in the river. They believe this is helpful in the process of reincarnation. And I'm looking at this picture and then you just can imagine like seeing flames, smelling burning bodies and you think, "Okay, if the

Bible is true, then I'm looking at a physical picture of a spiritual reality." Yeah. I mean, Jesus himself uses words like fire that never goes out, will never be quenched.

David Platt: Jesus himself uses those words. So, okay. Like never ever be quenched. So, yeah. So I'm wrestling with that. So how do I wrestle with that? Well ... How do I summarize? I don't think there's easy answers, here's not like tidy bows, but I do think it comes down to this as part of what I walked through in the book, is at that point. And I've got a lot to learn from. There's a brother, a guy in the book that has been working for 20 years in those mountains and he's really been helpful to me on these things because he basically said to me when I'm wrestling through it through this, "David, we've really got two options at this point with the emotions you're wrestling with. One is to just disbelieve the Bible. Throw it out and say, 'It's not true. What Jesus said is not true. Jesus is not necessary to go to heaven and evident.' Like there's all kinds of different directions that can go."

David Platt: So that's one option. I mean, you could do that and I would say that's a Rob Bell type response. So that's one option. disbelieve the Bible. The second option, is to actually believe the Bible and trust God's word. And not that that means you've got it all figured out and you can understand it all, but you're going to believe the Bible and you're going to live like you believe the Bible, which means you're going to live with an urgency to make the good news of God's love and Jesus known to as many people as possible. As long as you have breath on this earth. That's really the only two options. And it doesn't make sense like a middle ground here. Like, "Okay, I'm going to believe the Bible, but not really try to make the gospel known." That's like the coldest way you could live. It makes no sense.

Carey Nieuwhof: So David, I realized we could spend the full hour, or a day, or a year, on this question, but I want to ask it anyway. Why didn't this kill your faith? Because there are people who see exactly what you saw and they walk away. We live in a year right now, an era of deconversion stories. Very well known Christians who are walking away from their faith going, "You know what? I've seen too much suffering, not sure the Bible is what it is." So why did this not and why have things like this deepened your faith, not killed it?

David Platt: That's a great question Carey, because I mean, it does ... I certainly found myself, I found myself in this way at different points in my life. I just think about my time in college, state university campus, a time of searching and exploring and yeah, and I'm sure about that some in the book, just exploring different religions and, but whenever I've asked this question, "Okay, is the Bible true?" I'm just convinced it is. So why am I convinced it is?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, I know.

David Platt: I believe...

Carey Nieuwhof: See, because I'm diving into other things too. And you say in the book that, this is the birthplace of Buddhism and was it Hinduism as well?

David Platt: Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: We can't remember. Yup, and so you're walking right into the jaws of that. It's not like I haven't seen other worldviews, but if anything, the study of those seems to deepen my understanding of God and I can't ... I don't know that there's a good answer, but I want to know why you aren't one of the growing choruses of people either casting doubt or walking away or ... I'm just curious.

David Platt: I would say that the best way to summarize it is there are all positions of faith that we could step into. Buddhism, Hinduism, atheism, Christianity, like they're all-

Carey Nieuwhof: Everything's a belief system. Fair enough.

David Platt: All stake your life on you believe this is true. And I guess the best way to summarize it without going into in depth like, I did some extensive teaching on world religions, on something we do called secret church, but like apologetics type things. But I just ... I don't believe the answers that atheism gives are any more satisfying, in fact, not, not even more satisfying. I mean, true or satisfying or good. So what are the other options? Just to think through, okay? Then what are the other options that there is no God, that this world is just random, that good and evil are just kind of what we manufacture them to be.

David Platt: And in the end there will be no justice. I mean that's, that's the ... When I read atheist scholars talking about good and evil in the world and how we are products of our DNA and we just dance to its music. I think that's the last thing I'm going to say to a girl who's been trafficked like this. Like, "I'm sorry, like your DNA, is just dancing to it."

David Platt: In the end it's all going to be ... It's not going to matter. You just had a bad luck. Like that's not true. Like there's justice that will reign in the end and there's a good God who wants his love to be and hoped we made known about in that little girl's life. And I want to be a part of making that good news known to her. I go down that road, I go down a road of Buddhism, I try harder and harder and do better.

David Platt: I mean, and I'm talking to people in these mountains and their hope is that their next life is going to be better because they burned enough candles in this life. I don't see that which is true or good, and I believe Jesus is true and he's inadvertently good. Because I believe that I want that be evident in the way I live. The way I lead the truth.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you. Thank you. No, you know, it's ... The more I look, the more I ask questions, the more I keep coming back and some of the alternate because it's



all a belief system, right? Agnosticism is a belief system. Everything is a belief system, but it's like the questions there are larger than the questions that I have in my own worldview as a Christian. And I just, I just think that's really, really well said. So you run into ... And this is the other thing too, right? I mean global poverty has been cut in half in our lifetime and so on. But you ran in to ... Do you want to tell the story of that first day where you met the guy in the village and this is gross, but he was missing an eye and-

David Platt: Sure. Well, that was in a really ... So the book is a compilation of a couple tracks, but that is the first village I ever walked into in those mountains. And we walk out, the first person I see is this guy's holding like a towel or shirt or something over his eye, his right eye and ... Or what I think his right eye. And he's kind of looking down and you can tell he's in pain. And then we started talking to him and he takes that off and his eye is just missing. Yeah, you can just look into his head through his, where his eye is, and you could tell this infection just taken over his whole face and really, really serious and he doesn't have ... I mean, that's kind of the way things work in impoverished situations like this, like a simple infection could, can just begin to take over and kill you eventually.

David Platt: So seeing this physical need and then that's one of the other questions I try to wrestle with in this book is, "Okay, what's this man's greatest need? For somebody to fix his eye or for him to hear about Jesus?" Physical needs, spiritual need, because I hear some people in the church be like, "We just need to preach the gospel. And that's what's most important." Then I hear others like, "Well, it's just as important, equally important to care for physical needs." And the result is there's a lot of work, even though it's done, it's called like missions that does a lot of care for physical needs. But does it ever share the gospel? And there's a lot of people who share the gospel and they're ignoring his physical needs.

David Platt: So I try to wrestle through that as well. The thing is what I ... Yeah, what I'm so thankful for the people that are on this trek with me, in the book is they're not just asking these questions like philosophically or theologically. So they can have like really cool discussions or challenging discussions even in comfortable places around the world, they're doing it. So they're working hard and these mountains is not easy to do this with the gospel, that people died because they believe the gospel, because they're sharing the gospel. But I mean, they were working hard and have been for decades now trying to get medical care and we're doing that for this guy after we met him. So trying to get medical care and doing it with the greatest news in the world that God loves this guy and has made a way for him to have eternal life through Jesus.

Carey Nieuwhof: What are some of the other experiences? I mean, because you mentioned sex trafficking, I remember you went into one village and really the book is a travel log. You know what it reminded me a lot of? My favorite Henry Nouwen book is one that nobody ever talks about. It's The Genesee Diary. And it was the beginning of his ... I think it was the first book he wrote, he was still at Yale. I

give it away a lot, recommend it a lot. But he just went to a monastery to kind of find a soul for six months. And he just kept a journal. And so some days you get like he was baking bread and nothing happened, and the next day you get this profound insight and it kind of shaped the Henry Nouwen we've come to know and you wrote it like a journal/travel log where we're on the trip with you.

Carey Nieuwhof: And so I really, really appreciated the style. so if you're thinking it's going to be like radical or one of your other books, no, this totally different. Right? Which is cool.

David Platt: Part of me would love to like take multitudes of people with me in those mountains, like on the trails. Obviously physically that's just not possible.

Carey Nieuwhof: There would be some casualties if you took multitudes of people the way you describe it, not everybody would make it home.

David Platt: Yeah. There's a variety of reasons why that's probably not the wisest thing to do. So this is my attempt to bring these trails to us. And so, yeah. We've talked about some of that heavy things. One of the things I try to do in the book is not just so yes to show like the need, but then to show the opportunities that God has given us to be a part of spreading hope in otherwise a hopeless situation. So just telling stories about people I've met on those trails. Who were teachers or engineers, students, retirees, like people who are using unique gifts, God's given them. I'll tell one story about a guy who is an expert in aquaponics, which I didn't know what aquaponics was, but-

Carey Nieuwhof: No idea.

David Platt: But it's basically using trout waste, like trout poop to create a system of vegetation and nourishment. I mean, I even now like I'm doing a horrible job...I'd have to read it in a book, like really get accurately because ... But anyway, what's so awesome is listen to this guy who he's a retiree and his wife have come up into the mountains and are using aquaponics as a vehicle through which to help like real physical needs. And they're doing it with the gospel. And I'm like, "This guy is very different than me. I don't know anything about aquaponics. I may have a seminary degree, but this guy is far more equipped by God's grace to make the gospel known in a unique way here than I am, or that a lot of people are." But that's kind of the beauty. The subtitle of the book is called To Make Your Life Count in a World of Urgent Needs.

David Platt: And I just got a conviction that God wants each of our lives to count for the spread of his goodness in a world of urgent needs.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

David Platt: We've all been given unique gifts and grace from God. They can be like each of us. I think we just don't realize that. I think we, we think, "Okay, well, somebody

else that's great what they can do, what this person can do. No. What each of us, every single person listening to this has unique gifts. By God's grace, they can be instruments in his hand for his glory and not just a version like far from them but right around them. And then maybe in ways far from them, in ways beyond what they can imagine. And so just trying to tell some stories of people meeting along the way, both to live in this country where I was tracking, but then also who have moved there and have seen a God use their lives in ways that they really never could have dreamed of.

Carey Nieuwhof: So how are you different? You say, something needs to change in you. How are you different coming back from that? Because that was a few years ago.

David Platt: Yeah. So there was a lot that changed after that trip it actually ... I share about some of these things in the book. Just on a tangible level. Like I came back, I started talking to my wife about maybe God's leading us to move over there. And so we start praying through that, really exploring that. It was actually while I was doing that. This was after my first trek. I've been back other times since then, but it was during that time that the International Mission Board came and talked to me about potentially leading the church where I was. And so I was in the middle of praying about maybe moving overseas and I was actually leaning toward that.

David Platt: But then just as Heather and I prayed and just asked, "Okay, why would we be willing to move over there and not like move into a position to mobilize and yeah, shepherd multitudes of people to go there?" So anyway, God ended up, that's how I got led us to International Mission Board. And so that was just a tangible change in our lives that happened as a result of that. But then as we've already talked about, and God directed me into where I'm at right now and I would say, yeah. I just got back from these trails a couple months ago, whether it's the way I use my time, my money, the way I shepherd the church, the only way I can describe as like a Romans 15, like deeper ambition than ever to see Jesus known where he's not been known.

David Platt: He's not known right now and his hope known in those places. We're going to mobilize that we've got some things that are happening right now through ... Not just the church, but through, a ministry that we call Radical that I hope are going to make a significant impact when it comes to, making the hope of Christ known and otherwise hopeless situations. So I share all that, but I want to just before moving on anything else like say I am in under no presumption that like God is going to do the same thing in other people's lives. Not everybody's supposed to lead an international mission organization, not everybody's supposed to pastor a church or this or that. But that's kind of the beauty, like God's going to lead us in all kinds of different ways to do all kinds of different things. The question is, are we open?

David Platt: Are we willing to open our eyes and our hearts, like we're willing to weep? And are we willing to get close enough to people in order to, to experience that kind

of reaction? Because I mentioned in the book, like I, on the way over there had actually written a sermon on the plane, like I was working on a sermon on poverty. And I had written it from like, I mean, no tear ever came to my mind or came to, came to my eye and I was just like, I can, it's like frightening how much I could talk about poverty and think about it and not like feel it. So what happens? We're willing to feel like sense of the sense of need around us and then open our lives to whatever God wants to use us to do in response.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. So, and David, I mean, I think I've seen that in your life and so have lots of other people. I mean you're channeling your time, your energy, your resources into helping with this and trying to tackle poverty and, you know, letting your heart go there, you're sharing the gospel in the DC area with people locally, you're traveling overseas. But for the average person who's like, "Well that's a life that feels totally inaccessible to me. I have my 9-5 job, I go to work, I'm trying to raise my kids, we're going to be fortunate to make the car payment next month. What do I do? What needs to change in me?"

David Platt: That's a great question. So I try to land the book on some practical help along those lines. The simple, simplest way I could put it is one, don't underestimate today what you can do for urgent need around you. Meaning, the most urgent need people have is to be reconciled to God. And that's going to affect their whole eternity. And the reality is pretty much all of us are going to be around people today who are separated from God right now. And they're not guaranteed tomorrow. So there is an urgent need. We've got ... So don't underestimate like, it's not just, "Okay, go lead a mission organization, just share the gospel," like we've talked about it. You are now addressing the most urgent need in somebody else's life when you do that. So don't underestimate that opportunity.

David Platt: And then, I just try to encourage people, "Okay, just look right around you. Where do you see a physical need around you, in your community? And just what and maybe something really small." I say really small, because what I'm about to say, it's not necessarily not at all small, but I was talking with a guy yesterday who read an advanced copy of the book and he and his wife are like, "Okay, what can we do?" So they, they're not, they don't have like excessive wealth. I mean, certainly compared to the rest of the world. But he's an editor of a magazine, and he basically said, "All right, we're going to foster a child." And so they just had a three month old baby in the middle of the night coming to their home. I mean, I just think, "Okay-

Carey Nieuwhof: That's pretty cool.

David Platt: That's one like simple story, but don't underestimate the importance of that story for that three month old. Right. And, and whatever God's going to do from that. That's just one story." So just open up like what might you be calling an individual, a family to do then to think about like I was talking with a couple recently who read an advance copy, the book, and they have a dental office and

they just said, "Okay, like we have profits that come in through our dental office. How can we steward those profits best for what matters most and not just this world, but in eternity?" And so they are identifying some different projects where they're going to get behind some pretty powerful things happening around the world and this urgent spiritual and physical need.

David Platt: It's just kind of is infusing using a whole new picture of life and cleaning teeth. Because they know that the fruit of this is not just going to be God being glorified and good, excellent work being done on teeth, but it's also going to be to God being glorified in a place where his name has not been known.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's incredible. You know, that David, I so appreciate it. If I can just throw something really, really small that actually was bigger than I thought. So I've, I'm founding pastor now, which means I'm not in the church most days. I haven't got the itinerary I used to have or that you would have or that kind of thing. So I do a lot more of this these days and I'm like, "You know, not sharing the gospel as much as I used to. I'm not in that interface all the time." And so I started praying this prayer a few months ago and I actually forgot about it until this interview. I'm like, "Oh, I better start praying that again. "

Carey Nieuwhof: But it was, "God, use me strategically in the people I meet today. Whether that is a flight attendant or some Starbucks person, all the stereotypes you think really don't matter. Amen." I started praying that and I'm like, "Okay, you can turn off the tap now. Like this is enough." I don't know whether that reorients me or whether it, it opens up spiritual channels or what that does, but something as simple as that. To see people through a different lens and to look at the opportunity around you can be pretty exceptional.

David Platt: That's such a good word. Yes. And yeah. Not to underestimate today and God's sovereignty and who He's putting in your path. That's pretty ... That's good.

Carey Nieuwhof: And I got to write a letter to my sponsor child, which my wife always reminds me I need to do as well. We have some sponsor kids and so on. David, this was great. So the book is called Something Needs to Change. It comes out probably the day we broadcast this. I would think. So that's exciting for that. And then where can people find you online these days, David?

David Platt: I would say a primary place people can go is Radical.net, that has just resources from the church. I mean, if anybody's ever in Metro Washington DC, they're welcome to come at McLean Bible church. But sermons, resources and just the whole purpose of Radical, through a variety of different avenues is to help encourage, serve the church when it comes to the mission of Christ.

Carey Nieuwhof: There's one question. This is fun for people who actually listen to the end because we do have a few more minutes. I forgot to ask you this question, because it's been a source of research for me for my next book. But one of the things you just kind of mentioned by the way was that you didn't have a lot of

tech access on these treks. I mean, you literally are where there are no cell phones, there's no place to plug your phone in, the whole deal. And so you used the phrase, "I was alone with my thoughts." As you're processing all this. Just as a final, final question, I would love to ask you, did you notice, because we live in an age of digital distraction, did you notice a difference in you? Did that make an impact on you?

David Platt: Without question. No question, yes. To the point where it's like, "Okay, I'm ready to be back home with my family without ... I'm ready to see my wife, see my kids." But otherwise, I don't want to come back in that sense. Like there's just a-

Carey Nieuwhof: Really?

David Platt: Well, and especially I think it's all the more so in the mountains. I mean, just time alone with the Lord and the mountains is, I mean, you're sitting at 12,000 feet, Carey. And you're looking around. It feels like you're in a valley because there's these huge peaks all around you and it just hits you you're there with your Bible, open you're underneath. You're like, "I am speaking with the God who like said a word, and this happened. He created all this and right now he's talking to me and I'm talking to him and he's actually listening to me. And yes, there's just ... You're alone in that sense with God.

David Platt: And then just yes, with your thoughts. I mean, trekking those trails is part of what I love about trekking because there's, there are a lot of places that are just really narrow so you can't even talk to anybody else around you. So it's just like quiet walking, and thinking, and not being distracted. And you just get to a whole nother level in your thoughts and you get to a whole new level in your heart when you're not, when you don't have this quick fix to put your phone and get this information or look at that or be distracted by that. And you just have time to, to go deeper in your own heart and your own mind than than I think we most often do in the world we live in.

Carey Nieuwhof: Was it freaky at first?

David Platt: I don't know. I really think it's refreshing at first. I mean, I, you sure you're impulse is right. It's like, "Okay, I need to check something. But it's ... I mean, you just kind of crossed that off. You can't do it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Sounds dead and I can't see anything. Yeah.

David Platt: So just like, "Okay, alright. But it gets to the point where I've enjoyed it so much even when it kind of the trails widen, I want to stay back so that nobody will talk to me because we'll get to a rest stop, I won't have time to hang out. That'd be great. I love people, but like these are my moments, unlike most, anytime in my life. I mean I'd try to ... Yeah, spend time, with the Lord every morning just alone. But it's just different. It's just different.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Has it changed your practice now that you're back?

David Platt: That's a good question, Carey. Has it changed my practice? That's really sad. I don't think it has.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm trying to carve out more distraction for it. It was Nietzsche who said, "There's no thinking without walking." Which is really interesting if you start to study. This has been a personal passion point of mine, but Nietzsche said you can't have any good thoughts without walking. And if you look at the number of major figures whose ideas outlived their lifetime, most of their writing and most of their thinking had to do with at least a couple of consistencies. One is no distraction.

Carey Nieuwhof: Like Mark Twain was famous for his writing cabin. Just like you're thinking, "Okay, you're living in 1882, what distractions could you have?" But his family would have to throw rocks at the writing cabin to remind him it was lunch. And Nietzsche said you have to walk. And as they're doing neural, like there's neural science now that shows that in the actual act of walking and being out in creation, your thoughts go to different places, which is why I wanted to ask the question because that's fascinating.

David Platt: That's a good question. Maybe that's something that needs to change.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, I'm looking at it in my life, sitting here talking to you on an iMac with an iPad, prompting me with my questions. And my wife had called me. She's the only one allowed to get through the do not disturb line along with my kids on my phone. And she called twice while we were in this interview. And I'm like, "Are you okay?"

Carey Nieuwhof: I want to know what you wanted at Costco. I'm like, "No. I'm good." So anyway, David, this has been a joy and we will find you at Radical.net. Thank you so much for your contribution to the church and for a fascinating conversation.

David Platt: Well, likewise, Carey. Thank you a second time doing this and I just walked away last time in a way I distinctly remember and this time just really encouraged, I appreciate you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, thank you. You're a gift. Thanks, David.

David Platt: Thanks, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, that was a pretty phenomenal and I'm excited about the lineup that we've got this fall because NT Wright comes on the podcast, he's one of the greatest theologians, I think, of our lifetime. And we talk about some of the same things, but of course from a different perspective. I also have Gordon MacDonald, one of the wisest leaders alive today. Pat Lencioni is back. Albert Tate. Oh, who else are we going to talk to? Carlos Whittaker. Jon Acuff, Francis Chan is coming

back. We've got Chris Brown, Chris Lema. I think I've even got Larry Osborne convinced to come back on.

Carey Nieuwhof: So this can be a fantastic fall. I'm so excited for it. And of course if you subscribe you get this all for free. Also, I forgot to mention my wife and a good longtime friend of ours, Rob Meeder, a pediatrician are coming on board to talk about their new podcast and how to help families win and parents win when it comes to childhood anxiety. Yeah, we kind of cover all the topics that I think are interesting, anyway. Next week we're back with a fresh episode with Clay Scroggins. Clay is a good friend. He's got a brand new book on how to lead in a world of distraction. And here's an excerpt from my conversation with Clay.

Clay Scroggins: I'm driving home, you know one of those like you can hardly see kind of moments. And I had about an hour, about 30 minute drive home and then I sat in the driveway for about 30 minutes and I'm just trying to process like, "What is this?" And I think that moment of solitude was really healthy for me, and I started realizing that I am feeling like a failure and I've rarely felt like a failure in my life. And then I was wrestling with, "Well, am I a failure?" And at first I was trying to argue with myself like, "No, you're not a failure." You're doing the whole Stuart Smalley from Saturday night live thing.

Clay Scroggins: "You're good enough, you're smart enough, doggone it, people like you," that kind of thing. Which I'm like, "That's not really helpful, honestly." I don't want to trick myself into thinking that I'm winning when I'm not. I mean, the truth, it at the time might've been, I might've been failing, I don't know. And then I don't want to also just go, "Well, I'm never going to put myself out there again."

Carey Nieuwhof: So that goes live next Tuesday. If you subscribe, you get it all for free. Remember, because these are time-sensitive, check out ProWebFire.com. Use the coupon code, Carey2019 to get a subscription-based web service. And if you act now before the end of September, you will get a free customer website build included with that which is exciting. And Remodel Health is saving organizations millions of dollars, as we speak, on health care and in many cases improving the benefits your team will receive. So if you're interested in innovative solutions, visit RemodelHealth.com/Carey and download their church buyer's guide for free.

Carey Nieuwhof: And I know a lot of you are working on your 2020 budgets, so this a great time to head over and do that. Also final note, just remember we're doing #askCarey. So get on the socials, ask me a question, starting next month I'm going to start answering them. So really excited for that. Guys, thank you so much for listening and I 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.



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