

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 384 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Man, it's so good to have you along for this episode. We're going to go into some fun places today. Talk about fundraising, which a lot of you do. You're always as leaders trying to raise money of some kind. How do you do that? Bob Westfall is my guest. I think you're really going to enjoy this episode. It is brought to you by Pushpay and Church Community Builder. You can increase connection and encourage giving with ChurchStaq by going to pushpay.com/Carey. And it's brought to you by Convoy of Hope. Man, this has been a year, right? You can bring hope to the hurting and hungry this Christmas season by texting COH to 68828 or visit convoyofhope.org to donate.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Bob Westfall is going to talk to us about how to raise more money, how to create a culture of generosity and why giving can grow even during tough economic times. I know a lot of you probably already got your 2021 budget in the books, but you're asking yourself the question, "Well, what can I count on?" I don't really know. The economy is all over the place. Really good in some areas and not good in others. Can we count on the surplus a lot of you saw this year next year? Is it going to get worse or better?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, over the last 18 years, Bob has helped charities and not-for-profits raise over, are you ready for this, \$1 billion for their work. He unpacks why some people give and others don't, the wrong script to use when raising money and the principles behind raising more money. And he also explains, as we've talked about from time to time on this show, why economic downturns don't necessarily reduce giving and can even increase it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

He is a well-known expert in philanthropy. He founded Westfall Gold, a fundraising firm that has raised over a billion dollars for 100 ministries, universities and other nonprofits. His personal mission is to inspire everyone to live out courageous generosity in order to experience true fulfillment and joy. In his latest book, the Courage Factor, he shares a number of insights and stories. And yeah, it's going to be a great conversation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, as you look to 2021, here are some questions. How do you increase connection and momentum in your ministry at the same time? Well, you can do it with one powerful suite that can help you encourage giving, nurture community and share your message. If you haven't checked out ChurchStaq, that's S-T-A-Q, ChurchStaq, it brings all of the digital tools you need together for a seamless, connected experience.

To learn more, go to pushpay.com/Carey, C-A-R-E-Y and you can find out everything you need to know there. So that's pushpay.com/Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I have been really impressed with the work of Convoy of Hope. This has been a year of unprecedented disaster all over the world, and millions are actually hungry this holiday season, but you can help. So far this year, in 2020, Convoy of Hope has delivered 150 million meals to those affected by COVID-19 all in partnership with the local church. Convoy of Hope is a Christian humanitarian organization, and they exist to bring hope to the hungry, through feeding initiatives, disaster response, women's empowerment, agricultural training, and so many other things.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thousands of churches, including many of the leading churches across the US partner with Convoy of Hope to help those in need in their local community. And you can as well. Convoy is one of the most trusted non-profit, Christian, humanitarian organizations in the world. They take your dollars and stretch it into \$6 because of their partnership with companies like Walmart, Home Depot, Culligan, Nestle Water, Bass Pro Shops, and so much more, stuff that, honestly, on your own you just can't do. So if you want to really help the hurting and the hungry this season, text COH to 68828. That's C-O-H to 66828, or visit convoyofhope.org and you and your church can donate.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, we're going to jump into our conversation with Bob Westfall. Also, really excited to talk to you a little bit about the principles around how to increase giving and yeah, just kind of supplement what we talked about in this episode with Bob Westfall. Well, without further ado, my conversation with Bob.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Bob, welcome to the podcast. So glad to have you.

Bob Westfall:

Hey, it's an honor to be here. Thank you. Appreciate the opportunity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. We have a lot of mutual friends, so it's fun to have this conversation and you sent me your book and it's really interesting because we're going to talk about generosity and that's one thing that links almost all the leaders together and there's kind of two hats. One we're donors. We all give to something or most of us would give to something and some very sacrificially, but probably, for the purposes of this podcast, a lot of us are trying to raise money, like you talk to church leaders, they're trying to raise money, sometimes venture capitalists are trying to raise money. That's a bit of a different equation. Or we're all trying to do something for good cause.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You start off your book by talking about multiplying your talents, though. I want to talk, even before we get there, about how you started this. You said that getting to the place where you spend your life helping people be generous was not an easy journey. You hint at it. What do you mean by that? How is this one a hard one for you personally?

Bob Westfall:

So at the time, Carey, I had been serving at an organization called Walk Thru the Bible founded by Bruce Wilkinson, and had developed a model that a donor to walk through actually came to me and said, "Bob, this is too good of a tool to help release funding for the kingdom, for this tool to be planted inside of one organization. You ought to make this available to the kingdom, not just to one ministry." And so it was actually a donor that walked through that challenged me with that. And I was praying through that decision and I was at an extraordinarily difficult time in my life. My marriage was in shambles. I had four kids, one about to start college. My wife at the time was stay-at-home mother and I was working for a ministry. So I had .19 in the bank. I had a really secure job at Walk Thru the Bible.

Bob Westfall:

Basically underneath my tenure, we had scaled the development program tenfold over what I had inherited. So I had had, really, an incredible place, safe place at Walk Thru, to continue my career. But the seed had been planted that I had developed this one tool, a talent, if you will, that could be used to really scale other organizations for kingdom impact. And I was posed with that question, "Hey, you have this talent, what are you going to do with it?" And given where I was at personally and the safety that I had, the easy answer was, "stay put." It's safe. But then I started thinking about the parable and the one servant who had one talent and when that one servant buried that talent, what God had to say about what that servant had done with that talent. And I had to look myself in the mirror and had this gut check like, "Bob, you either have to do that or face at some point your master and say, 'I was scared.'" I couldn't do that. I was safe where I was at, so I stayed there. And that was a reckoning moment, Carey.

Bob Westfall:

I was, again, at a really impossible place at home and life was tough and then I had this very safe job and no money. But I did not want to be held accountable for burying the one talent. So I made the choice to flip the switch and say, "Yeah, I'm going to do this and I'm going to go for it." I left and had just an incredible opportunity thrust at me in the transition period at Walk Thru. And then I came to know Christ through Billy Graham and Billy Graham Association called just before I started my company. And they said, "Hey, why don't you come and help us raise the money to build the Billy Graham Museum. And if that works, then we'll move you into the chief development officer role at BGEA." Here I am a guy a product of Billy Graham and I had to say no to that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

So when you talk about a season of crisis of vision or crisis of courage and faith, man, I was right smack in the middle of it when I ultimately made the decision to launch Westfall Gold.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I appreciate you being so transparent about that, too. I think a lot of leaders, I've been in that place where things are not going well personally, but things were, they still had an upside professionally, so to speak, or vocationally and it's very tenuous ground. Henry Cloud's been on the podcast before and one of the things he said last time around, which I thought was so good, is that when people run into an area of struggle or even personal challenges, you talk about your marriage or your personal life being in not

the place you want it to be, he said, they... if I'm going to get this right. He says, "People tend to conclude that it is permanent, personal and pervasive." In other words, it's personal. This isn't about just my marriage. It's about me. It's permanent. Things will never get better. And it's pervasive. I'm no good at anything.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did... because then you talk about multiplying your talent and you hear this calling and you walk into it in that season. What made you not fall for the three Ps and just play it safe, as you said?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. It was the fear of saying, "Sorry, I was scared," and having to face that. But secondarily I had bought into the ultimate impact that I could have. And that tethered, if you will, to the servant who had five talents and created 10. And the tether was, yeah, but imagine if I go for it and I'm able to have some measure of success with that talent, imagine being able to hear the three promises from God. And as much as the fear of not pursuing that and hearing, "Get away from me, you wicked servant," not only did the fear drive me, the promise of God drove me and that probably tethered my heart more towards going fully after it than the fear did, if that makes sense. And so it was a commitment to being a 10 talent producer.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did you, and I don't mean to get too personal, but what happened in that season and how did you move through it? And then I'd love to talk about what happened since.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah, well, the friend that convinced me to launch Westfall Gold said, "Bob, if you made the choice to do this, how would you measure its success?" This was before I launched the company and this guy was a Harvard MBA graduate, had built a massive company, took it public and then sold it on the New York Stock Exchange. So a brilliant business mind. And he said ultimately, "Hey, over the next five years, you start the company, you help five ministries raise \$25 million in that five-year timeframe and at the end of five years you look back on that achievement, how does that make you feel about your investment?" And I'm like, "Are you kidding? Crazy good." And he said, "Well, that's how you make the decision." Yeah. It's easy for you to say, but it's not so easy for me to do.

Bob Westfall:

So I decided to do it and in the midst of the turmoil. The turmoil was, it got worse, deeper and harder. And at the end of the day, sadly, ultimately ended in a divorce in the midst of it, and I ended up with full custody of my kids. So I had the issue going on in my family. I had all of a sudden become a single dad and I was running Westfall Gold. So when people say it must have been an easy decision to me, to do what you do given what has transpired as a result of what you've done, we have a little conversation about how difficult it really was, because it was an extraordinarily difficult season of my life.

Bob Westfall:

But I also think, Carey, if I could just expand on a little bit.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, please do.

Bob Westfall:

I also think that when you're in the midst of extraordinary conflict in your life, your senses, your heart, your soul, your spirit is listening more. I think if folks in the midst of conflict, in the midst of tragedy, in the midst of conflict, if they would realize everything is really heightened emotionally, spiritually, physically for me, also begin to look not just at the conflict happening, but begin to look what else is happening around you.

Bob Westfall:

And that's what I did during that season is I didn't just look at the conflict and the turmoil and the difficulties I was going through. I was watching what else was going on around me and what was going on around me with some pretty good stuff. The impact we were having in the early stages of the business was extraordinary. One client, Moody Bible Institute, in the first couple years of our relationship had raised \$20 million in cash and \$20 million in estate giving. We had \$40 million raised just through one client, not 25. And you know what I'm saying?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

So I had some experience around me that I allowed myself to at least look at some of this positive things that were having a really cool impact and allow that to also saturate my soul and my mind and my heart as I walked through that experience.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, I really appreciate you sharing that, Bob. I think, one of the harder dialogues in the church and we always don't handle that well is, everything's fine until everything's not fine. And then there's a temptation just to sideline people and say, "Well, that was it. You're disqualified or you're this." And so I think it's really inspiring to hear how you move through that, how you saw God's hand was still on you. And I'm sure it was an incredibly difficult season as well for you, for your wife, for your kids, the whole deal. I can see it in your eyes. For those of you who are watching the video, you can see it in your eyes. So thank you for sharing that.

Bob Westfall:

Thank you. Absolutely. Happy to.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you know what? There are some leaders who are listening to that right now going, "Bob, that's exactly where I'm at. And I don't want to tell anybody. I don't want to admit anything." What would you say to those leaders who are in that situation right now, where it feels like it's kind of imploding personally?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. That was my original go-to. It's safer not to tell somebody else what's happening than to risk exposing that and have to be drug through what the results of that might be. But what I found, it was the exact opposite, is as I shared what I was going through, I got empathy. I got grace, in most cases, in other cases I didn't.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, fair enough.

Bob Westfall:

I got compassion and it taught me how to be actually more transparent, just to be candid. It was both healing, medicinal, and instructional. It really helped prepare me for not just when I engage with people who are going through personal tragedy, but it broadened, I'll use this word, it broadened capacity in me as a person. When someone reflected to me of the, pardon the use of the word hell, I went through in my season, I reflected back, that was a really difficult season. One of the benefits of that season was it created enormous capacity in me. My wife would tell you, she's never met anybody that has quite the capacity that I have. And I attribute that back to the pain, the turmoil, the ability to allow people to enter into that story with me, if you will.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Did it improve your empathy as well for other people going through a hard time?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. I would say if my empathy bucket before I went through this was at a 10 on a scale of one to 100 and my grace bucket was at a five on a scale of one to 100, I would say both my empathy and my grace buckets are up near, I don't want to say I'm perfect, but I'm probably in the 80 to 95 percentile range now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Our marriage went through a tough time. My wife's got a book coming out about that. And some other things too, called Before You Split. Our story was we were able to stay together and I'm very thankful for that. But I think about the deepest failure in my life was burnout 15 years ago. And prior to that, I was very judgmental of anybody who is weak or burning out. And since then, if you're telling me you're having a hard time and can't keep up with it all, I'm just locked in and empathetic and there's almost an instant bond. Wish we had more of that in ministry. You know what I mean?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. Me too. Me too. Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thank you. I think that's been an encouragement and God has used you. How many years ago was that Bob for you when you started Westfall Gold?

Bob Westfall:

2002 and that's 18 years now. Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. That's incredible. This is the story we're going to get into. Now, the parable of the talents, which we started to touch on, you had a hearing of that, that kind of shook your world. So is there anything we didn't cover about that, that you want to just... Because that's one of my favorite parables, too. I don't know that I'm the five talent steward, but I figure I got two. And even if I've got one, my job is to double it, right? That's my goal.

Bob Westfall:

There you go. I think I'm the one talent guy. So what happened was, the pastor reading the verse read the promises piece. So a little while the master came back and called for an account from his servants and the one who had had five presented him 10. And he said, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You've been faithful with a few small things. I can trust you with more." But then he said, "Enter into the joy of your master." And I just stopped listening at that moment. And I said, "What? I've never heard that before. What does that mean?" And I started to dive into it and I couldn't fathom that God had finally told me how I could engage and morph into this co-habitive joy, be in joy with my father. And when I finally allowed myself to believe that's what he was saying, I then went back and say, "Why did he say that?"

Bob Westfall:

What a lot of people miss, Carey, is the parable is in chapter 25, in 24, the disciples are saying, "Hey, you're about to go. What's going to happen to us. What's the end time's going to look like?" And he goes into all these parables, but then he says, "Hey guys, let me just lay it out for you, what I'm trying to say here." This is what's so... I get so charged about this. He says to his disciples, "Look, I'm about to go. And when I go, somebody has to rule the kingdom on earth. So here's what I'm going to do. I'm entrusting you," us, "to rule this kingdom on earth."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

Watch this. This is so crazy. "What I'm going to do, because I know so intimately how I created you, I am not only going to equip you with that talent. I'm going to give you something of mine, of mine, God, to you, Carey, to help you carry out the very vision I've given you, the very talent that I've given you. Something of mine, God, unique. I know exactly how I created you, Carey." This is what God's saying to you.

Bob Westfall:

Sorry, I'm getting a little worked up.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's good.

Bob Westfall:

But I get so excited about this. I know exactly... This is what he says, each according to his own ability. So God knows exactly how he created you. And then based on how he created you, he gave you something

of his to steward and manage on his behalf to help with his kingdom on earth. So why does he care so much about the way we steward what he gives us? A, because it's his, and B, because he's equipping us to be stewards of his kingdom here on earth. And when I got that, I'm like, "Oh my gosh, he loves us so intimately that he gave us something exclusively ours, for us, for such a time as this, to bring his kingdom here on earth." And so when I captured the heart of why he was telling that story and why was he so full of joy?

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:23:04]

Bob Westfall:

He was so full of joy because what he entrusted to you, Carey, you did well with, and it was his that you were stewarding here on earth. So when I wrap my head around that, that's when this all started to happen in 2002. And then I said, "There's no way I can abort that talent for the sake of safety." Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Bob Westfall:

I just had to say, "You've got to go for this, Bob, you have no choice." So that's what happened to me, when I understood "enter into the joy of your master," and why he was saying that, and why the parable was so important. Listen, he used the word talent because at the time one talent was 80 pounds. It was 80 pounds of silver. And when you're thinking about that at that time, that's a huge amount of money.

Bob Westfall:

So what he's saying to his disciples, this is the last point I know I'm going over on this one, but what he was saying was, "Look, I'm entrusting my kingdom on earth to you. And I'm not just going to say, go do something with it. I'm going to give you something of great value to help you in this journey." And I think if folks really understood what that parable was about, we would live our lives a little bit differently. Not everybody. I think a lot of people get it. And I tell a lot of the stories in the book, but I think there's a lot of folks out there that have buried that talent that I'm hoping this book says to them, time to go dig that little thing up and put it to use.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I love that. And it's one of my favorite parables too. I've gone back to the Greek on it. I went to seminary so I can nerd out like that. But one of the things that fascinates me about that, Bob is there's the five and the two talent, steward. And you would think, the one shows up with four, the other shows up with 10, and I look at your ten and I look at my four, and I'm like, "Well, I'm inadequate." But that's actually not how the story goes. God just says the exact same phrase, word for word to each of them. It's like, "Great. You produced more. And you've been faithful with a little." And so whether you lead a small church, a large church, a mid-sized church, a mega church, a small business, a large business, it doesn't really matter. Your job is not the ultimate size. It's to actually create a return on the investment and to use that gift that God gave you. I think it's the most equalizing parable. It's so beautiful that way.

Bob Westfall:

Right on man. And I didn't go to seminary. I don't teach Greek, but it sure became real personal to me. I allowed it to seep deep into my soul and to really own it if you will.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So what is the mindset of the leaders you've met and you've worked with many of them, the mindset of a leader who says, "Yes, I'm going to put this to work and I'm going to double it. I'm going to use my talent, not bury it." What are some of the qualities and characteristics of leaders, even thinking back on your own life. Going, "no, I'm not going to bury myself in this little hole of things didn't work out the way I wanted and I'm just going to play it safe and stay in this job. And hopefully one day retire and make the best of a tough situation." What made you go for it? What was the self-talk?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah, the self-talk was again the negative. "I don't want to hear that." The positive, "imagine if I could create this great return for the kingdom," and another kind of characteristic is, so we set a dream for our company in 2005, because we'd gone over the 25 million drastically. But we set a dream of a billion dollars for our company to happen by 2026. And that created a kind of a-

Carey Nieuwhof:

By that you mean release a billion in giving or a billion in revenue?

Bob Westfall:

Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Bob Westfall:

Sorry to be clear. It was to inspire generous givers that attend our event to give a billion dollars to the charities and ministries that we serve.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Okay.

Bob Westfall:

Now see, now we had only hit about 40 or 50 million in that stage.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It might as well have been a trillion at that point?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's like way out there.

Bob Westfall:

For me, a billion was like, you can't even think about that. So we set that as a vision and we said, that's what we want to hit by 2026. And the beautiful thing is a few years ago, we realized that we're going to hit that a lot quicker.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

So we changed the goal to, by the end of 2020 this year. And by God's grace last year, we helped generous givers through our events contribute 171 million dollars, just last year to the ministries we serve. And last year, that amount added to what we'd raised so far, put us over a billion dollars raised-

Carey Nieuwhof:

For kingdom endeavors. That's incredible.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. Yeah, it's wild, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

And so for me, everybody kept saying in 2019, "Hey, you might hit it this year. What's next?" And to think that, it was first of all, hard to clear the billion dollar hurdle, if you will. And then to put myself in, well, golly, what are you going to start presenting next? And so it's, I think one of the essentials is the ability to see beyond the physical or the human to trust vision as inspired and involved, spirit of God, and God himself. The second thing is humility. One of the things that I identified in each of the stories of the leaders that I mentioned is the humility of being asked by God to steward the talent they've been given. And the way they carry that out in their day-to-day life. It's just in my mind, in most cases, it's an absolute picture of humility.

Bob Westfall:

And then another thing that I see in these leaders that are committed to kind of, we're going all the way, Hal Donaldson, we're feeding 200,000 children right now. I have the systems in place, we do as an organization, Convoy of Hope. We want to be feeding a million children. It's almost like never satisfied with where we're at. We got to get to the next level. And it's not for our sake. It's not for my sake that we're raising a billion dollars because when we raise a billion dollars, I know that we have helped impact 1.1 or 1.2 billion people around the world through the money that we've helped raise. So it's also understanding the fruit of what you're doing with that talent that matters. It's not a personal thing. It's a kingdom impact thing.

Bob Westfall:

The other thing I see is the way they treat people. You're valued. You're valuable. A personal tenet I have in my personal leadership is this is not a one-way street. Kind of founder syndrome says in most cases, founders typically have a one-way loyalty street it's to them, not from them. And I flipped that. I say, "Look, you've been with us for eight years." I had someone come to me the other day, who had an idea they wanted to pursue, that ultimately we hope is housed as a tool inside Westfall Gold. It might not be. And if it's not, how do I help our company connect with this new vision so that we can help you fulfill your dream? I was saying to that person, "This isn't a one-way loyalty street. You've been with us for eight years. You've helped us cross that billion dollar goal. I want to do the same for you. What can I do to help you achieve your dream, your vision?"

Bob Westfall:

It's honesty. It's transparency. The last thing I'd say is it's allowing you to be a person. So we have an employee who was responsible for production of an invitation package that, I'll make something up here just to illustrate it. It, may have said something like "Let's help us bring cancer to an end." Let's say that that was the title. And we ran a press check of it, but we didn't go to the press to watch it being printed. And it ended up saying, "Let's bring cancer." Instead of "Let's bring cancer to an end."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, that's a bit of a mistake. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a tough one.

Bob Westfall:

So the package went out, a board member called the client, the client called us and say, "What the heck happened?" And the employee who was responsible for the production of that piece, I had a call with that employee and she knew I was calling her. And I called her, and as she answered the phone, you could hear the emotion welling up in her, sad, despondent, disappointed, hurt, hurt that she hurt us. Those are all the emotions she was feeling. You could see that you could actually almost see the tears in her eyes, even though we were on a phone call. And I said to her, as she was going through her explanation of how bad she felt. I said, "Could you hold on one second?" And she said, "Yeah, go ahead." I said, "I was really just hoping to talk to somebody who had made a mistake because I have never made one. So it's really cool to have a conversation with somebody who made a mistake." And that was what she did. She's like, "Oh, you kidding me?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

And she, at the end of that call, she felt so honored and empowered. Yeah, you made a mistake. Did you learn from it? What are we going to put in place so we don't let that happen again? You're valuable to

me, you're valuable to us. One production error is not the end of this relationship, okay. So let's put that to rest and let's move on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's so interesting. The qualities you're describing are very much featured like in Jim Collins' Good to Great. The Level Five CEO, the Level Five Leader. I was talking to another CEO recently, and he had an employee who made a terrible mistake that potentially could have cost the company millions. And I just happened to ask him, I said, "So what happened to that guy? Did you fire him?" He said, "No. When we found out what happened, I went over and hugged him. Could you imagine how he felt right now?" And I'm like, "Wow, that's like a great boss. That's a great boss."

Bob Westfall:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you have thousands of leaders listening who are trying to raise money for either their church or their cause or something that they're invested in. And you've helped nonprofits raise over a billion dollars. What are some of the best practices in fundraising and generosity that leaders should know about?

Bob Westfall:

Excellent. So in the church space, it's not relying on conviction, or guilt, or requirement. It's really focusing on vision, impact and helping the giver connect their gift to the impact that they're having. And that that's one of the principles that's true in the nonprofit space. I'm speaking right now, the church space.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah.

Bob Westfall:

And in the church space too often, we don't take the time to build the evidence of the impact of our support. We rely on the importance of the transaction, the importance of the behavior, the importance of the responsibility, rather than the impact of the gift, the number of people that we're reaching, the impact that's having in the lives of the people that we're reaching. So our company, we serve on the board of The Giving Institute. The Giving Institute informs, and creates, and funds the annual charity report on giving, Giving USA.

Bob Westfall:

And we also are researchers of giving habits. And then finally we subscribed to the biannual study of giving habits of high net worth people. That's produced by Bank of America, through the Lilly School of Philanthropy.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

So we take time to understand what inspires people to be generous givers. And 94% of givers will give when they believe in the mission of your organization. So the question I always leaders in the nonprofit space, and this is true for pastors too. The question is, do people that you're talking to believe in what you're trying to, do and the impact that you're having? And here's the third one. Do you believe as a leader, you can influence their belief in you? And that is-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I was thinking through that. Yeah, yeah.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. That is really the most important question. Because if you don't think you can instruct, you can equip a giver to believe in your mission. Then you might as well stop trying to do it. The answer is, you can inform, you can inspire people to believe in your mission. It has to be founded on principle. It has to be founded on trust, and it has to be founded on impact. Meaning, I'll believe in you when you show me the impact that you're having in the lives of other people. So 94% of people will make a strategic gift to your organization when they believe in what you're doing. But here's another really important factor. 93%. This is to me, pay dirt. 93% will write a check when you've proven to them that when they give you the money, you're going to take that money and to help transform somebody else's life.

Bob Westfall:

So our company, we call that the transformational case. So there's three elements to a case. There's the, let's call it the intellectual. It's the who you are, the where you are, how you do it, how long you've done it, that opens the mind to at least say, I want to hear more. And then you have the emotional case who you're trying to reach, how many lives you reach, where you reach them. So you have the intellectual, the emotional, and then you have the transformational. But you have to do it in that order.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Bob Westfall:

Head, heart, soul. That's the process.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Head, heart, soul. Okay.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. So for those of you in leadership, I speak on this topic all the time, Carey, and I'll walk away from having given this presentation and highlight the strategic importance of the transformational case. I'll go back to an organization two or three months later, and I'll say, "Tell me what you're doing in your engagement strategy with your giving community." And you know what I'm looking for. I'm looking for the places where they've implemented the transformational case to help deliver that impact, telling the donors how they're impacting people's lives. And I don't see it. So it's almost like they hear it. They go home and they just keep doing what they know how to do. But if folks understood the impact the transformational case has in a donor writing a check, I believe we would transform the way we engage in donor development with our donor community.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I wonder if you could do this, you've sat through a thousand church services in your life, I'm sure. Or appeals. And a lot of them are done really poorly. So most people have that 30 to 60 seconds before they take up the offering. However they do that online or in person, can you give us an example of a really bad way to do it? Just if you were going to do the worst possible job, and you've got 30 seconds to take up an offering, or make a pitch, what would be the wrong way to do it? What would you say?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. So-

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I realize this is a lot more, we're going to get into donor weekends and everything, but I realize...

Bob Westfall:

Sure.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But that's where the rubber hits the road for a lot of leaders. So.

Bob Westfall:

Sure.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What do you think?

Bob Westfall:

So, yeah, so here's the opportunity today, God expects the tithe and as you are preparing to enter your personal commitment to the offering, I just want to remind you that the tithe is of the highest priority. And it's supposed to go to the storehouse. The church is considered the storehouse.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've heard that a few times. I've heard that a few times.

Bob Westfall:

That's an actual one that I've heard.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Perhaps I've delivered it once or twice.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What's wrong with that? What's wrong with that?

Bob Westfall:

Well, God loves a cheerful giver.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, yeah. A million times growing up.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. And I don't feel very-

Carey Nieuwhof:

And we're all sitting there with scowls on our faces. Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

I'm sitting there going, "I don't feel very cheerful about this. I feel like it's a guilt trip, and I've not been instructed on why this is good. I've only been told what I'm supposed to do." Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm.

Bob Westfall:

So for me, sitting in the pew, what I want to hear is what you're going to do when you get this money, what the impact's going to be when you get this money, the impact I can have when I give my money. And then probably the most important thing is, am I engaging God in the conversation about what he wants me to give?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay, so how would the script be a little bit different. If you're going to do a better job, how might you frame it?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. So I would have to understand the community and the church, the missions of the church, local, regional, international. And I would package it somewhere like that. Here's how we use given resources in this church locally, regionally, internationally. Here's a story of a life that was transformed because of an international gift that we made as a church. Here's a story of a regional impact of a family's life that was impacted because of giving from this church. Here's a story of someone who now attends our church, that didn't, and how that engagement happened. And then I would say, "Now you have an opportunity in the pew to do something with your lives, and your resources to do the same. The question is this for you, as you begin to prayerfully consider your engagement with our church, and in this offering, will you invite God into that conversation? Will you ask God between you and your spouse? God, what are you laying on our heart to give to this right now? Will you both engage in that conversation where you engage God? I'm sure God has an opinion. Perhaps you'd like to ask him right now."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, wow. Yeah, I don't think I've heard that very often, to be honest with you.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. Well, yeah. I think that's a way to help inspire people to think about the impact the church is having. And then invite God into the conversation because I'm sure he has an opinion.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Different than rah rah, here's a whole bunch of vision, you should give isn't it?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah, it is.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I hear it.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Okay. So we talk about some of the best and the worst. You talk in your book at the very end about a culture of generosity, Bob, what are some of the keystones of creating a culture? Because I agree it's more than a transaction. It's more than the 30 minutes, or 30 seconds, or the three minutes on a Sunday morning. It's more than a donor night. What are some of the hallmarks of a culture of generosity?

Bob Westfall:

So first of all, it has to be in community when you are rubbing shoulders with generous givers, generous giving happens. And sometimes I get the question, "Can you help non generous people become generous?" As another way to frame it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That was on my list, actually. I'm curious what you think about that.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah, but I think that this answer will blend both. First of all, you have to model generosity yourself. So what I mean by that is I have a good friend of mine, a guy named Todd in Atlanta. I was asked to speak at Christian Leadership Association on this topic of transformational generosity. And I came in as the practitioner to help people understand what are the steps to helping create transformational giving. But I brought a giver to help create kind of the anecdotal to the intellectual, if you will.

Bob Westfall:

And so I laid out my case, Todd, the donor spoke and validated the intellectual pieces, the empirical data. And then we got a question from the audience and the question was, "Hey, I want this question to

go to Todd, because he's the giver, in this conversation." And Todd said, "Hold on a second. You don't know the generosity of this guy." He pointed to me, I don't mean to point myself out, but I'm what I'm trying to say is, the people in the room didn't reflect me as a generous giver. They reflected Todd as the generous giver. And Todd paused and gave a great testimony about my wife and I, and our stewardship. But what he said was, "You can't, as a fundraiser, you can't invite people to be generous if you're not generous yourself." That's what he was saying in his commentary. The second thing is you have to engage. You have to build bridges of trust between givers and organizations. You have to demonstrate impact.

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:46:04]

Bob Westfall:

And then it takes community, but it takes generous givers speaking to givers about the reasons they are generous. So a few weeks ago, we just had an event with one of our clients, Biblica. We had Bob and Leslie Doll there with us. Bob Doll and Leslie did a fantastic testimony about how they've crafted their philosophy of stewardship. And several givers, when they filled out their commitment form in response to the ask at Biblica, said they had... One donor had actually added a zero to their original idea of their giving commitment, added a zero because of what they had to say about their own personal generosity.

Bob Westfall:

So you have to be willing to be transparent about your generosity, right? So it's modeling, it's building trust, it's demonstrating impact, and it's being willing to be transparent. And the last thing I'll say is, it has to do with some more empirical research that has been done with people who consider themselves novices or knowledgeable or expert philanthropists. And look at this number. Novices, on average, give \$19,000 a year. This is high net worth families I'm speaking of. Knowledgeable givers, people who kind of understand philanthropy and engaged in it, they give \$80,000 a year as a family. Experts, people who apply thinking and strategy and technique in their giving, experts give \$120,000 a year.

Bob Westfall:

So here's the point, in the philanthropic world, we have an opportunity here to increase the knowledge of donors, right? We don't just look at these statistics and say, "Wow, that's cool. I wish our donors would move from novice to expert." But guess what? We can help them do that. We can bring about training to help increase the intellectual mindset of people in the area of stewardship. So the intellectual, the spiritual, the emotional, they all come together with that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now, that's really interesting when you think about expert philanthropy, because my wife and I have been watching Inside Bill's Brain, the biography on Netflix about... the documentary, I should say, about Bill Gates. And it's interesting, because he's now spending most of his time with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and it chronicles all of his work. And it's almost like he's taking all the intellect he had in software to create Microsoft and approaching that to clean energy and eliminating disease and fighting poverty. And it's not just, "Oh, I think I'll write another check because I was moved by this video or I cried a little bit."

Carey Nieuwhof:

He's gotten an intellectual approach to it that is rigorous, rigorous to how he's giving. And of course, he and Warren Buffet have had that pledge where you're going to give away over half of your wealth in your lifetime. Do you see that with high-capacity givers, that they are very prayerful, but also very thoughtful and strategic and expect to see a return on their investment?

Bob Westfall:

They are. They are quite intentional. The experts are very intentional. They have a plan. They even begin to export that plan to their family, to their kids, and they teach it, they model it. I think of one family that I know that has a commitment over the next five years to give away a hundred million dollars. They told me the story of the first time when they were building their business. The first time the couple, the husband and wife, sat down at the dinner table and really had a hard prayer time about giving their first thousand dollar gift. Now, they're on a plan to give away a hundred million dollars.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. That's a lot.

Bob Westfall:

But you know what? Not only do they have a plan to give away the hundred million, but they meet with their grandkids and they talk about, "Hey, let's put a bag of groceries together this Thanksgiving and go bless a family." Here's a family that could write a \$10 million check, but then they're sitting with their grandkids saying, "Let's go put together a bag of groceries and feed a family at Thanksgiving." Or they're sitting with a waitress or a waiter, and that person engages in conversation with them. They learn something. The Spirit ticks their heart that, "Maybe you should do something special for that waiter or waitress." And they write a hundred dollars tip on a \$40 check, you know?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

It's that kind of generosity that you see in the experts, if you will, the intentional, the super generous. And what's really important is to get those people together with the other non-generous or less generous or less, let's call it instructed folks, right? Let's help create community where these communities are engaging together, and that's where you're going to see some momentum begin to form.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I couldn't agree more, because you learn from other people, right? You learn in those environments. So I want to go back to a lot of the leaders who are listening, who are the fundraisers here, who are the people trying to, as you do, facilitate those encounters. One thing you said earlier is, "The generosity of the pastor or the leader is really important personally."

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've talked to numerous people. It's no secret that some pastors are very sacrificial, very generous, perhaps even to a fault. Others are kind of stingy and broke. Is that a non-starter, like you're never going to have a generous culture if you're a stingy leader? Any thoughts on that?

Bob Westfall:

I've tried to audit that and evaluate that on a case-by-case basis, and I don't have anything but anecdotal to give you. But the organizations, the pastors that are super generous, attract super generous people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's funny.

Bob Westfall:

Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

And those that are not super generous themselves that are ultra conservative that... I'm not going to put labels on, but those-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm not cheap. I'm just being a good steward. Right. Yeah. Sorry, let me give you the phraseology.

Bob Westfall:

... They attract people like that. Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

And so what I've seen is, we did an event for a university, and they had been stuck in this \$25 million campaign for a medical building. They'd been stuck right at... I think it was at \$14 or \$15 million for five years, hadn't gone past that number. And we were working with this organization for the first time, and they said, "How do we get past this block we're at?" And I said, "Look, you've got to say... If a donor asks you, 'What's the one thing that if we were to do this weekend that would give you great leverage and momentum?' And be prepared to say what that is. And then the other thing you have to do is be able to say what you were willing to do about it yourself." So the CEO goes up on stage during the ask. The way we frame our weekend, the ask comes on Saturday morning.

Bob Westfall:

And the CEO stands up and he says, "You know, here's the whole vision that we're casting. Folks in the room, I got to tell you, there's one thing. It's been burning in my heart all weekend. And it's our medical center. It's got to come online. We've been in this campaign for five years, five years too long. We're stuck at \$15 million. This is the most critical thing we could focus on. And it's the one thing I would say to you. As you pray, if God leads you to this place, please join us."

Bob Westfall:

And he said these words, "I've talked to my wife. We've prayed about it. She and I are making the single largest gift and commitment we've ever made in our entire life, all in for that medical center." And at the end of the weekend, they raised \$3.2 million for the medical center.

Carey Nieuwhof:

There you go.

Bob Westfall:

So generosity breeds generosity, and you have to be a generous giver yourself in order to invite others to be generous.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I think you've already half answered or maybe fully answered my next question which is, how do you talk about your generosity? Because there is that biblical thing where the right hand shouldn't know what the left hand is doing, and you don't want to do your acts in public. On the other hand, there are a good number, perhaps the majority of leaders listening, who are generous, who do give sacrificially. It costs them something, right? And-

Bob Westfall:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They're going over and above with their tithe. But if you stand up there and say, "Hey, I want you to know we're giving 15% of our income away to this church," or whatever, it starts to feel very self-serving. So how do you do that in a way that's appropriate, that has spiritual integrity? I love the phrase, "You just give." And my wife and I have done a similar thing where we've said... We didn't give the amount but it's like, "This is the biggest thing we have ever done in our lives."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Our joke is with one of the buildings, it's like, "Oh, there's our kid's college education. It's in the bricks right over there." We ended up walking away from that building, ultimately. And our kids have graduated from college, so God provides. But it's like, I get that. And there's a lot of leaders listening who are like, "Yeah, I put my kid's college education on the line, you know, once or twice as well." What would you say to them? How do you talk about that in a way that isn't weird or unproductive?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. What we do is at our events, we ask the ministry leaders not to make the ask. We ask them to tell the story to proclaim the vision. Here's where we're headed. We ask them to prescribe. If you're going to get involved with this, here's a variety of ways you can get involved. But then we equip a giving couple on making the invitation, and that becomes peer-to-peer. And so what we say to the giver is, "Look, what we'd like you to do is articulate why this particular mission matters so much to you. Number two, what stories can you relate about your giving to this organization that have affected you personally and inspired you to be a generous giver to this organization? Number three, are you willing to say we give to a portfolio of organizations? This one is number one or number two. You know, it's in the top

two of our personal stewardship. Are you willing to say we've given up things from our life in order to make this happen? If you are, don't say how much."

Bob Westfall:

Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm.

Bob Westfall:

And then lastly, are you willing to ask them directly to invite God into this conversation you're going to have with him this afternoon because my wife and I are going to ask him as well? And that creates the space to allow that conversation to happen couple to couple. I'll give you one quick story. One couple came to one of our events and made the ask, if you will. And they had been to the event the year before, and they related a story to what happened the year before. So here's what happened.

Bob Westfall:

The husband says on the airplane to the second event, "Sweetheart, we know this organization now. Let's go ahead and get in our minds what we're going to commit, and it's going to be X, right?" They agree. They get to the event. It starts on Thursday. They go through the whole cycle on Saturday morning. They get to the ask Saturday. They go back to the room, and the husband relays the story this way, "We're in our room. And my wife goes, 'Babe.'" And he goes, "Uh-oh, I know what that means."

Bob Westfall:

And he goes, "She was out on the patio and she goes, 'Can we talk about that number again?'" And he's like, "Oh yeah, we can talk about that." They're relaying this story literally like this on stage. And she goes, "I've been thinking. You know, we've talked a lot about what we could do without in order to..." She said, "We've not talked a lot about what we could do without in order to give more. But when I was thinking about that, I also thought about what it would mean to the people that received the benefit of our gift if we gave more." And so she goes, "I'd like to consider giving more. Can we pray about it?" And he said, "Yeah. Well, let's just pray right now. You pray in your mind, I'll pray in mine, and we'll come together with a number."

Bob Westfall:

They both prayed, and he said to her, "What'd you come up with?" They wrote it down on a piece of paper. She showed him hers, he showed her his, and it was the same number.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No way.

Bob Westfall:

Three times what they had planned to give, yeah. So they didn't tell a number, right? They didn't tell, "Well, you know, we were going to give \$10. We gave \$30." They didn't tell that. What they told was the story about how God moved in their hearts and what it led them to do. And the last story was from a couple who said, "We believed in this organization. We had a full plate. We were already giving 50% of

our income away, and we were giving like crazy. And our plate was full, so when we first were invited to consider a gift to this organization, you know, we were of the opinion we probably don't have room for it. We went back to our room on Saturday, my wife and I were praying about giving to this organization."

Bob Westfall:

And he said, "God spoke to my wife this way. He said to my wife, 'Hey, you're right. Your plate is full. That's not what you need. What you need is a bigger plate.'" And she pulls out a plate from underneath the podium and has this big serving plate. And she goes, "So you know what? We got a bigger plate." And that was the ask, so just a couple of stories to kind of help inspire, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, that's so good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's so good. Tell us about your donor weekends. You talk about it a little bit in the book. Just to give people an idea, because I think you're right. We only talk about money when we need it. We tend to truncate it. Already, my ideas are flying. I wish I had a capital campaign I was doing right now, just so I could try some of this stuff. This is good. I don't. Sorry, guys, you can't give to me. But this is a lot of fun, so tell us about the donor weekend.

Bob Westfall:

Sure. So in my 12 years at Walk Thru the Bible, I learned a lot about philanthropic engagement. And what we purpose to do at our weekends is create that same strategy, the same model, build this relationship development plan that would typically take 12 to 18 months. But we want it to happen in three days. So what we do is we create space to build community. We've done a five-year study of the giving of all of our clients and their givers over the last five years and found the number one factor that moved people to a higher level of generosity was community. So we build space, a lot of space, for community, intentional community throughout the weekend-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can I just to interrupt? Why is that? Why is it community?

Bob Westfall:

So one of the most important factors in a donor's engagement... Remember, we talked about belief in your organization?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

That really translates to trust. So community affects trust. And then we do lots of other things in the event that builds trust. But the most important thing an organization can do between an organization and a donor is build bridges of trust. So community is number one. Plus, it inspires people when they're engaged as couples around an organization, "Oh, look. They're involved. We can be involved." All those things-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've heard that. People are like, who else is in? If I'm giving at this level, who else is in? And that's always way more powerful in a room than over the phone.

Bob Westfall:

Right, and then the development of the case for support. So our company requires when we work with an organization that we create the content that's created on behalf of the organization, that's going to be presented at the event. So we have script writers that writes the scripts for each of the speakers that speak on behalf of the organization. All of those speeches have multimedia content. We produce new videos. Ultimately, at the end of the day, the story has to have an arc and it has to have cadence. And having done this more than 440 times, been in the business 30 years, that's something we just know how to do with absolute excellence.

Bob Westfall:

So community, case for support, delivering the case for support with excellence, it's done concisely, it's done understandably, it's believable, and it's packed with vision. That creates a space where a donor converts from being a transactional giver to a transformational giver. And the way we define that is, the donor moves from making a designated gift, "Here's \$50,000 for you to buy a new bus to bus kids in from all parts of the city to your church service," to instead of a \$50,000 gift for new bus, they're giving you a \$500,000 gift for your mission, for your vision. It's unrestricted.

Bob Westfall:

Of the \$171 million we raised last year, 90% of that, Carey, was un-designated. So that's a critical factor. And then the last thing is, we build in peer involvement throughout the weekend, so it doesn't just look like organization and giver. It looks like it's a community of people together. The organization and people, givers, are one body. And in my mind, that's one of the most important aspects of creating a giving community is it isn't just us and them or you and us. It's us together. We are one body.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And what does that weekend feel like? Is it like a conference? Is it like a resort? Do you load up the agenda? Is it a lot of unstructured time? What does it feel like?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. So Thursday night is meant to be fun. There's three community building times. It's dinner outdoors, and a comedian or an artist, a singer. Could be, if it's one of our ministry clients, it would be worship artists and Christian comedian. It's meant to be light and to help break the ice, right? And then Friday morning, we get into a devotional and worship music for our faith-based organizations. And then we begin to unpack the case for support Friday morning. We have four presentations until we get to the ask, so we have two sessions on Friday morning. We're done by 11:30, and people have free time from 11:30 to 6:00. And then we have dinner Friday night, and then we have another ministry presentation on Friday night and a keynote speaker on Friday night.

Bob Westfall:

Then Saturday morning, we'll have one more presentation on the organization. And then we have the invitation to give, asking the people to pray over their lunch in the afternoon and bring their

commitment form back at dinner on Saturday night. Saturday night, we have dinner and then we have either a special concert. The last one I did, we had Steven Curtis Chapman for the evening. It was supposed to be Michael W. Smith. The date got changed because of COVID. Michael W. Smith couldn't come, so we brought in a great alternative, Steven Curtis Chapman.

Bob Westfall:

And then we announced the giving commitments that are tallied so far for that event. We go to dessert, invite people back to bring their final commitment back on Sunday morning. We have a worship service, and then we announce the final giving results. We're inviting, at our events, people of high net worth and ultra high net worth. So it's a small community, 40, 50, 60 families. And just as an example, illustration, I mentioned last year, this year's not complete. So we don't have the final tally this year. But last year we raised \$171 million at our 42 events. And the average gift was \$134,000 a family. So that's the kind of families we're attracting at our events. So we do these at places, at resorts those kinds of families want to go for an experience, if you will. So we go to really nice places.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What are the transferable principles for people in a more ordinary setting? For a para-church organization that's doing great work, you can pull in a number of high net worth individuals. But if you look at a typical church, you probably have a few wealthy families, unless you're in a really interesting zip code, a lot of people making, \$40, \$50, \$60, \$70, sometimes up to \$100,000 a year. What are the transferable principles for them?

Bob Westfall:

This can get a little bit controversial in some theology, and I'll just say it this way. I believe there's some people that could make extraordinary gifts that need a little more attention, because there's a lot more that has to be communicated to get an extraordinary strategic gift from that group of families. There is another group of families that couldn't make a gift that size, but still require attention in reconciling why they should perhaps give more strategically to the church than they should to a para-church organization.

Bob Westfall:

And that doesn't have to be done in a three-night experience at a five-star hotel, right? It could be done at a one-night retreat away from the church where you're calling this-

Carey Nieuwhof:

In someone's backyard or...

Bob Westfall:

Sure. Backyard barbecues are great. And then lastly, there is the community at large. How do we engage that community at large? We can do it in the context of the service. We can also do some pretty fun things at the church, on the grounds, before or after service, right?

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:09:04]

Bob Westfall:

We can do a special reception at the church. There is a lot of ways to involve the community around the church experience. But I believe that in today's day, we need to understand who we're working with and craft experiences that attract those people to want to learn more about what we're doing. And it's not changed... Here's where I get the most rub is one of the organizations we work with, they deal with feeding children in really, really poor countries. And they're like, "Oh my gosh, we feed children in Haiti for 80 cents a day, but you want us to have an event at the Montage, where it's-"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Bob Westfall:

"\$500 a night for a hotel room for just one person, you want us to be there for three nights. That doesn't fit with our culture." And my answer to that is it shouldn't fit with your culture. Your culture is you feed children for 80 cents a day, right? I'm not asking you to change who you are. I'm saying, if you want to reach people who can on average, give you \$134,000 and you want to get their attention and you want to soak them into the ethos of your organization, you're not going to be able to do that by inviting them to Haiti, especially if they don't know you. Now, if you want to attract those people, have it at a place where those people would be attracted, immerse them in your story and then bring them to Haiti, right?

Bob Westfall:

So you have to go to where the people are. Sometimes I've been called a missionary to millionaires. So in order to do that, you have to go where they would want to go. And I submit to you that if you pause, you put people in a place where they're comfortable, immerse them in your story, you can engage them for really deep generosity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

One of the things we've asked a few of our guests on this podcast about is a lot of pastors are like, "Look, that sounds amazing, but I'm completely... I make 40,000 a year, 60,000 a year. I feel completely intimidated talking to somebody who makes a quarter a million, let alone a million dollars." Any keys for people who are not used to moving in that circle who maybe have one or two of those donors in their church, and like, "I don't even know how to approach them."? Any thoughts about getting over that intimidation?

Bob Westfall:

Yep. Those people in your church don't view you as different than them. So the moment you view the person of that wealth, different than you, you're actually looking at them differently than they're looking at you. So they believe, those in your church, they may act differently, but in their heart of hearts, the way they believe is, "We are all part of the same tree. I might be the vine. You might be the fruit, the other way around, but we're all the same member of the same body." So they don't want to be treated differently by you. They want it to be treated by you like you treat everybody else. They want that relationship. And they don't view you differently than they view their next door neighbor. In fact, they probably have a lot more respect for you than they do their neighbor. So, the thing to get over is, "They don't want to have a relationship with me." Or, "I don't know how to have a relationship with them."

Bob Westfall:

You just start and guess what? When you start, you're on equal ground. It doesn't matter what they make. It does not matter what they make, because they are the same person as you are in God's kingdom. So just like the one who had one in the one who had two in the one who had five, we're all the same in God's eye. And don't be intimidated by somebody of high net worth because they're not intimidated by you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. One more thing you mentioned designated giving, which is... I feel like I've spent 20 years trying to undo designated giving. What are the pros and cons of designated giving? I can imagine there's a lot of leaders who are flipping to digital going, "I need a donor to get behind some new cameras." What would you say to that leader?

Bob Westfall:

The moment you start creating a culture of transactional giving, it's really hard to break out of the culture of transactional giving. When you educate your donor, that the way you want to get gifts is transactional, they get used to that. That's all they expect from you. To switch that culture, and actually at an event this weekend where we did this. For the past 50 years, all they did was transactional giving. For the past five years since we've been involved, we've helped flip the narrative to a transformational giving culture. It took five years-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Bob Westfall:

We got there, but the donor base was so trained that this organization only takes project gifts. That when you start talking to them about giving missional gifts, it was mind-blowing to them. They couldn't make the leap, but we've made the leap. But what it creates is, it creates a relationship that once you start to try to change it, it's really hard to change. So when we talk about giving, we give examples of the way money that can be given, can be used. Meaning in one pillar, we talk about transformational hearts and in transformational hearts, it might have a \$5 million bucket of projects, right? But we'll say, "Hey, \$5 million over the next two years will help us transform hearts. Here's one example of the way we, as an organization use resources in transformational hearts. We spent \$119,000 in a community center in Haiti around our feeding program that people come to and we engage in relationship evangelism." That's just one example, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Bob Westfall:

Well, now what does the donor say? "Oh, these guys know how they spend their money." Right? "I know what they do when they get \$119,000 to use it in Haiti." And so we invite people to give to one of the three pillars that we present during the weekend. Or, "If you like everything you heard, this, this and this and your heart is inspired by the mission, why not give to the core mission fund, which actually impacts all three areas of ministry?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

So rather than let's build the community center and we'll pick that project or we'll buy the new bus or we'll buy the car or the well, or whatever that is. It's like, "Now, we're just going to contribute to a bigger cause and if we do that, well, then we're going to have the new community center."

Bob Westfall:

What creates the transactional mindset in most cases, not every case is the need to have money right now, right? It's urgent. And you don't want to take the time to build the whole case for support, because the way we do it, takes time. We do it over three and a half days, but if you did it in a traditional way, not an event, it takes time to help build that philosophy, that mindset, that case for support. But once you do, when they get to the end, people aren't giving transactionally or project-driven, they're giving transformationally.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And the argument would be, they would become more generous as a result. Correct?

Bob Westfall:

Every time-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

Every time.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That they would give more and not less? Fascinating.

Bob Westfall:

Absolutely. Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So can you turn a non-generous person into a generous person?

Bob Westfall:

I've seen it happen.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. It doesn't happen overnight. It happens by modeling. It happens by engaging. It happens by discipleship. If you're a generous person yourself, and you're trying to disciple and engage a non-

generous person, it is step-by-step, it's not overnight. God's brought two people into my life that he's allowing my wife and I to engage and tell our story with these couples. And it's not happening overnight, but we're seeing movement and now they're asking questions of us. So it takes time. It takes building trust. It takes demonstrating the impact. And it takes transparency.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So we're heading into a year of financial uncertainty. I think 2020 looking back on it, people are like, "Yeah, I thought it would be way worse than it is, and it is worse and it's uneven." How does economic uncertainty, or have you even seen economic uncertainty impact people's ability to be generous? What are you seeing? How you're reading the current conditions?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. So this year we're not seeing an impact yet on generosity compared to last year. There would be a lot of people that would say that, "The wealthy aren't as impacted as the everyday person is." But I can tell you, I was fundraising around the turn of the century when we were dealing with Y2K and the collapse of the dot-com marketplace. And we did not see a dip in giving. I was fundraising in 2008 during the great, what do you call it? Recession.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Recession, yeah.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. And we were doing one event where the stock market dropped 800 points one day, and 900 the next and my wife and I were praying, "Golly, we hope this organization breaks even this weekend." They had never raised the money at an event before in their life. It's an old historic, very conservative mission-sending agency. And they raised \$1.4 million that weekend, the weekend-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow!

Bob Westfall:

that the stock market was crashing. A year later, I was at an event in 2009. A giver at that event made a \$3 million commitment. I happened to have met the giver during the event. I walked up to them on Sunday morning and I said, "Man, I noticed you made an extraordinary gift. What inspired that?" And that gentleman goes, "Back..." And he was a country guy. He goes, "Back in 2008, I lost everything I had. I had \$5 million in the bank. I lost it all in one weekend, lost the whole thing." He said, "Well, we started rebuilding our business and this year God was gracious to us. We ended up with about \$3 million of net and I said, 'God, I am not going to lose that money this year. I'm going to go ahead and give it all to you right now.' So I gave the full \$3 million."

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's crazy. That's amazing.

Bob Westfall:

The last thing I would say is in down-times, you're going to have givers that go away or stop giving because they can't. In 2008, real estate developers were crushed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Bob Westfall:

And what I saw was philanthropic organizations kind of walked away from those generous givers. And what I would say to you is don't do that. Those wealthy people know how to come back. And if you walk away from those folks, when they come back, they're going to walk away from you. So, listen, if you have a constituency that's hurt, their giving is impacted. That's not the time to leave them. In fact, that's the time to draw closer to them, engage with them, pray with them, be a part of their life, walk the journey with them. And as they come back, they will stay connected with you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Bob, this has been so good. Anything else you want to share and then want to get people to where they can find out more about you?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. Well, thank you. I would say, great stewardship of your talent matters a ton to God. When I think about the end of the parable of the talents and the steward that had the one talent and buried it, and the master said... Watch this. He said, "Take it from him and give it to the one who made 10." So God instantly, instantly cared for that transaction because it matters to him.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow!

Bob Westfall:

The stewardship of his talent in your life matters a great deal to him. And he will resolve that in his way. And he did it with the servant who had buried his one talent.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, this has been so encouraging, so inspiring to me. I can't thank you enough. Bob, where can people find you and tell them about the book too?

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. bobwestfall.com And then the book is available on Amazon, Leafwood, any book distributor. It's available in hard copy and Kindle and other e-reader version.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And it's easy read too. I don't mean that in a negative way, I just mean if you haven't got time for 800 pages, this is not one of those books, so.

Bob Westfall:

Yeah. Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Bob, thank you so much.

Bob Westfall:

It's been a delight. Thrilled to have been here. Thanks for the invitation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I hope you found that conversation as stimulating and interesting as I did. I always love it when you kind of find things that you're like, "Oh, that's counterintuitive." And there was a bunch of that. If you want more, we've show notes for you. You can go to careynieuwhof.com/episode384. Also, we have transcripts. So if you really want to drill down... Yeah, those are provided free of charge to you. Coming up, I've got What I'm Thinking About. I'm going to talk about how to normalize talking about money at your church. This was a big struggle for me. I did not like talking about money. Why? Because pastors always get criticized for talking about money. How do you do it in a way that really, really helps? So, it's seven fresh ways to think about money in your church. So I hope it helps you as much as it helps me. That's coming up.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Man, we have been working on a guest list. I don't want to give it all away, but I am so excited about what's happening. So if you subscribe, you get all of it automatically in your inbox and with all the digital noise out there. I basically only listened to the podcasts that I subscribed to. So if you new to this and you enjoyed it, well, we have a bunch of great episodes coming up. I can't tell you everybody that we are trying to line up, but man, when you hear it, it will curl your eyebrows, I think. But who do we have?

Carey Nieuwhof:

We're going to kick off 2021 with Andy Stanley. Jon Acuff is back, Patrick Lencioni, Rachel Cruze, GM of the Lakers, the LA Lakers, Rob Pelinka is coming up, John Kotter from Harvard Business School, Craig Groeschel is back. So many others. I'm very excited for this. And again, subscribe as you get it for free, but next episode we have Kayla Stoecklein. And a lot of you know, a couple of years ago, Kayla's husband, Andrew died by suicide, and Kayla has written a book about it. And we had a really honest, transparent conversation. It's something really close to my heart, because of a period that I went through a number of years ago that was very dark. And yeah, we just kind of open it up and have a conversation. Here's an excerpt.

Kayla Stoecklein:

And his response to that was he was sharing that, he was rundown and he was exhausted and that he was up in the middle of the night, the night before and he had all of his staff organization charts spread all over the counter and he felt completely overwhelmed and thought about killing himself. And my reaction to his admission was, "Andrew, that is the most selfish thing you could ever do. You would never do that to me and the boys. I can't believe you're even saying that." I was so completely shocked. And here I am trying to tell him how I'm struggling and he's telling me he's just going to leave me. That's how it felt. And so I wasn't able to take a couple steps back and even hear his pain. I didn't even hear his pain. I thought he was being dramatic.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, that's next time on the podcast. Yeah, we kind of go all over the place, but I am as concerned for you as a person, as I am for your skill set as a leader. And I'm really grateful for Kayla opening up about that and coming on this podcast. So, that'll be next episode. In the meantime, it's time for What I'm Thinking About. It is brought to you by ChurchStaq. You can increase connection and encourage giving as Pushpay and Church Community Builder, combined forces to bring you ChurchStaq. You can go to pushpay.com/carey, C-A-R-E-Y to learn more. And what about helping the hurting and the hungry this Christmas through Convoy of Hope? You can go to convoyofhope.org to donate, or just text COH to 68828, and you'll be able to help out right there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, I am thinking about how to normalize talking about money. This was a huge problem for me. Obviously you need money to survive, whether you're running a business or a church, and as a church leader myself for 25 years, it was always a challenge, at least for the first decade it was. And I made a mistake, a really bad mistake for a while, of only talking about money when we needed it. And that's like thought number one. Do not just talk about money when you need it. Money is a problem for people every day. It's an opportunity for people every day. It is an often fought about subject. And what I learned as a leader is that you need to talk about money because the people that you lead talk about it every day, right? Whether it's, "Hey, are we going to eat out tonight or we're going to stay at home to save money?" Or, "What car should we buy?" Or, "How much should we spend at Christmas?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

People are talking about it. They're arguing about it every day. It is a church issue. It's a person issue, right? It's a unchurched person. It's a church person. We all struggle money. And so if you normalize the conversation around money, you just need to talk about it when you're not trying to raise money because the people you lead talk about it every day.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Another thing I realized is that talking about how to deal with money is pastoral care. I figured this out about maybe 15 years ago, we started taking this seriously. And I was saying to somebody just the last weekend like, some of the 18-year-olds are now in their thirties. And since we started to try to help them balance a budget and all that, it's been such a joy to see them move into a fresh season of their life in their late twenties, early, mid-thirties. And because they've had some financial training through our church, we want to help them with their money, just not ask them for their money. They have a lower debt load. They're not arguing about money like so many people who have never been taught about it are.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so it's really pastoral care when you help people get out of debt, when you help them pay cash for their cars or vacation or save for their retirement or their kids' education, you're really helping them. And you're making their home life better. And I remember one episode, it was when I first ran into to Andy Stanley's teaching, I was talking about this with my wife the other day Andy said at the time, and this must have been early 2000s, like I'm thinking 2002. I remember it was a message I was accessing on really low-bandwidth internet. And Andy said, "If God called you to go to Africa today, would you have the financial freedom to do it?" And I thought it was such a crazy question. It's like how can anybody just

drop what they're doing? And we were kind of living not quite paycheck to paycheck, but close to it. And it was not an option.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And what I have realized over time is when you have financial margin, you have options and it actually makes you more obedient. So, it's a spiritual growth thing. I would answer that question very differently today than I did 18, 19 years ago when I first heard it. But that's why talking about money is pastoral care. And then the third idea, what you do for people is as important as what you ask from them. Again, when you're only talking about money when you need it, it's like, "Hey." Of course, they're going to tune you out, because they're like, "Oh yeah, he needs money again. There he goes." But if you talk about it, you normalize it and you try to help them... We launched an initiative years ago called Thrive to help people live with financial margin and live on mission. We introduced something called the Financial Learning Experience just to help them learn how to balance a budget. It's really helped them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And also, a few other things before we go today. Understand that when you're talking about money, you are attacking a big idol. It might be a big idol in your life. I know it's a contender in my life and I have to be very, very careful. And you also have people who have to be careful about money. And that can be on the spending side, where what they acquire through money is an idol, or it could be on the hoarding side where it's like, yep, got a lot of money in the bank and nobody's getting any of it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Money's a great candidate for an idol. And so when you talk about it, you're attacking and tackling a big idol. And I really believe, this is the fifth point. People want to be generous, they just don't know how. Most people would love to give. Like you heard us talking about Convoy of Hope and you're like, "Oh yeah, well, I'd love to spend money on it, but..." It's like, well, you can help them. Right? You can help them become generous. And I have found as we have helped people with their money, they have become more generous because they're like, "Oh, we do, actually. We can give, we can give hundreds. We can give thousands. We can give more." And they can start to tithe and then they realize, "Wow, this is really a different way to live." And the culture, I promise you'll never teach you that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Another thought. Okay, your vision and stewardship needs to be worth the sacrifice people make. People are sacrificing when they give to you and you got to make sure you got a red hot vision. And that you're an excellent steward of what people give you, because that's really important. Then finally, point number seven. Unchurched people are more open to conversations on money than you realize, because you think, "Oh, this is a church issue and unchurched people are going to run away." Listen, we spent years reaching thousands of unchurched people. They want to talk about money because they have money questions. They have money issues. And if you de-stigmatize it, man, great things happen. So I hope that helps you. Those are some principles that really, really helped me. Really appreciate you. Thank you so much for listening. We are going to have a profound conversation next time.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And as we often do on this podcast, kind of veer into all kinds of interesting directions. By the way, I send out an email to over 75,000 leaders, almost every day. If you want to hear more of what you just heard about here, or other thoughts on leadership, you can go to careynieuwhof.com/email, and you

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can sign up right there and get some goodness in your inbox almost every day. So appreciate you. Thank you so much for listening. And I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Speaker 1:

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

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:31:52]