

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 293 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Hey, we got a brand new feature on the podcast. If you listen to the very end, which I hope you do, I will be taking a listener question every single week for a new segment we're calling Ask Carey. Today, one of our listeners wanted to know, "What do I do to make friends, man? Leadership can be lonely." And I got to tell you, that is an occupational hazard, so I'm going to answer that one.

Carey Nieuwhof: Also, my guest today, I'm so excited to have Jeff Henderson back on the podcast. He's an entrepreneur, he is the founding pastor of Gwinnett Church and Hamilton Mill Church in Georgia and just releases today a book that I am so excited about. This is a movement that started a few years ago with Jeff, where he just decided to be for the community. If you go to church and you're a pastor, you probably seen these signs probably somewhere in your community. They're certainly all across America and other parts of the world, but a little #for whatever your community is. So, are you for Gwinnett, for Atlanta, for Kansas City, for whatever? Yeah, Jeff was sort of behind that. He's got a lot of marketing experience with the Atlanta Braves and then with Chick-fil-A and then in the last few years as a pastor, and he's got a brand new book out today called FOR.

Carey Nieuwhof: This is Jeff's premise, is if a business was a person, many businesses would be considered narcissist, same with the church. Why? Because they only ever talk about themselves and narcissism is bad for business. So we're going to explore how to do customer service in a brand new way. I really think, I had the privilege of endorsing this book, that Jeff is pointing us toward the future of business and the future of how we communicate to a community. It's really, really a fascinating conversation. I think you're going to love it. I talk to a lot of leaders, particularly in church world, but this also applies in business too where they're like, "You know what? I'm convinced we're just losing people. They're trickling out the back door."

Carey Nieuwhof: The few years ago at Connexus Church, when I was exiting the lead pastor role, my successor, Jeff Henderson, retained Tony Morgan to come and consult with us. We were looking at a bunch of stuff and I was in the room and I said, "Hey, you know what? I think we have a backdoor room." And turns out Tony did the numbers and said, "No, actually, you don't," and recently Tony Morgan interviewed Jeff Brodie, my successor at Connexus, for his leadership podcast and they talked about whether or not we had a backdoor problem. Listen to what Jeff had to say about what we discovered when we brought Tony and The Unstuck Group in.

Jeff Brodie: Five years ago, we asked Tony to come and spend some time with us that year. Little did we know, it would be basically the month Carey and I would be passing the baton in his succession plan. And, we began to have a conversation about where our church was at. And, you're 100% correct, Tony, we started talking about the number of guests that we were seeing, and we were talking about the fact that when we looked at our number, you had said, "Hey, for a healthy new guest number, it needs to be equivalent in a year to what you would see on a Sunday." And that kind of rocked us a little bit.

Jeff Brodie: And when you left, we had been counting in a different way. And so we said, "Hey, we need to be counting the same way all the time, all that stuff, and really get down to what the numbers are. And when we saw them, we realized, "Oh, we had thought all along, some of the growth that we wanted to see..." I mean, we were growing but not at the pace we wanted to. We thought it was a backdoor problem, and realized, "No, we actually have a front door problem." We need to be seeing probably at least twice the number of new guests that we were seeing at that time.

Jeff Brodie: And, so, it was a sobering moment for us because we said, "Wow, we're creating a church that unchurched people love to attend." We're excited. We're talking about inviting all the time. It's not that we don't talk about it, and it's not that it isn't happening, but it isn't happening at the level it should be if we're going to grow at the pace that we would like to.

Carey Nieuwhof: Fascinating, isn't it? Now, to see growth, here's what's so cool. You need more new guests each year than your total average attendance. It takes intentionality to do that. And the natural tendency of every church is to become inward-focused over time. And so here's the question, does your church have a front door problem? To hear more about our experience working with The Unstuck Group or to learn more about their process and how it can help you head to TheUnstuckGroup.com/Guests. That's TheUnstuckGroup.com/Guests. And also, you know this, when people actually show up at your church, what's the first thing they see? It's not your front door, it's not your parking lot, it's not your greeting team. It's your website. And nobody visits a church these days without first visiting the website, kind of like you don't go anywhere without checking out the website.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, how's your website? Is it updated since 2008? 2016? A good website will directly impact your church's visitors and online ministry. And that's why our friends at Pro Media Fire are launching their brand new Pro WebFire subscription service this fall. They're going to build you a custom website updated weekly as per your plan. Yeah. Every week, updated. They're also including management of three digital marketing campaigns a year in Facebook, YouTube and Instagram. It's kind of cool, so it's a subscription service. You don't hire staff. You hire them for a monthly fee. And, speaking of that, this month the listeners of this podcast can receive a launch special of up to 30% off for life, depending on the plan. That's no upfront website development fee, up to 30%

off for life. This is only in October. So you can go to ProWebFire.com/Carey. That's ProWebFire.com/Carey, C-A-R-E-Y, where you can save up to 30% for life depending on the plan, so get your website into 2020. How does that sound?

Carey Nieuwhof: Well now, without much further ado, here's my conversation with Jeff Henderson. Well, I'm so glad to have Jeff back on the podcast. Welcome back, Jeff.

Jeff Henderson: Carey, it's great to be here. I'm so excited. We're recording this at Gwinnett Church and you're about to speak to our staff.

Carey Nieuwhof: I am, yeah. In about an hour or thereabouts we will go upstairs and hang out with your staff. We've gotten a chance to spend a lot of time together. You came up to Toronto to hang out with us at Connexus Church and at my house. We got out on a boat.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. It was amazing. And Wendy came with me, so that was awesome. And if the podcast thing doesn't work out, I think you could go be a chef as Big Green Egg company or something. It was amazing. So you guys have probably seen Carey's pictures on his InstaStory. I had to personally test it to see if it was really that good as it looks, and it was amazing.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, good.

Jeff Henderson: Great steaks, wonderful time on the water, some cake and ice cream. It was great.

Carey Nieuwhof: We had a blast. The ice cream, you got quart of dairy, would you say?

Jeff Henderson: That's right, that's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Local legend.

Jeff Henderson: It was great.

Carey Nieuwhof: Total local legend. But anyway, Jeff, I'm so excited for you because you've had this message inside you that you've been building for a decade that's finally coming out in a book form today. Know What You're FOR, right? So why'd you write it?

Jeff Henderson: Well, interestingly enough, you're part of the story. I remember one time, I think you were in South Dakota, and you took a picture of a church that was doing something for their community and you texted me. I still have the text to this day. And you said, "Okay, I've had it. You've got to write a book on this." We wouldn't be here if it weren't for you, literally. But this really kind of goes back

to the last 22 years of working with two thriving organizations, Chick-fil-A and North Point. And if you're looking-

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. You didn't mention the Atlanta Braves when you said thriving organizations.

Jeff Henderson: They're actually... well, depending on when we're broadcasting, which is actually October 1st launch day. I'll say this-

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm a Blue Jays fan.

Jeff Henderson: ... they've had a good season. They've had a good season.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: But I really just realized beginning to ask the question, "What caused these two organizations to grow?" And it really became out of studying that and being a part of that for last 22 years, these two questions that I really think helped organizations whether it's a church or business or non-profit grow. And it's really about being for people. And while that sounds altruistic, I think it really is at the heart. It really gets to really the most powerful way that organizations, businesses grow is through positive word-of-mouth advertising.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, you had a chance to get to know Truett Cathy.

Jeff Henderson: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Carey Nieuwhof: You were actually his driver at one point.

Jeff Henderson: That's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: For one night. For one night.

Carey Nieuwhof: For one night.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: You drove Truett Cathy. So for those of you who don't know Chick-fil-A, he founded Chick-fil-a. And before we get into Truett Cathy story, Chick-fil-A is relatively profitable. Fair to say?

Jeff Henderson: Fair to say. They-

Carey Nieuwhof: Fair to say? Is it true that they outpace McDonald's in terms of same-store sales and that kind of thing? I mean, for whatever's public, just tell us about the success. Because I think a lot of people, particularly for what you say it's such positive message, they're like, "Yeah, but we need to drive the bottom line and we live in a cynical world."

Jeff Henderson: Sure.

Carey Nieuwhof: "How can being for people and for your customers and for your team actually work?" But give us some of the staggering numbers of Chick-fil-A, which is now really a global competitor.

Jeff Henderson: It's a \$10 billion organization. So they'll do \$10 billion in sales.

Carey Nieuwhof: Over the year?

Jeff Henderson: Yes. And what's interesting about Chick-fil-A is that they've had 51 consecutive years of same-store sales growth.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Jeff Henderson: Same-store means stores that have been open for over year and you compare... that really dictates and tells you the health of an organization.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, same-store sales. The store could've been there for 25 years and they're growing every year?

Jeff Henderson: Well, overall.

Carey Nieuwhof: Overall. Sure, sure, sure.

Jeff Henderson: But 51 straight years of consecutive same-store sales growth, which is unheard of. The other thing that's interesting is they're debt-free. They are not funding their store growth out of debt. They are funding it out of cash.

Carey Nieuwhof: And it's still privately held?

Jeff Henderson: Privately held, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Privately held.

Jeff Henderson: Which is why they're closed on Sundays.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yes, exactly, right? So here's the crazy thing. A \$10 billion company in an organization that is only open six days a week.

Jeff Henderson: That's right. And, in many cases, particularly those stores that are in a mall, they'll do more sales in six days than the other tenants will do in seven days combined, in some instances. So it goes back to this premise that it's actually, doing good is good for business. In today's world, doing good is good for business, which is why I think this is an exciting time to be alive, that people want to do business with companies they believe in.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. You know, it's funny, I had dinner recently, like a few months ago, with someone who had just literally endowed a university, the business school. And we were talking about what was changing in business, and right now with the 2020 election coming up in a year, there's the fight between the right and the left, capitalism, socialism, the whole deal. That's why when I had the opportunity to endorse your book, one of the things I wrote, I think it made the edit, was that, "If you're looking for the future of business, this is it."

Carey Nieuwhof: And I had a chance to tell him, I think ethical business is... that there has to be more than just dollars. Like, \$10 billion is impressive, but if you're trying to get to \$10 billion, trying to get to \$10 billion is not the way to do it. And that's not how Chick-fil-A did it. So let's go back to... and he was saying, "Wow," thinking about business school and all that stuff, and I said, "I just think businesses that actually care about people, that care about culture, that care about the community, that care about the environment, that have a soul, that have ethics are going to drive the future."

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. And if the goal is to stay in business, if that's the ultimate goal, "We're just want to stay in business," you won't. There has to be a driving purpose for, how are you making us better? Why should we pay attention to you? That's why when I see a lot of advertising and it's, "We're better than our competitors," it does not surprise me that you think you're better than your competitors. That's not new information to me. What would be helpful is how are you helping my life better. How are you making the world a better place? And that doesn't mean that you have to separate those kind of motives with a bottom line. They actually go together. And that's one of the things I've learned with Chick-fil-A, one of the things I've learned from North Point. Obviously, in a non-profit world, as you will know, Carey, the only thing we really have to sell is purpose, you know?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's it. We got to be mission-driven.

Jeff Henderson: That's again. But I feel like if non-profit leaders could think a little bit more like business leaders and business leaders could think a little bit more like non-profit leaders, there's a win in the middle ground there somewhere. And I think business leaders sometimes just focus on a product, but oh, if they had a purpose to go with that product and baked it into the purchase? That's where the game is going. And you don't have to not focus on the bottom line, you can have purpose and a great bottom line.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, going back to driving Truett Cathy. He got this like 70 years ago. He understood that. And you have a quote in the book... which is great book, by the way, I'm taking my team through it as it becomes available.

Jeff Henderson: Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof: That he's more interested in the business growing people than people growing the business.

Jeff Henderson: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you explain what that means?

Jeff Henderson: Sure. Well, to your point, I was driving Truett to a speaking engagement. I can't remember where we were going, what we were doing, but it's not surprising that the CEO would ask you questions, right? And you're thinking it's going to be typically business-related questions, but he asked me about, "Hey, how's Wendy doing? How are your kids doing?" He knew my parents. "How's your dad and mom doing?" And we started talking about how can you be a good husband and a good business person and a good father, and successful career. We really started talking about some really substantial life issues. And I began to realize over the course of the car ride that's Truett was for me. He was more interested in Jeff as a person than Jeff as the chicken salesman.

Jeff Henderson: But what I experienced after that, Carey, is, at the end of that night I would've run through a brick wall for Truett Cathy. I became a better chicken salesman because I became a better person. And so in that moment he was interested in me as a person, so because of that I want to return the favor and do the very best job I can for him. So his business really grew me as a person, helping me in all areas of life, but as a result of that it helped me be a better business person. So for me, that's when I thought, "Oh, that's his secret. He's really interested in growing people." And if you grow people, they'll grow the business. And so that's what he's experienced.

Carey Nieuwhof: So give us the For initiative in a nutshell.

Jeff Henderson: The For initiative is based on two questions, and the first question is, "What do you want to be known for?" That's your vision, that's your unique niche in the marketplace.

Carey Nieuwhof: What do you wish people would say about you, what do you wish when they think of your company's name, your name, your church's name?

Jeff Henderson: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: "Oh, that's the Church, Gwinnett Church."

Jeff Henderson: "This is what they're for, this is what they're known for." So, what do you want to be known for? Then the second question is, "What are you known for?" And that's the customers' answer. So the first one is our answer, "This is what we want to be known for." The second question is the customers' response to that. And here's the power of that, Carey. When those two questions, when the answers to those two questions match, when what you want to be known for is what you're known for, you create a sales force for free. You harness the greatest form of advertising the world has ever seen. Positive word-of-mouth advertising. And we quote Scott Cook in the book, billionaire, smart business guy, and he says, "A brand is no longer what it tells customers it is. A brand is what customers tell other customers it is." That's word-of-mouth advertising. That's how your podcast has grown. "Oh, you got to listen to the Carey Nieuwhof podcast. Have you listened to this latest episode of Carey..." That's it. It goes viral. I mean, it's the whole viral thing.

Jeff Henderson: And we all know this. When a business is saying, "How do you hear about us?" and they list several boxes. "Did you hear about us from TV? Radio? Billboard? Print?" And then there's the final box called the Other box. The Other box always wins and it drives marketing people like me crazy, because we all know what the Other box is. It's positive word-of-mouth advertising. But it's so mysterious, it's so elusive that what we do is, we just end up going to the paid advertising. And I'm not saying we shouldn't do paid advertising, but I'm saying that the Other box doesn't have to be mysterious. So what this book is about, is it takes the mystery out of the Other box. It teaches us how to harness and create a sales force for free and it's based on those two questions.

Carey Nieuwhof: So let me ask you, just from a business standpoint. I sell lawnmowers. I'm just going to pick something, because I do like cut grass. Like, that's my-

Jeff Henderson: You do.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. But, I sell lawnmowers, so what am I for? Am I like, "Great lawnmowers at a good price?" How does that work out? What would, if I'm a lawnmower salesman, if I'm selling cars, if I'm selling chicken, what do I want to be known for?

Jeff Henderson: I love what Frank Blake says. Frank is the former CEO of Home Depot and he says, "We didn't sell drill bits. We sell the emotion that when the spouse comes in and sees the completed project, we sell that emotion." I love that. So what Frank is saying is, "We want to be known for making that customer feel good in the eyes of somebody important in their life."

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Jeff Henderson: So if I'm selling lawnmowers, I'm trying to figure out, as it relates to you, I want to sell that emotion that Carey's, when he InstaStories those fresh lawns in his backyard-

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you.

Jeff Henderson: I'm not selling a lawnmower, I'm selling the emotion that when Toni, your wife, comes out and says, "Carey, you did a great job." That's what I'm selling.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Jeff Henderson: And so I want to be for that. Now, how they couch that in terms of wording and phrasing, that's the whole other thing, but I don't think it's, "Our lawnmower is cheaper than this lawnmower." You're going to figure that out. You're smart enough to figure it out. You're going to look at the pricing. I don't need your help to tell me what the pricing is. But if there's something that lets me know that you're for me and you can relate to me and connect to me, and there's something about the emotions that you connect with me, that's what I want to be known for.

Carey Nieuwhof: And then for a church it would be, "Well, we want to share the gospel," or not-for-profit. But is there a nuance to that?

Jeff Henderson: Well, the great thing for us is, that's where we started. I mean, the book is based on really the experience of Gwinnett Church asking these two questions before we even had a name. We didn't have a building, we didn't have a name. We took eight months off before we even launched this thing. Because I was at Buckhead Church and then... I didn't want to go too fast. I wanted to kind of go slow and take my time. And so we asked the two questions, "What do you want to be known for?" and, "What are you known for?" Well, we weren't known for anything, because we didn't exist.

Carey Nieuwhof: You didn't exist. That's right.

Jeff Henderson: So I said, "What is the church known for?" And then someone in the meeting said, "Well, the church for many people, people are more familiar with what the church is against rather than what the church is for." And I can still remember that moment right now, and it's like, "Well, that's a big statement."

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, and I would say, that was nine years ago.

Jeff Henderson: Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's probably even more accurate today than it was nine years ago, in the current climate, right?

Jeff Henderson: Right. That's true. That's true. That's true. It hasn't gotten any better.

Carey Nieuwhof: No.

Jeff Henderson: So in that moment we said, "Wow, that's a big statement. Well, what do we want to be known for?" And then we said, "Well, we want to be known for being for Gwinnett kids and being for Gwinnett students and for Gwinnett businesses and for Gwinnett government officials, and all of it." And so that's when we thought, "Well, we're for Gwinnett. That's what we want to be known for." And so that's when, when we bought the property that we're on today, the city said, "You could put a sign out there that says Gwinnett Church coming soon." And that's exactly what I did not want to do on our first impression. You know, initially. Eventually, I have to say, "This is where we are." But our first introduction to the community, we just put a sign out there that said #forGwinnett. There was no website. It was just that.

Jeff Henderson: And I got feedback from people saying, "How are they going to know this is a church?" And I said, "Exactly." I want to create some conversation with people. Because you just drove on the road. The cars that were driving up and down the road on those early days, I don't want people the first impression think, "Oh, that's a church. I'm not a church person. That has nothing to do with me." I wanted a message to say, "Everybody that lives in this county, whatever's happening over here is for you and we are for you. And our world is to tell you that we can connect you and serve you." So that's been our answer to the question, and that's really how this thing began to grow. And then it's been fun, I mean, thanks to your influence and your support of this message, but I remember the first time I got a For Winnipeg coffee mug.

Carey Nieuwhof: Love that.

Jeff Henderson: And I thought, "Oh my goodness, somebody's..." and then I got a t-shirt, For S.C., from NewSpring, and so it just began to grow. And I thought, "Oh my goodness, this message is really-"

Carey Nieuwhof: It's everywhere.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, it's resonating. But it was really born out of those two questions, "What do you want to be known for?" and, "What are you known for?" So from a church standpoint, I think it's just as practical and helpful from a church standpoint as it is a business standpoint.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. You got a quote in the book that I loved, "If a business was a person, many businesses would be considered narcissism... or, narcissists, and narcissism is bad for business." That's great. Can you explain?

Jeff Henderson: Well, if you take any major brand. I mean, I won't mention any, but any major brand, and you go to their Instagram page right now, you'll see a discrepancy between followers, who they're following and who's following them. I mean, it's a massive discrepancy. And then, when you look at their Instagram feed, it's all about, "Look how great our products are, look how great we are. Look, look. It's all about us, it's all about us." If that was a person, that's displaying-

Carey Nieuwhof: "Look at me, look at me, look at me, look at me." Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: Right, right, right. Google says narcissism is someone that has an excessive admiration about themselves. And so my pushback to big brands is, hey, the follower-following discrepancy... I was with a big brand recently and I said, "So you have a million followers on Instagram and you're following 55. Do you know who those 55 are?" And they said, "No." I said, "Well, basically, it's you. You're following yourself." Now, the pushback I get on this, and if we're going to... not too detail, but, "What if I follow somebody that does something that is inappropriate?" Well, you just unfollow them. And I'm not saying you follow one million, but the issue is, the spotlight on social media for most large brands and, really, churches, is the spotlight's on the business and the organization.

Carey Nieuwhof: Me, me, me, me, me.

Jeff Henderson: Right, right, right. And we have to shift the spotlight, because the customer's walking away from that. They want to know, "Are you noticing me?" And I think thriving organizations... I'm all for creating great fans and we'll talk about this in just a second, but I think where the game is going is, thriving organizations of the future will be more interested in becoming a fan of the customer instead of trying to convince the customer to become a fan of the organization.

Carey Nieuwhof: And it'll flip it.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, just flip it. And if you'd use a sporting analogy, we have a football helmet here, for many years, and still in the business world, if it looked like, let's say, a football game, the business would be the one on the field and the customers would be on the stands cheering the business because they're the most important ones. What I'm asking businesses and churches to do is flip that. You get in the stands, put the customers on the field and you cheer them on. And when you look at that from an Instagram or messaging standpoint, it's a completely different shift. And so one of the things... and we don't get this right all the time.

Jeff Henderson: We had a conversation about this just the other day. We try, every third or fourth post on the Gwinnett Church Instagram feed, we want it to be about something outside the four walls of the church. So when I'm with churches or businesses I take them to their Instagram page and say, "All right, let's count the last 10 posts. How many are about the business and how many are about the customer or the people outside the business?" And typically it's nine to one, 10 to zero in favor of the business. And so it's just a shift, but there are organizations that are doing it.

Carey Nieuwhof: But how do you do that? I'm just thinking about that. Do you start retweeting what they're doing? Okay, a good example, if you follow Dave Ramsey or Rachel Cruze, they have the debt-free scream on radio, but then they've got pictures that people have of, you know, "We paid off \$62,000 worth of debt in 18

months." It's the family and they're cheering, and the whole deal. So are you talking about that? And then how do you even create that?

Jeff Henderson: Well, I love Chubbies Shorts. I don't know if you're familiar with Chubbies Shorts, but it's-

Carey Nieuwhof: I don't know them. I heard about them through your book.

Jeff Henderson: It's a really fun brand. Short men's shorts, hence the name. But they've done something really ingenious. They have, in essence, turned their Instagram feed over to their customers. So if you were to buy a pair of Chubbies Shorts, Carey, and, by the way, with your following, they would love this, by the way, and you post a picture of you on your Instagram feed and tag them, then typically what they'll do is they'll take you and feature you on their Instagram feed. Now, that's the thing-

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh yeah, it's just the tagging it.

Jeff Henderson: It's a tagging thing. But you think, "Was that that big of a deal?" Well, I don't know, but they have almost as many followers as Home Depot and Lowe's, and they are multi-billion dollar brands. This is a small, little brand. So the social media traction.

Carey Nieuwhof: Didn't you say they do 10 million in sales as opposed to like a hundred billion or whatever-

Jeff Henderson: Whatever they-

Carey Nieuwhof: ... Home Depot does, who knows?

Jeff Henderson: And again, in fairness to Home Depot and Lowe's, theirs is, "Here's our product. Here's who we are. Here's our product." But Chubbies is doing it, "Here's our customer and our product. Here's our customer. Here's Carey and our product." And so what happens is, is when these customers see themselves on the Chubbies Instagram page, then they start texting their friends. "Go to the Chubbies Instagram page. I'm on it today."

Carey Nieuwhof: "Look, I made it on Chubbies."

Jeff Henderson: Right, right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jeff Henderson: So what is that? That's a sales force for free. They haven't paid anything for that and they are having people basically go market their Instagram feed, and that's why they're growing in their social media traction, because they put the

customer at the center of it. It's not saying, "We shouldn't talk about the business. We shouldn't talk about the products." It's elevating the role of the customer in that story.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. You talk about another story in the book. I can't remember whether it was a hypothetical or whether it was real. It was like, so, somebody who follows you is getting married.

Jeff Henderson: Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: And you comment on their feed. "Hey, congratulations." Can you tell us some stories like that? You had a few in the book that, I think, were really clarifying for me about what you can do as an organization to really celebrate your customer.

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. Well, it's a really story in the sense... it was a Home Depot story.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay, yeah.

Jeff Henderson: So I was with some of the folks that worked with Home Depot and I said, "You've got 500..." at this time it was 500,000, it's grown since then, Instagram followers. "But, let me show you one of them." So I showed them Dana, and Dana just got engaged, right? So, here's Dana. She actually is open to your brand because she's following you on Instagram. So that's a really good thing. She just got engaged. So all you need to do is just say, "Hey, Dana. Congratulations from your friends at Home Depot. So excited for you." So let's say Dana gets married and then it's six months later, and she and her husband wake up one morning and they're just like, "You know what? We need a new kitchen floor." So they get in their car and they're going down the road, and there's Lowe's on one side and Home Depot on the other. Do you think that conversation that you went off of your social media platform on to hers and simply congratulated her, do you think that conversation will come up into the mix? I think it will, and that's where the game is going.

Jeff Henderson: I was with Proverbs 31 recently. Fantastic. We love Lysa TerKeurst, as you do. They helped me with the messaging of this book. And one of her team members said, "Oh, the other day, I'm a huge Starbucks fan and I just took a picture of my Starbucks mug on my Instagram page and they commented back on my Instagram page, and I took a screenshot of it and sent it to all my friends." I said, "Okay. When is the last time that you have taken another screenshot of the Starbucks anything that they've done on their Instagram page?" And she goes, "Oh, I've never done that." And I thought, "There we go." So what Starbucks did in that moment is they said, "Hey. We see you. We notice you. We are connecting with you." And then she became the sales force for free. "Look at what Starbucks did for me today."

Carey Nieuwhof: So is this how you create raving fans? You talk about that in the book. Can you tell me... because everyone's talking about raving fans. You've got the people who just love your church, love your business, love your organization, love your mission, whatever you happen to be doing. How do you create a raving fan?

Jeff Henderson: Well, that's a big question. It's a big-

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's another book, I know. But it's a part of what you do.

Jeff Henderson: It is. And I would say there's some bedrock things, Carey. For example, let's take Chick-fil-A. The sandwich has to be good. With pickles on it. The customer... I mean, the bedrock foundational things. It does have to be good. But there are businesses that have good products that go out of business. And when it comes to a church, a church has to pray. I mean, you've got to start with prayer. But there are churches that pray that don't grow.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: So there's some fundamental building blocks that you got to have. But once you have those fundamental building blocks, if you don't have people that are talking about you, if you don't have what I call passionate inviters in church world, then your growth will be limited. In church world I tell people, "I would rather have 10 passionate inviters than a cool website." But typically what happens in church planning world, we spend a lot of time on our cool website and our cool Instagram photos and all that, but we aren't fueling people to actually go out and invite and bring people in. And that's your sales force for free. It's just like any business. Nothing happens unless somebody sells something.

Carey Nieuwhof: So how do you feel that? How do you have passionate inviters rather than apathetic attenders?

Jeff Henderson: I think it really comes back to a compelling vision. But once you have that compelling vision, you have to say it over and over and over again, because vision rarely repeated is quickly forgotten. And I would love to live in this world that I say, "For Gwinnett," one time, and everyone's like, "Yep. Got it. Check."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, this is year nine for this message, right?

Jeff Henderson: Yeah

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. And it's still catching steam.

Jeff Henderson: Oh, absolutely. Well, give you a quick example in the business world. In Chick-fil-A, one of the things I did is, I represented the corporation to the largest market, the Atlanta market. So I would work with a lot of operators on marketing. And

this was a great question, by the way. They said, "Hey, we've been doing the Eat Mor Chiken Cow Campaign for 10 years now."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: "Hasn't everybody already heard that? Hasn't everybody... I mean, can't we move on to the next thing?" This is 10 years in and this is a campaign that's in the Advertising Hall of Fame, okay? And yes, there actually is an Advertising Hall of Fame.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay.

Jeff Henderson: So I thought, "You know what? That's a good question. Let's do research." So we're in Atlanta, Chick-fil-A's number one hometown market, and we discovered that the Cow campaign, this breakthrough campaign, is only barely starting to break through at 10 years. And so when I shared that with the Atlanta operators, they were like, "Okay. Let's stay on message." And, by the way, staying on message is a huge thing that church needs to do right now. You know what? If we could just stay on John 3:16 and just stay on that message, it would revolutionize and change the world. That's another sermon for another day. But I think you've got to create a compelling vision, but then you have to equip the vision carriers. The more vision carriers you have, the more vision casters you have.

Jeff Henderson: So a real quick example of how we did this at Gwinnett Church is, with just our small core volunteers I cast this message and said, "Hey, what do we want to be known for?" And, "Many people are more familiar with what the church is against," all that. "So, we want to be known for being for Gwinnett. So I'm going to give you this t-shirt that says For Gwinnett. I want you to wear this and when people ask you, 'What does that shirt mean?' here's what I want you to say."

Jeff Henderson: And vision's like a bucket of water. The more water you have in a bucket, the more the water spills out. You have to have just a few words. So when somebody comes up to you in the grocery store and says, "For Gwinnett..." there's a sign up there that says #forGwinnett. Is that a school? And they ask, "What is that?" here's what I want you to say, "Well, it's a church. And the reason it's a church is, we believe that many people are more familiar with what the church is against rather than what the church is for. We believe that God is for you." That little statement grew our church. Prayer grew our church, God grew our church, but having-

Carey Nieuwhof: "God is for you."

Jeff Henderson: "God is for you," and people that would be willing to wear those t-shirts and to actually say that, the beautiful thing about that for me, Carey, is you don't have to get a bullhorn and yell at people. You can just wear a t-shirt that says, "For Gwinnett," and people will come up and go, "What does that mean?" And I can't

tell you how many conversations I've heard of people going, "I was in the park and I walked up to this person, they said this, and I decided, 'Huh. I'm going to come to that church some day.'" Because there's something compelling about an organization being for people.

Carey Nieuwhof: You argue that customer engagement is the new customer service. That customer service is reactive, but customer engagement is proactive. What do you mean by that?

Jeff Henderson: Well, you've got to have great customer service. If you take, again, my former life in the quick-service restaurant customer services, "The fries are cold." "Oh, I'm sorry. Here's a coupon for a new fry."

Carey Nieuwhof: "Free fries."

Jeff Henderson: That's right.

Carey Nieuwhof: "I hope they will be warm."

Jeff Henderson: That's right. Customer engagement is, "Oh, Dana, congratulations on your engagement. Congratulations from your friends at Home Depot." And when I talk to big brands about this, the pushback they get, is they'll say, "Jeff, I totally agree with that. But how do I do that for everyone?" That's why I love what our mutual friend Andy Stanley says. "Do for one what you wish you could do for everyone." But it's not just one person. When you do that for a Dana, that kind of customer engagement, engaging with them in their world, she tells other people about you. That's what we're trying to do here. We're trying to get Dana to talk more about Home Depot than Home Depot talk about Home Depot.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, and you have that story in the book about, I think it was Hurricane Harvey in Houston, and the guy who called the local Chick-fil-A. That is a powerful story and it's something he'll be talking about until he dies.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, so he called... he couldn't get ahold of 911. Obviously so, I mean, as Hurricane Harvey hit. So he calls Chick-fil-A and he orders two chicken burritos and a boat. And the guy answered the phone at Chick-fil-A and they weren't open that day, but then he thought, "You know, I do know somebody here that actually has a boat." So they showed up with a boat and jet ski and there's a picture of them being pulled away by two Chick-fil-A team members from their house. And they're waving goodbye. And then they got on Good Morning America and CNN. But to even have that kind of ethos of culture to go, "Oh yeah, I mean, I can't get you a chicken burrito today, but we're closed, but hey, this person has a boat. Let's go." That's... because at the end of the day, we want to be known for being for people. And while that was kind of an outrageous claim, you can't bring a boat to everyone, but you can bring a boat to someone.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. And if you have a boat, bring it, right? Nordstrom does that too. I don't think you talk about them in the book, but Nordstrom has that crazy empowerment... Horst Schulze has done that at Ritz-Carlton where he empowers his employees. He's been on the show. \$2,000 per employee per day to go fix problems and empower staff to do nice things. "It's your anniversary. Here's some fresh flowers."

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. Horst is just... you know, he's the quintessential customer service guy. And I remember him telling me one time, "Jeff, the church should be the best at this, because your leader Jesus was the best at this." That's was very convicting in terms of customer service and people service, and I thought, "Oh my goodness, you're so right."

Carey Nieuwhof: Why do you think so many churches and businesses and organizations aren't good at it? Why do you think that... even barely. I always told my kids, "If you just show up and do what you said you were going to do when you said you were going to do it, you're ahead of 98% of the population." That's true in customer service a lot of the time. It's like, "Wow, the fries were hot. I didn't have to wait a long time." But most of the time it's not. Like, average is remarkable these days. Why do you think it's so bad in so many places?

Jeff Henderson: Because when we go to work we go behind the counter and we don't stay in front of the counter. In other words, when I would go and work with Chick-fil-A operators, I would say, "Hey, I know it's lunchtime and I know it's busy, but one of the best things that you can do, not every day, but more often than you would think, you need to be in front of the counter seeing the business from the customer's perspective."

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Jeff Henderson: Because when you don't, what'll happen is, you'll fall prey to consumer logic versus producer logic. Consumer logic... they'll fall prey to producer logic versus consumer logic.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay.

Jeff Henderson: Producer logic says, for instance, in a quick-service restaurant, "It's lunchtime, so I need to stack the queue with as many fries as possible so I can get them out fast." That's producer logic. "I'm producing these fries. I got to do that." But consumer logic comes up and says, "That's a lot of fries in the queue. I wonder when they get to my fries, are they going to be hot and fresh?" And so you don't see that when you're in the producer logic behind the counter. You just see this, "I got to get these fries out."

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Jeff Henderson: Wendy and I, we're getting to the close of empty-nesting phase, and this may sound boring, but we love going to movies still. And when I go to buy popcorn in the movie, there's all these popcorns in the queue line, but I never ask for that popcorn. I ask for the fresh popcorn, and it's always fascinating to me, they don't go, "I don't know what you're talking about." They always go to the fresh popcorn that's already popped but it's not in the queue line. And so for me, I just feel like that we have... we go to work every day and we get behind the counter and we see that from our perspective, and we've got to fight for the other side of the counter.

Jeff Henderson: We've got to fight for the consumer that's coming out for the first time. It's why I want to get to church on Sunday, and you know this, I get here before anyone else is... you know, before any of the attendants are here, and there's no parking problems. There's no stress. Everything's fine. And I never see the problems that people can face when they come in, because I've created a system where I don't see any of the problems. And so I think understanding the difference between producer logic and consumer logic and moving toward consumer logic, what are the customers seeing? That's one of the reasons we don't get there.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you get your team to care? Because I think there's a lot of owners, there's a lot of senior leaders listening in there like, "Well, I care. I'm with you 100% on that. But I just can't motivate my team. I can't get... I can't pay top wages, or sometimes I do and they're still not very motivated." So how do you motivate it? How do you motivate an unmotivated workforce?

Jeff Henderson: That's a great question. I do think it goes back to vision, but putting vision on repeat and just saying it over and over and over again. We've given our staff a little sticker on their laptops and it says, "What have I done for Gwinnett today?" And a question that I was taught at Chick-fil-A by David Salyers was, "What did you today to build the business?" And I love that many times we would ask this to Chick-fil-A operators, we would say, "Hey, what did you do today to build your business?" And they say, "Well, yesterday I did a big crate catering order and next week I'm doing a billboard ad," or whatever. And we said, "Hey, all that's great, but that's not the question."

Carey Nieuwhof: Today.

Jeff Henderson: Today. And so I would tell business leaders, "What did you do today to remind everyone of the compelling vision that you have as an organization? And then if we don't work toward that today, the world around us will suffer."

Carey Nieuwhof: So what's a good answer for that for you?

Jeff Henderson: For us, is, "We are for Gwinnett. What did we do for Gwinnett? Did we-"

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, but how do you do that tangibly?

CNLP_293 –With_Jeff-Henderson (Completed 09/25/19)

Jeff Henderson: Well, will do in just a second, and before you speak in staff meeting. This may seem like a small thing, but the reaction we've got out of this is really cool. We'll start our staff meetings and go to Instagram and search #forGwinnett, and we'll like and comment on the photos that are there as a staff. And what people will say is, "Oh, this church feels small. I mean, it's so big, but it feels small."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. It's five or six thousand people on a Sunday, but it feels small.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. And I think that's the new way to grow. Grow small. What I mean by that is, every organization has to grow, but I think you can still... you don't have to sacrifice the small feel. You wrote about this on your blog recently. All the criticism about megachurch and all that, not to get into all that, but I think we all need to grow. I mean, and now how you characterize growth, totally different, but healthy things grow, unhealthy things die. And so one of the ways we can grow is grow small. So one of the ways our staff is reminded of the For Gwinnett mission, is today, in just a few minutes, we're all going to sit there and like 10 Instagram posts and comment on two of them.

Jeff Henderson: But what we do is then it allows them on Sunday to go, "Hey, I saw that you were at the beach with your For Gwinnett shirt." And they're going to go, "How did you know that?" "Well, I saw it on Instagram." So that kind of thing helps reestablish why are we here, why are we doing this. And we want people to know that we are for them and God is for them.

Carey Nieuwhof: You write thank-you notes too.

Jeff Henderson: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Carey Nieuwhof: And you have a quota. You talk about that. And that's one of the first things I knew about you when we got to know each other years ago, I would hear you talk about thank-you notes. And I've been the recipient of some of those thank-you notes, and they're wonderful. Tell me about that and how that makes a difference.

Jeff Henderson: Well, I think I have... I'm an encourager at heart. So my love language is words of affirmation, so it means a lot to me. But I just love the old-school, get a stamp and put it in the mail kind of approach, because I just envision our volunteers going to their mailbox every day and they get bill, bill, bill, catalog, and then here's a note, and it's from me saying, "Hey, I heard a story of what you did in our middle school ministry, and what middle-schoolers are facing nowadays, oh my goodness, and you're helping them? That's amazing." And I just heard so many stories of people who've come up to me over the years saying, "Hey, I still have your thank-you note on my refrigerator at home, and that was five years ago."

Jeff Henderson: My experience is, people don't throw thank-you notes away. Maybe some people do, but most of them keep... I've seen them in cubicles, I've seen them

on refrigerators. But it just helps reinstate vision. And I tell in the book that my hero in the world of thank-you notes is Frank Blake. I mean, he-

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Tell that story.

Jeff Henderson: This is astounding to me, but Frank, his goal is to write a hundred a week. But the cool thing-

Carey Nieuwhof: That's insane.

Jeff Henderson: It's crazy. But if you look at the story of Frank, when he came into the organization, and the turnaround story, he would tell you it really came to reminding everyone of the vision and celebrating the vision.

Carey Nieuwhof: So he became CEO in '07, '08?

Jeff Henderson: I think so, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right around the Great Recession.

Jeff Henderson: And it was not a great time either for the economy or Home Depot.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: And Frank would tell you that when the board tapped him, he said, "Who, me?" It's like, "You have the right guy?" Because he had no experience, necessarily, to run this. But he set up a systems. They had districts that would give them stories and then he would put on an orange apron, run around stores and then take stories and names, and he got really good at this. And then just legendary stories of people walking up to him and saying, "Did you really write this?" And he said, "Yeah, I did." The point is, do you think people worked harder after getting a Frank Blake note or they worked less? No question about it. And I think he began to see the vision begin to rise in that organization.

Jeff Henderson: So for me, I'm no Frank Blake, so he does a hundred a week, I do 15. Just three a day, five days a week. And there are some systems. One of the systems is, I'll text our staff on Sundays and say, "Hey, are there any stories from your volunteers today? Please send them to me. I would love to write them a thank-you note." And just things I hear, but I'd carry a stack of note cards with me in my book bag, in my car, just so if I have some downtime I'm writing notes. And I've just heard a lot about that. And again, it goes back to growing small. And that I've noticed you, I see you. "Can't do it for everyone, but do for one what you wish you could do for everyone," as Andy says.

Carey Nieuwhof: One of the first times I showed up at North Point, I was at an event and I was aware of you, we had met, but we weren't really friends yet. And I met one of

your staff members. This was in the early days of Buckhead Church. And I don't know how it came up, but we were just chatting and they said, "Oh, you work at Buckhead Church? You work with Jeff." And she said, I don't remember who she was, she says, "I love working with Jeff." And I don't want to embarrass you, but she said, "Wherever that man goes, if he's picking up garbage, like if he becomes a garbage collector," she says, "I'm on the back of the truck with him."

Jeff Henderson: Wow.

Carey Nieuwhof: "That's how much I love working for him." Why do you think you engender that kind of loyalty? What are some of the practices? What are some of the habits? What are some of the rhythms and disciplines that have helped you? Because part of this is being for your team, right? It's not just for your community, for your customer, it's for your team.

Jeff Henderson: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: What are some other things that you think help engender that kind of response?

Jeff Henderson: I think the car ride Truett instilled that. I think I've had several mentors in my life that have instilled that. But the great thing about these two questions is they're not just for organizations. They're for people. What do you want to be known for and what are you known for? And the way I answer that, there are a couple of ways I answer that, one of the ways I answer that is, "I want to be known for being for the person right in front of me." So that could be the barista in Starbucks. That could be Carey Nieuwhof. That could be Aaron, who's helping us record today. That could be whoever's in front of me. I want that person to walk away thinking, "Wow, that guy was for me."

Jeff Henderson: Because I don't think there's any coincidence in our interactions. I think every interaction every day is a divine appointment. It's what I try to tell our kids. When we go out to dinner, whoever... this is amazing country. People bring us food. Are you kidding me? This is amazing. So let's treat that person with the honor and respect that they deserve, because they do deserve that. Because I've been in that industry. So I want to be known for being the person, whoever's in front of me, that's who I want to be for.

Carey Nieuwhof: You do that with servers. I mean, we've had many meals together and you always ask a server for their name. Even when you're on my turf, you'll be like, "What's your name?"

Jeff Henderson: Even with my Southern accent, I think, yeah. I mean, there's a spiritual side of that answer as well, but for me it's, I want to be known for the person in front of me. And so for the team, that's... if you're going to do this, you've got to be for the team, because you can't have a healthy customer culture with an unhealthy team culture. I mean, when you and I walk into a restaurant, or you and I walk

into a business, we can instantly feel the culture, because it's flowing through the team to us. And I can tell how they're being treated. So if I go to a quick-service restaurant and they won't even look at me in the eye, I'm like, "I know how you're being treated."

Carey Nieuwhof: Really? You-

Jeff Henderson: Mm-hmm (affirmative). That it's not good. I mean, you're not confident, you don't care about the business because the business doesn't care about you. And they've put you at the counter and they've not prepared you, which means there's no training, there's no proper training and this organization just has you filling an hourly slot versus saying, "Hey, this could be a step in your larger career."

Carey Nieuwhof: You know, I had that at the hotel last night. I got in late, after midnight, it was probably closer to 1:00 a.m., which is way beyond my bed time. And there was a guy, roughly my age, who was behind the desk and I'm sure that wasn't his dream job.

Jeff Henderson: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right? But it was bare minimum engagement. And you're right, it's probably not him. It's probably how he's being managed. It's how he's being led. It's how... as Craig Groeschel says, our mutual friend, "You can't say, 'My people don't...' You have to say, 'I haven't led my people to...'"

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely, absolutely. And there have been other experiences where you've gotten in late and it's been the exact opposite. And so this is-

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh yeah. Yeah, I know. I mean, it can be three o'clock in the morning and people are like, "Hey, we've been waiting for you. Good to see you. Welcome. We're glad you're here."

Jeff Henderson: And if you go to those two questions, I think the goal of any leadership team should be to shrink the gap between those two questions. There's a gap in those two questions. What do you want to be known for? What are you known for? There's a gap here, there's a gap everywhere.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. It's a gap in my marriage.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, absolutely. The goal is to shrink the gap. And to do that you have to be for four groups. You have to be for the customer, for the team, for the larger community and then also for you. And in doing that you create this ethos that says, "This organization is for you." And when that happens, customers and the team end up becoming for you as well.

Carey Nieuwhof: You made an interesting link between customers, the way customers are treated the way you treat the team. Do you subscribe to the philosophy that your team kind of is your customer? That how you treat your team is how your customers will ultimately be treated?

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. In fact, when I became the lead pastor of Buckhead Church, that was, my first customer is the staff. Because if I can take care of the staff, the staff can take care of the church. And I want to create that kind of culture. That doesn't mean you alienate the church or customers, if you will, but I want our team to feel challenged and loved, and I want our team to feel celebrated and appreciated. And I know that our team, some of our team will go on to bigger and better things, but I want them three to five years from now to look back and go, "You know what? That time at Gwinnett Church prepared me for what I'm doing now. They were really for me." And I just think life is too short, and we work way too long and way too hard to not do that and not to actually have a powerful purpose along with the bottom line.

Carey Nieuwhof: Does that mean sometimes you get people who just don't respond to that kind of leadership? Have you had to transition people off? How do you know, "Okay. I've been for Carey. I've done it again and again and again, and he's just not responding." What do you do in a case like that?

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. What's funny, Dr. Tim Irwin, who's great friend and great thinker, he wrote a book called Extraordinary Influence and he's trying to ban the phrase "constructive criticism." Because he says, "That means my motives are good, but I'm about to gut you emotionally." That's what constructive criticism means.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right, right, right.

Jeff Henderson: But Tim says, "If people know that you are for them, they can handle pretty much anything." And so a good friend of mine, David Farmer at Chick-fil-A, I mentioned David in the book, he's very blunt with his team, but his team knows that, "The reason I'm being blunt is because I'm for you. I see something about you." And there are some people that just can't take that. There are some people that would say, "Ah, I don't want to do that." Or, "I don't resonate with being for Gwinnett." Or, "I don't resonate being for Barrie, for Midland in Toronto." So that's fine. But I want to be able to transition you off into your next step. Now, there's some things, there's just, we missed on chemistry. We missed on... you know, and for whatever reason, or-

Carey Nieuwhof: It's not going to work all the time.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, it's not going to work all the time. So you have all the systems in place, but once they're on staff, we want to be able to create... and, in fact, somebody said yesterday, and I told you this, they said, "Who's booking all these great guest speakers at our staff meetings?" meaning you. And part of my role is to try to bring as many great speakers in to our staff meeting so that they can

provide deposits in. And I want them to think, "Wow, we used to have Carey Nieuwhof come and speak at our staff..." and you're going to say some things today that will help them grow not just as a Gwinnett Church staff person but as a person. That's a huge deal for me.

Carey Nieuwhof: One of the things I learned from you, and it articulated something I'd already was doing, but not as well as you do it, and it changed how I do one-on-one meetings, and I might get the phrase wrong, but it's something like, "Ask people how they're doing before you ask them what they're doing." And so I'll usually start most of my check-ins one-on-one with like, "So how's it going? How's Wendy? How are the kids? How's Jess enjoying Montana? How's Cole doing? Wow, is this his last year? Right." And then, "Are you all right? Like, you had gas in the tank? Okay, let's talk about work." Why did you adopt that approach?

Jeff Henderson: I think it's a For approach. In that moment, you just said, "Jeff, I'm for you." The fact that you know my daughter's in Montana, that Cole's a rising senior. Oh my goodness, you've paid attention to me? That's awesome. And so if this was a boss-employee relationship, I would walk away going, again, "I want to run through a brick wall with Carey. He actually knows my daughter's name." Now, you can't do that with 500 employees. I understand that.

Carey Nieuwhof: No. Or a church of 6,000 or 8,000.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. But again, it's those you can. And it's, that's why this whole thing that may seem like a silly thing about liking Instagram posts, so we'll do that, this is what will happen Sunday. I don't know how this happens, but it will. Typically. Not always, but typically. I'll be in the lobby and somebody will walk by and I go, "Hey, hey, so you guys were in San Diego last week, right?" And they're like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Thanks for liking my Instagram post." Those kind of things are just, wow, it's personable. And the more personable, the more remarkable. The more personable, the more memorable. And we want to create personable moments in our friendships, and we're just so busy in life. So these kind of things slow things down, but they slow things down for the right reasons.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. And I think you're right. I mean, it makes sense, if we take a moment, and you do, with Aaron who's engineering the sound today, and he feels like he's treated well, then that's going to leak out when he's in the foyer on a Sunday morning or in the parking lot or dealing with some of the people that he works with or he leads. Now, that's good. Anything else about being for your team?

Jeff Henderson: I think, and you've written a lot about this as well, as it related to for the team, it's just, let's celebrate and let's have some fun. I mean, especially in church work. I think in church world we take ourselves way too seriously. Our work is serious, but we don't have to take ourselves so seriously. We're not perceived as very fun, nice people by the rest of the world.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's true.

Jeff Henderson: We're perceived as judgmental and we take ourselves too seriously. I mean, I've told our church this, I'll let Disney World be the happiest place on earth, but as for us, we want our church to be the most joyful place on the planet. And the church has got a long way to go to be the most joyful place.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you do that?

Jeff Henderson: Well, I think part of it is, we'll do just events. Like, we have this legendary event in the fall called S'more Gwinnett, where we just have s'more pits and then we have a firework show and it's for no other reason. And we'll throw events out on the lawn and we'll just try to have a lot of fun. We try to have to create some fun on social media and just try to do some fun and crazy things. There's always a fine line there and I totally understand that, but we want to be joyful, because if what we believe is actually true, we got a lot of reasons to be joy-filled.

Jeff Henderson: I just feel like if we're not careful, we just take ourselves way too seriously. But that really emanates from the team, so having fun and celebrating and doing a lot of fun things, that helps create an ethos of joyous spirit, because, they don't teach this in the business world, but there's a very, very practical, real business advantage to a culture that is buoyant and joy-filled. I feel it at Chick-fil-A, I feel it at a company like Zappos. I felt it when I went to your church for the volunteer event and all these volunteers were fired up. All right. And they're not-

Carey Nieuwhof: They're there on the nicest Saturday of the year to date, and I'm like, "And we're not paying you. This is crazy."

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. And i thought the business leaders, they kind of sometimes dismiss us church leaders as like, "Yeah, you don't really know how to lead, because you're a church.." I'm like, "So how many people on your staff do you pay?"

Carey Nieuwhof: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. We have maybe 12 or 15 on the payroll and it takes about 700 around the church.

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: So we pay these folks in coffee and doughnuts. And I've heard John Maxwell say, "If you really want to know a great leader, look at who they can lead if that team isn't getting paid." And so what I saw at Connexus Church was 300 or so volunteers on a beautiful Saturday, first warm Saturday in Toronto, in quite a while, fired up and excited to be there. Okay. That's a wow. No wonder you all are growing, because there's this joy that's emanating from that team to the people that would come the next day. That's huge. And so when I saw that at Connexus, I'm like, "Well, of course. No wonder you've experienced this growth, because this joy is fueling it."

Carey Nieuwhof: I want to talk a little bit about self-care, because that's part of it, right? Being for you, which means for yourself. You got to take care of yourself. And burnout, I'm writing a book on it right now that'll come out a year from now, but it seems to be a rising epidemic. It's happening in business, people are tired, they're exhausted. You and I were talking about that at breakfast even, right? How maybe over the course of our 20-plus years in leadership we become more introverted as our organizations have grown.

Jeff Henderson: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: And you're responsible... so you have five or six thousand people on the weekend, but how many people call Gwinnett Church home at both your locations?

Jeff Henderson: Oh, goodness. The circle is wide.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's probably like eight to ten thousand.

Jeff Henderson: Right, right. Yep.

Carey Nieuwhof: Which can seem overwhelming. You have how many staff right now, Jeff?

Jeff Henderson: Over 50.

Carey Nieuwhof: Over 50 staff. So over 50 staff who you cannot have a personal relationship with. And, like me, you refuel by being alone. Now, sometimes when things grow and things get big, leaders just wall themselves off and I don't talk to anybody and you have to go through Fort Knox to get to the leader and the whole deal. And you're not really like that, but you have to have some boundaries. You have to figure out what fuels you. How do you navigate that? What are some rhythms, disciplines and habits that help you figure out how to still be for the people that you can be for while refueling yourself and still being for your family, and leading a massive organization of like 10,000 people who call this place home?

Jeff Henderson: Such a great question. And one of the things I've learned, it took me a while to learn this, but I realized that one of the best ways that I can show the people in my life that I'm for them is to be for me in the sense of making sure I remain inspired and I remain rested. Because one of the best things I can give them is a replenished and rejuvenated me. And I'm going all out to serve them at the expense of my own soul, then ultimately I'm not doing them any-

Carey Nieuwhof: What happens to you when you get in a bad place? What happens to your personality?

Jeff Henderson: You know, for me, I stop dreaming. I stop creating. And I feel like when the ideas stop and I start getting more and more withdrawn, I think I'm more of a, in conflict I'm a withdrawer.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right, right. Yeah, you're conflict-averse.

Jeff Henderson: Right. And that's just as bad as somebody going ahead and going, "Oh, you're a former lawyer so you-"

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. I don't mind conflict. It's okay.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. You welcome it. For me, I just withdraw.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Jeff Henderson: And you were pivotal in my burnout in fall of 2015. I mean, that conversation I had with you in Toronto, I was just scheduled to be, when I took those days off, I was just happened to be scheduled, but that was a God thing.

Carey Nieuwhof: That was a divine appointment.

Jeff Henderson: That conversation with you still has dividends to this day, which I'll tell the staff in just a little bit. So I've got to surround myself with people like you that are good friends that can speak in, and I feel like you could say anything to me and I would go, "Oh, wow. You're seeing that?" So I've got a group of people that I meet with frequently, and then they're mentors of mine that have Wendy's cell number and they go, "How's Jeff really doing?" Because I really think my marriage, our marriage is an indicator of how I'm really doing.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. Yeah, that's a really good point. Toni and I, we've had our ups and downs, and we're on an up.

Jeff Henderson: That we all have, by the way.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yes. But I thought we were unique, that was such a rare story. No, and we're in a really great season. We're talking about the future together. And I said to her just the other night, "I feel like there's really an us at a level that there hasn't been before." So, "What do you want to do?" "What do you want to do?" "What about me? What about you?" It's like there's just an us over the last few years. That's been really cool. And I think that's true, because you're always going to have fires. You're always going to have turbulence. There's always going to be something. If you're leading anything significant, there's always something that's not going quite-

Jeff Henderson: Oh, sure. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: You know? Like-

Jeff Henderson: And I noticed that with y'all, when Wendy and I were up there with y'all, we both talked about this. There's a togetherness with y'all now that... I mean, it's always been there, but the other thing is, to your point, I mean, you have been through a lot of fires. I mean, starting a church is not for the faint of heart.

Carey Nieuwhof: True.

Jeff Henderson: Especially starting where you started a church and coming out of the very traditional setting. So you had a lot of things going against or whatever the phrase is, or walls you had to knock through. Well, that's going to take a toll.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, it did. Oh, for sure.

Jeff Henderson: But that's actually normal. That's the price of leadership. And when anybody tells me, "Oh, I want to be a leader, I want to have more responsibility," I'm like, "Well, okay. Then buckle up, because if you really want that, then you have no idea of the challenges that are coming your way until you get to that seat and it's there." But you guys have really come through and it was fun to see just that togetherness that y'all have now.

Carey Nieuwhof: It was great to spend a couple of days together on home turf. In the boat, the backyard, the whole deal. And that is a joy that there were seasons where we didn't know it would come. I think that's a really good litmus test, like, "How is it going at home?" Because I've always reminded myself, because I didn't used to believe this. "If you're winning at work, but losing at home, you're losing."

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: And I used to think that winning at work kind of... you know, well then home's kind of irrelevant. It's like, no, no, no, no. No, no, no, no, no. It's very, very irrelevant. Home's going to be around a lot longer than work.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah, and especially is the pastor world.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah.

Jeff Henderson: But one of the things too I've learned from you that I'm not doing a very good job at is, I got to have better hobbies, or more hobbies. My hobby's just working out or something, but you've got boating and the Big Green Egg and the-

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, that's why you're so thin and fit.

Jeff Henderson: No.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm not. One of my hobbies is eating.

Jeff Henderson: You continue to beat me on our little app thing that we're doing.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, but I-

Jeff Henderson: But your hobbies, your replenishing, that's very convicting for me. But again, all that goes back to, I've got to remain inspired. It's not, "Get inspired." It's, "Remain inspired."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. No, that's good, Jeff. Anything else about For? I think it's a fantastic book. You've got incredible endorsement as well. It's been endorsed by some amazing people.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah. Well, I'm honored that John Maxwell endorsed it and you endorsed it and Andy Stanley wrote the afterword, and so it's been fun. But this isn't my message, this is our message.

Carey Nieuwhof: I love that.

Jeff Henderson: Connexus has been a part of this for years now with what you guys are doing.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm learning from you.

Jeff Henderson: And I'm learning from other churches and other organizations. So it's been great. So I think this is a message from me, that it's a life message.

Carey Nieuwhof: For the business leaders listening, have you seen businesses adopt the For approach as well?

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. And in fact, Cheryl Bachelder who is the former CEO of Popeyes chicken, she's in the book. She's now the interim CEO of Pier 1.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh. I didn't know that.

Jeff Henderson: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's great.

Jeff Henderson: In Dallas. And so Cheryl's amazing.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah. She is. She's been on this podcast. She was like a 90-minute NBA. It was crazy. Really into it.

Jeff Henderson: Well, her turnaround story with Popeyes, I think-

Carey Nieuwhof: It's remarkable.

Jeff Henderson: It's one of the best I've seen in recent years.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah. It'll be written up in Harvard's case studies for years.

Jeff Henderson: Absolutely. Just brilliant. But what she did was really a For mentality. For the franchisees. She's in the book about how she would listen. And that seems so simple, but it's not. And so she's actually implemented the For strategy. She's implementing it right now at Pier 1 and doing a fantastic job. And so seeing companies that implement this, and they have it, I think, sometimes in words, but there are some systems that we can put around this in terms of customer strategy, especially as it relates to marketing and messaging, especially as it relates to social media. One quick example is, one of the mistakes big brands do is they put social media in the advertising department.

Carey Nieuwhof: Ah.

Jeff Henderson: And as a result of that, they treat it as advertising. It shouldn't be treated as advertising. It should be treated as customer engagement. But they treat it as digital media, not social media. So the For mentality shifts that to say, "Hey, we've got to treat this as customer engagement in social media, because what we are doing right now, we're a megaphone. We need to have a telephone approach in engaging with our customers." So I'm seeing a lot of businesses, locally business and large brands start to implement this, and so it's really fun to see them get some traction.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's great. So the book is called Know What You're FOR. It's got a big FOR on it. It's out today and available everywhere books are sold. You're doing a book tour.

Jeff Henderson: I am, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Where can they find details about cities and where you'll be?

Jeff Henderson: Just go to jeffhenderson.com. So there'll be a list of all the tours and tour dates, and so I'm very excited about that. But it'll be what we're calling a business breakfast tour. So we'll get together, we're going to talk about these two questions and talk about how you can grow your business and your career. And so it's an opportunity for people who they... just invite your teams and we're going to be with... it's actually, we're hosted by a lot of churches around the country, but it's not a church setting. It's just a host site. And we'll just purely be about business, have breakfast and then you'll go on off to work. And then they can get the book at jeffhenderson.com as well. So I'm excited about it, but again, it all goes back to you texting me that day going, "I've had it. You got to get this book out."

Carey Nieuwhof: That's a little too much credit, but-

Jeff Henderson: No. And then you connected me with Esther, and the rest is history.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jeff, hey, thanks so much. This won't be the last time, once again it's just so rich. Really appreciate you, my friend.

Jeff Henderson: Grateful for you. And thanks for what you're about to do for our staff.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, here we go. Jeff is one of my favorite people. He totally is. I just love the time we spend together. I know you're probably intrigued. His book is out today. It's called Be Known For What You're FOR. It is available anywhere books are sold and you can also get everything including transcripts at careynieuwhof.com/episode293. And remember to stay tuned. In just a moment I'm going to and a #askCarey, and we're going to talk about leadership and friendship, which actually is a bigger issue than most people would think. But before we do that, make sure you check out the unique offers we've got from our partners this week. You want to check out The Unstuck Group. Tony is one of the sharpest leaders out there, Tony Morgan, and you can hear more about how they helped us at Connexus. You can head to TheUnstuckGroup.com/Guests and remember, for this month only you can get up to 30% off for life on your website for your church. That's no upfront development fees, 30% off for life, by going to ProWebFire.com/Carey, and they would love to serve you there.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, next week we've got Dee Ann Turner, someone that Jeff used to work with at Chick-fil-A, who talks about how to create an amazing customer service experience. You ever been to a Chick-fil-A? Fascinating. Of course, most of you have been to a Chick-fil-A. It's not just a chicken sandwich, it's their customer service and how do they instill that attitude into tens of thousands of 16-, 17-year-olds, that's what we're talking about on the next episode, it's coming up later this week, with Dee Ann Turner. Here's an excerpt.

Dee Ann Turner: And he had this one particular rule. He took a nap every day after lunch. Now, I'm not talking about power naps that executives might take now for 10 minutes to regain their energy. I'm talking about a full-on snoring, two-hour nap.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh my gosh.

Dee Ann Turner: He was a head of the company, and on top of that he left strict instructions he was not to be disturbed under any condition. Well, one day I was sitting at the receptionist desk and the FBI showed up. And naturally, it was during the boss's nap time. They showed their badges and my 20-year-old self, just as proud as I could be, I said, "I'm sorry, he's not available." And of course you know what they did. They said, "Let's make him available."

Carey Nieuwhof: So that's next time on the podcast. Remember, if you subscribe you get it automatically for free. Guys, thank you so much for sharing and thanks for sharing this on social. We had one of the biggest weeks in the history of the podcast just a couple of weeks ago, and again, that's because you guys keep sharing. Thank you so much for that. And now, to today's question. The question was simply this. "As a pastor, and I would substitute 'leader', because I talk to a lot of leaders, and this is problem, it's been sometimes difficult to find true friends, even or especially in the congregation or on the leadership team. People get weird with you." Yep. "How do you approach this?"

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, couple of things. First of all, yes, people do get weird with you. Whenever you're a boss, here is the reality, okay? You have power over the people that you serve. Now, obviously you're supposed to have a servant heart and be a servant leader and not focus on the power that you've got, but the reality is, when you have the power to hire and fire people, or you're kind of their authority, it is going to be a different kind of relationship. It just is.

Carey Nieuwhof: Now, I've been in the same community with the same group of people for 25 years and we have lifelong friends in the church. A handful of them. But you always have to ask question, "Is that because I was their pastor, or I am their pastor? Or is it because I'm their friend?" And the answer is, you don't really know. You can have a best friend at work, and I think that's great, but remember, at the end of the day you're still the boss, and that means sometimes you have to correct your friend. And sometimes you've maybe got to fire a friend. I mean, it's hard to do that.

Carey Nieuwhof: And so, how do you handle this? Well, it's a great question. One thing is, I would not resist having friends like that. I think you can have some great friendships and we do, some really rich and rewarding friendships. But in the back of the mind I have to remember, "Yes, I'm still their pastor. I'm still their leader." That's exactly how that works. So, you got to remember that. And then secondly, don't just look to the organization in which you serve for friendship. Here's what I'm going to encourage you to do. I would love for you to go back a few episodes and go back to episode 286 and listen to my interview with John Townsend, the renowned clinical psychologist and best-selling author. He talks about how to actually make friends. It's toward the end of the podcast and he gives you an interview process on how to interview people to see if they can become part of your inner circle of friends.

Carey Nieuwhof: Believe it or not, yeah, you're doing an interview for how can I be a friend. It is single-handedly the best advice I've ever heard on friendship and the kind of friendship that, frankly, a lot of leaders don't have and a lot of pastors don't have, because we tend to always be on the giving end. We're always giving pastoral care or giving advice or coaching or mentoring or serving, and we don't really have close friends. So if you want a more nuanced answer, he talks about taking a few people out to lunch and just kind of testing the waters in

friendship. He shows you exactly how to do that, and that's episode 286 of this podcast. It has much greater detail.

Carey Nieuwhof: Bottom line is, I think you need three of those. I think you need three people. One of them may be inside your church, but then maybe two others that you can have regular contact with. You could do it virtually, but it's better if you do it in real life. John shows you exactly the questions to ask and the process to follow, and that's an episode 286. So yep, it's hard, it's not impossible. I do have some very rich friendships. They take a lot of work. They really do. But don't give up, and hopefully John Townsend can help you even more than this little answer can. Hey, if you got a question, leave it for me on any of the socials, Instagram, Twitter or Facebook. Use the #askCarey that's C-A-R-E-Y, and I will answer one every week at the end of this podcast. Guys, thanks so much for listening. Thanks for all your support, all your encouragement, 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.