

LeaderImpact Podcast - Ep. 23 - Michael Zigarelli - What does it Look like when a Follower of Jesus Runs a Business?

Lisa Peters

Welcome to the LeaderImpact podcast. We are a community of leaders with a network in over 350 cities around the world dedicated to optimizing our personal, professional, and spiritual lives to have impact. This show is where we have a chance to listen and engage with leaders who are living this out. We love talking with leaders, so if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions to make this show even better, please let us know. The best way to stay connected in Canada is through our newsletter at leaderimpact.ca or on social media @leaderimpact. If you're listening from outside of Canada check out our website at leaderimpact.com.

I'm your host Lisa Peters and our guest today is professor Michael Zigarelli. Michael is a professor of leadership and strategy at Messiah University and the former Dean of the Regent University School of Business. Dr. Zigarelli's research in the fields of management, leadership, practical theology, law, and ethics appeared in a number of scholarly journals and magazines and he is the author of 12 books including the book we are discussing today about what it looks like when a follower of Jesus runs a business. The book is called *Christian Owned Companies* and Michael's work has been translated into several languages. Professor Zigarelli is also the creator. The Christianity 9 to 5 resource center and YouTube channel where more than 2,000,000 viewers across 130 countries have accessed his instructional videos. One of his great passions is coaching high school and college soccer. His greater passion is his family. Michael and his wife Cara have been blessed with 4 children and decades of marriage.

Welcome to the show Mike.

Michael Zigarelli

I'm so delighted to be here Lisa thanks for inviting me.

Lisa Peters

It is exciting to have you. When I was sort of I was looking around for people to talk to people to interview, who would be great for LeaderImpact, I found your book. And I was so excited when I got the book. It was an amazing read. So I was honored that when I immediately contacted you were like yes, let's do this. So I'm excited to get into it and I think our viewers would be super excited.

So my first question to you really is just telling us a little bit about yourself. Because what I'm sort of reading is you go from this grad student, into business into author and now you're YouTube 2,000,000 viewers. Can you share a little bit of how does that happen, Mike?

Michael Zigarelli

Well, from a supernatural perspective, it's not me. I mean God has carried this stuff to four corners of the earth and I'm very grateful for that. From sort of a naturalistic perspective, yeah, one day and I'm a grad student at Rutgers University. The next day, something that I wrote was published and it shows up at my door and that was really a moment for me. I don't know if you've had this kind of moment in your life where it's a bit of an epiphany like wow I can do this. There's something that if I just put in a little more effort then I can publish as much as I want, wherever I want.

And it really was a bit of an inflection point in my career where I learned that it's just a matter of investing yourself in something. And it's a principle that has helped me in many other ways. I mean it's helped me in my marriage, helped me in my parenting, helped me in my soccer coaching, it helped me in my fitness. There are no more excuses, right? So you have all the power you need to make your life what you want it to be, to make your profession what you want it to be, and make your career what you wanted to be, your marriage, you name it. And all the power you need and to excuses, just go forward and do it. So it was maybe long answer I apologize for this but it was just one of those moments that struck me like Wow, there's a lot of potential on the horizon here. I just need to invest myself in it and so God has carried that effort to different places and I'm truly grateful for that.

Lisa Peters

Do you ever feel that you had ever missed an opportunity that came to you? I know things land, you're like I should I got to do this. I have every opportunity to do this. But did you ever feel like something passed you by? But I mean I believe it comes back around, but do you ever?

Michael Zigarelli

Yes, countless times.

Lisa Peters

Okay, you're normal! (Laughing)

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, well I don't know. But there are and mostly that's to some extent that's discernment. There are only so many things you can do. Sometimes it's just fear. I really don't want to travel to South America and give these talks. I don't speak Portuguese, they don't speak English, something's going to get lost in translation. No thank you. I mean there are those kinds of things where you look back on them and say, Yeah I probably should have done that was maybe the Holy Spirit tapping me on the shoulder saying, Go for it. I'm with you. So yes, that happens.

Lisa Peters

So when I picked up your book I really loved how you laid it out, and for anyone I hope you

pick it up. But you sort of start the first part of your book is high level, the 8 different ways businesses live out their faith. Then you go into the stories which are phenomenal. And then you end with these 100 effective business activities you might see in a Christian-owned business. So I love that. I love the layout because I love storytelling. It resonates with me. So my question is why did you decide to write a book like this and maybe who did you write it for?

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, well and I guess in a sense I've been writing this book for 25 years. I've been teaching for about 30 years or so. The last 25 really focused on faith-based leadership, faith-based management. And I basically wrote the book that I wanted 25 years ago to teach this. If I can teach what does it look like when a follower of Jesus runs a business, there really weren't a whole lot of resources around like that. And over the years there have been a lot of sort of field studies or here's what goes on in this particular company or that company. There have been a number of people who have exegeted these principles from scripture and say this is what it means to lead faithfully, this is what it means to manage faithfully. But there really hasn't been that study that says these are the actual expressions of the faith. This is how Christian business owners, Christian entrepreneurs, Christian people in business are living out the faith on Monday morning. So I wrote the book that I wanted to read. But it's also something that I've been teaching for a long time to my MBA students and to my undergrads.

Lisa Peters

So, Mike, I feel like it takes a lot of courage to run a Christian-owned business. I feel that there's a lot of judgment, people just don't understand. So the question to you would be what would be the biggest misconception that someone might think of a Christian-owned business?

Michael Zigarelli

I think probably the average person on the street might look at something called Christian-owned business or faith-based company and think that it's all about evangelism, think it's about trying to convert people, trying to get people to come to your church, trying to give money to your cause, whatever. I mean it's obviously a caricature. It's a sort of media-fueled misconception I think in many ways. And it's certainly business can be a platform for ministry and for proselytization of course for introducing people to God. There's so much more to it.

And some people think that maybe Christian-owned business is about a bunch of thou shalt nots. Thou shalt not open on Sunday, and thou shalt not bake cakes for same-sex weddings and thou shalt not provide birth control in your employee benefit plan or something like that. And there are a number of principles on which Christian business owners stand. That's part of the story.

But what we found in this research is that there are a number of different expressions of the faith. When you look across the broad range of faith traditions people engaged in faith-based business, we found 8 of them all together. And this isn't necessarily exhaustive, but if you'd like I can just run through them really quickly and just give your listeners kind of a broad overview of what it looks like when a Christian runs a business on Monday morning. So first and foremost there's this sort of this cornerstone purpose of seeking to honor God and all that they do. That's why they exist as people, that's why they exist as a business. And so that's one expression of the faith. This is our purpose.

Another would be they create products and services that really bless the world where they make a difference in the world. It's more than do no harm with your product or service actually do good with it. So there's an expression through the product of the faith.

Number three would be funding faithful causes. Taking excess from the business and putting it toward charities, putting it toward good works to bless whatever the community is.

And number 4 would be another expression would be blessing their employees. treating their employees like family, taking care of them sort of being good stewards of the people entrusted to you whether it's through the pay and benefits the type of work that they do just taking care of them as people created in the image of God.

A fifth expression of the faith would be, maybe and this one would be a little surprising to some but, creating jobs for people who might not have them otherwise. And not every business does this but there are some faith-based businesses out there that hire the homeless, that hire women who have been sex trafficked, that hire people who may have been ex-cons, may have been in prison and can't get a job anyplace else. Some of them even exist for that reason to provide jobs and ways forward for people who really need that. So that be a fifth expression of the faith.

Another one would be value and creation care. And I think it's a stereotype and really an unfortunate one that Christians don't care about the environment but there are a number of faith-based businesses that we found that not only do the basics of recycling, do the basics of taking care of pollution and so on, but they really exist to care for the planet. And so we have a number of stories in there about creation care being expression of the faith.

And then the last two 7 and 8 are standing firm on principle regardless of the cost. anA evangelizing, proselytizing, introducing people to God. Those 2 things that people might reduce the Christian faith to just that. You won't do this, you will do that, you're different in that way and you're going to try to sell me your faith. Well, those are important expressions of the faith but that's a very small part of a much bigger story.

So that's what we found in this research and that's why I've been kind of excited about the book itself, is this is just sort of practical how to do it based on how others have done it. So

thanks for letting me answer the sort of longer answer there. But I appreciate you being patient with that.

Lisa Peters

That's good, but I think just explaining that because then we still...I think the stories are what tell...are what, well, the stories tell the story, if that made sense. I think that I would love to hear, I would love our listeners to hear more of the stories because when I read your book I'm like I know that company. These are not companies that are you've never heard of. These are companies, that are they are million-dollar companies some of them. So if you could, I would love for you to share some of those stories that you will recognize the names pretty sure so and how they're doing it.

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, and there are a lot of the usual suspects out there. The Chick-fil-A and Hobby Lobbies of the world, the Auntie Anne's Pretzels. And we could talk about some of those. And then there are some that people have never heard of but they'll read it and they'll be inspired by that right?

So, Anne Beiler, Auntie Anne Beiler is it's a great story in here. Some people may, I don't know if you have Auntie Anne's Pretzels up in Canada where you are. They're in a number of different companies. It started right here in Pennsylvania and it started because a woman named Anne Beiler, there's a real a significant tragedy in her life. They lost their 2-year-old child and it created problems in their marriage and eventually they went to counseling and their marriage was restored. And that worked so well for them that they wanted to provide free counseling to a lot of other people. How are they going to do that? They didn't really have the money to do that. So Anne Beiler started making pretzels and selling them at farmers' markets. And it got really popular because they wanted to make this money so that her husband could then counsel others and kind of pay forward what they had received. While the business was specifically started to provide free counseling to marriages in trouble and now that so selling pretzels at a farmer's market grew to 2, 3, 10, 20 farmer's markets and eventually to what we know today which Auntie Anne's Pretzels is around the world. Couple \$100,000,000 business. Almost 2000 locations around the world. It's really a stunning story of growth. But the whole purpose of that was to bless other people through free marriage counseling. That's why the thing existed. So there's stories like that, like this is a company that's funding a faithful cause. That's why the company existed. Yeah, the pretzels are great. Yeah, delicious. Yeah, everybody enjoys them. But it's so much more to it than that. So yeah, that would be that be 1 typical story, but really surprising twists and in fact, her book is called *Twist of Faith*, twisting pretzels you get the pun. But in any case, great story. Anne Beiler is her name.

Lisa Peters

Yeah, and I think of...I mean you have 50 stories of such great...So and you've in your book, you've broken them down to sort of covering the 8 expressions of faith. And I think I know

that one of the stories and I resonated with it because it was Chick-fil-A and they're in Canada now in the east. But I was actually, I came to Dallas and I met with Zig Ziegler's son and he took me to Chick-fil-A. I had no clue but I'm sure at the time he may have explained it, and it just it went over my head, and you have a great story about them and I just think that's one that did come to Canada. My question is so I would love you to tell the story but are they still maintaining that? Chick-fil-A was started so many years ago. Do people continue? I just wonder if...

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, check started I'm sorry you finish your.

Lisa Peters

I want to tell the story but my question to the purpose of Chick-fil-A does it get carried on when there's a change of ownership when they franchise? That's sort of that's an interesting concept.

Michael Zigarelli

Yes, it's a privately owned company and one of the ways they've been able to maintain the values through their growth is because they're not publicly traded. So it's maintained by the year, the Cathy family. Truett Cathy is a founder. Passed away a few years ago. He passed on the business to his son Dan Cathy that's now been passed on to a third generation Andrew Truett Cathy is in charge of the business now.

But this company that started as just a little diner in 1946. Eventually Chick-fil-A started in 1967 after Truett Cathy kind of hit on a winning formula for fried chicken and then it has grown into literally thousands of locations across America and now they're branching out internationally as well. And they're known for being closed on Sunday and they can make so much more money if they open on Sunday but they refuse to do that.

They're known for quality food. They're known for taking care of their employees. They are exemplars in every way. There aren't many stories in this book where you have a company that really expressing the faith through all 8 dimensions. Of what we found Chick-fil-A is probably one of them. And so many Christian-owned, Christian entrepreneurs business owner,s Christian business people in general look to what the Cathy family has done and say, Well you know what, maybe maybe I can do that too. Or maybe I could do 1 or 2 of these things because they demonstrate that you don't have to choose between being faithful and being profitable. You don't have to choose between being ethical and doing the right thing and dominating your industry the way they do. It's really stunning when you look at their per unit sales is so much higher than every other quick service restaurant out there. How much they make per restaurant and they're closed for two months out of the year. They're closed every Sunday. They're closed on Thanksgiving. They're closed on Christmas. They're closed for like 56 days a year and they're still outperforming all of their competition. They haven't compromised on the faith. And that's one of the fantastic things about Chick-fil-A. From a faith

perspective is that they demonstrate that you really don't have to compromise. You don't have to trade off profitability for faithfulness. Yeah.

Lisa Peters

Now I can't remember because I, my book's right here and I want to flip through it, but was it Chick-fil-A, who you in your book you listed some of what the employees do. And they were chasing people out. They forgot something and the employee would chase them down was that Chick-fil-A?

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, chasing them down or just kind of noticing that there's somebody who's disabled eating by themselves having trouble and so I'm going to move from this register to go over there and help them eat with them, get to know them. I mean there's really this personal touch. They call it second mile service at Chick-fil-A. Where the first mile is the food is going to be good. It's going to be quality. You can get fair value. It's going to be on time. The basic things you'd expect when you go into a restaurant. And that second mile second service is just things that you simply would not expect from any kind of business where they're actually caring for you as a human being and yes, chasing people down they forgot their order. There's a story in there about somebody forgot their change and so one of the employees brought the change back every day for three weeks in case, they saw that customer come back and they did after three weeks and oh by the way here's your dollar and 53 cents that you left the last time.

But that's the second mile second service that they talk about. And just the beauty of it is, it flows out of who they are. This isn't just a set of values and principles that they superimpose from the executive boardroom all the way down to the customer-facing positions. This is who they are as people at the executive level, at the manager level, at the sort of rank and file level, the chef level and so on. And it's so important to get the right people in place. Critical and in any business but especially service business like Chick-fil-A.

Lisa Peters

Yeah, those are great stories and I just I think of top-down, like I think those people are watching someone above them do similar and so I love that story. When I think of the legacy we leave, and I mean LeaderImpact is about leaving a legacy, but there was two stories in your, that I thought were connected, and you can correct me, but Hershey Chocolate and then there was Sunshine. So I think if I if I read, this the guy that started Sunshine actually worked for Hershey.

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah that's true. I mean the Milton Hershey company, we have some stories in here of companies that are historically Christian sort of founded on Christian principles and then they've kind of morphed into more secularized companies in here. Domino's Pizza is like that. Guinness Brewing Company was like that believe it or not. Hershey Company is like that as well. Milton Hershey grew up in a Mennonite from Mennonite background and all of his

diligence and all of his innovation to create chocolate that was low priced enough for the average person to purchase back in the early twentieth century. He's like the Henry Ford of chocolate. Cars used to be only for the super-rich and Ford made them affordable to everyone. Hershey did the exact same thing with chocolate.

But undergirding all that and his care for employees and his willingness to keep people employed through the Great Depression and so on, were these Mennonite roots, was this Mennonite faith. So it got expressed a little differently in his case. That's one of those people who gave people jobs who wouldn't have them otherwise but also producing a quality product also taken care of his employees et cetera etc and producing a fantastic school for underprivileged kids, the Milton Hershey School, some of you want to look that up. It's just a remarkable place.

Now out of that decades later comes this guy named Don Larson who was the turnaround guy at Hershey who had it all. I mean he had a Porsche. He had a hot air balloon. He had pretty much everything anybody could want from material perspective. And he realized one day I got to do something more with my life than this. And so he sold everything moved his family to Mozambique, Africa and started helping cashew farmers to find markets for their nuts. Started a business called the Sunshine Nut Company there in Mozambique, one of the poorest places on earth.

So he moved from the sweetest place on earth, is what we call Hershey around here, to one of the poorest places on earth, Mozambique and created a fantastic company. I don't know if you can get Sunshine Nuts up where you are or some of your listeners can. Outstanding quality but the the mission behind it is to take care of the cashew farmers in Mozambique, take care of orphans in Mozambique and they are everywhere, giving them jobs, giving them food giving them the basic necessities. Just taking care of people who aren't really able to take care of themselves in the environment that they have. So Don Larson, Terri Larson are the founders there. But yeah, this is also part of Milton Hershey's legacy, in fact, because that's where they were working before they kind of sold it all, went radical and moved to Mozambique.

So the stories in here are just fantastic and I just feel so privileged and so blessed to be able to find these stories and then to share them with others because not only are they practically instructive, they're truly inspirational.

Lisa Peters

Yeah, so in your research, and I know I mean you just found them. You found them through books probably audio, video. Did you get to interview any people?

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah I got to talk with Anne Bieler. I got to talk with people at Martin's Potato Rolls. I got talk with some others that people aren't going to know named Michael Cardone, John Vack. The

stories are in there. Most of the research that I've done here been over the years from the books and videos and other resources available. Really hearing from the founders themselves on how they do what they do. Why they do it. What's in their heart. What the challenges have been, how they move past those challenges. And then taking their 300 page book and then condensing it into 3 or 4 pages so that busy business executives can access it. get the gist of it and move on. So yeah, you're right, most of the research has been done through my teaching, through my basic work in the universities over the years. But yes occasionally I've gotten to meet these folks.

Just salt to the earth people. I mean it's something that they have in common. It seems they're about something bigger than themselves. They know that the world's bigger than they are. They know that they're truly blessed to be doing what they're doing. They want their lives to be an expression of their faith. Now they're very different personalities but they're great business people, truly devout, very courageous recognizing that hey this might not work but God wants me to do it so I'm going to go forward and do it. And truly a privilege for me to get to chat with some of them for sure.

Lisa Peters

Yeah, well my question was for you but you really have answered. It's just we don't always remember the stories. But you're researching so you do, but we remember how they made us feel and I just when you were in these interviews, how did they make you feel, like in their presence?

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, like so for example, just back to Anne Byler for a second. She's now in her 70s she's got lots of energy. She's on the speaking circuit. And just chatting with her, well I don't want to take up too much of her time. I just kind of approached her at this speaking event where she was. She's like, Hey, how you doing? Very interested in me, wanting to know what I do. I mean just sort of unpretentious, not full of herself at all. Just sort of the epitome of humility.

And many of the people I've talked through the years, whether they're business owners or other Christian executives, now they're not all like this, granted, but many of them are. They recognize their relative smallness because they're not comparing themselves to me. They're not comparing themselves to the person next to them. They're comparing themselves to God and they see that what they have they've been given. It's not just something that they have created and that's their mindset. And so it's very easy for them to be authentic, to be real to be sort of humble and even self-effacing with the people around them. So a real joy and and also very instructive for those of us who might have any kind of hint of pride when we're around others and kind of compare ourselves too favorably to the people around us.

Lisa Peters

So we move into the third part of your book. So we've we've done the 8 expressions of faith, all the stories which is a big part of the book. And the last part of your book is about the best

practices sort of Christian-owned business or Christian companies. And for me like I look at it and I think it is just a good way to do business. These are a hundred practical ways. And so I think my question for you is just really I think there's a lot of people and maybe right now more than ever, we're searching for more meaning in our, if it's our our personal day our work, our lives, overall life, we're really searching. And I just wonder if I was looking for a Christian-owned company, I'm not sure I would know where to start. I mean my mind goes to, I'll go to their mission statement and see their language on their website but I don't know if you have any advice if someone's listening going, I love this idea where do I start?

Michael Zigarelli

Okay, so so the question is about people who want to do business this way or who are looking for a contractor who's faith-based which question?

Lisa Peters

I think that's both. I think number one I want to find a company to work for. But maybe the second part, the flip side is I want to start a company where do I start? So I think there could be 2 questions there.

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah I understand. As far as finding it, some of them, they do a really good job of masking it not because they're embarrassed about it but because it's just they are just living on principles, living on values. And so they're not, they don't necessarily want to wear it on their sleeve. They don't want to necessarily be misperceived as being in your face about it. They're just good companies, good values, giving good product or service to people and operating with integrity.

Some of them will have a Christian fish symbol on their logo or something like that. Many just become known in their community that they're that faith undergirds their business operations. But there aren't that many places out there. There's something called the Shepherd's Guide, I don't know if it exists up where you are? That is sort of like the yellow pages. Shepherd's Guide. Shepherd as in shepherding sheep. That has a list of Christian-owned companies in different geographic areas. So that's probably online and easy enough to find.

As far as where do I start? if I'm trying to...Okay, so I'm a believer and I'm in business, how do I put those things together on Monday morning? It starts with purpose. It doesn't start with a list of 100 best practices. It doesn't start with here's how Chick-fil-A does it, here's how Hobby Lobby does it, here's the Anne Beiler story. As inspirational and instructive as those can be, it starts with I want to honor God in everything that I do because the mission of the business again is a microcosm of our mission as people, as believers, as disciples. So if that's truly what's in your heart then that becomes the heart of the business as well. And so if whether you put it in a formal mission statement and be overt about it on your website or not, if honoring God and all you do glorifying God say it, however you want, if that's at t that's at the

epicenter of what you're doing, well, then the expressions of the faith will naturally flow out of that. Rather than them having to be superimposed, externally sort of artificially as best practices. Okay now, what do I do to take care of my employees? Well, there are a zillion ideas. But if you don't genuinely love your employees, not going to have much-staying power. And where does that love for employees come from? Well, that comes from a love for God. So that would be clearly the place to start as a Christian business owner is exactly the same place to start as a Christian.

Lisa Peters

Good. Now I'm heading towards the end of our podcast, but I think if you were listening to this podcast and you were on the fence and you're like oh I am not sure, what do you think people are thinking right now but afraid to ask? like I ask all my questions. But if people were listening if, is there something you hear a lot from people they're afraid to ask?

Michael Zigarelli

Yeah, and it's usually along the lines of can I really make money this way? I mean I have to have more revenue than expenses and I am limiting the way I operate based on these principles. Doesn't that somehow then limit my top line and my bottom line? And if there is this perception or misperception out in the culture that Christian businesses are soft or mediocre or oppressive or going to treat me in a way that trying to sell me something more than their product, and that could really hurt business. Can I really make money? Can I really stay in business? Is this sustainable operating on these principles?

I think that's probably the number one sort of latent hidden objection of believers who want to apply their faith to their work and to their business and to their leadership. I think what these stories show, and many others, is the answer is an unequivocal yes. I mean there's no doubt and in fact, there are many people who think it actually gives you a competitive advantage. It's more profitable. Not that you do it for this reason. But who wouldn't want to do business with a company that operates with integrity. That genuinely stands behind its products. It's going to produce quality that's going to care for its people. It's going to care for its customers. That's going to pay its taxes on time and repay its loans and who would not want to do business with people of integrity? We all do. So again, that's a misperception that some people have that I'm not going to be able...This isn't going to be sustainable when in fact, it truly is, not guaranteed, but it truly is sustainable and in fact, it can even be advantageous.

Lisa Peters

Yeah that's a great answer and that is something probably one of the first questions I talked to my husband about profitability.

Well I want to ask you a question because I mean I know that if anyone right now asks me what leadership book are you reading or what do you see? I'm gonna be like you need to read *Christian-Owned Businesses* by Michael Zigarelli. It's going to be a book I'm going to promote

and I know my husband saw it on our table and he flipped through. It's like I need to read this. Yes, you do. So I'm going to ask you because I'd love to know what other leaders are reading. What is a leadership book you're either reading right now or a book you have loved, gone back to. I'd like to hear your...

Michael Zigarelli

Sure, yeah, well my favorite leadership books, first of all I don't want to sound cliched or anything but Old Testament book of Proverbs is simply outstanding. As far as I mean 3000 year old wisdom that could have been written yesterday in so many ways. So yeah, go back to that again and again for business wisdom just for life wisdom.

Good to Great by Jim Collins written about twenty years ago, probably best business book of this millennium. It's a leadership book. It's not just about business. You could take this and apply it to some team that you're coaching. You could apply it to your church, and many have. You could apply it to your school or whatever organization. So *Good to Great* by Jim Collins.

There's a book called *Influence* by Robert Cialdini which I love. He's probably the most cited social scientist of our day Robert Cialdini. C-I-A-L-D-I-N-I. Cialdini. And it's all about how to be more influential and it's taking the best research out there from the last hundred years or, so pulling it together into essentially 6 best practices in how to be more persuasive. So and that's going to apply in business and everywhere else of course.

And I'd say that the last one as far as what I'm reading, I read this every year. It's Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline* which doesn't sound like a leadership book. It's really a book about how to become more spiritually mature. How to grow spiritually. About spiritual disciplines prayer and worship and Bible study and guidance and solitude and various others that have been around for millennia.

But the heart of leadership is spiritual maturity. We lead from the inside out. You can't lead with just a bunch of externals. Here are best practices that I'm going to apply today. It doesn't last very long. Who we are on the inside is eventually who we are on the outside. And so if you want to be a faithful Christian leader or just a faithful leader period, it begins with our character. It begins with the internals and a book like *Celebration of Discipline* from Richard Foster, practical guidance on how to order your life around God and therefore develop that heart or have God develop that heart that ultimately culminates in faithfulness in everyday life.

Lisa Peters

Good. Well I'm I got 2 of 4 of those. So I've written down the other two.

Michael Zigarelli

Okay, so right we got. We got the book of Proverbs. Oh you, you have to of 4. You actually own 2 of 4. of discipline. Yes, yes, oh it's a classic.

Lisa Peters

This is I love hearing that. I wrote down *Influence* and *Celebration of Discipline*. Yeah, so.

Excellent, good now. Our podcast always ends with 2 final questions that we ask all our guests. LeaderImpact is dedicated to leaders having a lasting impact. So I've loved hearing some of the stories of how people are passing on their legacies. But as you continue to move through your own journey, have you considered what you want your own faith legacy to be when you leave this world?

Michael Zigarelli

Well a couple of things, one I mean I've had thousands of students. I think that hopefully I've planted some seeds there. I have four kids, been blessed with four in-law children as well. So we have these 8 kids all of them following God and doing good things in the world. And so that's certainly part of the legacy whether it's books or videos or other things that are going to outlive me, God will take them where he wants to.

I try not to think about legacy all that much though because that can very easily, it can be a trap for me, maybe for others as well. We start thinking about our reputation. It kind of reduces to reputation and I don't want to focus so much on that. I want to focus on what has God called me to do and then I'm going to go forward and do it.

One of my favorite quotes is from John Chrysostom who was a bishop back in the fourth century. And he said this, If you knew how quickly people would forget you after death, you would not seek in your life to do anything other than please God. If know how quickly people are going to forget about you, all you're going to do in this life is please God. And the more I can remember that, the less I worry about legacy. God's going to take whatever I've done and carry it where he wants to. God's sovereign. So I try not to focus too much on that legacy piece. Though I think he's going to use some of what I've done for good things and I'm blessed by that.

Lisa Peters

And my last question I ask everyone is what brings you the greatest joy?

Michael Zigarelli

My goodness, anything that brings me gratitude brings me joy because they are inextricably linked. I mean joy is an outgrowth of something else. Yeah, we can't just manufacture joy. We can do things in our life to grow our gratitude. And I find that the more grateful I am the more I'm thinking about what I have rather than what I don't have, how blessed I am rather than how much better things can be, then the more joy I have. And the more other centeredness I have, the more forgiveness I have, the more humility...so much flows out of gratitude. But yes, joy so whatever brings me gratitude brings me joy. I don't know if that's the answer you're looking for expecting in that but there is an antecedent to joy and from what I've seen, gratitude is one of the secrets to a happy and joyful and faithful life.

Lisa Peters

That is lovely. Oh Mike, it has been so good to spend the last less than an hour with you. I am grateful to have spent this with you and I feel blessed to have found your book and I am going to share it with everyone I can because I think there are a lot of misconceptions and I think you have nailed some on the head and so I'm so thankful to have you here. And I just appreciate you taking the time to share with us. Thank you.

Michael Zigarelli

Well it's been blessing to be on. Thanks very much lisa.

Lisa Peters

Well this ends our podcast but I just want to ask you if anyone wants to engage with you or find you, what's the best way for people to do that?

Michael Zigarelli

You can find my information, my contact information just by Googling me, going to LinkedIn, something like that. It's pretty easy to find me or Messiah University where I work. You can just look me up in the directory there.

Lisa Peters

Or look up his book *Christian-Owned Companies*. I think that's how I found you. Well thank you again. It was a pleasure to have you. Thank you.

Michael Zigarelli

Thank you. God bless.

Lisa Peters

Well if you're part of LeaderImpact, you can always discuss or share this podcast with your group. And if you are not yet in a LeaderImpact group, we would love to have you. Check out groups available in Canada at leaderimpact.ca or if you're listening from anywhere else in the world, check out leaderimpact.com and get in touch with us by email, info@leaderimpact.com and we will connect you. If you like this podcast please leave us a comment, give us a rating or review this will help other global leaders find our podcast. Thank you for engaging with us and remember impact starts with you.