



# EPISODE GUIDE

LEADING  
SECOND

## Episode 216

The Leader God Can Use ft. Dr. Christopher Palmer

To kick off 2026, Brandon sits down with Dr. Christopher Palmer, Dean of the Barnett College of Ministry & Theology at Southeastern University, Lakeland, FL, to examine what truly defines a leader God can use. Beyond charisma, talent, and social media influence lies something far more enduring: character forged through testing. We're reminded that leadership isn't about the position we hold but about the person we're becoming. We're called to lead from vision, strength defined as steadiness, and character that's been tested in the fire.

### HOW TO LEAD WELL.

We first have to recognize that there is the **position** and then there is the **person**.

Charisma will not give you a sustainable leader.

**Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)** "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things."

The fruits of the Spirit describe the Lord and the character we are to portray.

You need vision to know what it is that you are attempting to do. Without vision, the people perish.

Having strength is to be steady/unruffled. A person who is a stabilizing factor.

## **BUILD THE RIGHT FOUNDATION.**

Your **reputation** is extremely important. If you damage your reputation, it creates difficulty for you to be used well.

A position in ministry separates you. You have to have **good character** to succeed in a ministry position.

The call to ministry separates us from the rest. We're called as leaders. We don't get to do everything everybody else is doing.

Just because a skyscraper can go up doesn't mean it's built on a good foundation.

**Testing** and **crushing** build character in our lives. It brings out the worst sides of ourselves, and we learn how to deal with them.

**Failure** is a great teacher.

You can quit, or you can keep moving forward.

Moving forward helps to develop the mentality of grit and endurance.

If you are called to ministry, then you are called to the challenging moments of ministry.

## **CHARACTER AND CONVICTION.**

**A leader has to believe in something.** A true leader today is the individual who knows how to be thoughtful, think through things correctly, and stand for something.

People won't follow someone who doesn't stand for something.

A leader needs to learn how to process the world through Scripture in a healthy way.

We cannot just appeal to people for the sake of being people pleasers.

In every Gospel, there is the notion of the **crowd**. The crowd is a character that sometimes liked Jesus and sometimes disliked Jesus. But one thing you never see is Jesus's inconsistency with the crowd. He stays consistent while the crowd stays inconsistent.

Leaders can't pander to the crowd. They have to know who their character is and how to speak the truth, even when it's hard.

Whatever position of leadership that we find ourselves in and whoever we are leading, we have to remain consistent. To do this, we cannot find our confidence in the people that we are leading.

We're not trying to be the hero. We are just trying to lead the way that our **convictions** tell us to lead and the way we believe God is leading us to do.

#### **START THE NEW YEAR RIGHT.**

Always start with **yourself** first. You can't lead people until you're first leading yourself.

What are the things that I am doing that I should stop doing? What are the things God has been calling me to do that I haven't done?

If you aren't hearing from the Lord, go back to the Lord and try to find the last thing that He told you to do and see if you've done it. If you haven't done that, do it. These are the things God calls us to so that He can bless us and we can be a blessing to others.

Life is not fair, but God is faithful. You need to keep believing that you are going to catch fire at some point for what you are to be focusing on. God is going to be faithful to you. Dark seasons don't last forever.

## Dig Deeper

1. The conversation emphasizes that 'without vision, the people perish.' How can a leader develop and maintain a clear vision when surrounded by constant distractions and competing voices?

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2. Dr. Chris experienced a decade of financial difficulty and ministry struggles before seeing a breakthrough. What role does prolonged testing play in developing the character necessary for sustainable leadership?

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3. The discussion emphasizes that leaders must first learn to lead themselves before leading others. In what areas of self-leadership do you find yourself most challenged, and how might addressing these impact your ministry effectiveness?

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## Additional Resources

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### *Goff Companies:*

[Goff Companies](#) works with churches through the building process. Their team of pastors walks alongside you to make church facility expansion simple and mission-aligned so leaders can build places that inspire worship, connection, and growth.

### *Leading Second Camp:*

Leading Second Camp is crafted specifically for church staff, leadership team members, and key volunteers. On February 25-26, 2026, Leading Second will be hosting a two-day conference in San Antonio, TX. Prices increase on January 29th at 11:59 pm CST. You don't want to miss this! To learn more, watch past years' messages, and register you and your team, visit [leadingsecondcamp.com](https://leadingsecondcamp.com).