



LEADING
SECOND

EPISODE GUIDE

Episode 224

Second Chair is Not Second Class ft. Brandon Stewart

What if the seat we occupy in ministry is not a stepping stone to something greater, but is itself the place of greatest significance? Brandon Stewart walks us through the heart of Leading Second and the renewed vision of the ministry going forward.

WHO IS LEADING SECOND?

Leading Second wants to be a friend to all Second Chair Leaders.

It's about helping each other carry the weight of ministry faithfully.

Leading Second also wants to be your coach.

It's about calling you higher, equipping you to run your race well, and to be found faithful.

LEADING SECOND DNA.

A lie that a lot of us in the second chair have come to believe is that leadership/significance starts with a title, a paycheck, a platform... leading out in front.

The truth is that the second chair is one of the most consequential seats on the team.

It is impossible to have a healthy church without a healthy second chair team.

For many of us, the second chair is our calling. It is the place of God's blessing and favor on our lives. It is what moves our churches forward.

WHAT DOES FAITHFULNESS IN THE SECOND CHAIR LOOK LIKE?

Leading Second has developed a new set of values, all centered around the word: CHAIR.

C: Competency Over Charisma.

- Charisma is a tool. But it is also loud.
- Charisma can get you noticed, but only competency will make you trusted.
- The mission needs more than a personality.
- **Ecclesiastes 10:10 (NIV)** "If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed, but skill will bring success."
- **Psalms 78:72 (NIV)** "And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."

H: Honor Over Familiarity.

- The Honor Gap - the casual over familiar language with your pastor, boss, and/or fellow team members.
- It used to be affection, but has not quietly become disregard.
- Familiarity feels like closeness; but familiarity, if left unchecked, is actually the first sign that honor is leaving the room.
- As Second Chair Leaders, our job is to be the architects of honor on the team.
- To honor something is to elevate it; to treat it as special or uncommon.
- Don't let closeness with your leader become an excuse for casualness towards your leader.

A: Alignment Over Autonomy.

- Second Chair Leaders want to lead with agency, initiate, and purpose.
- Alignment and initiate are not opposites. Alignment is what makes your initiative trustworthy.
- Maverick - a leader with agency but no alignment.
- Yes Man - a leader with alignment but no agency.
- In the second chair, we don't serve our own mission. We lead out of alignment to something bigger than ourselves.

I: Integrity Over Image.

- Leadership isn't discovered in the spotlight. It's developed in the mirror.
- The most important person you will ever lead is the person who looks at you in the mirror every single day.
- Leading yourself is leadership's first act.
- We can get performative and image can become important to us. But eventually the gap between image and reality will collapse.
- Gifting and talent can take you to a place your character can't sustain you.
- We value character. We value integrity. Without them, it will cost everyone, including us, everything.

R: Responsibility Over Excuses.

- The essence of ownership is to take responsibility.
- **I Corinthians 4:1-2 (NIV)** "This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."
- God is our rewarder and defender.
- Prayer: "Lord, if I take responsibility for others and your house, will you take care of me?"

Dig Deeper

1. Brandon shares that he felt God ask him whether he would be just as faithful serving another man's vision as he would be if his name were on it -- how would you answer that same question about your own calling today?

2. The concept of 'aligned agency' pushes back against both the maverick and the yes-man -- where do you personally tend to land on that spectrum, and what would it look like to move toward the healthier middle?

3. The concept of 'aligned agency' challenges leaders to pursue both initiative and submission simultaneously -- how do you personally navigate the tension between bringing your full leadership capacity and staying in genuine alignment with your pastor's vision?

Additional Resources

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Goff Companies:

[Goff Companies](#) works with churches through the building process. Their team of experts, designers, and 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 our annual, flagship gathering for leaders who are all-in for their pastor, their team, and the local church. This year, we will be hosting an Executive Strategy Day on February 3rd, 2027, focusing on creating an intimate learning environment for Executive Pastors and executive-level leaders. On February 4th, 2027, we will host a full day of powerful worship, preaching, and ministry for all Second Chair Leaders. Brandon & Lindsay Stewart will be joined by Larry Brey (Elevation Church) and Marcus Mecum (7 Hills Church) in Dallas-Fort Worth, TX for this special time together. To learn more, watch past years' messages, and register your team, visit leadingsecondcamp.com.

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