



## LEADING THROUGH TRANSITION

### *From Senior Pastor to Founding Pastor*

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#### LEADERSHIP TRANSITION

- Pastor Chris recently transitioned from Lead Pastor to Founding Pastor of Church of the Highlands through a very intentional process.
- The transition itself was a two-and-a-half-year process, involving elders, trustees, and leadership teams.
- At almost the same time, Pastor Chris started having more vision for Highlands College while Pastor Mark Pettus started having more vision for Church of the Highlands.
- Healthy leadership transition can seem rare, but this was built on trust, preparation, and shared vision.

"I believe in this next generation." - *Chris Hodges*

#### FOUNDING PASTOR

- Many assume "Founding Pastor" means retirement, but that's not the case for Pastor Chris.
- His main focus now is leadership development and vision-casting through Highlands College and GrowLeader while staying engaged in the church.
- He likes to describe it like moving from parent to grandparent—still leading, but in a guiding role.
- When transitioning between roles, it's a great idea to bring in a third party to help bring an outside perspective through essential conversations to avoid confusion.

"If you've loved me as a father, you're really going to love me as a grandfather." - *Chris Hodges*

#### HIGHLANDS COLLEGE & GROWLEADER

- Through this role transition, Pastor Chris isn't slowing down—he's shifting his focus to where his passion is strongest.
- Highlands College is expanding to train more future pastors and leaders.
- Fundraising and partnerships are key to expanding the impact of ministry schools.



- GrowLeader will continue helping churches with succession planning, growth strategies, and leadership development.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

See the next pages for Discussion Questions that will help you and your team get the most out of this episode!

### EPISODE RESOURCES

- [Anniversary Sunday Message](#)
- [GrowLeader One Days](#)
- [GrowLeader Conference](#)
- [Monthly Mentoring with PC](#)
- [GrowLeader Roundtables](#)
- [Build a Legacy of Kingdom Builders Team](#)
- [Free Church Resources](#)
- [Previous Episodes + Show Notes](#)
- [The Wesleyan Investment Foundation](#)
- [OneHope](#)
- [StudioC](#)



**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

Keep growing to reach your full potential by asking yourself and your team these questions:

**LEADERSHIP TRANSITION**

1. What steps can you take now to prepare for a leadership transition, even if it's years away?

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2. How can you ensure the next leader is equipped and confident before officially stepping into their role?

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3. How can you ensure the next leader is equipped and confident before officially stepping into their role?

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**FOUNDING PASTOR**

1. How can you stay engaged and add value to your organization without overstepping the new leader?

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- 2. What outside mentors or advisors could help give fresh perspective during a transition in your organization?

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- 3. How can shifting from a hands-on leader to a guiding role actually make your organization stronger?

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**HIGHLANDS COLLEGE & GROWLEADER**

- 1. What systems or structures can you create to develop future leaders in your business, ministry, or team?

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- 2. How can you ensure your organization is consistently investing in the next generation of leaders?

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- 3. What relationships or strategic partnerships could help you expand your leadership impact beyond your immediate organization?

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