



FEATURING
Charlie Hughes

Leading Young: Authentic Ministry, Capacity, and Calling

Season 2 Episode 8 • TML Episode Guide

*Young Adult Pastor, Rally, First Baptist Fort Lauderdale /
Church by the Glades*

“If you will be faithful with little, God will eventually trust you with much.”

Overview

In this episode of *The Missional Leader*, Rob sits down with Charlie Hughes, a young preacher who serves at First Baptist Fort Lauderdale and Church by the Glades, where he helps lead Rally, a young adult movement reaching and discipling a rising generation in the heart of the city. Rob and Charlie talk about the soil that forms a young leader: growing up in a pastor’s home marked by authenticity, being entrusted with meaningful responsibility early, learning to steward opportunity with humility, and developing the discipline required to carry increasing influence.

Core Insight:

Why Early Influence Requires Deep Formation

One of the defining insights from this conversation is this:

A platform can be given early, but depth must be formed over time.

Charlie's story is not simply about a young leader with a gift. It is about a young leader shaped by:

- Authentic faith at home
- A church culture of entrustment
- Personal initiative
- Spiritual discipline
- A deep sense of stewardship

In a generation hungry for authenticity, Charlie's life points to a vital truth:

Young leaders do not simply need more opportunities; they need deeper formation.

The Soil Beneath the Gift

Rob observes that what stood out about Charlie was not just his ability to preach, but the spiritual depth beneath the gift. That depth did not appear by accident. It was formed in an environment where faith was consistent, ministry was modeled with integrity, and love for Jesus came before love for the platform.

Charlie describes his parents not primarily as people who loved ministry, but as people who loved Jesus. That distinction matters.

A love for ministry can produce performance; a love for Jesus produces integrity.

From Opportunity to Stewardship

Charlie was entrusted with responsibility early, but he did not treat that opportunity casually. After preaching his first sermon at sixteen - a sermon he describes as one of the worst he ever preached - he realized that calling required preparation.

That first failure became formation.

He learned that gifting alone was not enough. If he was going to preach, lead, and serve well, he would need to study, practice, ask questions, and bring his best to the work God had placed before him.

This is a key mark of missional leadership:

Opportunity is not entitlement. It is stewardship.

The Framework:

How Young Leaders Are Formed for Faithful Influence

1

Authenticity Forms the Foundation

Charlie's earliest picture of ministry came from watching his parents live the same way at home as they did in church. There was no performance gap between the pulpit and the living room.

That consistency gave him a healthy picture of faith.

For many pastors' kids and young leaders, disillusionment begins when public spirituality and private life do not match. But Charlie's experience was different. He saw a faith that was genuine, natural, and deeply rooted in Jesus.

Authentic leadership begins before anyone steps onto a platform.

It is formed in:

- Consistent character
- Love for Jesus
- Love for people
- Private integrity
- A life that does not require performance to be spiritual

For this generation, authenticity is not optional. It is one of the primary ways trust is built.

2

Entrustment Gives Young Leaders Room to Grow

Charlie was formed in a church culture where young people were not merely entertained or observed; they were entrusted.

At Church by the Glades and First Baptist Fort Lauderdale, young people are invited to serve, lead worship, run production, greet, preach, and help shape ministry environments for their own generation.

This reflects a powerful leadership principle:

Young leaders grow when they are trusted with real responsibility.

Entrustment does not mean abandoning oversight. It means creating a culture where young people are coached, corrected, empowered, and given meaningful chances to lead.

Rob identifies this as one of the key ingredients in Charlie's development: he was not only encouraged, he was entrusted.

The Framework:

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3

Initiative Turns Opportunity into Growth

Charlie's first sermon did not go well. He was overconfident and underprepared. But instead of allowing that moment to discourage him, he allowed it to teach him.

From that point forward, he took preparation seriously.

He studied.

He practiced.

He preached to empty rooms.

He listened to great communicators.

He asked questions.

He made every opportunity count.

This is where entrustment and initiative must meet.

Leaders can open doors, but young leaders must walk through them with humility and hunger.

Charlie's example challenges young leaders to reject passivity. Calling is not an excuse to wait for someone else to develop you. Calling is an invitation to steward what God has already placed in your hands.

4

Stewardship Protects the Gift

One of the most powerful themes in this conversation is Charlie's sense of stewardship. He talks honestly about purity, discipline, and the guardrails he has placed around his life because he understands that his life carries the name of Jesus.

Rob names this clearly: Charlie is not simply protecting his own future; he is stewarding the gift and calling God has placed on his life.

Stewardship means asking:

- What has God entrusted to me?
- What kind of person must I become to carry it well?
- Where do I need discipline before I need visibility?
- What guardrails protect my calling, my relationships, and my witness?

For missional leaders, purity is not just about avoiding failure. It is about honoring God in every area of life.

The Framework:

How Young Leaders Are Formed for Faithful Influence

5

Capacity Must Grow with Calling

Charlie also names a challenge many young leaders face: growing capacity.

As his preaching opportunities have increased, so have the demands of leadership. He is learning that ministry is not only what happens behind the microphone. It also involves leading people, managing responsibility, growing teams, developing discipline, and carrying the weight of organizational leadership.

This is an important lesson for young leaders:

Gifting may create opportunity, but capacity sustains it.

As influence grows, discipline must grow with it.

Formation:

Reflection and Next Steps

Reflection for Missional Leaders

Pause and reflect personally or with your team.

Identity

- To what degree is my identity rooted in a love for Jesus compared to ministry, visibility, or opportunity?
- Is there any gap between who I am publicly and who I am privately?
- What kind of faith are others seeing in me up close?

Calling

- What has God placed in my hands right now, even if it feels small?
- How am I being faithful with the opportunities I already have?
- Where might I have mistaken waiting for obedience?

Leadership

- Who am I entrusting with real responsibility?
- Am I creating space for younger leaders to grow, fail, learn, and lead?
- How can I provide both opportunity and formation to those in my sphere of influence?

Formation

- Where do I need more discipline in order to grow my capacity?
- What habits are forming the kind of leader I am becoming?
- What guardrails do I need to protect my calling, purity, and witness?

Stewardship

- Do I see my influence as something I own or something God has entrusted to me?
- What would change if I treated every opportunity as stewardship?
- Where is God asking me to bring greater humility, preparation, or obedience?

A Simple Next Step

Missional leadership is formed through faithfulness.

This month, take one intentional step:

- Identify one area where God has already entrusted you with responsibility.
- Ask what faithfulness looks like in that place.
- Then take one practical step to steward it better.

That may mean preparing more deeply, asking better questions, creating stronger guardrails, or entrusting a younger leader with real responsibility.

Influence is not sustained by gifting alone. It is sustained by formation, faithfulness, and the grace of God.

Resources mentioned in this episode

- [Church by the Glades](#)
 - Mentioned as one of the churches where Charlie Hughes serves; described as a thriving megachurch in South Florida.
- [First Baptist Fort Lauderdale](#)
 - Mentioned as another church where Charlie Hughes serves; located in downtown Fort Lauderdale.
- [Theology of the City](#) by Rob Hoskins
 - Book mentioned as authored by Rob Hoskins, on urban missiology.
- [OneHope Research: Gen Z & Gen Alpha](#)

Connect with Rob

Missional leadership is formed in community, not isolation.

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