



Season 11: Episode 3 | Darren Young | Is This Generation the Most Spiritually Open?

Hello and welcome to Scripture Untangled, a podcast by the Canadian Bible Society. My name is Joanna la Fleur. I'm a friend of the Canadian Bible Society and I'm going to be your guide for today's episode.

Today I have the privilege to bring you a conversation I had with Darren Young, the President of Power to Change. But not only is Darren Young the President of Power to Change, he also is a member of the Board of Governors since October 2023 at the Canadian Bible Society. Long ago Darren was captured by the mission of God through the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ or CCC.

He was a student then at Simon Fraser University and it was there that God captured him with a life burden to help people know Jesus. He joined the staff with CCC and for the next eight years he served as the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Leadership Development and HR. Then in 2006 God gripped Darren's heart for the local church where he spent the next 13 years preaching God's Word, shepherding a congregation and igniting people to evangelism at Town and Field Church in Langley, British Columbia.

During his time pastoring he was heavily involved with Leadership Network and in 2019 he joined Leadership Network as the Chief Operations Officer and then Acting CEO. In 2020 he also pioneered an organization called Executive Leadership Solutions, but Darren eventually returned to his roots where he is now in June 2021 when God called him back to Power to Change as the Power to Change or P2C President. Over the last four years it has been Darren's great joy to lead P2C into a

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new season of faithfully stewarding the mission that God entrusted to Power to Change so many years ago.

Darren has been married to his red-headed sweetheart for 25 years and together they have two amazing boys, Taylor and Matthew, who are young adults. He loves coaching and cheering his boys on in sports, running marathons, watching movies with his family and taking their dog Gus for evening walks.

So, enjoy this conversation.

Joanna la Fleur: Darren Young, welcome to Scripture Untangled. We're really glad to have you on the podcast today.

Thanks for joining us.

Darren Young: Ah, so thrilled to be here, Joanna. Yeah, really thrilled.

Joanna la Fleur: You know, by means of introduction to you as a leader, and some of your story, the first question I wanted to jump into with you, we couldn't be Scripture Untangled without talking about the Bible. And so, I'd love to know, where did you first connect with the Bible? Do you have like an early memory of where the Bible, I don't know if you grew up as a Christian or this came to you later in life, but what are your earlier memories of the Bible connecting with your life?

Darren Young: You know, I did grow up in a Christian home. So, I grew up in the church, but the funniest story, this is so funny because of how precious the Scriptures are to me.

But where it starts is really quite humorous because my first memory of the Scriptures in my life is Sunday school class. I'm a little kid. I don't even know how old, let's say I'm eight years old.

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I don't know. And one of the things our Sunday school teacher did was to have us memorize Scripture. And so, every week when we come back, we had to memorize a new Scripture.

And so, in order to motivate our class, uh, to actually do it and come back with it memorized, she said, listen, what I'll do next week is, I'll give you a dollar if you've memorized the Scripture. And so, uh, so more than being motivated by memorizing the Scripture, I was motivated by, by the dollar. And so, what I did, this is so, this is so horrific.

So, what I did is because I couldn't remember the Scripture. What I did is I wrote the Scripture on my arm.

And then when I was in the class and she would take us out one by one to, to say it, I had my coat kind of over my arm, around my arm. I took it off and had it around my arm. So, she couldn't see that I was reading my arm.

While I, pretended to have the Scripture memorized. That is my very first. And I got my dollar for that.

And so that is my very first memory of the Bible is lying to my teacher, pretending I'd memorized it. So I could get a dollar, a dollar. Uh, I did that.

So that's my first memory, which is really funny because not only is that ridiculous that you would do that, but the Scriptures are so dear to me. And God took me on this journey of, you know, writing it on my arm to writing it on my heart. Uh, and the really first meaningful time was, when I was in my early teenage years, we moved, and we moved to Abbotsford in BC, and we got involved in a church where they had a summer camp program.

And so, my sister started working at that camp the year after we got there and I had nothing else to do that summer. So, I started volunteering at the camp and during that summer, my sister bought me a Bible. I still have that Bible.

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This is 1989, and she wrote an inscription in the front of it. And she really encouraged me to be in the Word. And I think working at that camp that summer, all these little kids, we do Bible lessons with them.

And it just took me on this journey of wanting to learn what the Scriptures had to say. And that really began my journey.

Joanna la Fleur: I love that one as sort of your, saying, and I was sort of commenting there, this idea that as you're a young leader, I mean, you kind of came into leadership early.

You're at the summer camp. There's kids asking questions or you're being faced with challenges. You're away from home.

You're with your sister. You know, the sort of, some of those things are, I wonder if that's what it was. I think of you as a leader now, this idea of until you're sort of confronted with a challenge or maybe the question of someone else, it didn't become alive to you or it didn't become something that you had like, Hey, I got to explore this because I don't know the answer to that question.

Darren Young: Well, I think there's just been so many things like that, as you've described, so many things in my life that I look back on and I realized in one way or another, whether it was needing to understand it because of a question coming or a context of needing to know how to teach it. But it was just one thing after another, the Lord bringing into my life that kept provoking me to the Word. And so, through high school, it was a lot of that camp and my sister's influence in my life.

And then when I went to university, I got involved with Campus Crusade for Christ, which is now called Power to Change in Canada, but got involved and they took me on a journey of just opening up the Word and trying to understand it. And then at one point I went to a conference with them and a speaker named Tommy Nelson out of Texas. He spoke and he spoke about the Word of God.

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And so, the Spirit of God, just so captured me with how much this mattered that I cherish the Word and delve into the Word. And he talked about how for 21 years, he had only one day in 21 years, not been in the Word of God. And he shared the circumstances of that, which was almost unavoidable that he couldn't open it that day.

And so, I was so captured by that. And that took me on a journey for me for the next two years, I didn't miss a day in the Word. And it wasn't out of an obligation.

It was out of a sincere, I mean, it was a discipline, but it was out of the sincere desire. I want to be in the Word of God. And so, through all these different places, God just kept provoking me to care about His Word.

Joanna la Fleur: Yeah. Well, and it's amazing as you say, like someone, the inspiration of that kind of leader gave you a hunger for it for yourself, but in your leadership journey, I mean, I'm thinking you were the camp leader, you were in student leadership, you pastor, you've been a pastoral leader. You've been in consulting work and business environments now, uh, as the leader of P2C.

How has Scripture been part of that? Maybe, I don't know if you look back and say, I see, was it, were there turning points for you or grounding moments that came from, two years where you didn't miss a day? How has that shaped you as a leader?

Darren Young: When I came on staff, so after I was a student with Power to Change Campus Crusade for Christ, I came on staff and I think the discipleship I received there both through my student years, and then also when I came on staff of individuals ahead of me, speakers at conferences I was at, like I shared, but even my coming on staff was provoked by the Scriptures being opened by a speaker named Crawford Loretz at a conference and God speaking to me after that. He called me to a life of ministry, and the speaker spoke from 1 John 1, that God is light and in Him is no darkness, no darkness at all. And he talked about the beauties of Christ, and it so

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captured me that my life was to be given to help others to, to myself seek it out, but to help others know the beauties of Christ.

So at every stage Scripture has, the Lord just kept bringing Scripture, and then I came on staff and the discipleship of others provoking me to things in the Scriptures that, to be honest, Joanna, at times just made me, they made me angry, like, that can't be true. How do you wrestle with that truth about God and about, eternity and so forth? So, but it took me on this deep, I've got to delve deeply, I can't just skim the surface of Scripture about the niceties of Scripture and pretend that this is just, you know, a fairy tale story. This is real and it's gritty and it's deep.

So that took me on a journey, on my time at Power to Change. And then when I started pastoring, which is just crazy, Joanna, again, you look back and you realize how God has worked your journey. When I went into pastoral ministry, my wife and I just felt like God was calling me to the church, the local church.

And we're highly involved in our church. And I came on staff as an associate. And then within a few months, our lead pastor left.

And all of a sudden, the elders asked me to step into the lead for the interim, which includes the preaching. And I mean, I hadn't gone to seminary. I had preached twice in my life as the local missionary.

Like they were horrible. And now all of a sudden I'm called into this.

But my wife and I just felt like this is why God brought us to this church. I need to do this. And so, I was scared to death to open the Scriptures like that for others.

But what I discovered in those first several months of doing it, which I wouldn't have known otherwise, is that God had me to preach the Word of God. And so, you go on this journey where He just throws me in it. And I developed such a rich, deep communion with Him through that time.

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It wasn't the preaching itself. It was the times with Him where the Word had to pour over, wash over me in preparation for preaching. That was so rich.

And He just put me in it. I didn't choose that. I didn't seek it.

And so, again, it's just been one step after another, the Lord saying, the Word matters everything for you. And I'm entrusting it to you to bring it to others.

Joanna la Fleur: What strikes me about how you're describing this, even when you use the Word anger is, well, first of all, that you're sort of inherently saying there's some permission to have that emotion when you come to the Bible, but more than that, that the Bible brings a reaction out of you.

And I'm curious about that. Maybe I could say the, you know, the many emotions that a human can have, but then maybe the other side of that, I love the Bible versus I'm angry about the Bible, but maybe it's an emotion or engage emotional engagement versus complacency. Could you speak about that? Cause I'm hearing you say, whatever the emotion, you were passionate or angry or wrestling versus, I don't care. This book doesn't affect me. I have no response.

Darren Young: Right.

Yeah. I think one of the worst things that we can do with the Scriptures is approach it as an ancient text, which was written in a day for a moral code, for life, a rule of life for today. Now certainly it has, it is a rule of life.

But you know, the writer of Hebrews tells us in Hebrews 4, it's living and active. It's a communal conversation God has with us to tell us a story and to take us into the depths of His story and how our story intersects with it. And that is full of emotion that is full of wrestling because all of us know that the challenges and the joys and the disappointments and the longings and the frustrations and the temptations and the hopes.

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And so, all of this, the Word has to be the place that we wrestle through that to encounter who God is for us and why He wrote this story, and what He's doing in the midst of the process of redeeming all of it. And so, it's an invitation to that. And, I think, that's what He intends it to be.

Joanna la Fleur: And I know Power to Change is more than campus ministry, your whole family of ministries. And we're making sure, you know, people want to check that out. It'll be in the show notes.

People will hear in the intro, some of what that is, but when it comes to the student ministry, I think we're interested, particularly at Canadian Bible Society, there's been this rising interest and curiosity in younger generation people when it comes to the Bible that we haven't seen in a while. So, I'm curious about how, can you talk to us about what you're seeing, what's going on, on campus? How does the Bible get used in campus ministry? I mean, and maybe all your ministries, but particularly with younger people that you're interacting with, what are you seeing happening across Canada?

Darren Young: All right. So, as you say, we have ministries into many spheres, but I like to say that our campus ministry is the heartbeat of who we are.

And what I mean by that is we began as a campus ministry. Dr. Bright, 1951, California, a vision, boy, if we could reach students, I mean, it'll change the world.

Joanna la Fleur: Can you say a little more about that? What was that original fire?

Darren Young: Yeah, because, well, what's interesting too, for our story is that when Dr. Bright, Bill Bright and Jeanette Bright received a vision, there's a book called *Amazing Faith*, which is a story of Dr. Bright, which really tells the story of our organization and the movement. And which is really quite interesting.

And so, cause it's a biography of his story, but when he received, he was a businessman, and the Lord got hold of his life. He fell in love with Jesus, fell in love

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with the Scriptures. He was going to seminary and in the midst of studying for a Hebrew exam one night, the Lord gave him a vision.

And he was just, as he describes it, he was enveloped by the Holy Spirit. So, I love that because at the heart of our story as a movement is the Scriptures, is him studying the Scriptures and God enveloping him in that moment in the Holy Spirit and giving him a vision. And the campus, I think, you know, our heartbeat is that you've got a generation and you point to, we're living in a unique moment in Canada right now and probably other places in the world because the spiritual openness in this coming generation is unlike anything we've seen in any of our living generations.

It's incredible, the spiritual openness. So, the heartbeat for us is that, I mean, if you can capture a young person who's wrestling at this crossroads in their life, what's my story? What do I want to be? All my hopes, all my aspirations, but also all my fears. I mean, it's this crossroads of life and it's the same crossroads the Scriptures bring you to.

So, it's a really unique moment to be able to come alongside someone. And for us, I mean, the research shows to that, that handoff between I'm in my home, I'm in a youth group, I'm in a high school to university. If that handoff is not done well, people walk away, young people walk away from their faith in droves.

And so, for us, the heartbeat of who we are as a 20-year-old, who's captured wrestling with the story of God captured by that story of God and realizes it's worth everything for their life. Like it was my story, which is why it's so dear to me because that's exactly what happened. God had laid the groundwork in high school for me, but when I got involved with Campus Crusade on campus and I realized the fullness of Christ was in 1 John 1, His beauties, His brilliance, His worthiness for my whole life and the mission of God, it just changed the trajectory of my life.

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And God had been preparing that. So that's why this age group means so much for us, because then you're going to go off from that age group. And I mean, you're going to become teachers.

You're going to get married. You're going to raise kids. You can go into the workforce.

Some are going to go into government. You can become marketplace leaders or nurses, go into nonprofit mission all over the place. I mean, everyone from that age is ending up somewhere.

So, we used to say in the beginning, the campus today, the world tomorrow. If you can reach the campus, you'll reach the world. And so that's why it's such an important, important age group for us.

Joanna la Fleur: Yeah, reach the campus, reach the world in the sense, of course, these young people are making life decisions, partner decisions, business and career decisions, faith decisions, financial decisions. They're setting up the groundwork for wherever they may go into their life and leadership.

Darren Young: And they're wrestling in that stage.

They're really, it's not just they're looking, they're really wrestling. I mean, we're more aware of mental health struggles, the loneliness in that place, the fear that I won't meet somebody. The fears now I'll never be able to afford in many of our major cities around the world.

You're in the Toronto area. I'm in the Vancouver area. And young people for the first time, this is a generation saying, I'm not going to be able to buy a house.

So, the fears and the struggles and the wrestling in that place, who is God in that place to you? It's a really critical moment.

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Joanna la Fleur: And are there, are you seeing generally, I don't know, Bible themes or like maybe, for example, we always, when we're introducing people to faith on campus, we start with this book or this approach from Scripture, or is it like, actually we're changing it up. What we used to do was we used to do apologetics and now we're doing, I don't know, anxiety and mental health.

Like, how are you coming at it or as a team, what have you found? Is it the same or is it different?

Darren Young: Yeah. So, it certainly has shifted.

I think one of the things we try to be is agile. So, the story doesn't change. The importance of the Scriptures don't change.

But ultimately within all of that, the Scriptures are important because they point us to Jesus. The Word points us to the Word, John one. So, the Scriptures, as much as I cherish the Scriptures and every believer should, and it's God's intention.

It's not the end game. The Scriptures aren't the end game. The Scripture of God telling a story by the power of the Holy Spirit, critical to people seeing who Jesus is, but the end game is Jesus.

And so, how do we get people to Jesus? And in every generational moment, there's in every cultural moment, there's different questions being asked, there's different struggles, and there's just different doorways you need to go through. So, we definitely try to be agile. The end game doesn't change.

We stay razor locked in where we're trying to get people, but even how people approach the Bible. So, they're asking different questions. You know, we like to joke about Campus Crusade Power to Change, one of the tools Dr. Bright created was the four laws and probably every boomer, a Christian, maybe even maybe Gen X Christian knows the four laws or some version of it. God loves you. We're sinful. Christ

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is the bridge. And then you need to receive them. So probably in some form, every Gen X or boomer knows it.

But Dr. Bright wrote that in an age of, you know, they're called the four laws because it was an age of science. It was an age where people were wrestling with science. So, he used science language back in the 50s and 60s.

And that resonated with people. Also, it came out of, it was post-World War II, then to the Cold War in the U.S. and largely Protestant population. And so, you can approach faith conversations in a certain way.

Now the game has completely changed in Canada. We'll just talk about Canada here. You've got a generation that is not asking those same questions.

And the landscape of Canada is completely different. The beauties of the diversity we have in the nation, the economic realities, political realities. So, the questions are different.

So, you have to look for different doorways. You reference apologetics. Yeah, apologetics in some places are incredible, and God's using it powerfully in certain places.

And in other places, we just find that's not the conversation they're having. They're really struggling with fears. They're struggling with anxiety.

And so, who is Jesus in that place? And how do you invite people into not just the proclamation of the Word, but a participation in the wrestling with the story of God? So, I think there's been a greater shift to the story, rather than just the systematic theology of the Scripture, the storyline of the Scriptures, and letting people sit in that, wrestle with it, and create places of conversation around it.

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That's Bible course . ca. And as always, the links will be down in the show notes.

Joanna la Fleur: I heard a shift. I think it was Nikki Gumbel from Alpha, but via Bob Goff.

Bob Goff, an American author.

Darren Young: Yep, he's fantastic.

Joanna la Fleur: He was talking about encouraging us not to say, what do you think about this discussion topic, but have you ever experienced something? So, when we talk about an issue of forgiveness, have you ever experienced needing forgiveness? Have you ever had to forgive someone else? And suddenly you're getting to a different level of conversation where it is a bridge into the story of Jesus and his radical forgiveness of all of us that's available, but you're not coming at it by, what do you think about Jesus dying for your sins? We're coming at it from a different angle and from that experience. It's just as you're saying that idea of, we're trying to understand it maybe conceptually before we understand it from maybe quote-unquote scientific.

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That's really interesting.

Darren Young: Yeah, and Jesus was, let me just say, Jesus was masterful at this. So, you talk about Jesus, and the Scriptures point us to Jesus.

I mean, if the goal of the Scriptures, if I'm not in every Scripture reading on my own personal time or in group talking about, okay, well, what's this telling me about Jesus? Even in the Old Testament, all the Old Testament is meant to point us to Jesus and prepare us for Jesus. And so Jesus was masterful at doing exactly what you just described, inviting people into experience, helping people, whether it was the woman at the well, whether it was with all the religious folks who wanted to stone the woman caught in adultery, whether it was the journey with the disciples, He took them in an experience. And so, if the Word is to point us to the Word, then we have to do what you say and say, okay, how did Jesus help people experience and understand, not just conceptually, because conceptually won't change your heart.

I mean, it can, the Holy Spirit can do that, but how do we get people into the story? So, we should be reading the Scripture, looking at Jesus saying, oh my goodness, look at how He did that.

Joanna la Fleur: And one of the things that I find really interesting about even the family of ministries is you're trying to help people bridge from high school to college university and college university into the workplace and workplace into family life and marriage and all these kinds of life transitions. What are you seeing of people out the other side then if we're moving beyond student ministry, are people wanting to share their faith? Do you find that, you know, I'm thinking of those who are listening to us now, but generally do people want to engage this or are people feeling like, oh yeah, I'm thinking the Canadians who are always apologetic and sorry to bother you with my good news.

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What are you finding as people are coming out the other side as sort of young adults or into adulthood? Are people feeling nervous to share their faith? Are you seeing a rise in enthusiasm towards it or even the Bible itself?

Darren Young: Right. Yeah. You know, in any cultural moment, I think because of the spiritual battle, there's always a hesitancy and a fear for the people of God to tell the story.

And to really step into it. And there's a lot of reasons for that. Again, the spiritual battle, the fear, a sense of my own inadequacy, a sense of I don't know how to do that, a sense that the culture doesn't want to hear it.

We've certainly we bought into to the narrative that the culture doesn't want to hear it, even though the research, as you pointed out, shows that we've got a very, very spiritually open generation that's coming. Now, they might not want to. That doesn't mean they want to hear the Christian message in a traditional way.

But so, there's all these narratives that go through our mind to not say it. And then, of course, there's just distraction. Even as believers, we're not ourselves experiencing the story of God being good and all satisfying and God being faithful.

And so, we're rattled in our own stories. And when you're rattled and caught up in your own story, you're certainly not inviting someone else into a story that you're not experiencing as good yourself, even though you know it's intellectually good. So, I think that the body of Christ in general is certainly caught up in our cultural moment in that.

I think struggling to tell the story for those many multiple reasons. And at the same time, again, I think you've got a resurgence of God in a generation coming who wants to engage the story. And I also think in our cultural moment with a lot of the issues and tensions and struggles, I'll just call it a remnant to kind of sound churchy, Bible-y, a remnant who's saying, actually, we're going to stand in this cultural moment and we're not going to be swayed.

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And in a cultural moment that says your message is offensive and hateful, we're actually going to stand in that place and we're going to pray like never before. And we're going to bring the story because we're God's people and this is who we've been called to be. So, I think there's actually something really beautiful and powerful that is unfolding in our moment.

And I'm really interested to see what God does with it.

Joanna la Fleur: Yeah. And are you finding that there are any new ways, as you've just said, that there's the message is the same, but the approaches are different.

What's something I love about you, Darren, as a leader, but, you know, as your organization, let's not be afraid to try something new. I don't know if there's, even if you're like, we don't even know if they're going to work yet, but I'm thinking about digital tools or new approaches or, you know, certainly whatever the pamphlet was that was printed in 1965, it's probably not going to work today. So, are there any, and maybe some of them we tried, ah, it didn't work, but what are some things that you're experimenting with as an organization or even finding more than experimentation, finding some, some traction with in some of those new approaches?

Darren Young: Yeah.

So, a lot of times it is in the different spheres, helping people know how to engage people in story. So how do you learn to ask really good questions? How do you learn to journey with people in such a way that they can share their story? And you share yours. And so, we have different tools that we try out, different missional living resources.

And then we, across our different ministries, like you say, we just kind of keep trying new things. We'll have different missional challenges we do where it might just be, okay, here are three questions we want you to ask people in your world and then come back and report what conversations did that open up? Just as simple as that.

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One of the big things we find though, is if you try to do this outside of community, sharing the gospel outside of community is really, really hard.

So research will show too, that there's really three key ingredients to a Christian sharing their faith, but usually only two are focused on. So, the first is inspiration. You have to be motivated.

There has to be something that has captured you. Maybe it's your pastor, maybe it's your time in the Word. Maybe it's a conference you went to, but something captured you.

It really matters that you share your faith. So, you're inspired to do it. Secondly, then you have to be equipped to do it.

How do I do that? I don't know how to do that. Okay. Well, you need some equipping.

How do you ask questions? How do you introduce it? And so, how do you journey with someone? You need that. And most evangelism mobilization stops at those two, but the research shows the third critical key is community. If you have inspiration and equipping without community, most believers, except for radical evangelists, you know, the John the Baptist kind of type, they're just not going to do it because it's really hard.

So, can we do it in community? So, it's the beauty across all of our ministries. You're in leader impact, our marketplace ministry, you're in a group and you're learning to live on mission, go out into your world and you come back. How'd it go? We're on our campus, like I say, with a missional challenge.

Can you go ask these three questions and then come back and let's talk about what doors did it open? And then let's pray for those people. Yeah. Digitally, we're trying new things.

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We're trying new spaces, but even those spaces are, they're very relational, even digitally. So, for instance, we have something we call the mentor center where online through various platforms, we create opportunities for spiritual engagement could be through loneliness. It could be through marital strife.

It could be through whatever, that is the doorway to this is where you're experiencing a pain or reality in your life. That's having you ask more questions of life. And then when people engage digitally with that, they're connected ultimately with a mentor.

We have about 800 across Canada. They're connected with a mentor and that mentor journeys with them. And then that mentor, if they need a professional counselor or they need to connect in with a church or an Alpha program or so forth, then that mentor helps them get connected to the next steps, but it's all very relational as well.

So yeah, we're constantly trying new strategies, new tools to provoke the conversation, engage people in a community, and then help them journey through the story in whatever way. So whatever strategy you use, that's what you're doing every time.

Joanna la Fleur: I love that.

You're talking about strategy. So I'd love to get in your head a little bit about your own leadership. I mean, you've been, as you said, you've been in student ministry, you've been a pastor, suddenly you were thrown into the senior leadership role in a church consulting, and now you're president of this national ministry with, you know, even more global impact.

So, what is some of your leadership philosophy being shaped by the Scriptures over the years? Like what are maybe some of your own leaders, it's just as you said, that the man who was in the Bible every day, except that one horrible day of his life. But how has your own leadership been shaped and how do you sort of define that now?

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Darren Young: When the Lord called me back to Power to Change four years ago, I've been back four years now. And I mean, for me, again, it was coming out of university, the Lord called me to ministry through His Word.

And so, there's just always been this really unwavering rooting that as hard as ministry or life is, and when I say called me to ministry, I mean, vocational, He called me vocational. So, the Scriptures are at the heart of that. And I've always been, as I've shared at the heart of my story, when I came back, interestingly, four years ago, I came back had a really strong word from the Lord.

So, he had told me about three months before I got a call to have a conversation for this role. I was in a prayer time with Him. And He just said, Darren, every place I've had you at Campus Crusade and the church with Leadership Network is about to culminate in the next assignment I have for you.

Every single one of those places is really going to matter in that. And then I got about three months. So, he said, you need to prepare yourself.

And I got a call about three months later. So very early when I came back, one of the things that He said to me is, is Darren, I want you to seek out the story of what I've been doing through this ministry. So, you know, philosophy of my leadership has always been God's doing something, He's leading, and I need to discern and understand the moment that He's called me into and be faithful to that as a leader.

So that's really rooted me. And it's from the Scriptures and it's from my time with the Lord. And that was true when I came back.

And so one of the things I started doing was connecting with those in our global organization, which is so globally called Campus Crusade for Christ, who were connected with, this is going to sound funny, were connected with Bill Bright, because Bill died years ago. And I never met Bill, and I have no personal, Bill's not a hero to me. I'm not trying to make him as to some patriarch of the organization, but something was entrusted to Dr. Bright.

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And I want to understand that because my philosophy is I need to be faithful in our moment to carry that forward. I don't make up the mission. It's not my strategy in my head.

What do I think? It's being faithful as the batons handed to me. So, I just started getting in touch with some of those who were older now, who had worked closely with Bill Bright. And one of them was a man named Steve Douglas.

And he was the president after Dr. Bright. Anyways, I'll cut through the story because it's a beautiful story, but it takes a long time. Through that season, with several of these individuals I connected with, who became such dear mentors to me from afar, they live all over the place.

But one after another, they start passing away. And they were at that season of life. And I watched this unfolding.

And Steve Douglas was one of them. Dr. Tim Keller, who was not a personal mentor to me, but as a spiritual mentor to me. And he passed away a few years ago.

And it was just like one after another. And I was grieving. I was so, so heartbroken because I needed these men and women of faith.

And in that time, the Lord gave me Hebrews 12:1-3, as an anchor verse to talk about Scripture, rooting my leadership, and my understanding philosophy, if you want to call that leadership. But just burdened me with this picture in Hebrews 12:1 - *Therefore, since we're surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let's throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.* And the imagery in Hebrews 12:1, scholars agree that the imagery in Hebrews 12 was an imagery of what it says, a cloud of witnesses.

It's surrounded by a cloud of witnesses. It's an athletic imagery. And of course, then the writer of Hebrews talks about running the race.

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So, it's an athletic imagery. And the imagery of the day was an imagery of a stadium. And it was spectators cheering the athletes on, in this case, cheering the runners on.

And so, the imagery being painted, there's all these great men and women of the faith of Hebrews 11, who represent so many others. They're now in the grandstands cheering you and I on in our moment as we run the race. They're cheering us on.

Don't give up. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus. He's worth it. He's worth it. It's your moment. Tell the story. Tell the story.

And God gave me this in this moment and said, Darren, one generation is passing to another. And now it's your moment.

It's your moment to keep telling the story faithfully. And that Scripture became so dear to me. And it has anchored me in this moment.

So which ironically, where I started with the first story of writing a Scripture on my arm. So, I had it tattooed on my arm. And Hebrews 12 was so from writing it as a kid to get a dollar, which was a different Scripture, writing a Scripture on my arm to get a dollar to now it's tattooed on my arm, and to see it every day, that it's now our moment to tell the story.

And so, you know, really my philosophy of leadership. I mean, there's lots of specifics if we're just talking about that. But it is just God has called.

And it's our moment. And I want to be faithful to in our generation and prepare a new generation to tell the story of God. So, the mission we have to be unwavering to but how we accomplish that the agility and the nimbleness, like Jesus in every situation doing it differently as needed.

So, I'm just trying to be really, really faithful. It's been entrusted to me, we stand on the shoulders of men and women who Hebrews 11, who gave their lives for this, who suffered and died, as the writer says, without having experienced all the promises of God, because they look forward to a future day. And so that's the heartbeat of how I

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try to lead and what we're trying to do, be faithful in our moment to tell the story like those who went before us.

Joanna la Fleur: Well, I'm deeply moved by what you're saying. I mean, I have some tattoos myself.

I don't know how people feel about tattoos. But I hope that a tattoo like that is like it is, as you said, it's writing it on yourself so that you don't forget. Maybe my last questions for you are maybe two parts.

First, how can we as Canadian Christians, how can we support the work of Power to Change in this season in this moment? And then the next is really, you know, what is our prayer and our hope for this rising generation? But we'll answer the first one, like, what can we do? Or where do you even want to send people on the internet? We'll link that down below. How can we support the work of you and your team? How can we cheer you on?

Darren Young: Yeah, thanks. You know, our big heartbeat in this season, and it's part of what, I really don't say it lightly when I say God. God spoke or God said, it'll all be tested.

But I mean it very sincerely. It was so significant how He spoke to me when I came back and what our leadership experience. But to answer your question is we really believe in this season that God has reinvigorated us to, to help fuel evangelism for the body of Christ.

And so rather than how can someone get involved in Power to Change, our heart is how can we come alongside the body of Christ? So, I think it's a bit of a philosophical shift for us from we can do it, get involved, you can help, to no, no, no, you can do it. And we think we can help. So how do we become a hub of evangelism that's going to help a new generation live on mission for Jesus? How do we fuel the next things that God wants to do? So we're right now in significant, significant R&D experimentation on how do we create places of convening and catalyzing new strategies, new

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initiatives, supporting churches, creating spaces of shared learnings and platforms to engage people in communities on mission and so forth, meeting with others, partners and other Kingdom non-profits and evangelistic organizations.

So, there's a pretty massive undertaking right now that we're part of. And so, pray for us on that is all I'm saying, because our heartbeat is to flip your question rather than how can someone get involved and help us? How can we get involved and help you? So that, you know, as Bob Buford, when I was with Leadership Network, Bob Buford, he founded Leadership Network and his phrase was always, our fruit should grow on other people's trees. And I think that's our heartbeat as Power to Change in this coming season is we want our fruit to grow on other people's trees where our name is never on something, but we're seeing new ministries and new strategies and a resurgence of the church that is happening.

And we're not the only ones, obviously, but we're playing our part and we're going to be able to in 10 to 20 years, sit back over coffee and say, look at what God has done. And we were part of helping spark that and support that, but our name's not on it. And the Kingdom is a growing and Jesus is being exalted.

So that's our big prayer. And I think in terms of the next generation, your second question is, you know, I've now got two boys who are 22 and 21. So they're my age when I received the call from the Lord to a life of full-time ministry and was captured by the person and mission of Jesus.

And so, my prayer is for their generation. I really believe that for me as a leader that I might not see the fruit in my moment, in my leadership, and that's okay. But I pray for this next generation that they see the greatest breakthrough any of us have ever, ever experienced.

And I think because of the age my boys are at, it's not just theoretical, it's not just conceptual. It is looking at them and saying, God, will you please do in their generation, the promises You've given generations before, will you fulfill it now? So, I

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really pray that this coming generation, the next generation is the one that brings in the Kingdom. And I might be naive and idealistic with that, but one of the things we say, and I say to our staff all the time is, regardless of what age we are now, we are a ministry who have the heart of a 22 year old who thinks you can change the world.

And that's who we are. And that's why our campus ministry matters. So, I'm just praying this next generation is the one to bring in the Kingdom.

And I think we're seeing glimpses of the spiritual renewal through some of the research. So, my prayer is for the next generation and the rest of us, let's help them bring it in.

Joanna la Fleur: Yeah.

Amen. Darren Young, thanks for joining us on the podcast. This has been rich with insights, but also, I think an invitation to be planted in Scripture so that our fruit would be on other people's trees, that God would get the glory, not any person or organization.

You know, for the glory of God and a new generation coming up as we pass the torch on to them. Thanks so much for being with us today, Darren.

Darren Young: Such a joy, Joanna.

I really appreciate it. It's been a lot of fun.