

This transcript was automatically generated.

In this episode, Bible or ai, why you should leave your, yeah, that's what's happening. Why you should leave your church EQ as a building block for discipleship and talk about our annual meeting that we had this week.

Oh wow.

Hello.

Hi, Danielle.

Hi.

How are you?

Good. How are you? Podcast

It out today.

I am.

Okay, good.

We record them all on the same day for some. It's fine.

And then I get the

Tail end of it. Spy

Seconds. Yeah. This is the back half.

Yeah, you do

The 19th hole.

For real. It's better this than a meeting though, because those go, that's what we had last week. That meeting went crazy. I

Felt bad. Meetings at the end of a week

Are

Never good.

Never good.

Not productive. And we probably all say things that we should get fired for.

Okay.

Especially you. Not me. Not me ever.

Especially me. Yeah. But they're good brainstorm times,

Right.

But not good decide things. Your

Brain is just loose. Go. It's all over the place.

Okay. Alright. So I thought to let people get to know you.

Oh boy.

No, not really. I've been wanting to do this game. Bible verse or ai.

Oh man.

So did this come from, I'll be specific with you. The ES version of the Bible.

Oh, wow.

This transcript was automatically generated.

ESV, sorry. S-V-E-S-V version of the Bible or chat. GPT is what I used. And fun fact, I actually used chat GBT to make this whole game. I was like, just give me 10, make five of 'em from the esv. And then I checked them. So it took,

Let me just say by way of,

This will be a get to know you.

I don't have the whole Bible memorized, so maybe I'll get some of these wrong.

You'll be

Fine. I just want to make sure.

Wait, you don't have the whole Bible memorized. Hang on. I thought you got your whatever.

Yeah, I did get my whatever.

Your divinity one,

Right?

Isn't that memorized the Bible?

Yes.

Yeah. Well,

And then obviously I failed

Money, not well spent.

Sorry. Kim

Should have memorized. Sorry, Kim.

Sorry, honey.

Should have not cheated. Alright, let's try. So you tell me. Al

Or

ESV Bible.

Okay.

Okay.

I'm ready.

Okay. I dunno. The cedars bend before the breath of his voice and the mountains melt like wax in his presence.

I think that's Bible.

It's not,

Oh wow.

I thought the wax would get you.

No, I mean, well, yeah. Wax is

Wax. Wax is kind. Yeah. I

Should have got that

One. I

Was going Song of Solomon with that sucker.

Okay. Yeah. It sounds Song of Solomon. He

This transcript was automatically generated.

Okay. All right. I'm Oh for one.

Oh for one.

Yeah. Wax. We should have known wax.

Yeah. Wax is not, maybe I shouldn't read them. So serious. Number two, my beloved put his hand to the latch and my heart was thrilled within

Me. Okay. I think that is Bible.

That is Bible. And that is, yeah. So that's funny. I was like, whoa, okay.

Whoa.

Yeah.

Okay.

In the quietness of Dawn, you will hear wisdom call in solitude. Truth will guide your steps.

I think it's throwing me off how you're reading.

Oh, sorry.

But I think that's ai.

It is. Yeah. I'm reading them all as if they're overdramatic.

Bible verses, overdramatic Bible verses. Yeah. I'm picturing

The earth and all its ways are woven with the mystery. None can find the edge of wisdom, but those who seek it deeply,

I can't past. I can't get past. I'm trying to help you. So that's ai.

Yes. Isn't that crazy one?

Yeah.

The earth in all its ways are woven with mystery. None can find the edge of wisdom, but those who seek it deeply, I mean,

Yeah, boy,

The concepts.

The concepts. But yeah, there's definitely a computer.

Cable. People don't use AI for your Bible study stuff.

All right, let's do a couple more.

Couple more. I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

I think that's Bible.

It is.

And I think it's Joshua.

It's Amos.

Amos. Okay. Alright.

Yeah. Eight, nine. Yeah.

Okay.

Yeah, because when I was doing the game, I was like, some of the verses were so I'm like, please, I know these. So I was like, make the verses more obscure. Make the verses more. I kept cha pt.

This transcript was automatically generated.

All right. That's pretty good

For you have delivered my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling.

That's Bible.

Yeah. Psalm.

Psalms

One 16. For the roots that grow in darkness still reach for light. Hidden yet striving.

That's got to be ai.

It's good job.

Yeah.

Two more.

Okay.

He makes wars, oh sorry, three more. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear. He burns the chariots with fire.

I think that's Bible.

Psalm 46.

Psalm. Okay.

The earth in all its ways are woven with mystery. None can find the edge of wisdom, but those who seek it deeply,

That's ai.

Yes. Good job. Last but not least, the fig tree should not blossom nor fruit beyond the vines. The produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food. The flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls.

I think it's Bible.

It is. And it's so weird to read. That's why I put it in.

Yeah.

Habakkuk.

Habakkuk. Interesting. Yeah, good job. You did. I did better as we went on. I was a little intimidated at the beginning of thinking my entire life choices were going to come under.

And there is a cadence. I think AI has a

Cadence.

It has a,

That's probably true

Way that it does things.

Wow.

Well good job.

I got one wrong.

Yeah, that's great.

Okay. I mean, not really.

This transcript was automatically generated.

Okay. Wait, you get one? Oh, you thought it was a Bible. It

Was that,

Yeah, it's probably not good. That's fine. It's probably not good. It's fine. Alright, so let's move to your Inbox. Okay.

No AI here.

No.

So I want you to, maybe you could explain a little bit around the theme. The theme is why to leave a church, when to leave a church, how to know when to leave a church, but maybe the heart behind some of the messages

You've gotten. And we're going to do a two-parter on this. By the way. We're going to pick one up next week. I want to talk about how to leave a church because that's another related subject, but not exactly the same. So I think the why to leave a church question, there's a couple of different questions that come into this. So sometimes people are thinking about, first of all, this is epidemic, people leaving churches. And so this is kind of a podcast for pastors, although I know lots of just Christians listen to this. And so I hope it will be instructive in multiple directions as we talk about this. But I think sometimes these have arisen from people who are thinking about leaving our church

And are trying to do it the right way and to have conversations and say, here's what I'm thinking about and involving me or one of our pastors in that process with them. And so I think that's where this would come up of like, well, what are the actual good reasons to leave a church? And sometimes it's people coming into our church, and this would be the most recent example of this, somebody coming into our church from another church and they came up to me and declared themselves and said, here I am. I'm coming from X, Y, and Z. Here's what happened. And I actually gave them a document that has some of this stuff on it to just say, I just want to kind of check you a little bit and say, make sure that the Y are right because this is not something that we should enter into lightly.

I agree

At all. And so today I want to talk about the wise. And I don't know if it's just, I do hear it from other pastors I know around here in the Erie area. It's almost a standing joke among pastors.

Yeah. It's trickled down to the rest of us too. Yeah. We know the joke

Where it's just like people go from church to church. And when I started out, and again, this is almost 30 years ago, I was really diligent about this with other pastors of just being like, Hey, so-and-so is coming to your place and they came from our place and I just want to let you know and it's okay. All that kind of stuff and just kind of try to keep

Relational. That's good.

It's a weird thing for pastors. You figured cheated

On or

Something. Yeah, it gets very personal and all that kind of stuff.

And so I tried to be much more diligent in the beginning and it's so epidemic now. I'm embarrassed to admit I really don't go to those great lengths anymore just because it happens so much. And there's almost, in our area, at least I've heard this through the grapevine, there's almost this idea of graduating that you graduate from one church to another church and when you are fed to some point, then you

This transcript was automatically generated.

graduate to, and it's just kind of weird. So anyway, I want to say first that my response at the outset is always, this should never be entered into casually or

Lightly.

That if you're going to leave a church, nobody, this is not flipping your channel from one TV station

To the next. You're not switching pharmacies or

Switching pharmacies or I go to Giant Eagle versus Wegmans or something like

That. But also,

Right,

Let's have a conversation.

No, we don't have time.

No, we don't. That'll

Be sweet question. The Bible says, and the idea of church membership is not kind of in the Bible in that way, but the Bible talks in very strong terms about what it is to be a part of a body. And so we are members of one another. If that's true and I'm going to violate that or I'm going to take myself away from that, that's a big deal. We are joined together in Christ. We must carry each other's burdens. When you just think about these tethering responsibilities that we have to a local church family, the Bible doesn't take it lightly. And so nobody should take it lightly. So that would be my first thing. But the other thing that I think is a really important part of this conversation, and then I want to get to what I think are a couple of reasons why someone should leave a church. But I think we have to acknowledge first and define first that there are different kinds of

Churches.

We all know that there's different kinds of churches, denominationally, but I want to talk spiritually, different kinds of churches. So there are such things as false churches. For example, we've had people come to our church from what I would call a false church. I have no guilt or bad feelings about that. Of course, get out of that false teaching craziness and please come to our church. There is no hesitation there because there are places that have the name church on the building that are not true churches. They have wrong, very wrong theology. They have very wrong beliefs about the personal work of Christ. They have a wrong handling of the ordinances, they have improper use of the scriptures. And so there are just false churches. There are also true churches just by way of contrast. And true churches are churches where the gospels are rightly taught, where the ordinances are rightly administered. The mission of the church is getting lived out by the congregation. So those are true churches. Here's where it gets tricky. Among true churches, there are more pure and less pure churches. And that's just true. It's also hard to judge and weigh. So again, within this category of churches, the church's purity is determined by things like the degree of freedom that that church has from wrong doctrine,

Wrong conduct, its degree of conformity to God's revealed will for his church, proper preaching, proper worship, effective praying in the church, fellowship in the church, personal holiness among the members of that church, care for the poor character of the leaders of that church, spiritual power in the ministry of that church, the outreach efforts of that church, et cetera.

So you

Can look at kind of the biblical descriptions of what a church is and then see if there's a more pure or less pure church. We must also just admit here that no churches are perfect and no churches are completely pure. And so there's always going to be a scale like this with any church. Churches aren't perfect,

This transcript was automatically generated.

Believe

Me. And I've often said for years to newer folks of just like, you're welcome here. You think everything is perfect about our church right now? Give us time

And

We'll absolutely. We'll show you how imperfect we actually are. So anyway, so I think acknowledging that scale is an important thing. And then I also want to talk about why not to leave a church. These are the reasons I don't think people should leave churches. So I think it's always wrong to leave churches for personal ambition and pride. I think I personally think it's wrong to leave churches about personality clashes with leaders or the pastor or even other members of the church when it's personality clashes. That stuff is part of being a church and that's the stuff that gets worked out to improve our maturity. I think differences among minor doctrines are what we would call secondary doctrines, I think is a wrong reason to leave a church. So differing end times theologies or stances on alcohol or style of music or those kinds of things. I think that's the kind of stuff I had a friend once say in his church. They had, I think he said either 80 20 rule or the 70 30 rule where he said basically you're going to come here and you're going to like 70% of what we do, or 60%, I think it was 60 40 actually you're going to like 60% of what we do, 40% you're probably not going to care

For

And for that 40% you have to train your mind to go, but somebody else loves that. And for the sake of this church, I'm going to endure that thing because of the 60% of things that I do like. And so I think that's part of the spirit of a healthy church. I think there are also some wrong reasons to stay at a church and I see this coming to pass a lot. So memories of that church. So

Actually

As churches drift into even falsehood or less and less purity, sometimes people will stay in a bad church sentimentally.

Absolutely. Yeah.

And I'm not sure that's a great reason. Family ties is part of that or their family's history in the church, denominational loyalty. Some people stay with the church because this is the word Lutherans and that's what we do. Or we're Methodists and that's what we do. And we've always been Methodists we're going to, and that's not always a great reason to stay at a church. So here's how I would lay it out. I think a person is always justified in leaving a false church. So if it's a false church, leave it. It's trickier when it comes to more and less pure churches. And so here's the three reasons or the three reasons I would give to leave a church. And again, even these need to be very carefully weighed. So one is doctrinal error. So when the church's leadership deviates from the Bible in a serious way in those core issues, so the trinity, the person of Christ, the atonement, the resurrection of Jesus. I think this is the main reason and maybe the only reason, acceptable reason to leave a church.

And most churches have a statement of faith that you could probably look up and see where they land. And then you would know.

That's right. Yeah, that's right. And sometimes that will show you that it's not the church for you.

Yeah, you could immediately see that.

And sometimes the church says that that's their statement of faith, but then they start doing things that are against that. And so that's a good thing to bring up. But I think it's important to see that even Paul's response, even to people ind doctrinally airing churches is to stay and to bring repentance and to bring discipleship and sometimes to bring discipline. And so we will see these examples, one Corinthians five and two Thessalonians three and Titus three, and where Paul's kind of encouraging you stay in the

This transcript was automatically generated.

church and take care of the wrongdoing a different way. So doctrinal error is one. Second is matters of conscience. And this gets a little bit more subjective and tricky and squishy, but which means that you have to be really cautious and really humble, which is hard when you're thinking about leaving a church. It really is. It's like this thing rises up in you. But if you don't have, for example, if you don't have freedom to minister in a church in a way that God has gifted you or the scripture requires that the church doesn't see themselves as a body where people can use their gifts, a person like that might be released to leave that church.

The third way is just practical considerations. And again, a little squishy, so you have to be very diligent about this. But if after much prayer someone decides that staying at a church could actually cause more harm than good for them individually for that local body, if staying at the church may harm the faith of others or could stand in the way of people coming to saving knowledge of Jesus, it might be time to leave that church. So anyway, those are the ways that I would summarize considerations for leaving a church. My overwhelming encouragement to people though is to stay and work it out and let the church be the church. The church has built in protections to keep you think about how Jesus or how the Old Testament used the prophets and how there were these ways within the people of God of self-correcting. And I think if we flee from that too early, we can set churches a drift that could actually benefit from our involvement.

Yeah, that's good. Thanks. If you have questions that you want answered that you get in your inbox, please send them. You can send them@dereksanford.com. We're going to move into our reinventing church topic and we're going to talk. Derek, you had a chance to sit down with Justin Buer and Steven and you guys talked about EQ as a key building block for discipleship and leadership. Justin is the teaching pastor of Bere Bible Church in green, New York. It's a church with four physical locations and his church also shares some of his time with another church in their region where he goes to minister for one day a week, which is kind of cool. Its a

Cool thing,

A cool thing. So let's take a look at that and we'll come back.

Hey Justin. Hey Derek. Good to have you, man. Great to meet here. I'm here with Steven as Wells up, and we'll be exploring this exciting topic today with you. And thanks for being here, making the long trip down from, tell us where's home for you?

Green, New York, just north of Binghamton by a little bit, kind of in between Syracuse and Binghamton. Cow country.

Right on. All right. Cow country, remind you of Scotland. Is that cow country

Where she

Country? Oh, sheep. Sheep. That's right. Wrong animal.

Don't get that mixed up. We have big sheep with spots that give milk.

Okay. Alright. You're making Steven feel right at home. This podcast is weird already. Welcome to America.

Bonjour spot. Anyway, thanks for being here, Justin. We're talking today in this awake the Lake reinventing church topic of the day talking about eq and we're calling it eq, a key building block for discipleship and leadership. And so I always introduce this section of things by just saying, why is this important to us? And so we're, as a church kind of shifting our approach and the model and the way that we do church and really kind of emphasizing this discipleship model. And we're really, really putting a bigger emphasis on bringing leaders up through a discipleship pipeline. And I think as we've been reflecting on where we are and how we've developed people over the years, I think we've done a decent

This transcript was automatically generated.

job. But when it comes to just kind of that final piece of leadership, we trust that people have been developed through our system and then we kind of just did the final stage of leadership development like the world does, which is give us an application and two references, and then voila, you're the children's leader or whatever.

And so we're saying, you know what? There's a better longer process to that where we want to see different skills emerging in people as their sending to different positions of leadership in the church and really outside the walls of the church. And one of those that I think has incredible relevance to both discipleship and leadership is this skill called eq. I heard it described one time as the meta skill of the 21st century, that work play all kind of places are really dialed into this idea of EQ because it really determines a person's capacity and trajectory both to grow and to lead others. And I think we've gone through a lot of history without maybe having words for this, but now suddenly there's words for this. And so I heard you give a talk on this subject, which is why I wanted to invite you to come talk about it with us. I think it's an incredibly important topic as we think about discipleship and leadership. So thanks for being here and for being willing to talk about it.

Oh, happy to.

But before we dive into that, I have a question. You are living out a really a rare principle in our day in the church world. A lot of churches unfortunately have kind of seen themselves as competing with other churches instead of cooperating with other churches. And you are personally and organizationally breaking the mold of that. And so can you just talk about how you're living out this principle of cooperation instead of competition amongst churches?

When I first came to Buran 15 years ago, there was this mindset that we were competing with a church 10 miles down the road. Now the funny part about that is that church had helped to start Buran in the sixties.

Wow.

So in a sense it was like our mother church. And when I heard people talking about them and saying, well, it's that church and this and that, I'm like, well, why would you think that we're competing? Why is that even a thought? So I got talking to that pastor and him and I became friends and he said, well, my people think the same way. They just assume that we're in competition. So he said, well, how can we break that mindset? Got to, we're not in competition, we're teammates. We're sister churches at least maybe mother-daughter churches. And so there's got to be a way to break this. So we said, well, we talk about all the time that we're teammates. What if actually acted like teammates? Could that change the Calculus?

And so he said, yeah, let's design a Christmas series and swap pulpits and do it one series together. So we got one other church to join us, and we had a three week swapping of pulpits. And I'll tell you what, that single handedly changed the competition mindset among our churches. And he said, Justin, people are coming up to me in the grocery store from your church, and now they're coming up like, Hey, how's your family? You preached at free and there's this relationship and connection now they realized we are friends and we do work together. And that spread other churches found out. And it went the next year, I think we were nine churches doing it then 12 churches and 18 churches and 21 churches and just kind of kept spreading as churches are like, oh, it's a

Big sermon series.

We kept it in three, we kept it in quad groups of three. But it was this idea of why can't we swap pulpits and why can't we just act like teammates?

This transcript was automatically generated.

So down the road, as our church has really embraced that mindset, it's like, okay, could we make that part of every staff member's role where you're not just thinking about our church, you're thinking about the kingdom, the big church uppercase. And so if you're serving other churches, that's part of your role that counts as part of your time, and we bless you to do that. And ultimately you should be working yourself out of a job. So my friend Dan moved from Pennsylvania to New York, not far away, 45 minutes away from me. And we just got talking about how could we work together at a deeper level. We did the pulpit share thing, and we did some of those things we're like, we'd love to work together at a stronger level,

And so what if we did some staff sharing? So we presented some absolutely ridiculous concepts to both of our boards and they didn't know what to do with 'em. So we went back and we said, let's dial this back and just do just a very simple, what if one day a week I go and I serve on the team up at Grace and be like a ministry coach and just help with discipleship and some other things. And so that was this year. And every Monday I drive up to Cortland and Homer area and work with Dan and the team. And it's a blast. And our people aren't upset by that. Their church kind of bought out my Mondays is how it works. And we have a blast together. Every now and then we get some things done. But what's kind of cool is because of where Brian has grown, there's some of the milestones we've hit that they're now hitting.

And so I can just land a little bit of experience and say, Hey, here's what we've been through. Maybe this could help. And I'm amazed at how cool that connection has become between our two churches and it's leading to other things. We're talking about aligning some sermon series next year and some other things where we can just work together at stronger levels. And now we're like, Hey, could we do this among more churches? Could we just think of people like specialists in certain roles that could be tapped for churches that have those needs? And I guess the biggest question we have is why not think out of the box with staffing?

It's awesome. Since I've been aware of you guys doing this, it's been on my radar and other arenas. And I was just in a room this week with some other churches talking about doing this where they've said in areas where we've before had a, what's the word? Subcontractor or a contractor or whatever, that we would contract some work out. We've been staff sharing with some other churches and there's actually four or five churches who maybe share one person who does accounting or whatever, and they all pay a little bit of a portion of their salary, but then that person's equally responsible to those churches. And just such a cool concept, not just from the getting work done standpoint, but from I think the message that the John 17 kind of message that sends to our world that we're together in this. Yes. That's a beautiful thing. So we need to talk eq. So I know I have so many questions.

Yeah, I know. I'm sure everybody else does too.

We can come back. We can come back and I think it'd be great to do an episode maybe just for that for Sure. Yeah,

On that concept. So eq, let's start with some basics. So lay out some basics that may be, people probably have heard of that, but maybe people don't know exactly what that means. Can you just give us some basic definition work around eq, layman's definition kind of thing, and maybe even get into why it's critical for Christians to be thinking about this, for us to be thinking about it in discipleship and a leadership lens.

Yeah. Everyone's heard of iq, right? Emotional. There's intellectual intelligence that's iq and it's fixed pretty much your entire life. People tend to not be able to change their IQ for better or for worse. eq fewer have heard of. And yet researchers say about 80% of our success in life is based on our eq. And EQ is simply your emotional intelligence. There's some cool things with eq. One of my favorite is that it's changeable. Whatever you're at right now can absolutely be changed for the worse, but thankfully for

This transcript was automatically generated.

the better, you can actually grow in it. And there's two parts of eq, and this was completely new to me about 10 years ago. I didn't know anything about eq. So their self-awareness is the one half of eq. And then there's others awareness, which is the other half. And often people are strong in one and weaken the other. And so for me personally, I'm the middle child of 16 kids. And so a huge family. And I was the peacemaker and I stunk at the part of EQ that was self-aware. I wasn't. I was highly others aware. I sensed the emotions and the needs of the people around me, and I adapted and adjusted to keep the peace and negotiate between the different groups of siblings. And so I was off the charts on the others aware. And I wasn't even on the charts of the self-aware,

And I didn't know this because I wasn't self-aware,

Right?

But when I would do counseling and I'd be sitting with couples and they'd be talking about, Hey, when you said this, here's how I felt and here's what it did to me. And I would just be sitting there, wow, I feel like I'm in a reality show. How do these people know exactly how they felt? If you asked me at any given time how I felt, I would tell you I'm fine. I couldn't put my finger. And I think a lot of guys struggle with this at some level, but I was at such a level. I couldn't tell you how I was feeling at all. I just had no idea. And it's not like my emotions were out of control. I would just say I wasn't able to identify them at all.

So you said a lot of guys struggle with this. I think that was an intentional word.

Yes, it was.

Yeah. So talk about why.

Say more about that. So most guys can identify two emotions, anger or frustration. And it's classic. You see that in counseling. You see that in conversation. Guys know when they're angry and they know when they're frustrated. But you go beyond that, and many guys, myself included, struggle to name another feeling. I feel insecure right now. I feel hurt right now. I feel sad right now. And this sounds so touchy feely and ridiculous. These are things I just ignored completely 10 years ago. And completely, I remember my mom used to ask, what are you thinking about and what are you feeling? I'm like, I'm not thinking and I'm not feeling. And you probably weren't lying either. Yeah, I wasn't. And so this has been a game changer for me because once I identified, okay, there's two parts of EQ and you can grow in both of them, and I need to grow in the area of self-awareness, I was able to focus in it. And I'm growing. I'm not there by a long shot. So don't ask me how I'm feeling today, Tanya. That was

My next question. I was going to ask

Steven, but I now can more often identify and then adjust because ultimately with emotional intelligence, it's I identifying your emotions and the emotions of others and being able to adjust to that. And that's why people that are highly successful are such because they're able to make the adjustments that others aren't. And it's a big deal.

How did you grow? How have you been growing in self-awareness? What are some ways that you said this is changeable, we can get better at it? What are some things maybe practically speaking, that you've implemented that have helped you to grow in self-awareness?

I think one of the biggest things is just as I've identified when I feel discouraged. So I'm this total optimistic, extroverted person, but I do have times where I feel discouraged and I hate those times if I try to fix that with prayer and Bible reading, if I try to fix it with any of those spiritual things, it just doesn't work. And so identifying that ultimately that feeling is almost always coming from tiredness. So when I'm tired, that's how I feel. So the best solution is a power nap. And on the other side of that power nap, I'm a different person.

And

So that's just been a game changer. So an example, I shared that talk that you heard, Derek is late one night my wife asked me about some plans I had for a few weeks out and my plans were in chaos. I had overbooked myself. And as soon as she brought up what were my plans, I got the stress. I felt it rising. And I simply was able to say, honey, I'm really tired. I can't answer that question tonight. Could we talk about this in the morning? And she instantly is like, yeah, sure. And she gave me grace and we discussed it the next morning and it was a non-issue. Instead of just acting like now I'm just frustrated that she asked me that question, no, it wasn't frustration. It was tiredness, which was leading to me being easily stressed and overwhelmed after a night of sleep. I didn't feel any of that stress and overwhelmed. I was able to logically come up with a solution for that weekend.

That's really good. The power of being able to name those emotions I think is so profound. And it's like I am hearing you talk and I have this little tape running in the back of my head of a pastor friend of mine who got let go from his church by his elders because he introduced the book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality from Pete Cero. And it reminds me that Christians have such a weird relationship with emotions and feelings and that it's almost like there are some parts of the Christian Church who go way too far into the feelings and there are parts that go way too far into the feelings are evil and we just need to know and do and not feel, suppress those feelings, push 'em down. And I just think about that tension. I think that some people in the church sense about just the role of emotions in our faith and our life and I don't know, can you give us maybe some biblical guidance that would take us back to the scriptures about where can we draw some insight and truth about this topic?

Yeah, I mean I think the ultimate case study on emotional intelligence is you look at David and his family. So King David is probably the most self-aware person that you see in scripture. His psalms are his emotions and he is just pouring out how he feels. I mean, he's this super emo guy. He was musical, he was emotional skinny jeans. He had a part in the center. I don't know. I don't know. But he was like this super, no, he definitely did.

His armor was fitting. Sorry, go ahead. The skinny. Yeah, definitely the skinny jeans harp. He was definitely sch medium for sure.

This is awesome. So the case study just got weird, but anyhow,
You're welcome.

So David is this really emo guy, highly aware of his self and his own emotions. You look at the story of him and Bathsheba, what was he highly aware of himself and how he was feeling? He was feeling probably lonely. He was feeling lustful, I mean all the stuff. And what did he do? He acted on how he felt.

What he was not good at was awareness of others. He stunk at that. And you saw that in his relationship with his wives and his kids. He was really bad at reading and understanding how they felt and he didn't adjust based on that. And he had a hugely dysfunctional family because of that. Now enter his most gifted son, Absalom. What was Absalom really strong at? Others awareness. Absalom went to the city gate. He sat there and he negotiated and listened to people, what are your problems? How can I help you? How can I fix this? People felt heard and valued by Absalom, but what Absalom lacked was any self-awareness. He had this massive ego. He didn't have this deep, humble self-awareness of his dad. And so while David would've made a great king if he had some of what Absalom had, Absalom would've made it to great king if he had some of what his dad

Had.

Both were too broken and messed up, and their lives are these shattered, dysfunctional, broken families. And so then you look through the ages at their family line, and one day from their line came this future king who had the ultimate self-awareness. Jesus is the most self-aware person to ever walk

This transcript was automatically generated.

planet Earth, earth. And he was the most other aware person to ever walk planet earth. So if you want the ultimate case study on eq, read Matthew, mark, Luke, and John. Jesus is incredible. He knows exactly how he's feeling in any given moment and he adjusts based on that. But he's also really good at knowing how the people in front of him are feeling and thinking. And he adjusts based on that.

And

There's times that you look and you're like, man, he's kind of selfish for pulling away. And then there's other times where you're like, man, he's incredibly a doormat here because he didn't, when he needed his space and time, he didn't. Well, no, because he was tapped into the needs of the people around him. There's just no better example than I can possibly find than Jesus Christ.

So as you're talking, I'm just curious, and this might be out of left field for you. If you don't have an answer, that's fine. But in your experience with this and maybe even interacting with other pastors or even congregation members. So this is a lens I'm thinking through right now. People that come to church and maybe have a hard time with their pastor in a particular area because he doesn't naturally show up to something or he's overworked, he's clearly tired. You ask him always doing, he's fine. The both ends of the spectrum. What kind of advice should we be given to congregation members who are maybe even listening to this? Give your pastor some grace or let's think about encouraging that pastor towards awareness in one of these areas because it's maybe evident to somebody that they're lacking in it, but it's a blind spot in the pastor's life.

So I can give an experience that I had that drove me to studying eq. And it was from a congregation member. They met with me, they shared stuff with me. I did not agree with the things that they shared with me, but I listened. And then she asked to meet with me again later and she said, Justin, I feel like you're not genuine. I feel like you were dishonest.

Interesting.

I was blown away by that because integrity is a big deal to me and honesty is a huge deal. And so I said, can you tell me what you mean by that? And she said, well, when we had those meetings and I shared all those things with you, you nodded the entire time. And I took that to mean you agreed with me, but you went out and you did the opposite of what I had requested. And I said, wow. And thinking back, I'm like, holy cow. That's me being a peacemaker, being a negotiator. I was trying to let her know I was listening by nodding, and she exposed for me that was being disingenuous unintentionally, but I was giving off that I agreed with her. So I had to learn some phrases like, Hey, I hear you. I don't agree with you, but I appreciate what you're sharing with me. I learned that because she was honest enough with me to tell me, this feels like you're being dishonest. And that was my poor, and that led me down this road. That was one of the things that led me down this road of eq. So I would say your pastor probably is weak in one of these two areas.

He is broken. You show grace to him, but maybe just have a conversation and let him know maybe what you see in a very loving way, in a very kind way, in a supportive way, an I've got your back type way, pastor, and here's what I see. And I don't think you meant this and I think your pastor would probably take it. Well, if you come across that way, I don't think you intended this. And then it's like, wow, this is a loving words from a friend.

This person's on my

Side. Yeah, can be incredibly helpful.

Yeah, that's awesome. You shared a quote, I think this ties in during your talk that I heard you said, is it possible that the church in America is not thriving because we're not healthy? And I think even emotionally healthy could probably be put in there. Can you talk more about that and about that

statement, it really got my attention, this something that I've been thinking about ever since. So just talk about your perspective on that.

Yeah. One of the big buzzwords right now and evangelical circles is soul care. And for good reason, it's because we've ignored the soul for so long. We've been focused on a lot of other things, metrics. We've been focused on growth, we've been on success, we've been focused on all those things, but we are doing SoulCare. Now, the challenge with SoulCare is often SoulCare is about caring for and fixing what's broken. And while that's very needed, I think a focus on EQ can be more preventative than fixing after the fact. So if you're someone that wants to get healthier, maybe you say, okay, it's not like I'm unhealthy or toxic, I just think I can grow. Then study EQ and take an assessment to find out where you're weak and then spend intentional time developing in that area. And I'll tell you what, your church, your family, they will be the beneficiaries of that investment. They deserve a healthy you. And too often they don't get healthy. Us as a dad, as a husband, as a pastor, if I'm not healthy, a lot of people suffer. And then when they suffer, I get overwhelmed. I have to care for their suffering and so on and so forth. So it's this vicious cycle of unhealthy leaders leading unhealthy people who's going to fix this?

So I think we've got to take care of our own souls, and that includes just focusing on where am I weak? Am I a David and I'm really good at being self-aware and I am Absalom and I'm really good at sensing others? How do I need to grow in that other area? And if you take the time to invest in

That, I heard a metaphor one time, it's really good. I heard a metaphor one time of imagining the Christian life, like a winding road, a perilous road that goes up around a mountain and with real dangerous areas and cliffs falling off and all that. And that people kept falling off the cliff. And the solution was, let's build more hospitals at the bottom of the cliff. And because so many people are falling and somebody comes along and says, you know what? Maybe we should build fences, guardrails along so people can keep climbing and not fall. And I feel like that's what you're saying, that this kind of soul care emphasis or whatever, we're building hospitals at the bottom to catch all the people that are falling off. And this is an approach that goes, these are guardrails that we can build so that we can keep climbing. We don't have to make these desperate falls down the mountain. We can keep going up.

Yes. So going back to my personal story, I began to realize that the reason that I was broken in the self-awareness is I was a perfectionist. I was a people pleaser, I was a peacemaker. All these things that make you look successful, but they're killing you on the inside. You can't ever live up to that level of perfectionism and people pleasing. You're always going to disappoint people, especially if you're a pastor. And so what I began to realize is a lot of my discussions and conversations and relationships with people, I needed something from them. I needed affirmation. And once I drilled down on the self-awareness and began to address those areas of self-awareness, now when I enter a conversation with someone, I don't need something from them.

And

That's so freeing. And so many relationships become toxic because their need-based relationships, including marriages, I need you. I can't imagine life without you. That sounds romantic, that's toxic. You're setting the person up to be your idol. If it's so much powerful, it's like, Hey, I don't need you. I want you. I need him. I need Jesus. I just want you. And so now as a pastor, counselor, whatever, I can go into those relationships when I'm strong in these areas and I can genuinely believe I don't need anything from that person. I don't need their approval. I don't need any, I just want to help them or I want to have a connection with them. And it's freeing. And even my perfectionism, I didn't know that could melt away, but it has. I didn't know that was something that was changeable and it's so freeing. And now people come into my office and mess up my books, and I used to not be able to study with messed up books. Now they can stay messed up now a month later I'll go fix 'em maybe once a month.

This transcript was automatically generated.

You just won't curse them out in the process. I know we're almost out of time. I'm really curious. I love the guardrail analogy. Has this awareness of the EQ changed how you've put people around you in your life, whether it be your leadership team? I'm just thinking about that church pastor right now that's listening, right? Have you been intentional in placing people around you or making sure that you have specific types of voices in your life to keep you on this path?

Yeah, that's an awesome question. So I think I'd answer it this way because God's been working in my life in self-awareness, changing me from this need-based relationship with people. I don't have a feeling of need around other people or threat by people I easily could have. And I used to. So when you're not threatened by people, you can get people who are more gifted in your circle.

That's really

Good. Too often pastor's lids are their egos and they have to have lesser gifted people around them because they got to feel better about themselves. Being able to invite people into your circle, whether it's friends or teammates or whatever, that are more gifted than you in areas, that's not a threat at all. It's a joy. It's like, let me learn from you and let's be friends and let's grow together. And man, if you end up taking my job, so be it. Who cares? I mean, this is what the church is supposed to be about is people becoming more like Jesus. And if there's people that are growing quicker in their walk with Jesus, I want to be around them more. There's this one guy at church that he grows so fast in his faith, and I was just hanging with him this week, and he wants to be around me. He feels like I mentor him, but I always tell him like, Joe, you're impacting me because growing so fast in your faith, I want that hunger. I want that passion. And I'm not threatened by that. I want to rub shoulders with him and I want to feed off of his gifts and his passion and all that.

That's great. There's a tool I know that we've used here, and I think I shared with my email list a couple of weeks ago, maybe we can stick it in the show notes, but it's called the JHA window F. It's a really great kind of self-awareness tool. But as I think about self-awareness and others' awareness, a really simple thing is just to ask a self-awareness tool to be able to go, what's it like to be on the other side of me kind of thing. Just inviting feedback is a way to make yourself more self-aware of just going, okay, you're telling, oftentimes you mentioned congregants, maybe coming in to talk to their pastor. I want to talk to pastors and go, you have to give permission for people to be able to do that. That's a very important thing, I think, for pastors to do, to trust people enough to go, Hey, what could I have done better? Or where am I falling short? Or to have a select group of people like that. And then the other's awareness is also asking, but asking them to reveal more about themselves and getting curious about people,

And

That can help our others awareness so much. And so I just think about super, super, super basic, simple. Ask people about your own stuff, ask people about their stuff, and you begin to grow in your self-awareness and you begin to grow in your others' awareness. I would just ask you one final question. Like any other practical ideas like that or thinking about the people who might be listening to this podcast, pastors of larger churches, smaller churches, as we think about getting our heart smarter, you talked about the difference between IQ and eq, not necessarily head smarter. We all have study guides and logos and whatever we can to get our head smarter. What advice would you give to help church leaders get their hearts smarter?

So real quick, Derek, you said giving people permission. And I think some people might hear that and think, okay, permission means go ahead, you can critique me. And then I cross my arms and get defensive. So permission in the sense of, I want this. I genuinely want to get better, and I only get better by you telling me what you see. I can't see what you see. So I meet every week with these guys. Both of them are older than me. I meet with one on Tuesday morning, another one on Thursday, and they have full rights to tell me what they see. And I ask them and they tell me, and it hurts sometimes. Like, ah,

This transcript was automatically generated.

you saw that in my preaching, but I want that and I need that. And I've made changes sometimes much too slow, but based on what they tell me they see. So inviting some people that you respect. If you're a guy, maybe a much older man, if you're a lady, probably an older lady, some people you respect to have full permission to share what they see and to let them know, I'm not going to attack you. I'm not going to use this against you. I need to see in here because everybody else does anyway. That's just a matter of I need, they're talking about you anyway. Right? They're all talking about this. Yep. I need someone to tell me directly to my face.

That's really good.

And so there's two resources I would recommend. There's a book, emotional Intelligence 2.0. I think when you buy the book, you still get a free assessment online. You can take it, you can see where you stack in those two different areas, and then you can work on those areas. And then self-awareness, a 360 self-awareness dot com assessment. And that's more of an annual review. So if you do that as a staff or when you're in a church, we're doing that this year with a lot of our staff instead of our typical in-House stuff, we're using this because it includes family members, it includes friends in addition to teammates and subordinates and supervisors. So you get a full view of what do other people see, because what I do at home affects others. And too often we ignore that in our assessments. And ultimately the most practical advice is read the gospels, look at the example of Jesus. He's this most supremely, emotionally intelligent person to ever walk our planet. Don't let that example go to waste.

That's awesome. Thanks so much for being here. And we're sending you back to the cows and to the sheep spotted spotted cows. Those thank you. This has been really great. It's been an honor to have you here. Thank you both. Thanks Justin. Appreciate it all. That was great. We're back. That was awesome. And Justin is, it's such an important skill for church leaders to get their minds and hearts around. I wish there were better assessments for it or something like that because it is such a predictor of how effective somebody's going to be in their job in leadership in their life.

There's just some times too, I'm just like, nobody in the history of my life sit across the table from somebody and I'm just like, what? And that's not because I'm perfect, but those moments where you're like, you really don't see this, you really don't see it. You're not evil, you're not dumb, you just don't see it.

Right. And we do just need each other for that because we can help be mirrors to each other.

Yeah, that's good.

Stuff that we don't see in ourselves and yeah.

Yeah, it's good. Alright, well let's talk about what happened this week. Let's

Talk about what happened

As usual stuff happened, stuff happens here, stuff happened. It just does. Alright, so we had our annual celebration this past Sunday, and I thought maybe let's just talk about, so we used to have,

Oh man,

We used to have it. It was called the annual meeting and it was an annual meeting.

So I've been here for 30 years and the first 10 of those that day of the year was my worst day.

Like ulcer growing day.

Oh, Danielle, it would go. And you experienced some of the tail

End of those. Yeah. You protected us from a lot

This transcript was automatically generated.

Of that. The tail end of those where, and God bless everybody, but they would be four or five hours long. The major part of the meeting was people determining our salaries and just talking openly mean. So the salaries were on the

Table. We had to leave

The room sometimes for hours

And

Go sit in the hallway or sit. It

Was like playing risk basically.

Literally. And while people debated, did Derek earn this year or should we take him forward a little bit or keep 'em the same or take him back? Went through every staff person by

A hundred people doing that,

A hundred people deciding together on everyone. And it was, I mean, arguments and everything was on the table that the church was doing. And we're a congregational, I should probably

Say. Oh yeah, sorry. I

Should've said we're a congregational polity. So, but man, for the last, I don't know, 15 or 20,

They

Have been fantastic.

So great.

We shifted to the annual celebration. We streamlined a lot of what we decide as a whole versus what we delegate to groups of people to decide. We have elders, we have a, I'm trying to think of the financial guy, treasurer. I just

Want lay treasurer,

The lay treasurer. And so we've got delegated responsibilities now where a lot of that work is being done. Obviously outside the room we've gotten big and more complex.

It would be too crazy

That can handle that. But there are a couple of things that the church still decides upon together. One is the election of elders and one is the licensing or ordination of pastors, which is really fun. Those are two awesome things for us to do together.

And yeah, it's positive, like a cool thing to see. And we had so two pastors on Sunday, which was cool.

Yeah, we,

Keith and Will and Keith. That was cool. And then I think, I don't remember how many new elders we had. We had three new elders, three, so new to the team, which is a lot of turnover for that team. It's 12.

Is it 12?

No, it's not even, it's seven, I think. Oh

Seven. Oh

My gosh. Yeah. So for three people, and the reason there was such turnover is three of them reached the end of their term. So three of them served six years.

Oh, wow.

This transcript was automatically generated.

And so again, that's a long run. And the lead up that nobody got to see, but the elders incoming and outgoing and the rest of that team was, we had a dinner a couple nights before the annual celebration. It's kind of a passing of the baton that as people go out and it was moving.

I bet.

I mean, because what we have is the outgoing elders just share what happened during their six years so that meaningful to them or memorable to them, and then give words of wisdom and advice to the new folks coming on. And it feels biblical. It feels such a generational passing of wisdom

That's cool. Around

A campfire almost. That kind of a vibe to it. And man, there was a lot of tears. A lot's happening in six years.

Yeah. Oh yeah. When you

Think about that and what those guys kind of led us through. But anyway, that's

Cool.

Back to the annual meeting. So I, my body,

Okay,

That's a weird way to start a sentence.

Go ahead.

Has a trained visceral reaction on annual meeting days. It hasn't been bad for 15 or 20 years.

No, it's PTSD.

It's been wonderful.

Yes.

And I think it's PTSD it.

It absolutely is.

Danielle, when I got done preaching Sunday, two sermons on Sunday, got my stuff, was walking out to my car, my stomach started churning.

Oh man,

I started getting a migraine. I started shaking, having anxiety.

That is PTSD Derek.

It hasn't been bad for 15 or 20 years.

I know, but your body keeps the score.

So I have people who talk about church hurt and some of that stuff. I haven't fully, I think experienced that, but I get it. I get how something so deeply into you can be really affected by the church and by unhealthy moments in the church's life anyway.

Wow. But what do you want to talk about that night? You're very,

Oh,

Nobody, if people are watching this, you're very skittish the night of like, Hey, Derek, the way you move and stuff. It's like, it's bad. And it's great though. It's great. And here's the thing, even if someone brought something up or whatever, I don't think it'd be bad.

It wouldn't be bad.

This transcript was automatically generated.

It'd be great.

It'd be so healthy. It'd be

Fine. Anyway,

So healthy.

So yeah, I just want to talk. I was handing stuff out as people were coming in. I was handing out ballots and a little thing we did for Wake the Lake Beach last thing,

Beach class.

And I was just observing people coming in and just people were talking to each other. It was hard to get people in. They were hanging out. And I was like, wow, this is a really cool spirit. And I did have a little bit of a feeling of like, wow, this is kind of the first public thing we've had where someone could say something about the vision. Like, Hey, that sermon series is, I'm not on board. What are we doing? And so I had a little bit of that trepidation. I wonder if someone's going to ask a question about that. And no one really did. I mean, you had a good presentation, but my observation was just like, we're just so we have different cores of people, but that core, that membership high, there are some high level leaders in there. Our staff is in there, they're in, whether they're 80 or 18, it feels that they're in. And it's cool to also see. So the two physical locations coming together to do something is cool

Too. Yeah, it's

A smaller group. Smaller

Group, a little bit older, a

Little bit older

Than our probably average

Age.

That would definitely skew older people who would come to the annual

Celebration, which is what I thought was genius, what you talked about because of the crowd.

So yeah, it's been interesting. And we've been having some reflections behind the scenes about when you change the mission statement, the core values, how we define discipleship in a church that's been around for a long time, that can be jarring to people who've been here for a long

Time.

And so those are the people at the annual celebration.

And

We've been talking, we have a couple hundred people going through our launch classes right now, which is that primer to our new approach to disciple making and that sort of a thing. And so again, behind the scenes we're people who've been here for a long time may come into that thing a little bit skeptical or a little bit, Hey, I've been through all this before,

Of course.

Or with my calling class people going, I already know my calling. I figured that out

A

Long time ago or whatever. And so there is that thing of people who've been around for a while, maybe a little bit, shrug your shoulders about this whole thing

Or even this isn't for me,

This transcript was automatically generated.

Isn't for me.

We'll let the kids do it.

Let the kids do it. Yeah. Oh, this is nice. This is nice for the rest of you to do

Well. And even I'm happy to be able to provide a way that they can do this. Yeah,

They're for it.

Yeah. They're just not,

But maybe it's not for me. And so one of the exercises I did that was from, again, every good thing from Clarity House, I think originally, or at least Future

Church

Was, yeah, Dave and Shane was these different lines through which you can view your life. And so one is a lifeline, a flat line where you just measure a life by the passing of

Time.

So zero to 80. The other is a bio line. And so if somebody imagines a, what would you call that? Like a bell, like a bell curve where it starts flat goes up in the middle and comes back down to flat. That's like a line biological line, which is like you're in your prime, your middle years, and you start helpless and you end kind of helpless. And in the middle

Of, by the way, I thought it was funny how you were like, you're in your prime and you're including your own age in the prime part. I'm like, I'm sorry.

I'm like, you're in your prime. You're 50, 67. Let's

That dial it back, dial it back. It depends who's presenting that, what that top of that. I was laughing, Who's in the audience?

I was

Laughing. But then the point, the exercise then is there's a third line that's an impact line that starts small but continues to grow basically until the day you die. And that if you frame your life properly, the impact line is really, I think the healthiest way to see your life is that your life can continue to grow and impact even when you're past your physical prime. Even when you're in fact, especially because of that. Because now you've created networks and people and your influence has grown and all this kind of stuff over time. And so I was just trying to encourage the people in that room that these things are not pat everybody on the head. And it's nice for the kids to be thinking about, but if we embrace these kinds of innovations that it can help that impact to continue through the rest of our life. That if you live out your disciple making calling and if you live out your divine design, your calling man, it doesn't matter how old you are to continue to have impact.

So anyway, that was wise to do. That was really cool.

Yeah.

Okay. So that's that. That's say goodbye. Thanks for joining us and if you liked the episode, tell us by leaving a rating or review. A bunch of you are abusing me on a regular basis about what I'm sharing on here. So I would like you to please leave a rating. Thank you or subscribe. You don't want to miss what's coming. I'm really excited. I think next week we have Mark Becker coming in. He's kind of a cool guy that we can learn from. So come back for that. And again, you can go to DerekSanford.com/reinventingchurch and that's where you can get the show notes. You can subscribe to Derek's fun newsletter and catch up with his blog. So thanks. We'll see you next week.

See you. Bye.

This transcript was automatically generated.