



Episode #9: Interview with Chris Sonksen

Saving Your Church From Itself: The Six Behaviors That Tear Teams Apart and How To Stop Them by Chris Sonksen

Pastor Chris Sonksen's book has just come out, and all leaders should read it. Today, we are going to focus on the topics of 1st & 2nd Chair and Leader Drift as discussed in the book.

The 1st and 2nd Chair

Leaders in these positions most often sit in both the 1st and 2nd chair at the same time. There is a natural tension that happens in ministry between these two positions because you often have campus pastors or high executive leaders who have the 2nd chair title but carry the 1st chair responsibility. This is not a problem to solve, but rather to constantly manage because it is not going to go away.

Areas where the tension shows up

There is tension between authority and submission. There is tension between creativity and boundaries. There is tension between your strength and your leader's weakness. There is tension between your personal opinion and the pastor's direction. There is tension between balancing the influence you are gaining and maintaining loyalty to your pastor. These tensions exist all at the same time. With all this tension, failing to guard your heart and mind will lead to leader drift.

Leader Drift

Leader drift is the subtle negative behavior or attitude toward the leader and/or the vision. The key word is subtle. Signs of this leader drift include:

- The leader coming with more questions or judgments than solutions
- The leader not thinking their pastor has anything important to say.
- The leader shifting from asking questions to having a questioning spirit
- Alliances being formed
- Isolation picking up
- Weaponizing preference with spirituality (ex: I love my pastor, but I wish he taught more expository than topical...)

LEADERSHIP LIFTER

EPIISODE NOTES



Distance leads to discontentment. And discontentment leads to discord.

Addressing Leader Drift

Leader Drift does not typically just self-correct, so addressing it early on is important before it infects the rest of the team. The worst thing you can do for your strong leaders is to tolerate a weak one. Set an appointment with your leader who is experiencing leader drift and truthfully explain the change in behavior you see. Then, ask them to speak into it.



Discussion Questions

Can you identify areas of tension between the 1st and 2nd chair on your team? How do you manage those tensions?

Has there been a time where you noticed Leader Drift on your team? How did you handle it?

What can you do to prevent Leader Drift from affecting the rest of your team?
