

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 what welcome to episode 467 of the podcast. It's Carey here. I hope our time together today helps you thrive in life and leadership, and happy new year. I'm so excited to be with you for the kickoff of a brand new year. For those of you who listen when these episodes come out, I hope it's been a great year so far. I know it's kind of the third year of crisis leadership. Well, we'll be there for you. We'll have some episodes that are very much dedicated to what's going on in the moment, and then some bigger ones like this one. I'm so excited to have Rick Warren here. I call this the legacy interview, and we spend about 90 minutes unpacking things, plus there's a lot more.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And thanks to our partners, Pro MediaFire. This episode is brought to you by Pro MediaFire. You can start all off your new year right with the 2022 digital playbook from Pro MediaFire. Claim your copy today at [promediafire.com/2022](http://promediafire.com/2022). And by Gloo. You can sign up for your free 14 day trial of their texting app called Thryve, and start connecting with your church community. Go to [Thryve.io](http://Thryve.io).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Rick and I started talking about this episode in the middle of 2021 when he announced he was, after 42 years, going to step back after Saddleback, that he was not going to be the lead pastor of Saddleback anymore. They were initiating a search. And so I flew down to California and really spent the better part, well, all afternoon with him. Now, this is really cool. So we're going to bring you the full interview. We did a 90 minute interview. As usual, it's available by video as well over on my YouTube channel. Just go to YouTube, search my name and Rick Warren's. You'll find us there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And what was really cool though, is he decided to give me a tour of his offices and his private library. So he has gone about collecting the largest collection in the world of signed books, signed by the author. It's actually recognized by Guinness, and we took a camera crew with us. And so that video will also be posted on my YouTube channel. So you won't hear a lot of it on this podcast, well, none of it, because it kind of needs a visual thing, but it's really cool. He has got the original copy of Martin Luther's commentary on Romans, signed by Luther. Yeah, that, that level of awesome. And so we have a look. He's got all kinds of beautiful historic, well, really, not relics of the church, but you know what I mean, like landmarks of the church in that library. And yeah, you got a tour of it. So you can go over and see that on my YouTube channel.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And let me tell you a little bit about Rick. I'm sure most of you know exactly who he is. He's known around the world and an influencer. On that tour as well, he showed us a state dining room that he has, just, I think it's like 14 seats or whatever, set up in his offices. And he will often bring in presidents in the United States, global leaders, to negotiate everything from world peace, to some of the problems that they're dealing with. He's been a pastor to many many presidents. And we talk about all that and a lot

more. And I have a feeling, as much as I spent four hours with him, this needs a round two. So Rick and I are talking about doing a second round at some time too.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Anyway, let me give you the bio. I don't want to keep this too long. I want to jump into the interview, but I'm just very excited about it. Rick is an innovative pastor, renowned author and global influencer. The various ministries Rick has created are a multifaceted expression of his heart to bring the whole gospel to the whole world. Rick and Kay Warren founded Saddleback Church in 1980 in Lake Forest, California. Saddleback has grown to over 30,000 weekly attenders, across 16 locations, including four international campuses and an online campus hosting listeners from around the world. They have an outreach of more than 300 community ministries, including the nationally recognized Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered recovery program now implemented in over 25,000 churches.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Rick's bestselling book, The Purpose Driven Life, has sold more than 50 million copies, been translated into 85 languages, and it is the bestselling hardback book in American history outside of the Bible. His book, The Purpose Driven Church, is listed in the 100 Christian Books that Changed the 20th Century, and Forbes magazine called it the best book on entrepreneurship management and leadership in print. So you're in for a treat, and make sure you check out the YouTube channel. While you're there subscribe, and that way you can see it if we ever bring you more bonus footage, which we probably will in the future.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So the past two years has required constant change as a leader. And guess what? Unfortunately, this year will be no different, but it will include great opportunities. To help you navigate this year and level up your digital game with new technology, Pro MediaFire is providing a free 2022 digital playbook. Here's what it includes: five digital trends to maximize your impact in 2022, the six biggest risks of decline to your organization and solutions for growth, why the hybrid approach will fail unless a key strategy is applied, and the digital investment guide with the best ROI for growth. So Pro MediaFire is giving you this for free. To start off the new year right and get the 2022 digital playbook from Pro MediaFire, go to [promediafire.com/2022](http://promediafire.com/2022).

Carey Nieuwhof:

And recently, my team and I have been using an app called Thryve. If you're on my texting list, that's what's powering it. So it's with a Y, T-H-R-Y-V-E, and it's been really useful. And now churches, you can use the same app. Thryve makes it incredibly easy to send texts to individuals or groups, but it's so much more than that. You can use it to send devotional series, answer common questions, get more prayer requests, send surveys, and even collect stories of life change. So it's more human to human service for everyone.

Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, remember to check out what's on YouTube, but in the meantime, my conversation with Rick Warren.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Rick, I've been excited about this time for a while.

Rick Warren:

Hey, buddy. Glad to be together.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, we've spent some time together already today, and it's just great to have you. This is a momentous time. Last year, you announced that you would be stepping down, moving on to a new role. And I watched this video that you posted on YouTube. I think you originally did it for your staff.

Rick Warren:

I did.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And you outlined 11 reasons why you decided to step back as the senior pastor, the only pastor so far, of Saddleback. Right. Do you want to walk us through a couple of the key ones? We don't need all 11.

Rick Warren:

Sure.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Just a couple of them.

Rick Warren:

Sure. Well, bottom line is there are human reasons and then there's God's reason. And the big reason, the God reason, is God is calling me to do something harder. I have prayed the same prayer every weekend for 42 years. As I drive to church on Saturday night, and as I drive to church on Sunday morning, I have quite a long... I call it my game day prayer. It kind of puts me in the mental mindset to do four, six or more services. And one of the things I've said every week for 42 years is, "God, I offer my resignation to you." I've said that every Sunday, at least twice on Saturday and Sunday for 42 years. And as I'm driving down the road, I literally have a thing where I take my hands off the wheel on the freeway for a fraction of a second, nobody else is supposed to know that, but I do, as a symbolism of I'm not in control.

Rick Warren:

And what I say is, "God, this is your church. You used me to start it, and I'm grateful, but it's not my church. It belongs to you. And not only does it belong to you, I belong to you. And so you have a right to move me if you want to. And so I give you permission with my resignation here to do anything you want. If there's somebody who can do a better job than I'm doing, if there's somebody who you need to take it in a different direction, I willingly step aside." And then the most important part of the prayer was this. "And I'm willing to do something more difficult."

Rick Warren:

Now I've said that, "I'm willing to do something more difficult," for 42 years, because there are a thousand things that would be easier to do than lead a large church of 30,000 people with campuses on four continents. It's incredibly complex, a staff of 500, and all of the movement stuff that we're involved in. So there are a lot of things that would be easier. God took me up on my offer and gave me an assignment that's more difficult.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, yeah. And that's a question, why now?

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

42 years, all of a sudden. You're how old?

Rick Warren:

I'm 67. And when I started the church at 25, I publicly stood up and announced that I would give 40 years of my life, at the very first service. Now that was a dumb thing. You shouldn't just announce a time, because it wasn't a time from God. It wasn't a word of the Lord. It was just, it was the biggest number I could think of. I thought when you're 25, 65 sounds ancient.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If I make it that long.

Rick Warren:

If I make it that long, somebody else should probably take over by then. But what I should have said was, "Guys, I'm here to stay, Lord willing. I'm not going to walk out on you when it gets tough."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Was that paradigm shifting back then? Because I mean, go back to 1980, right? In the tradition I was raised in, which is more main line, I mean, if you had a 10 year pastor, that was forever.

Rick Warren:

Well, yeah. And as a Baptist pastor, it was even shorter. Both my father and my father-in-law and my uncle were Baptist pastors. And you would stay in a church maybe five years.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Exactly.

Rick Warren:

And then you'd go somewhere else. And of course, if you're a Methodist, they moved you intentionally, because they didn't want you having long-term pastors.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So why did you choose 40 years then?

Rick Warren:

Well, because I...

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know it was a big number, but why did you decide to stay for-

Rick Warren:

There were a couple reasons. I'm glad you asked it. When I was in seminary, before I moved to California, one of the things that I did is I read every book in print on church growth at the time, which was 72 books at the time. There are, of course, far more than that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, I was going to say, that's changed.

Rick Warren:

The second thing was, it was a new category, church planting, and nobody knew about that. The second thing is, I personally wrote to the 100 largest churches in the world and I asked him a series of questions. And I asked them for a packet, "Send me your bulletin, your constitution, your programs." And I would get these packets and unload them, and then I filed them all. And I'm learning from others.

Rick Warren:

What I discovered was a couple things. It takes all kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people. There's more than one way to grow a church. And if you're growing a church, I like the way you're doing it, whether it's my style or not. So anybody who tells you, "There's only one to grow a church," they're wrong. They're just wrong. It depends on where you are and what you are. But there were two common denominators in every growing church, every single growing church. One of them was the longer a pastor tends to stay, the stronger it tends to get. Now, that's if you've got integrity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Integrity?

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And a bit of momentum.

Rick Warren:

Yeah. And if you keep going... Let me come back to this in just a minute. But the other thing is the faith factor. And that is, people who are not afraid to believe God. Okay. That whether it's a small situation or a small town or... I've started churches in four areas. I've started a rural church in my barn, in a town of less than 500 people. I've been in an inner city church in a metropolitan area where I was a minority as a white. I've been in an international church plant in Nagasaki, Japan, and I've planted in suburbia. So whether inner city or rural, or suburban, or urban, the faith factor of the pastor is an important thing. But a lot of pastors, they forget.

Rick Warren:

There's a story at the end of Purpose Driven Church, where I talk about bamboo. The way you grow bamboo is, is you get a bamboo stick and you cut it up, and you plant it, and you water it for a year and nothing happens. And then you water it for a second year and nothing happens. And you water it for third year and a fourth, and a fifth year, and nothing happens. And on the sixth year, nothing happens. And on the seventh year, you water it and one day it sprouts. And when bamboo sprouts, it grows very fast. It can grow a full meter overnight. And some bamboo can grow three meters or nine feet in a week, and they just explode. But they don't for a long time.

Rick Warren:

A lot of guys out there are pastoring bamboo churches. And what they do is, they've been watering, watering year after year, and nothing's happening. Nothing's happening. And then along about year seven, they move. A new guy comes in, takes over, and then it explodes and he gets the credit. That is not fair. That is not fair, because they put all the work in to do it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. Well, that was so helpful. And you and I, we both love rabbit trails and that kind of thing. So that's why you stayed. You decided, "This is a long assignment."

Rick Warren:

Yeah. Well, as I said, one of the common denominators of the biggest churches is nobody had been there two years. In the largest churches, they had all been there for decades.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. Gotcha.

Rick Warren:

Okay. And so I actually asked the Lord, I said, "Lord, I'm willing to go anywhere in the world." I told him this. "I'm willing to go anywhere in the world." Kay, we thought we were going to be missionaries to China. And the cultural revolution shut that down in the '70s, and that was the biggest disappointment of my life. We thought we were going to China.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Why China?

Rick Warren:

I had been in Japan, and we had a heart for Asia. And I just thought, "This is the biggest country in the world. They're going to need lots of churches." And I thought, "They're going to need lots and lots of churches," but God shut the door on that. And he said, "You're not going to be a missionary. You're going to be a missionary sending agency," which ended up being what was true.

Rick Warren:

But because of that, I said, "Lord, I'll go anywhere in the world if you'll give me the privilege of spending my entire life in one location." I have now pastored six generations. From the Great Generation of World War II, and then the Silent Generation, the Buster Generation, the Boomer Generation, the Gen X, the Millennials, the Y's, the Z's, and now the Alphas.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, they're coming up.

Rick Warren:

Now the Alphas. I have people on my staff that were born in the church. I watched them, not be born, but I watched them within seconds after their birth. And I've known them all their lives. When you have integrity and when you genuinely love people, it gets better every year. When you don't, it gets more difficult. And I'm not saying in productivity, it gets better every year. I'm just saying your ministry becomes more solid every year. I'm not saying, "Well, if you just stay in a place, well, one day it's going to grow." The dirty little secret, friends, nobody ever talks about this. The number one factor on the size of your church is your location. It's not your giftedness. I hate to tell you that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you're saying you picked some good property.

Rick Warren:

Exactly. I picked a place where there was going to be growth. If I had stayed in Redwood Valley, where I grew up, I could have spent 40 years there, and the church would still be 35 people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because you're a village of 500 people.

Rick Warren:

Yeah. The shoe tells the foot how big it can get. If you put a goldfish in a small bowl, it's not going to grow. And yet, we need churches in all of these villages. And so this is not a slap. Clearly, we need more small churches than we need giant ones, because God made more of them. And so we talk about rabbit churches, and we talk about tiger churches. We talk about elephant churches. At Saddleback, we plant all three kinds. We've planted tens of thousands of rabbit churches, which are small groups. Anywhere else in the world, they're called house churches. Only in North America, we call them small groups. Everywhere else, they're a house church. We have planted tens of thousands of house churches. We have 7,000 plus house churches in the Saddleback Church system here in California.

Rick Warren:

Then tiger churches are the churches between 75 and 150. And I call them tiger, because they're almost impossible to destroy. The pastor can run away with the secretary and the deacon run away with the money. They're not there for the sermon. They're there for the fellowship. They're there for the relationship. And then there's the elephant church, which is the megachurch. You do need mega churches in mega cities, that when they walk, they shake the ground and it helps every other church. But you don't want everybody to be that. Now the rabbit churches, by the way, multiply fasted. And if we're going to win the world, we got to start more of those than anything else.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a good metaphor. Okay. So that's why you decided to stay for four decades.

Rick Warren:

For four decades.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you listed 11 reasons.

Rick Warren:

Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

One of them was your health.

Rick Warren:

Yeah, one of them was my health, but that wasn't the biggest factor. The biggest factor for now was, one, God had called me to lead this movement called FTT, Finishing the Task. And I knew it was harder. And I knew I was gifted and trained, and I felt like everything else in my past had prepared me for this. And so that was it.

Rick Warren:

But another thing was now is because the staff at Saddleback right now is the healthiest it's ever been. We haven't always been healthy. Every staff goes through ebbs and flows over the years, and in 42 years, there's sometimes when I was super happy with our staff and there were some times I would wake up and go, "How did I get all these people working with me? And where did they come from? And why are they cranky?" And all that.

Rick Warren:

But what happened in the last two years, COVID prepared my staff, and actually prepared the church, for my transition. And the way it did is this. Carey, one of the things leaders know is that when you're in a crisis, like COVID, you overcommunicate. You actually communicate more than you did in normal times. So we went from a weekly staff meeting to a daily staff meeting. And we went from a weekly elder meeting to a daily elder meeting when COVID hit. Now, we couldn't meet together in person, so we used Zoom, but every day we would meet as elders and every day we would meet as a staff.

Rick Warren:

That started building the cohesiveness. And what it did was... In staff meeting, you often look at the back of people, the heads of people, but in staff meeting in a Zoom, you're looking at everybody. And they can comment over the side and they can write in the chat room. And it actually built camaraderie and Koinonia, and fellowship, and deepened that. And so we got closer and closer, and closer. We eventually went to two staff meetings a week, and then we went eventually back to one, but the benefit of it had already taken place. And my staff is more engaged and more healthy than they've ever been in 42 years. So I feel very confident if I were to drop dead right now, Saddleback, they don't need me to keep this thing going. They really don't.

Carey Nieuwhof:

See, that's a frequent... And you and I have done a few interviews over the last year or two, so we'll link to where we talked about finishing the task and all that. But that is a frequent criticism of mega churches. And I'm sure you've heard it a million times.

Rick Warren:

Oh, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

"Rick, what happens if you get hit by the bus?"

Rick Warren:

Yeah. And well, the answer is, is you have to be purpose-driven, not personality-driven. Personality-driven means when you're gone, attendance falls off. When you're gone, offerings fall off. Okay? I was gone for seven months when I wrote The Purpose Driven Life. Between Christmas and July, I only preached twice in those seven months, I preached Christmas and I preached Easter. I held no staff meeting, and I was working 12 hours a day on writing that book, Purpose Driven Life. While I was gone, we added 452 members, and the church did great.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. So there's a lot of pastors who are not-

Rick Warren:

Because we had structure for it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure. So let's talk about that, because there's a lot of pastors who aren't in that position. And I remember leading for a while, when I preached, attendance was good. Things were good. If I took a vacation, it took a nose dive. And it took me a few years to figure that out. What are some of the keys to making sure, like for the leader who's there right now going, "Ah, I got nobody"?

Rick Warren:

Right. Well, first, let me relieve a little bit of guilt. If you're planting a church, it does depend on you. So the first two years of the church, if I had left, the church would've died. And you don't need to be

ashamed of this, in a church plant or in a new start, that it is all depending on you at start. You just know this isn't where we want to be. And I want to wean them of me. I want to wean them of me.

Rick Warren:

Now, there are multiple ways you could do this. You can't do it quick. I can show you how to wean the church of your leadership, but I can't show you how to do it fast. Okay? It just is impossible. It takes time. And it has to do with both the preaching, it has to do with recruiting of lay volunteers. It has to do with empowering and mobilizing. It has to do with setting up a system of discipleship that that system keeps going, even when you're sick. We didn't set that up overnight. I can tell you how to get to where we are, but it took me 42 years.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And I was going to say too, I mean, Purpose Driven Church came out what, 17 years?

Rick Warren:

1995.

Carey Nieuwhof:

'95. So 15 years into life cycle of Saddleback.

Rick Warren:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You finally got to the point where you had systems in place.

Rick Warren:

We actually had the systems in place a little bit earlier. I did what a lot of guys don't do, is I waited 15 years to write my first book. Some guys start a church, then a year later, they're writing as an authority on how to do a book. I'm going, "You might want to wait a while." I had trained over 40,000 pastors in personal seminars before I ever put it on paper. And so I was revising every PD conference. We'd been teaching PD conferences for 10 years before I put it in a book. So when it went into a book, it wasn't like theory. It was like, "We've been practicing this forever, and we've been changing it. We've been learning."

Carey Nieuwhof:

So the other big question that always comes up, especially with a Saddleback, is huge shoes to fill, like huge. Like number one, who wants the job? Number two, who can do the job? Is it a single person? Is it a team of leaders? Is it that all your campuses become independent? That's not just true of Saddleback. That's been a question so many people ask. How do you answer that?

Rick Warren:

One of my mentors was Peter Drucker. I started talking to Peter Drucker about my successor, literally 20 years ago. Literally 20 years ago. I have notes from 20 years ago when I wrote down and I walked in, and

I said to Peter, "Peter, I believe there's no success without a successor. I'm not anywhere near that, but help me start getting ready for it." He told me a number of different things that have been very helpful. One of them is, of course, that usually the successor needs to be somebody very different.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. So you're not looking for a Rick then.

Rick Warren:

No, no. In fact the last thing Saddleback needs is a poor image of me. Because everybody goes, "He's not Rick." Well, nobody can be me, and nobody be you, and nobody can be you. You're one in the zillion. Okay? You're a unique thumbprint, voice print, hand print, eye print. So nobody's going to replace you. Nobody's going to replace me. What a church often needs is something totally different than the direction it was going for. Now, sometimes you can do an intentional interim. Okay? Now this is an important point. I'm not saying this for all the time, where you have somebody who will fill in. Moses is dead, but we don't have Joshua yet.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:26:04]

Rick Warren:

And when this person is an intentional interim, the people don't criticize that guy because they know he's not staying.

Carey Nieuwhof:

He's on his way out.

Rick Warren:

He's just there to love the people, but it does give a healthy break. Oftentimes after a founding leader, the second person who comes in is a sacrificial lamb, and they don't make it. I am determined that doesn't happen. I want my successor to be more successful than me. He must increase and I must decrease. And I'm more than happy for that. As I said, when you've offered your resignation every Sunday for 42 years, this is not a new stress.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So how do you make sure that's not a hit on your ego? We all have ego at some level. The whole idea the church got better when I left, how do you become secure enough to want that?

Rick Warren:

The way you need to want it is to look at your church like a garden. Let me give you an example, someday I'm going to write a book on everything I learned about leadership I learned in my garden. I grow 56 kinds of vegetables and 17 kinds of fruit. And I get in the dirt and I've learned more. One of the things that every year when my harvest is over and everything's done, what I'm most satisfied with is not the harvest of that year but knowing that year I enriched the soil a little bit more. I was putting in compost. I was putting in nutrients. I was enriching the soil.

Rick Warren:

When I first started planting my garden, it was bare clay and almost ungrowable. But I start enriching the soil every year. Enriching the soil is more important than the harvest because it means that the next year your crops will be better, and next year. I have been enriching the soil at Saddleback for 42 years so that anybody who comes in and plants a seed, they ought to grow. They really ought to grow because we have such bench strength in not just our staff, but in literally our members of volunteers.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But how does that deal with any insecurity you might feel? Let's say Saddleback goes three X the size of when you let it, there's something inside me that says, "Well, why didn't that happen under me?"

Rick Warren:

No, no, no, no. I'm the exact opposite. I'm going, "What I don't want it to do is go to nothing."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, there's that.

Rick Warren:

That it went down after me, which meant it was more personality-driven than you thought. So nothing would thrill me more than Saddleback to grow. So that's it. But the more important point is where are you getting your self identity? Are you getting your worth from your work? Are you getting your worth from the applause of other people? Or is your identity in Christ? And if your identity is truly in Christ, and we all preach on this, but it doesn't mean that you emotionally get it. And this is one of the big issues is we don't emotionally get what we even preach ourselves, is that God is God and if God likes me and I like me, if you don't like me, what's your problem?

Rick Warren:

I don't need your approval to be happy. But the truth is a lot of us in ministry, we are people pleasers, we do care about approval, we do want the applause and the first step in getting over that addiction is to admit it. And to just go, "You know what? Part of me really likes praise." Well, who doesn't?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I know.

Rick Warren:

There's nobody on the planet earth who doesn't like praise, but I always say praise is like chewing gum. You chew on it for a while, but you don't swallow it. That when you're running your race... And that's what ministry is, it's a marathon, and we need you to make it to the end. When you're running your race, there are people in the stands that give both cheers and jeers. You got to ignore them both. They both will cause you to stumble, to fall and not make it to the finish line.

Rick Warren:

Now, let me just pause here. And I know I'm chasing at rabbit, but thank you, Carey, for letting me chase a rabbit.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's long form podcasting.

Rick Warren:

Long form podcast. Pastors, I know it's the end of the year and it's been a tough two years and it's easy to get discouraged. I want to say to you pastors, first, your ministry matters to God and has nothing to do with the size of it. A pilot who's piloting four people is just as responsible to get those souls to safety as a pilot piloting a plane of 400. Can one guy be less concerned, because he only has four people on his plane? No, they're souls and you're given the responsibility to get them to the destination safely. So this has nothing to do with size. But if you're going to last in ministry, you got to realize a couple things. Somebody is going to be upset with you every moment of your life.

Rick Warren:

And if you let that get under your skin, you'll never be happy. I am constantly aware that every second of my life I'm disappointing somebody, because just about the time you get crowd A pleased, crowd B gets ticked off. And then you get them please, they get... Even God can't please everybody. This week, somebody's praying for two different sports teams to win. Who is God going to favor? Some are praying for rain and some are praying for sun, even God can't please everybody. Only a fool would try to do that. So this is important that you realize part of being in ministry means you're going to have to deal with disapproval. You're going to have to deal with criticism and you're going to have to deal with disappointment that people get disappointed in you, you can't let that... What other people think of you is none of your business.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So on that note, this is a question I wanted to ask you. You have taken your share of criticism over the years.

Rick Warren:

A little.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. A little bit, Rick. And you still got to smile on your face all these years later. You took a lot of flack from the Christian community over deciding that AIDS was the 21st century leprosy. "We got to care for people because that's what Christians do." You spoke at several presidential inaugurations. You prayed, I should say. And you were criticized by some on the left. And then when you were at Obama's and accepted, you were criticized by Christians. There have been all kinds of things said about you over the years. How do you respond? What is your internal narrative on that?

Rick Warren:

Well, if the criticism is true, you listen and learn from it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What would be an example of criticism that you would...

Rick Warren:

Well, sometimes people will criticize me about something that's partially true. And so I work on the 5% that's partially, even though they're 90% wrong. See, here's the difference. Critics don't realize they're actually enhancing your ministry if you receive it correctly. For instance, there are a lot of people criticize me on social media, I have never criticized anybody on social media ever. I will never fight back. I am most like Christ when I refuse to retaliate. The Bible says, "Jesus was criticized constantly." And it says, "He spake not a word unto them." When they challenged him, you've done this, they accused him of all kinds of stuff that was false. He would not dignify them. I was a while back criticized by a well known pastor who's written a couple books against me and he's never met me, he's the never been to Saddleback, he doesn't even know what we're doing. I have never said a bad word about him ever. And I won't.

Rick Warren:

I have Twitter, somebody said, "So and so pastor said this about you. What do you think about them?" And then I said, "Well, I have nothing but the utmost respect for this pastor and his ministry and what he thinks of me in no way controls what I think of him." Bam. Now, here's the thing. When you respond with a blessing, when you bless those who curse you instead of defending yourself, instead of trying to get even, and try to top them, try to point out something bad in their life, you just eat it. Leadership absorbs the pain. You just eat it. I'm most like Christ when I refuse to retaliate.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Did you have to learn that?

Rick Warren:

Oh, absolutely. And I had to learn it by experience. In fact, there was a time in my life when I was going through so much criticism and I go, "God, why? Why are you allowing this criticism?" He goes, "Because I want you to be able to teach others. I want you to be able to teach because every pastor is afraid of criticism."

Carey Nieuwhof:

So what would that do to you in those early days as you were figuring that out, sleepless nights,  
[crosstalk 00:35:55]

Rick Warren:

In the early days you worry about it. And when you worry about it, you make a criticism bigger and bigger and bigger. Someday I'm going to write a book just on criticism, the little lessons that I...

Carey Nieuwhof:

I will buy that book.

Rick Warren:

The little lessons I've learned. And the point is, here's the thing, when somebody criticizes you and you just smile and you don't retaliate and you respond with joy and with love, God, it anoints you more. You actually get more anointing by passing the criticism test. Now, when people criticize me, I learn from them if there's anything to learn. You could learn from anybody if you know the right questions. I learn from them. They never learn from me. Never. Which makes me smarter than them. So they don't realize

they're actually making you more effective. And the more they hit you, the more effective you are. And when you respond with Christ likeness and you return blessing and love for anger and criticism, God just says, "That's my boy," and he pours out more anointing on you. And you actually end up with more anointing than before the criticism. Critics don't realize how much they've given me more anointing from God.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, this is super helpful. So do you have people who are watching what people are saying about you online or you just wait if it eventually trickles out?

Rick Warren:

Yeah, if it trickles out. Here's the thing, I honestly believe that social media is a stumbling block to most people in ministry. I really do. Because we're caught up in the moment of the dopamine hits from likes and you post and the moment you post it, you look, "Does anybody like it, anybody going to like it, anybody going to like it. Oh, I got a like." And you get that dopamine hit. That is addicting. Now, I have 12 million followers on social media and I post almost nothing. In the last week, I've posted more than I've posted in the last three years, because I just don't do it. Partially is because on something like Twitter you can't, you have no context. And so no matter what I say, "The sky is gray." Somebody will come back and say, "Well, why are you against gray?"

Rick Warren:

And, "You must be a bigot against gray." I just said the sky was gray. And so I really think you need to pay less attention, get your face out of Facebook and get your face in the book. That's what you need to do to be an effective pastor.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because you and I have the advantage of having a pre-digital memory. We remember what it was when it was really hard to get information, like we were talking about earlier. If you were starting over again, you're 25 years old, would you use social media?

Rick Warren:

Yes, but not the way it's being used right now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, so how would you do it?

Rick Warren:

The way many... Now, I don't say all, many young pastors think that way they grow their church is by appearing to be cool. And they have gotten lost between legitimate marketing and legitimate messaging of the good news and self-promotion. And so they're posting pictures of themselves in this my so-called wonderful life thinking, "If everybody thinks I'm a cool pastor, more people will come." I will tell you this, you will attract what you are. And if you are that shallow, you will attract a church full of shallow, self-centered people who are worried about what they think. You will attract whatever you are. And the way to grow a church is not by impressing people by how cool you are. You don't help anybody with your successes.

Rick Warren:

You only help them with your failures, your weaknesses and your problems. If I were to get up, I could post a photo every day on social media of me and a celebrity, because I know them all. And powerful people around the world, I could, "Here's me with this guy and here's me with this girl and here's me with this rock star and here's me with..." And what would it do? Does that build Saddleback Church? No. All it does is create competition and actually create resentment. "Well, who do you think you are? You think you're so cool? You think you're so hot? I don't know anybody like that."

Rick Warren:

And so I never, never promote or push a self-promoting photo or a success in my life. What I do is if I do talk about me, and I don't think that's the primary purpose of social media, I will talk about that in a minute. I talk about a weakness, a hurt, a need, and then people go, "Whoa. Well, if Rick went through that and God used him, then maybe God could use me." When I share my pain, losing a son to suicide. When I share my pain, the struggle Kay and I had in our marriage. When I share going through a depression or going through a discouragement, people go, "It binds us. It unites us." Successes don't unite us, but pain does. So here's how you use social media.

Rick Warren:

Use it to encourage people in pain. And if you do that, you'll build a church. Now let me explain the basis for this. It's the parable of the sower. Jesus told the parable of the sower it's so important it's in three different passages. It's in Matthew, Mark and Luke. The parable the sower is the key to the great commission and the parable the sower is the key to growing your church. Now, Jesus said that there are four kinds of soil represent four kinds of heart. The hard soil represent the hard heart. It's totally resistant to the gospel. It doesn't even get a chance to penetrate. The shallow soil represents the shallow heart that responds emotionally, but when the heat's on, it has no root so it dies. The soil with weeds is the distracted heart, and the cares and the riches and being cool is more important than being holy. And the cares and riches of this thing choke out the life of the gospel and so it doesn't grow.

Rick Warren:

The fourth soil is the good soil where the seed is planted and it gets exponential growth, 30, 60, 100 fold. Now, if that is true, and of course it is, because Jesus told it, it means that at any given moment in your community, 75% of the people are nonresponsive. I don't care what city you are, in what world you're in, 75, 3 out of four people around you couldn't care less about the gospel. So if I'm a smart farmer, I'm going to maximize my seed on the good soil. I'm not going to waste it on the 75% where it doesn't get any results. That's bad stewardship. Good stewardship is to plant the best seed in the best soil. Now, here's the question, if 75% are not worth focusing on right now, first, it's not my responsibility to prepare the soil. That's the holy spirit.

Rick Warren:

I can't prepare a heart. I can't soften a heart. I can't change a heart. My job is to see the soft heart and plant the seed as a good farmer. It's God's job to prepare the soil. Now, here's the big question. How does God turn hard soil into soft soil? He sends a storm, he sends the rain and he pounds it with rain. C.S. Lewis said, "God whispers to us in our pleasure. He shouts to us in our pain. Pain is God's megaphone." So if I'm in a city in Pasadena, California and I've had a church there for 50 years, the guy who's lived next door and for 20 years has said no, he's going to keep saying no until he gets in pain. One day, his wife's going to die. One day, he's going to get the dreaded word, cancer.

Rick Warren:

One day he gets fired. One day his child has a scandal. One day he is going to be broken by pain. And that's when you have the opportunity to plant the seed, but you've been building a bridge of love all this time but you're not focusing on the people. I've been telling pastors for 50 years, "If you'll just focus on people in pain, you'll grow a church. You don't have to focus on anybody..." And it's God's job to make people have pain. And everybody eventually gets there, because nobody gets to go through life pain free. So even the most self-centered, successful, young professional who thinks, "I don't need God," is one day going to fall flat on his face. Don't focus on anybody else. There are plenty of people out there in pain. And guess what? Next year there'll be other people in pain who weren't in pain this year and next year there'll be somebody else. If you just focus on the 25% in pain, you'll grow a church.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What else, if you were starting over again, would you do the same or would you do differently if you were planting Saddleback?

Rick Warren:

Well, I made a mistake early on that I don't think many guys are making today, and that is I underestimated the value of music.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, okay.

Rick Warren:

I did not realize how important music is to the growth of your church. And so in the early time, our music was Kay on the piano. That was it. That was our band. All right. And I knew the hymns didn't make sense so I was rewriting the words of the hymns, but we were still singing hymns when we first started. And then we started a band and when we first started out, we tried to appeal to everybody's taste. And so one minute we'd do a rock song, then we'd do a country western song, then we'd do an easy listening song, then a Bill Gaither song, then a classical, then a jazz, then a reggae, then a rap.

Rick Warren:

And you know what kind of audience we had? Nobody. All we did is make everybody mad. What radio station would have audience if they played a different kind of style every time?

Carey Nieuwhof:

True.

Rick Warren:

They would have no audience. Now, in your family, I have five people in my family, we listen to five different radio stations. So trying to please everybody with your music is impossible. Tell me the kind of music you're using and I'll tell you who you're reaching right now without having ever been to your church, and I'll tell you who you're never going to reach. Just tell me the style of music you're using. I'll tell you who you're never going to reach. And I'll tell you who you are going to reach. So what I did is I actually passed out a card to everybody in church and said, "Tell me the call letters of the radio station you listen to."

Carey Nieuwhof:

There you go.

Rick Warren:

And when I got it back, it was overwhelmingly contemporary adult, middle of the road. It wasn't heavy metal. It wasn't hip hop. If you got a heavy metal church or a hiphop church, fine, but I'm just saying, "Once you decide the style of your music, you're determining who you're going to reach and who you'll never reach." Far more people will listen to your sermon from different backgrounds, but the moment you determine your... Music is not only half of your service, it's the first half. And a lot of people, before you even get up to speak, they've already decided they're going to come back or not. So when people come to your church, the first two questions they ask are not theological, they're sociological.

Rick Warren:

The first two questions they ask are not theological, they're sociological. Nobody comes and says, "Do they believe in God here?" Nobody's asking that. The first question they ask is this question, "Is there anybody here like me?" So a farmer looks around, are there any other farmers? A young married couple pushing a stroller, any other couples with a stroller? A Vietnamese person, any other Vietnamese in here? A military guy goes, "Anybody else got a military haircut?" Elderly, couple, any other senior citizens in here? We naturally look for people like us in a congregation. If we see somebody like us, we're more likely to stay. If we don't, we're more likely to leave. Now, when we started Saddleback, we were a pretty homogeneous group. Everybody at the church pretty much looked like me, young, white, and drop dead sexy. Now, none of that's true anymore.

Rick Warren:

Now we're Baskin-Robbins 51 flavors. We intentionally, 22 years ago, said, "We're going to be a multicultural church". And we actually changed one of the values in our name from atmosphere of acceptance to all nation congregation. How do you develop a multiethnic church? You put whatever you want on stage. If you look at our worship team and now you look at Saddleback, we are the most diverse church in North America. We speak 168 languages. 168 languages. Most of my campus pastors aren't white guys. I have 20 black staff, ministers, pastors. I have Asian staff. I have Middle Eastern staff. I have an Indian pastor from India. We have Latin American pastors. And not just one kind of Hispanic, we got every kind of Hispanic. Why? Well we're in Southern California, of course, which is very multicultural.

Rick Warren:

But while I've got 196 languages in our church, there are about 100 more of that in Southern California. So we got a lot further to go. But what you have is what you'll attract more of. And if you're going to get more, you got to intentionally go after them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What would you change about your leadership? You look back at young Rick, you look at what you've learned over four decades. We have a...

Rick Warren:

Oh, I don't think anything. I think I did everything correctly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Good.

Rick Warren:

Next question. You got 10 hour podcast?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Uh-huh (affirmative). We got a lot of filming.

Rick Warren:

So what would I do differently? Oh baby, oh baby. So many things. One of them I did say is we didn't put enough emphasis on music at first. And when we went after that, I started seeing, well, that's an important. I would say one...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because you talked about staff health. Let's go there. You said not all of our staff have been healthy at all seasons.

Rick Warren:

Oh yeah, right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And when I read the comments on my blog, on my site, I see a lot of people fleeing toxic staff environments. And I would say, I'll go first, there were times where I led the staff and it wasn't very healthy. So what have you learned in that respect?

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:52:04]

Rick Warren:

Well, here's the thing, John Maxwell once talked about, he said, "What if on a scale of one to 10, you're a 7 leader or an 8 leader, then you're going to tend to hire 6's." Okay? People who are not as with it as you are. You're not going to tend to hire people who are smarter than you. Well then that person, they hire, the 6 hires a 4, and the 4 hires a 3. Okay. And I remember looking one time at my children's staff. This is years ago, 35 years ago.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No one named.

Rick Warren:

Nobody named here and a long time ago. And I would just go, I would look at them and go, "How in the world did they get on my staff?" Well, I was not involved. I'm pretty hands off leader. I'm not a micromanager. But one thing I would say, pastor, you should be involved in, is you should have a good process for qualifying staff.

Rick Warren:

Okay. Now, I'm not a good qualifier because I tend to believe everybody can do it. I believe you can do it. I don't see your negatives. I'm going to sell you on the job, whether you're the right person or not. That's just the way I am. My wife has antenna.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Rick Warren:

Okay. She is discerning. And you need to find who are the discerning people in your church. And it could be some members who are very discerning, and it could be some people who are already on staff, and they pass through them before they get to you and you have final approval. But by the time they get to me, they've already been clarified. But in the early days we didn't do that. Let me just say it this way. It's better to have no staff than the wrong staff.

Rick Warren:

It's better to have no staff than the wrong staff. I remember for the first five years, the church people said, "When are we going to have a youth group?" I said, "Well, when God brings the right person." Said, wait a minute, we didn't have a leader. When the leader comes, we'll start. We went seven years without a singles ministry. Why? The wrong leader will cause you more in pain than no leader at all. And so, don't get in a hurry for staff. That I think that's a mistake I made early on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure.

Rick Warren:

At some point, when you're first starting out as church plant, the qualifications for leadership is you have to have a warm body and a pulse. Okay. And if so, you can serve in our church. Now, for instance, gentlemen, you got to go through all kinds of background checks. You got to do blood tests. Here's the thing. How do you know when a church is getting bigger? Simple, the attendance is bigger. How do you know when a church is getting more mature? This is a different question. And I think we should talk about some of those measurements. But one of the tests of mature is the standards for leadership get tougher. To be a leader at Saddleback is far more tougher today as a volunteer or a staff than it was years ago.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's talk about metrics. Because that was on my list of things I wanted to talk about. So COVID the last two years has thrown a bomb into everything. I talked to a group of pastors a couple weeks ago when I was here in California. And I said, "If you could wave a magic wand. And, other than please bring my church back to where it was two years ago, which everybody wants."

Rick Warren:

Everybody wants.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Everybody wants, Rick. I said, "What would you want?" And one of them, African American friend who preaches in Atlanta, said, "I would just love to know metrics." We used to be able to look at attendance and giving. And we knew that, "Okay, it's, doesn't tell the whole story, but at least lets us know where we stand." Now we don't seem to know anymore. When you think about metrics and Barna, who we're doing this as a joint production with, they measure things like vocation and spiritual health, emotional health, relational health, et cetera, that kind of thing. What do you think some metrics for the new age should be?

Rick Warren:

Okay. I don't want to, I want to come back to this. So ask me a question again about mental and emotional metrics.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I will.

Rick Warren:

Okay. After I talk about this. Okay. Okay. First place. Let's just think, what is the church? The church is a body, not a business. It is an organism, not an organization. It is a family. It is a flock. It is a relationship. So organizational metrics need to not be business metrics because we're not a business. They need to be body metrics. Now, you say, "Well, how do you measure stuff in the body?" Doctors do it all the time. I go to a doctor's office. He puts a thermometer in my mouth, writes down on a number. He looks in my ear. He writes down a number, looks in my eyes. He takes my pulse, writes down a number. He does blood work, writes down a number, takes my blood pressure writes. Obviously it's easy to quantify biological health. So if the body, physical body can be measured for health, then there must be measurements for the spiritual body, too. We just haven't been using them.

Rick Warren:

Now, a little background. The Bible teaches very clearly that there are five purposes for our church. These five purposes are explained in Acts 2. They are prayed by Jesus. They're modeled in Acts 2. They're prayed for by Jesus and John 17. They are explained by Paul and Ephesians 4. They're shown all through the New Testament, but they're best expressed in the five verbs of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. A great commitment to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission is all you need to know about church health. If you will practice the five verbs of the Great Commandment and the Great Commission, you'll grow a healthy church. What are they? In the Great Commandment he says first, "Love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength."

Rick Warren:

The Bible word for that is worship. Carey, worship is simply expressing my love to God. Okay. Whether I do it by myself or in a small group or with a hundred people in congregation, worship is expressing my love to God. Offering my body as a living sacrifice. This is your reasonable worship. Worship is not music. This is a pet peeve of mine. First we had the worship. Then we had the sermon. As if the sermon's not worship? The offering's not worship? The prayer's not worship? The invitation's not worship? The silence is not... Only music is... There's no such thing as Christian music.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. So worship.

Rick Warren:

There's only Christian lyrics. If I put on a song and you didn't hear any, no worship, you wouldn't know if it's a Christian song or not. So worship is the first purpose.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Rick Warren:

Okay. Worship is the first purpose.

Rick Warren:

And that's the number one purpose of our life. "Love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength." So we teach people we are to be a worshiping body. Then it says, "Love your neighbor as yourself." The Bible word for that is either service or ministry. Diakonia. When you give, when you serve, when you love your neighbor as yourself, you are ministering to them. You are serving them. It's the, diakonia is the word. It is the service. So, from the Great Commandment, we get worship and service. We are to love God and we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are to worship and to serve. And Jesus said, "Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only." Now, worship always comes before service. Service doesn't precede worship. Service comes out of worship.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. So worship, service.

Rick Warren:

Yeah. Now we go to the Great Commission and we get the other three verbs, or the three commands.

Rick Warren:

Go make disciples, that's evangelism. Teach them to do everything I've commanded you, that's discipleship. And, in the middle he says, "Oh, by the way, baptize him, in the name of the father, son..." Baptism is a symbol of incorporation. The Bible says we're baptized into the Body of Christ. Baptism is not just a symbol of salvation. It's a symbol of fellowship. We are baptized as belongers into the Body of Christ. It is the putting on of the armor. It is the putting on, it's saying, "I'm no longer a spectator. I'm a participator." Baptism is the entry to the church that says, "I'm one of you." And we say, "I'm a believer." We really more accurately should say, "I'm a beloner." Because we are called, not just to believe, we're called to belong. In fact, all five of these purposes, we are called to, honor God through worship. Okay?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Rick Warren:

And we're called to love our neighbors ourself through ministry, we are to make disciples, evangelism. We are to mature disciples, through teaching them to do everything I command you. And we are to

mark them, the disciples. Baptize them into the fellowship. So baptism is the symbol of fellowship. One of the biggest problems today is we have a lot of people who are believers who aren't belongers. People who say, "I love Jesus, I just don't need the church." That's nonsense. That's the most immature statement you can say. It means you don't have the slightest idea about the church. The church, Jesus died for the church. That's how important it is. It's like, saying, "I love you, but I hate your body." Or, "I love you, but I hate your wife." You'd be offended. And so fellowship, worship, discipleship, ministry and evangelism are the five purposes of church, going back to metrics.

Rick Warren:

That was all prelim.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Rick Warren:

That was all prelim. Okay. We need a metric, or metrics, for each of these five purposes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Rick Warren:

How do you measure worship? I can tell you. How do you measure discipleship? We figured out some of those ways. How do you measure ministry? Okay. How do you measure evangelism and how do you measure your fellowship in ministry? Well, for instance, on fellowship, we know how many people are in a small group? Okay. How many people are in a small group meeting regularly on that small group? How often do they meet? If you have more than 60 people in your church, Sunday is a crowd. It's not real fellowship. In fellowship, less is more. 10 is better than 20. 6 is better than 10.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you start looking for metrics like that.

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you, it's interesting, because you are a counter. When we toured your office. I mean, you had this nice little display. 50,000 baptisms. You're at 52 now, you know your numbers.

Rick Warren:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you think, maybe look beyond just Sunday attendance and start saying number of people in groups, number of people you're baptizing.

Rick Warren:

Well, exactly. And in worship, I want to know how many people in my church are having a quiet time.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How do you track that?

Rick Warren:

We have a covenant. One of the things that we've done is in our series of courses, we have a class called Discovering Membership in the Body of Christ. We have Discovering the Habits for Spiritual Growth. We have a class called Discovering my Shape for Ministry. And we have a class that is Discovering my Life Mission in the World. That's for the first four purposes. We know we can track, and in each of those classes, there's material taught, habits that are taught, that they'll use the rest of their life. But there's a covenant. We have a membership covenant, a maturity covenant, a ministry covenant and a mission covenant. I can tell you how many tithers I have in my church. I can tell you, how many people are in small groups in my church. I can tell you, how many people are having a quiet time in my church. That's the pulse. And it's not enough to just do nickels and noses.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Rick Warren:

Now giving is a discipleship stat. It's a discipleship stat.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But not the only one.

Rick Warren:

But it's not the only one.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So in many ways, by measuring that quantifiably, you're also looking at the qualitative, making reasonable guesses about the state of the health. Now you want to talk emotional...

Rick Warren:

Well you can do an annual survey on that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Rick Warren:

You can do an annual survey of your church to take the temperature. One other thing. Your church is not mature until it's had a baby. The mark of physical maturity, when a little girl goes through puberty, she becomes a woman when she has the ability to reproduce. A little boy becomes a man when he goes

through puberty has the ability to reproduce. Your church, I don't care how much doctrine it knows, if it hadn't had a baby, you don't have the ability to reproduce? You're not mature.

Rick Warren:

Now this is the statistic. I want to change the statistic from the 100 largest churches in America. I'd just as soon throw that one out the door. Okay? We've been on it, but don't even read them. What I want to know is, how many churches did you start?

Rick Warren:

And I would like to change the metrics from, I would rather have a church of 75 that planted two other churches than see a church of a thousand. Any day, any day. Because they're going to reach more people. And so, we need to change and we need to reward the multiplying churches, not the big single cell churches. Typically in denominations, the pastors who get invited to preach the [inaudible 01:06:10] are the pastors with the biggest crowd.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Rick Warren:

That just means they've got speaking gifts. That's all it means. That's all it means. But what I want to know is, I want to reward the church that is still at a hundred, but they've started five churches in 20 years. Okay? Where is the reward for those people?

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a great question.

Rick Warren:

We need to change the metric of what gets rewarded, because what gets rewarded gets repeated.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Emotional and mental wellbeing.

Rick Warren:

This is the most missing element, Carey, in the church today. It is caring for...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, you've been through it.

Rick Warren:

Caring for the emotional health of our members and caring for the mental health of our members. How is it that somebody can sit under the gospel for 30 years in a church and still be cantankerous and mean and self-centered and as mean as all get out. There's a likelihood of their been hurt and that hurt's never been healed. Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So when you see the angry person, you see the pain.

Rick Warren:

Oh yeah, yeah. Yeah. In fact, when you see an angry person look past and go, "Don't ask what's wrong with you." Here's the question. Write down this question. "Don't ask what's wrong with you." Ask, "What happened to you?" That's the most important question? What happened to you? Because everything has a reason behind it.

Rick Warren:

And a lot of times when people get angry at you as a pastor and they're upset, they're just reacting to authority and they never have solved the issue with some authority in their life where they were misused or abused or were never allowed to say their idea. They had a dad that would not ever admit he was wrong like that. I honestly believe today, one of the most effective forms of evangelism, in today's society, is what I call apology evangelism. And an apology evangelism, it is you admit to people your fear of talking with them. For instance, let me give you the example. Every one of you have neighbors that have lived by you for 10 years, and you've never talked to them about the Lord.

Carey Nieuwhof:

True story.

Rick Warren:

Okay. They've lived by you and you've never talked about the Lord, and now you feel embarrassed to talk to them about the Lord.

Rick Warren:

Here's what I recommend you do. You go to that person and you say, "Bob, I need to apologize to you."

Rick Warren:

And he goes, "Yeah?"

Rick Warren:

"Yeah, yeah, no, I really feel bad about this. I need to apologize."

Rick Warren:

"Well, yeah. What?"

Rick Warren:

I said, "Well, Bob. First, let me just say, I'm sorry. I was afraid what you'd think of me. And I was afraid. I've never told you about the most important thing in my life. We've lived next to each other for 10 years. And I was afraid to tell you about it because I thought you'd think less of me. I should have known better. You're a better friend than that. Would you please forgive me?"

Rick Warren:

The guy's now going, "Tell me what, of course."

Rick Warren:

"Well, I'm a follower of Jesus. And it's the most important thing in my life. And my past was forgiven and I got a purpose for living and I got a home in heaven and I never talked to you about. I'm sorry, would you forgive me?"

Rick Warren:

That is the way to get to the hardened secular person. You don't start with, I know it all, but you start with an apology. And so that had to do, I don't know how we got off on that, but from the emotional health and the mental health of people, pastors, we need to care more about, people can have this much head knowledge of scripture, but the hurt is this high. And we've never dealt with the emotional pain in their life or the mental struggles and the mental illnesses they're struggling with. And we expect, "Well, just pray about it." That's about as mean a thing as you can say to somebody struggling with mental illness.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You've been through a lot.

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Matthew's mental illness.

Rick Warren:

I watched it first hand for 27 years.

Carey Nieuwhof:

His death by suicide.

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Kay's cancer.

Rick Warren:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You mentioned, and you've been very public about it, but you have been through periods of feeling depressed yourself.

Rick Warren:

Oh, of course.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Couldn't take it, Rick.

Rick Warren:

No. And in fact, never waste pain. Okay. If I'm depressed, I'm going to tell my church about it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

In the moment?

Rick Warren:

In the moment. And I'm going to tell them how I'm dealing with it. And I'll say, "I'm discouraged right now. And here's what I'm discouraged about. But this is what I'm working through." If all of our testimonies are after the fact, they lose the smell of the fire. They don't smell authentic. It's in the moment where you go, "Guys, this last 90 days, I was in excruciating physical pain. I went through, who knows? They still don't even know what it was, but I got some kind of virus that has inflamed all the major muscles of my body. I couldn't sleep. I had to be hospitalized. I couldn't walk. I couldn't exercise. I could barely stand there."

Rick Warren:

I said, "Couldn't preach for three months." I could sit behind a table and speak one service to play the video. But this last Sunday was the first time I stood behind the pulpit in three months. And finally the medicine's working. But I didn't hide that from people. I said, "Guys, I'm in a lot of pain right now. And you've been praying for me. I pray for you. You pray for me." But I also have done that with emotional things. When my brother died, when you're going through grief. When Matthew died, of course, we were very open about that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And again, I am sorry for Matthew's [crosstalk 01:12:10].

Rick Warren:

Yeah. Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Was that natural for you? Was that a decision when Matthew died that...?

Rick Warren:

By the time Matthew died, I had already learned that our greatest ministry will come out of our deepest hurt. I had already learned that. Now that doesn't make it easier.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No.

Rick Warren:

I still want my son back. Here's the point. Pain is inevitable. Misery is not. Misery is optional. Pain is inevitable. And if you're going to go through pain, you may as well use it help other people. That's called redemptive pain. So I'm not going to waste my pain. So anytime I go through any kind of pain, Paul says in the new Testament, he says, "We loved you so much we gave to you not only the gospel of God, but we shared our very own lives." That's the incarnational part of preaching where the Word becomes fresh and flesh and it comes not through again, I don't share all my stories of success. Okay. The articles come out. They go, "That's a good article." I never pass it on to the members. Never. Okay. But I do pass on when I'm in pain.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I watched to do this a couple weeks ago. Toni, my wife and I, we were at Saddleback. And so this is first weekend of December, late November.

Rick Warren:

Oh, got it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you came out. I thought you were going to preach. So a couple things struck me. Number one. How warm you were. You came out, you were just like, "Hey everybody." And everyone's cheering. And you're like, "Sit down, sit down, sit down." They just kind of stood up there and you prayed for people, but then you said, "Hey, I've been in a lot of pain. And I need you to pray for me." And then you gave a mini sermonette. And then you said, "If you're in pain in the congregation, emotional, financial, relational pain, medical pain, stand up." You did the biggest pastoral prayer I've seen in a church service, Rick. And it was moving. It was so moving.

Rick Warren:

Well, I'm in pain and I know that they're in pain so I can fellowship with them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you said, after you prayed, you said, "Listen, I'm still in pain. It's too painful for me to do five services. So I shot this earlier in the week. I'm going to go now. But you're going to watch me on video." And then you waved and you walked off. And I thought, I can see doing that if you're a church planter. But, to do that after 42 years, when you could have just as easily had said, "Guys, run the video or get a guest. I'm staying home."

Rick Warren:

Right. Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How do you stay that engaged for that long?

Rick Warren:

The only way you can stay engaged is to genuinely love people. If ultimately your motive is not love for God and love for people, you won't last in ministry. It's just too hard. Okay. I don't honestly know a single pastor who's in it for money. People talk about all those money grubbing pastors, believe me. If I wanted to make money, there's a thousand easier ways to make money than pastoring and dealing with the 24 hour being on call. And I still do hospital visits and I do funerals and I do... People think, "Well, he must not do any of that pastoral care." That's how you keep your credibility. Okay. And a lot of guys don't really - the problem is they don't want to be pastors. They want to be preachers. And what they would like is a vacuum tube where they study all week and hermetically or sucked over to the pulpit and they preach. And then as soon as they finish they're hermetically back to their study, then go be a professor. Okay.

Rick Warren:

Pastor means you care. Pastor means you love. And that means you spend time with people. And I still spend a lot, I spent one day this last month, while I was in pain, four hours calling people in pain, from home, just calling people in pain. Staff members and members. I've had four of my staff members, key staff members, die in the last year. They were all, they're combined, they were all elders. I've had four elders die. They were all full-time pastors. They're combined over 120 years of service at Saddleback. I personally feel responsible for their widows. I call their widows and I call them and say, "How you doing? What do you need? I told Glen, I'd take care of you. How can I help you?"

Rick Warren:

That kind of stuff gives you credibility that honestly when you genuinely love people. Now you can fake love for 2 years. You can't fake it for 42. People figure out you either love them or you don't. But they know I love them. And if I were to say, "Let's charge hell with squirt guns." They'd say, "Sure, why not? Let's go." First, I have a track record. But more than that, they know I love them. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep and you can't go wrong with that. You can't go wrong, laying down your life for the sheep. You can't expect people to accept your vision if you're not giving into their life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

The other thing that amazes me, we have seen so many pastors fail, morally. You've seen a lot of friends, lot of people you started out with.

Rick Warren:

They didn't put up the guardrails.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's talk about that. Why do you think we see so many, and I'm sure small church pastors fail too. It's just the big ones make the news.

Rick Warren:

No, they make the news.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. So what's going on there?

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:18:04]

Rick Warren:

Well, because they're bigger targets Satan wants to take them down. A guy in a less known church doesn't have as big an impact for causing pain to the body of Christ. The only thing good we can say about Satan is that he doesn't have any new temptations. He doesn't have any new plans. He's used the same ones since creation, and the same three temptations he gave to Adam and Eve, he gave to Moses. That's in Hebrews 11. He gave to Abraham, he gave to David. They're the same three temptations of Jesus in the wilderness, and I could trace them all the way through. They're passion, possession, and position; or sex, salary, and status; or the temptation to be, the temptation to have, and the temptation to feel. They are best explained in 1 John chapter two, verse 15 and 16. Now, the guy who wrote 1 John also wrote John. And in John 3:16, he says, "God so loved the world."

Rick Warren:

Then in 1 John 2:16, 15, 16, he says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Well, which is it? God so loved the world, but I'm not supposed to love the world. The answer is the definition of the word 'world.' When God loved the world, he's talking about the people of the world. And in 1 John 2:16, when he says, "Love not the world," he's talking about the value system of the world. Because he said in the very next verse, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not of the Father, they're of the devil." We are to love the people of the world and hate the value system.

Rick Warren:

The problem is today, as Christians, we do the exact opposite. We hate the people and we love the value system. We are as materialistic and hedonistic and secular as they are, but we hate the people. We've got it reversed. We've got it reversed. We are to love the people, Democrats and Republicans. I am not allowed to hate anybody. I am to love my enemy. I am to love the communist or the Muslim or the gay person or the person who hates me or anybody who's different than me. I am not allowed to hate anybody. I cannot do that and call myself Christian.

Rick Warren:

On the other hand, I am to hate the value system. Now, lust of the flesh is the temptation to feel. I want to feel good. It's more than sex. One of the reasons Satan works on big time pastors more, is because the emotional drain is larger the more services you do and things like that. When you're drained, they say, "Oh, I deserve this." "I deserve to look at pornography." "I deserve this drink." "I deserve..." "I'm doing so much for God." That's a lie out of the pit of hell. It's a lie. When you're tired, you're most vulnerable. Jesus was tempted after 40 days of fasting. He's wasted. He's tired. Now, when Satan comes and says, "Turn these stones to bread," what's wrong with Jesus eating bread? Nothing, nothing. He's hungry. There's nothing wrong with him eating bread. What's the problem here? He's saying, "Use the gift I gave you for ministry to feed yourself." I've never been tempted to turn stones to bread. Why? I don't have that gift. Listen, you will not be simply tempted in your weakness, you'll be tempted in your greatest strength.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So when you look back at your life... I stepped out of the lead pastor role after 20 years and a friend of mine messaged me and he said, "Twenty years without a scandal. That's something these days." And I'm like, "Gosh, I never thought of it," but 42 years, yeah.

Rick Warren:

You have to put the guardrails up.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, what are your guardrails?

Rick Warren:

Because you need guardrails against all three kinds of sin. The first one we installed was what's called Saddleback Ten Commandments, which was literally a list of 10 things you cannot do if you're on the staff of our church. I wrote those, and we adopted them in 1986 during the Jim Bakker and Swaggart scandals. During Bakker and Swaggart, I said, "That is not going to happen here." Now, one of my mentors was Billy Graham, and he told me about the Billy Graham Rule. I have never personally been in a room with a woman who is not my wife with the door closed ever in 50 years, except in a doctor's office with a nurse. I have never been in a room with a woman who is not my wife with the door closed. My secretary was my greatest protector when she was my secretary for 20 years. I've had a male assistant for 20 years now. Harriet and I would not go down in the elevator together. "Who's going to go first?"

Rick Warren:

I remember telling this to Bill Hybels back in the eighties. I warned him. I said, "Bill, I think you're flirting with fire the way you travel with female staff and the way you don't hold up lines." And I gave him my Saddleback Ten Commandments. His response to me was "Rick, you're going overboard." That's what he told me. And I looked at him in the eye and I said, "Bill, I'd rather go overboard than be thrown overboard." And he was thrown overboard. I had told him, I said, "If I'm driving down the street and I see a female member of my church with a flat tire on the side of the road, I don't stop and help her. I will call AAA and make sure she gets the help, but I'm not going to..." I want to live in such a way that nobody goes, "Oh, I saw Rick with a woman, not his wife, on the freeway."

Rick Warren:

I want to live in such a way people have to make up stuff about me to criticize me. Well, I found out they do. They do, but not in that area. Not in that area. But you also need them in the lust of the eyes, which is materialism, and you need guardrails in the pride of life, which is humility. For instance, some of my guardrails, one of the guardrails why I don't spend so much time on social media, it's not good for my ego. It appeals to my ego to write something and then have people applaud it. I don't need that in my life. Today, the pride of life, a lot of it has to do with social media and the way... Are you trying to look cool? Who are you trying to impress?

Rick Warren:

On the money thing, Satan takes Jesus out and says, "All these things will I give you if you fall down and worship me." What is that? That's the temptation to sell your ministry for profit. When you say, "I'm not

going to say this, this Sunday, because that member out there is influential and he's going to loan me his condo for vacation." He's got a condo, and I can't afford a condo.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Therefore, I'm not going to say that.

Rick Warren:

I'm going to limit my message in order... I'm going to sell out in order to please the wealthy person in the church. And there are lots of ways that people do that. The third way, the guardrail, is on the pride of life. Jesus is taken up on the pinnacle of the temple and Satan goes, "Hey, jump off the temple, and it'll be really cool. Everybody will applaud you. They'll say 'Glory to God. It's God. It's really cool. Yay, God, yay, Jesus. You are the Son of God.'"

Rick Warren:

What's wrong with Jesus getting glory? Nothing. What's wrong with Jesus being recognized as Son of God? Nothing. It's how it was being done. The path to glory is through the cross, not through showing off. And we will be tempted to do the spectacular in ministry to show off. We will be tempted to show off by doing something really cool and be like, "Hey, watch this! The smoke and whistles blowing around." It's just so subtle that you have to put, I'm not going to do that on social media, and I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to read my own press releases, and I'm not going to promote myself like that. And I'm not going to do this and that.

Rick Warren:

When you do that, again, it goes back to the anointing of God. "Promotion comes neither from the east or the west, it comes from the Lord." So when God finds somebody goes, "I'm going to build guardrails on these things," then he goes, "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth that he may show himself strong on the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward him." I have discovered, Carey, that you don't have to be perfect to be super blessed, obviously; you don't have to be sinless to be... God isn't interested in your sin as much as he is in the direction of your heart.

Rick Warren:

I blow it all the time. And there are times I'm prideful. There are times I'm materialistic. There are times I could be tempted in other areas. I have not stumbled in the area of sex, but it's because I just... It's not how close to the fire can I get and not get burned? It's how far away can I be?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can you possibly be?

Rick Warren:

God willing, I'm going to finish that the only woman I've ever known is my wife, and I can say that. But in that, I have to say, "Lord, let him who stands take heed lest he fall." Here's the biggest thing, given the right situation, I'm capable of anything. "The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked." That's what the Bible says. That means you lie to yourself more than you lie to anybody else. I lie to myself more than lie to anybody else. My biggest lies aren't to other people, my biggest lies are to me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I really appreciate what you're saying. I echo that prayer that we can finish well, that you will finish well. One of the criticism I've heard, Rick, of the Billy Graham Rule, and Billy did finish well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Is that women say, "Well, that's not fair." It creates a bit of, not a misogynist environment, but "You might mentor me if I was a male campus pastor one-on-one, but you're never going to do that with a female director, and it stifles people in the organization."

Rick Warren:

I think they misunderstood. Of course, I have ordained pastors, women, on my staff, which created a lot of controversy, too. Half of my staff is women. The difference is it's not that I'm afraid of them. I'm afraid of me. They've done nothing wrong. It's a matter of given the right situation, I could be guilty of anything. I don't trust my own heart. So I have to explain to them, "This doesn't really have anything about to do with you; it has to do with my own propensity to sin," my own propensity to deny that I'm a human being, and that I am fallen. I'm broken. The Bible is very clear about this in Titus 2, that the older women are to disciple the younger women, and the older men are to disciple the younger men.

Rick Warren:

In the scripture, Paul tells Timothy, "Treat the older men in your church," that's older in the Lord, "as fathers. Treat the older women in your church as mothers. Treat the younger women in your church as sisters, and treat the younger men in your church as brothers." There was a period in my life when the church where I had identified five fathers in the church. These were guys who had been Christians longer than me. And I went to each of those guys and I said, "Look, we don't have a board. There's no election here. But if you see anything in my life that's out of base, you come to me and you have the right to speak in and say, 'Warren, correct this.'" They were spiritual. They had been Christians longer than me.

Rick Warren:

Now I've been a Christian now 62 years, so I don't have any spiritual fathers in the church anymore. I think I'm the oldest one. I have tons of spiritual sisters, and I have spiritual sisters who come to me and say, "Rick, have you ever thought about this from a female viewpoint?" "No, and you're right," and I write it down. There are women who speak into my life all the time as spiritual sisters, lots of spiritual sisters, lots of spiritual brothers. I just don't have any spiritual mothers, because I haven't found any woman in the church to admitting to be an older woman yet. They may be 85 years old, but they're still a spiritual sister.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you feel that way through mentoring, that that's an opportunity for women on your staff.

Rick Warren:

I do. I do. And our women pastors can mentor other women pastors. Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You and Kay have had your share of challenges in your marriage.

Rick Warren:

Oh, yeah. Especially the early years.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What was that?

Rick Warren:

Well, we are the exact opposite in every single cell of our DNA. If I say "Hi," she says, "Hello." If I say, "Black," she says, "White." It's Tweedledee, Tweedledum. For the first 10 years of our marriage, there was an old Huey Lewis and the News song that was our theme song, called Happy to be Stuck With You. The truth is, we would've never gotten married if we had done it in the correct... Do your enneagram and do your premarital counseling. Because any counselor, any counselor-

Carey Nieuwhof:

They would've said keep away from each other.

Rick Warren:

Any counselor could have said, "This marriage, there's no way it's going to work," because we're the exact opposite in so many ways. I took Kay out on our first date, and eight days later we were engaged. We were engaged before our second date. I did not want to tell that to my kids for years, because it's all the wrong way to do it. And then she moved during our engagement to Birmingham, Alabama, to work in an inner city Black church, and I moved to Nagasaki, Japan, to plant a church in Nagasaki. So we were separated our entire engagement. So when we got married, it's like, we knew we were in love and we thought God had put us together, but, "Who are you?" The first two years were hell on earth, and really we did not get along.

Rick Warren:

I was teaching at a Christian college, and I was making \$400 a month. I said, "We're going to make this thing work if it kills us." Well, it nearly did. So we got a Christian counselor, and then 45 years ago, counseling was not as acceptable as it is today. Pastors didn't go get counseling. We went to a Christian counselor. It cost me a hundred dollars a week, and I'm making \$400 a month. No, no, I've got that wrong. I'm sorry. It cost me 400 a month, I was making 800 a month. So half of my income was going to it. So I put it on my MasterCard. I've often thought I should do a commercial, said, "A saved marriage, priceless." How much is your marriage worth? People say, "I can't afford counseling." You can't afford not to get it." How much is your happiness worth? I'd pay a million bucks for my marriage today. I am so in love with my wife, more in love with her than I've ever been in my life.

Rick Warren:

There would be no Saddleback, there'd be no Celebrate Recovery, there'd be no PEACE Plan, there would be no Purpose Driven Life, there would be no blessing of over a million pastors in 164 countries if our marriage had crumbled. I'm glad we stuck together. We now know that we would've never made it if we... Of course, without the Lord, but we know that we would've never gotten together if we'd gone through premarital counseling and that, but God knew what we needed. And here's the thing. I've discovered when I used to do marriage counseling, the marriage is most in trouble where the people are most alike, because they get bored with each other. The greater your differences in marriage, the

greater your potential for spiritual growth and sanctification. The greater your differences, the greater your potential for sanctification and spiritual growth.

Rick Warren:

My wife, the Holy Spirit has used my wife more than anybody else to hone off my rough edges and to teach me things I wouldn't have learned any other way. Really, if you want to summarize marriage counseling in two words, it's this: grow up. Grow up. "I want what I want, you want what you want, we're going to have conflict, and that's not going to work, but Jesus in me and Jesus in you is going to learn how to get along." The lessons we learned from that helped me be a better leader and helped shape me, so that the marriage problems... I would not have even considered planting a church in the first two years, our marriage was so rocky. But by the year five when we planted, we had worked through a lot of that pain. And I felt like I could teach on marriage without being a hypocrite, and I could share from our weaknesses, and we had grown enough from that, we could learn from that. Who you choose as a spouse is an enormous, obviously, an enormous shaper of your life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Rick, can't thank you enough. Well, people can find you on social, whether that's good or bad. And they can find you at Saddleback.

Rick Warren:

Let me just say this word about social media. When Twitter first came out, a guy on my staff who's running our tech team, he knew about it way in advance. He wrote the Microsoft Certification test, the guy who was leading my tech team. And he came to me one day. He said, "Rick, you're going to want to get on this. It's called Twitter. And you type in certain things, and you just tell people what's going on in your life." I looked at him and I said, "That is the most narcissistic thing I could think possibly think of. Why should I write 'I just ate a burrito and passed gas'? First, why should I write it? And second, why should you care? And, second, 'Look at how cool I am with this great food right here.'" I said, "I can't think of anything that would stroke it more."

Rick Warren:

Even though I stayed off it for like two years, in the first two years, but he secretly put me on there. One day I'm sitting doing the funeral of a missiologist who had taught at Fuller Seminary. And I'm teaching this funeral with John Piper. Now John is the least narcissistic guy that I know. We're sitting together, and John leans over to me in the funeral, I'm sitting on the front stage, he goes, "Hey, Rick, I'm on Twitter." And I go, "What?" I just couldn't think of John Piper being on Twitter. And I go, "Why? Why are you on Twitter?" He goes, "Oh, I use it to mentor." Ding. Light bulb. Now I have a purpose for social media. So if you're using to edify other people, go right ahead. But if you're using it to show off, stop it. That's it. That's my advice. We're over and out. God bless you, everybody.

Carey Nieuwhof:

With that, Rick, thank you so much.

Rick Warren:

Thank you, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, that was pretty much bucket list, and there will be a round two. Rick and I'll have to hammer it out, but I'll go back and I will set that up. I hope you really enjoyed that. There's a lot of wisdom there, and a lot we did not tap into. There is more. There's bonus footage over on my YouTube channel. So you'll see the whole video of the interview that you just heard, but you'll also get the tour of his offices and library, which is pretty epic. I asked Rick what he was going to do with his library when he wasn't here anymore. And he said, "I don't know." I said, "This is a treasure for the church." I know he's going to figure that out, and he's got a lot of years ahead of him. I've got some other interviews with Rick on ChurchPulse Weekly podcast, and then another episode here where we talk about what's next for him, as well. He'll very much be leading in the capital-C Church over the next decade and beyond.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Anyway, all that said, thanks to our partners for this episode. You can start the new year off right with the 2022 digital playbook from Pro MediaFire. Claim your copy today at [promediafire.com/2022](http://promediafire.com/2022) and sign up for your free 14-day trial of their texting app Gloo's texting app called Thryve, and start connecting with your church community. Go to [Thryve.io](https://Thryve.io), and get started for free today. Next episode, another hero of mine, Don Miller. Donald Miller is going to be on the podcast and, well, here's an excerpt from the conversation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wait a minute. Business Made Simple Don, Blue Like Jazz Don. Are they actually the same people? It's been quite the journey. Can you tell us about that a little bit?

Donald Miller:

Well, my wife asked that question.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Does she?

Donald Miller:

There's been a couple times, and always it's the most pleasing thing anybody can say for reasons I don't understand, but they'll say, "Does anybody confuse you with the guy who wrote Blue Like Jazz"? And I think, "Yeah."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Like they don't know, right? They don't know.

Donald Miller:

I often confuse myself with the guy who wrote Blue Like Jazz.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So next episode, if you subscribe, you get it automatically. And thank you for those of you who have left ratings and reviews. And if you haven't done that yet, and really appreciate this podcast, we would love for you to do that, wherever you listen, whether that's Spotify, Apple Podcast, Overcast, wherever, just

leave a review. We would really appreciate it. Also coming up, a future series, Mark Sayers, Nona Jones, D.J. Soto, Craig Groeschel, Bobby Gruenwald, Vance Roush, and others. Coming up, we're going to talk about the future of the metaverse, Web3, and so much more. Hybrid church, crypto, AI. It's going to be a fascinating thing. I'm just really smitten by those things lately. So I thought, "Well, why not bring you four or five episodes about that?" And lots of others coming up this year as well, and subscribers, you get that automatically.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now that we're in a new year, hey, before I let you go, I want to ask you about your habits. Are your current habits getting you to where you want to be? I know we're four days into a new year. You're like, "Ah, I got one already up in flame." Well, you know what? You can set goals, or you can just actually reset your life. I've got a brand new course to help you make progress in 2022. This week I'm releasing the complete At Your Best Course. So I wrote a book, was released a few months ago called At Your Best. And it's been featured in Forbes, in what, Fast Company, been profiled by Malcolm Gladwell, Adam Grant, Susan Cain, and Daniel Pink, and the Next Big Idea Club. And it's helped well over 20,000 leaders so far get time, energy, and priorities working in their favor.

Carey Nieuwhof:

However, I've got material I didn't put in the book and I didn't put in the master class. And that's why I'm releasing the complete At Your Best Course. It's got the strategies that I use every single day to help me get more done in less time. So if you want to become a ninja at time management, you can get everything including the master class and brand new units in the complete course. So the course will cover the basics of setting up a productive life, like learning how to leverage your time, energy, and priorities, but it will also cover seven advanced productivity principles and strategies I haven't shared anywhere else. Everything about how to manage your inbox, to how to avoid what I call a gray zone. We talked about green, yellow, red. I'll talk about gray zone, how to maximize your meetings and other things. And what that will mean is more peace of mind, more time at home for you. And also a little more sanity in the chaos, because it looks like this year is still going to be chaotic.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you can enroll today by going to [atyourbestcourse.com](http://atyourbestcourse.com). The current pricing and offers expire in just a couple of days, so don't miss out, and sometime around the time this airs, we are going to hit a new milestone, 20 million downloads, and that's because of you. So we're going to be sharing \$1,500 in Starbucks on my social media channels, so if you want to get in on that, we do that from time to time. And thanks for listening to the end. I know a bunch of you actually do that, and here's the bonus. Just follow me on the socials. I'm cnieuwhof on Facebook and Twitter, Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram. When we hit 20 million, which may be happening this week, we'll post a barcode you can share at the Starbucks checkout.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Hey guys, long epic episode, check out what's happening on YouTube, too. So grateful for you. Glad we get to do this for another year, and I hope our time together today has helped you thrive in life and leadership.

Announcer:

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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 [01:43:51]