

Doug Smith ([00:07](#)):

Hey leader and welcome to episode number 355 of the L3 Leadership Podcast where we are obsessed with helping you grow to your maximum potential and to maximize the impact of your leadership. My name is Doug Smith and I am your host. And today's episode is brought to you by my friends at Beratung Advisors. We're also recording from the new return.com studio and you'll hear more about them in just a moment. If you are new to the podcast, welcome. I'm so glad that you're here and I hope that you'll enjoy our content and become a subscriber. Know that you can also watch our interviews and episodes over on our YouTube channel, so make sure you're subscribed there as well at L3 Leadership. And if you've been listening to the podcast for a while and it's made an impact on your life, it would mean the world to me if you would leave us a rating and review on Apple Podcast or Spotify or whatever app you listen to podcast through that really does help us to grow our audience and reach more leaders.

Doug Smith ([00:53](#)):

So thank you in advance for that. Well Leader. In today's episode, you'll hear my top lessons learned in 2022, part one. This is one of my favorite episodes to record every year. And in today's episode, you'll hear me share my top lessons learned in the area of spiritual growth and in character development. And there is so much there. Uh, but before we dive into that, just a few announcements. This episode of the podcast is sponsored by Beratung Advisors. The financial advisors at Beratung Advisors help educate and empower clients to make informed financial decisions. You can find out how Beratung Advisors can help you develop a customized financial plan for your financial future by visiting their website Beratung advisors.com. That's B E R A T U N G advisors.com. Securities and investment products and services offered through LPL Financial member Finra, S I P C, Beratung Advisors, LPL Financial and L3 Leadership are separate entities.

Doug Smith ([01:45](#)):

I also want to thank our sponsor, Henne Jewelers. They're a jeweler owned by my friend and mentor, John Henny. My wife Laura and I got our engagement and wedding rings at Henne Jewelers and we had a wonderful experience and not only do they have great jewelry, but they also invest in people. In fact, for every couple that comes in engaged, they give them a book to prepare for marriage and we just love that. So if you're in need of a good jeweler, check out he jewelers.com. I also want to thank our new sponsor Reiturn.com. And here's a question for you. Have you ever had an interest in investing in real estate? Well now for as little as \$500, you can become a commercial real estate investor. Just visit return.com, that's r e i t u r n.com. To learn more. Investing involves risks, so please consult to return offering circular if you're interested in investing. And with all that being said, here's my top lessons learned in 2022 Part one.

Doug Smith ([02:31](#)):

Hey, leader, today I'd like to talk to you on the subject, the top lessons that I learned in 2022. Part one. And this is one of my favorite episodes to record each year because I just finished my year end review. And if you don't know what a year end review is, I wanna encourage you a few episodes back. I actually share how to do a year-end review. It's a practice that I believe every leader needs to implement in their lives every single year. It's a life-changing practice. And essentially what it is is every year at the end of the year, I go away for a day or two two and I go through all of my journals from that year. I go through my calendar, my photos, et cetera, and I try to extract every single lesson that I can and type it up into a year end summary.

Doug Smith ([03:08](#)):

And then once I'm done with my year end summary, I basically look through that and say, okay, what were the top lessons that I learned in each area of my life? And then I record this lesson, hopefully add a ton of value to your life. And I mentioned earlier that this was part one. Uh, that's because this is gonna be a two-part series. There were so many lessons from 2022. And so today in part one, you'll hear me share my top lessons that I learned when it comes to spiritual growth and character development. A lot of lessons here. These were the two biggest areas that I grew in, in 2022. And then in part two, you're gonna be hearing the top lessons that I learned in marriage, family, and parenting, money and leadership. And so with that said, let's dive right in. Here are the top lessons that I learned when it comes to spiritual growth and character development.

Doug Smith ([03:52](#)):

And really, actually before I dive into that, I do wanna just share briefly that every year when I started New Year and I finished <laugh>, uh, the last year that I just lived, I spent time thanking God for another year, thanking God for another year. Cuz how many of you know we're not guaranteed another year? And I heard someone say this this year, that was a top lesson. And my friend said to me, he said, I think that we get this wrong a lot. We need to really realize that getting older is a gift. Getting older is a gift. This year, I'm, I'm currently 37, I'll be turning 38 in May. And I just started thinking about how many people never made it to 37. If you're older, how many people never made it to 40 or 50 or 60 or 70? So many people. And so every single year that we get on this planet is such a gift.

Doug Smith ([04:41](#)):

And are you grateful for that? And do you spend time thanking God for another year? And not just another year, but how about another day? Uh, one thing that I do every single day with my kids at the dinner table at night when we go to bed in the morning when we wake up, is we just thank God for another day on planet Earth because every day is such a gift. I love what my friend Laura Ellsworth said at our L three one day conference this year. She said, always treat life as if it were short, just in case. So powerful, always treat life as if it were short, just in case. So let's dive into to the spiritual growth lessons that I learned this year. And the first area that I wanna talk to you about is prayer. This was by far the area that I grew in the most, which is super exciting to me cuz if you know me or have been on the podcast or have been in a mastermind group with me, prayer specifically has been the biggest challenge for me in my spiritual walk.

Doug Smith ([05:34](#)):

Um, I'm, I'm not a very patient person and I used to view prayer as a waste of time and I always wanted to, to have prayer be a big part of my spiritual walk, but it just wasn't. And so in 2022, I did make it a goal to specifically focus on growing in the area of prayer and literal knowing that it would be a huge, huge year for growing in this area. And so the first thing I did just to encourage you is I set a goal <laugh>. I set a goal in the beginning of the year and said, I am gonna become a man of prayer in my walk with God by the end of the year. I don't know how, I don't know what that'll look like, but I'm gonna take steps towards that and make it a priority. Well, this really started to take shape in in June of 2022.

Doug Smith ([06:13](#)):

Uh, I I'm currently leading what I call a pastor mind group. It's been a group of pastors and ministry leaders that have been meeting for a year and a half. And this year we took a retreat to a prayer center

in Montana. And every day that we were at this prayer center, we would spend two hours in prayer, which if you would've told me that I was gonna do that beforehand, I don't know if I would've signed up. I mean, I still would've went, but uh, I would've what two hours is a really long time. But as we did this, it was the most powerful two hours of maybe, of even the whole year. And we just started off in worship and then, and moved into prayer. And it was so, so powerful and God met me in so many different ways and it really taught me that prayer, or I'm sorry, worship is the best way to lead into prayer.

Doug Smith ([06:52](#)):

And so if you struggle, like I, I like to walk around and pace and I think this is part of where I missed it when it came to prayer. I used to think, I just need to sit there after I read my Bible and pray. But for me, I'm a pacer, so I need to stand up and walk around to pray. And so starting off with worship and just starting with an attitude of worshiping God and then walking around and then praying out loud as I walk, that was a game changer for me, an absolute game changer. And so now in my daily devotions, yes, I'll spend time in the word of God, but then I'll turn on worship music, spend some time in worship and then go into prayer. That alone allowed me to take huge strides in my prayer walk. And when I was in Montana, God dealt with something that I wanna share with you.

Doug Smith ([07:29](#)):

He dealt with my heart on something and he, he spoke this to my heart. He said, Doug, you must lead your family and prayer and worship and must was emphasized. Make this part of your walk. If your walk with me is only in my word and my wisdom, then you're missing out on some of the most important parts of your walk. And your family will miss out on intimacy with me. Teach them to know my voice, to worship me, to live and walk and have their being in me. That's how you'll become a multi-generational family team on mission. If you don't, they won't be able to sustain their walk with me. So this was absolutely huge for me. And I've been making prayer and worship a bigger part of focus for our family because I realize that they need to know God. And knowing God isn't just knowing God's word, it's knowing him intimately through prayer and worship.

Doug Smith ([08:18](#)):

And so I hope that that word challenged you as much as it challenges me. And a another resource that I found on prayer that my friend Matt Gipper recommended to me was a book called The Hour That Changes the World And won't include a link to this in the show notes, but it's the hour that changes the World by Dick Eastman. And the whole premise is to get, it's the challenge people to pray an hour a day. And to a lot of people that sounds really, really overwhelming. But they actually give you a template in the book on how to pray an hour a day. And they give you 12 different ways that you can pray. And if you pray five minutes, 12 different ways, you'll pray for an entire hour a day. And it's actually really, really doable. So if you want to grow in in the area prayer, I really wanna encourage you to read that book, the Hour That Changes The World by Dick Eastman.

Doug Smith ([08:59](#)):

I also wanted to just share a few quotes on prayer that really impacted me. Cuz for me, if you know me, I'm a quote person, uh, usually quotes when I'm feeling not motivated or undisciplined, I usually try to think of a quote or two to encourage me to jump into discipline, which usually works. So here's some thoughts, uh, on prayer, uh, that I learned in 2022. My friend Sean Moore told me, he said, Doug, prayer is not a waste of time. And oftentimes leaders think it is, prayer is not a waste of time. Prayer will actually save you time, prayer will save you time. And why? Because Keith Moore, another man that

that I listen to often ministered, and he said this, he said, prayers, get previews, prayers get previews. God will actually show you things in prayer. And I'll talk more about that in a minute.

Doug Smith ([09:42](#)):

But this is huge. God could speak one word to you in a time of prayer and worship that saves you years of trying to do things yourself. And he did that for me earlier, late. Uh, I'll share later in the show. But prayer is not a waste of time. Prayer will save you time. And then a pastor that I've been listening to very consistently, Tim Delena, he's the pastor of Times Square Church in New York City. He said a few things on prayer that were awesome. He said, when we work, we work. But when we pray, God works so good when we work, we work. But when we pray, God works. And then he said this, and I repeat this to myself all the time, he said, when you pray, you'll meet people that you have never met. You'll go places that you would've never gone, and you'll have doors open to you that would've never been open to you all because you pray.

Doug Smith ([10:30](#)):

So really wanna encourage you if, if prayer is a challenging a place for you, I want to encourage you, make it a priority this year. Set a goal to grow in your prayer. Walk by the book, the the hour that changes the world, turn on worship. Just start to pray and watch how it changes your life. The second area spiritually that I want to talk to you about is in the area of getting direction from God, getting direction from God. And, and I've been trying to get direction to from God for the whole entire 18 years I've been walking with him, right? It's something we're always in the need of seeking direction because we have new seasons in our lives. And so there's never gonna come a time where we don't need direction from God. And what was so awesome about last year and me seeking direction from God is usually I, I discovered a pattern that I do in my life.

Doug Smith ([11:15](#)):

And maybe you're like me, I'm imagining there's people like me out there. Um, I was in a mastermind group, the mastermind group that I mentioned, and I was, I was seeking direction actually about two different ways that I could go with my life. And I was sharing it with a group. And my one friend, pastor Dave D'Angelo, uh, he just looked at me and he said, Doug, it seems like when you need direction in your life and you're contemplating direction that you go to a ton of people and you really turn up the dial of what people think. He said, what I wanna encourage you to do is I want you to encourage you to turn that dial down. You don't need to turn up the dial of people. What you need to do is turn up, up the dial of God in your life and you need to go spend time with God and hear from him.

Doug Smith ([11:58](#)):

And, and that's so simple. But when he said that, I recognize that every single time I look for a direction in my life, I go to everyone I know that I respect. I go to all of my mentors. What do you think I should do? What do you think I should do? What do you think I should do? And I'm constantly looking for people just to tell me what to do instead of taking the time to turn up the dial of God and hear from them. So what did I do? I spent time with God <laugh>. And this was literally, it may have been the actual week that, that David said those words to me. And I turned on worship just like I had just mentioned. And I started praying and God spoke very, very clearly to me on what I was supposed to do. And I've been seeking direction on this, this specific area for probably a year, year and a half seeking what people thought.

Doug Smith ([12:41](#)):

And then literally in just a few moments, God spoke to me exactly what I needed to hear for the direction that I needed. So if you're like me and you constantly go to people, I'm gonna encourage you, turn down the dial of people and turn up the dial of God and watch what God does in your life. The only other thing I'll say when it comes to getting direction from God is I was meeting with a mentor and we were talking about direction from God and he said, Doug, I really wanna encourage you study, uh, God giving assignments in the Bible. Just anytime that God spoke to someone and told them to do something, just study it. How did he do it? What did he tell them? And he said, what you're gonna find is that direction is usually very, very clear. And so my takeaway from that and from that study was, it is very, very clear.

Doug Smith ([13:23](#)):

Uh, God isn't trying to confuse you. God wants you to know his will more than you do. And if you'll spend time with him, he'll tell you his will for your life. He will give you direction, but it's up to you to spend time with him and seek that for yourself. So go get direction from God. Stop trying to get it from everybody else. The next area in the the realm of spiritual growth that I had a ton of lessons from was, was simply there's, this isn't really a category, but it's just a prayer that I've been praying over and over in the prayers this God, what is my highest and best use? What is my highest and best use? And I heard someone say this and this was so good, they said, the enemy wants you to orient your life around things that don't matter.

Doug Smith ([14:06](#)):

And when I heard that, I thought, absolutely. And so I don't know about you, but I don't wanna waste a second of my life doing something that I'm not supposed to do with my life. And when I read that quote about the enemy, it's like, of course the enemy gets so many people off track doing things that they were never asked to do and it's not their highest and best use. And before they knew it, know it, their life is over and they wasted in their entire life never knowing what their highest and best use was. And so here are some thoughts that, that I've pondered and I've come up on my harder that I learned throughout 2022 on this whole, um, this whole thought of God, what is my highest and best use one? Keith Moore said this, and he's been saying this for years and I've just been contemplating it.

Doug Smith ([14:43](#)):

He said that God dealt with his heart one time. He said, if you don't have plenty of time, you are wasting time. I thought that was really, really good, Keith, if you don't have plenty of time, you're wasting time. And so my prayer has been, God, can you show me where I'm ta wasting time in my life? What are the things that I'm pursuing that you never told me to pursue? What is a waste of time in my life? Please gimme clarity around this. And when opportunities come up asking God, God, is this something you want me to do right now? Is this something you want? And again, it all goes back to just seeking direction from God. I had a leader come into my life, uh, midway through last year and this was when I was going to people for direction, but he, he, the advice he he shared was so good.

Doug Smith ([15:26](#)):

He said, Doug, run the errand that you're supposed to run right now. We're all Aaron runners and you know the areas that you're talking about of what you might be doing in the future. You're not called to run those errands right now. The reality is there's an errand that God put right in front of you and maybe you should just focus on that. And when God wants to give you another errand, he will and he'll

make that very, very clear to you. And so, again, God is my highest and best use, though the Aaron that I'm running right now. Great, if it is, I'm gonna give everything I am to that. And if it's not, make that clear to me. God, the other thing I really have I've been trying to learn is, is the power of saying no. And his leaders, a lot of us are horrible at this cuz we wanna do everything and we want to help everyone.

Doug Smith ([16:10](#)):

But someone said this about saying, no, I thought this was so good. He said, either we can say no and regret it for a few minutes or we can say yes and regret it for days, weeks, months, or even years. And if you ever said some yes to something that you've regretted for days, weeks, months, or even years, I know I have and it's usually because we wanna please people and don't wanna disappoint them on the front end. But what I'm learning is if we'll just tell people the truth on the front end and say no, we'll have no regrets and maybe have a regret for a few minutes. I thought that was so good. Warren Buffet said this, he said The difference between successful and unsuccessful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything. And when it comes to saying no to things, one last thing that I'll share with you, and I've shared this on the podcast cuz this whole concept, Dan Sullivan who leads Strategic Coach, he actually wrote a book and he's been sharing this principle called who not how, who not how.

Doug Smith ([17:05](#)):

And the whole premise is in life, there's so many things that we want to do and we constantly ask how, like, how am I going to do this? How am I I I just don't know how to do this. And he said, when you find yourself constantly asking how and you don't know the answer, maybe you should ask who instead of how. In other words, there's probably someone out there who's really good at whatever you're trying to figure out what to do and you should probably just have them do it. A great example of this and that I've been trying to utilize this principle in my life so I can get freed up to focus on my highest and best use is Laura and I just bought a house this year, which is amazing. And but when you buy a house, you actually have to furnish it and decorate it and make it look nice, which is not a gift that Laura and I have.

Doug Smith ([17:46](#)):

Uh, I can't walk into a room and say, oh, this would look really great with this paint color and this couch. Like I can't even hang a picture on the wall. I am the least handyman on the planet. They should have a competition. I would enter it immediately for the least handy person on earth. Uh, and so what we did, instead of trying to figure out, okay, I need to figure out how to hang a picture and pick a paint color, instead we hired a who or good Fred Trina Falk, who's amazing at interior to design. And in a matter of hours she came up with an entire plan for our entire house. And we've been able to execute the plan and the house looks great, all because we got a who to help. My highest and best use in that case would not have been me trying to figure out how to do it.

Doug Smith ([18:24](#)):

My highest and best use is finding a who to do. And so maybe there's areas in your lives, uh, where you need to just start hiring some who's and asking for help. And all of a sudden you'll see your life freed up to actually focus on what your highest and best use is. But more than anything, I wanna encourage you, nothing is more important than you living your life, uh, for your highest and best use, which I believe is what God's called you to do. So seek direction from God by spending time in prayer with him, turning up the Dow of God in your life. Hear from him what he wants you to do, and then do it and make sure

that's the air he wants you to run. And if you are, you'll always be used in your highest and best use another error spiritually.

Doug Smith ([19:02](#)):

This is very, very simple, but this is just in life. But I, God dealt with me, uh, midway through the year. I was reading Galatians five where it shares the fruit of the spirit and the fruit of the spirit. In Galatians five are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. And God dealt with me. He said, if these aren't present in your life, Doug, something is off, something is off, you're too tired, you have too much going on, et cetera, pay attention to that. So I've been trying to pay a lot of attention to do I have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control in my life? And if I don't, I probably need to make some changes. And I actually have made changes based on that. Um, I've been trying to get eight hours of sleep a night. That's been a big focus.

Doug Smith ([19:46](#)):

I've been drinking more water, working out more. There's been a lot of things that I've implemented in my life to try to get more of the fruit of the spirit in my life. The next area I wanna talk to you about is evangelism. Uh, evangelism. And uh, I just love this. I was reading about William Wilberforce and here's what it said about his life when it came to evangelism. It says, William Wilberforce kept a list of friends and next to each name a series of topics and angles that he planned to bring up to start conversations with that person on the subject of eternity. When he started in parliament, there were only three members of parliament who were Christians. 50 years later there were 200 members of parliament who were Christians. All because he was intentional with evangelism. And I just wanna encourage you, if you're a person of faith, which obviously if you're listening to this, I'm imagining that you are, but if you're a person of faith, we're called to evangelism.

Doug Smith ([20:36](#)):

And when I read that about William, I just thought, wow, there was someone who had goals and intentionality around evangelism. And then I started asking myself, well, like what are my goals? What are my processes? What are my plans? Or am I just hoping that I'll have a chance to evangelize? And so I've been trying to be more and more strategic about how I can intentionally, uh, share God and share about eternity with other people. But the main question here is what are you doing intentionally about evangelism? And then the last category that I wanna talk to you about in part one today is character development. And if you don't know, character development is one of our values here at L three leadership. And I say it all the time, and I'll say it again, character development is the most important development and a prayer that I prayed since I was probably 20 years old.

Doug Smith ([21:23](#)):

It's very, very simple. But every year I pray, almost every day actually, I pray, God, please develop me as quickly and as solidly as possible, as quickly and as solidly as possible. Why? As quickly, God I wanna grow into who you called me to be as quickly as I can, but solidly right? But I also want my character to be solid enough to sustain what you called me to do. And I promise you, I tell people this all the time. I think that's one of the most dangerous prayers you can pray. Cuz if you pray to God and ask him to develop you quickly and solidly, he will. But get ready, put your seatbelt on, buckle up cuz it'll be the ride of your life. But when it comes to character development, here are some things that that helped me this year. One, I think one part, especially as leaders that we always need to focus on, uh, when it comes to character development, is dealing with unhealthy ambition.

Doug Smith ([22:13](#)):

This was so good dealing with unhealthy ambition. And here are just some, some moments throughout my year in 2022 that really challenged me to grow in this area. We were, we were in Montana and there was a, a pastor from South Africa ministering to us. His name was Peter Defen. He's actually Smith Wigglesworth, great, great, great, great great grandson. And he was just talking about his own life and his own leadership journey. And he said it took 15 years, 15 years for God to remove ambition from Peter defense heart and for him to fall in love with the hedges and highways. In other words, for the least of these, it took God 15 years. And so when I heard that, I said, God, please remove unhealthy ambition in my life and let me just see what you want me to see. Help me to reach who you want me to reach.

Doug Smith ([22:57](#)):

Help me to have no unhealthy ambition in my life. My friend Dave DeAngelo, who I mentioned earlier, he said, I don't want have any ambition that outweighs my calling. I just wanna be called and do what God called me to do. My friend Matt Dert says this often, and this sticks with me, he said, I'd rather be a small part of a big thing than a big part of a small thing. I'd rather be a small part of a big thing than a big part of a small thing. Um, one of our group members in our pastor mind, his dad, uh, was Billy Graham's pastor. And he actually wrote a book called Saturdays with Billy. It's a phenomenal book. But he came in and, and he was just sharing with us what it was like to do life with Billy Graham and his name's Don Woden.

Doug Smith ([23:40](#)):

And he said this, he said, Don, when I hung out with Billy Graham, what I realized was Don Wilton was a nobody that thought he was a somebody sitting next to a somebody Billy Graham who thought he was a nobody. And I just love that he just talked about the humility of Billy Graham and how he, he treated every single person the exact same. And he didn't have that unhealthy ambition. He just wanted to do what God called him to do. And then Don challenged us all as leaders. And he said this, he said, if you set yourself up as a it, as it, you're setting yourself up to fail. Cuz all you'll ever be in the end is an it And leaders, I just wanna challenge you, whether it's in your organization, whether it's in your ministry or your church, are you setting yourself up as an it where you're the go-to?

Doug Smith ([24:31](#)):

Everything has to rise and fall on you and everything is on you and it's all about you. Are you giving your leadership away out of humility and dying to your selfish ambition? I pray for all of us. And my prayer for all leaders is God, remove any unhealthy ambition that's in our hearts and help us to only focus on our highest and best use as I close. The last thing I wanna talk to you about is, is making it to your finish line. And to be honest with you, that's exactly why character development is so important to me because all I care about is I wanna make it to my finish line intact. And I want you as a leader to make it to the end of your leadership journey intact. And when I spend time with leaders who are near the end of their leadership journey, there's nothing more I like to ask them than what advice do you have when it comes to making it to your finish line?

Doug Smith ([25:22](#)):

Cuz so many leaders don't. And here are just a few thoughts that came up in, in 2022 that I thought I'd share with you when it comes to gate making to your finish line. Peter Din, who I just mentioned, he said this about finishing, he said, our finished race is more important than the accolades we receive along the

way. There are too many unfinished ministries. So the first thing I would just tell you is, are you thinking about your line? Because even if you're in your twenties or thirties or forties, your finish line's gonna be here in the blink of an eye. It's gonna be a matter of seconds. But if you have the end in mind, if you're thinking about your finish line, no matter where you are in your journey, you're much more likely to make wise decisions. I heard a podcast with Brian Tome and he was being asked about why leaders in the church keep falling.

Doug Smith ([26:09](#)):

And he said he's researched this a lot and there's two things that he sees that are lacking, uh, when in leaders due to fallen. And he said this, he said, one, they lack to have deep friendships in their church or their organization. I thought that was really interesting. And then he said they failed to have a life-giving hobby outside the church. So leader, do you have deep friendships within your organization or deep friendships in which you're fully known, fully loved and fully challenged, which we talk about here at L three all the time. And do you have a life giving hobby outside the church? Really, really important. My spiritual father, pastor John Nuo, uh, poured into us and I thought this was so good. He said, you must learn to deal with anything in your life that you know isn't right. He said, we often think that the silence of consequences is the approval of it and it's not.

Doug Smith ([27:01](#)):

I thought that was so powerful. We often think the silence of consequences is the approval of it and it's not. And just because you're not experiencing consequences immediately doesn't mean that they're not coming down the road. If you have something in your life leader right now, you're thinking of something as I'm speaking that you know shouldn't be in your life, you need to deal with that. Don't keep putting it off thinking you'll never get caught or they'll never be consequences. Deal with it. And how do you deal with it? Three very simple things I tell people, admit it. You need to go tell someone, Hey, I'm struggling with this. And then quit it, admit it, and then quit it. And again, that might be a journey, but quit it. It's worth it. And then forget it, right? You don't have to feel guilty about what you struggled with in the past.

Doug Smith ([27:41](#)):

The the Bible says we're a brand new creatures in him. There's no condemnation in Christ. And so admit it, quit it and forget it. But what do leaders try to do? Or what do people try to do in general? They try to forget it. Hey, they did it. Hey, I'll, I'll just try to forget it. It never happened. They can't do that. Then they try to quit it in their own strength and they can't. And then they finally get to a place where they admit it and ask for help. And hopefully they get help at that point. But if they were to just started it on the front end and admitted it and brought it up to someone, it could have changed everything. It could have saved their whole journey. So admit it, quit it and forget it. And then the last thing, um, that I'll share is just about alcohol.

Doug Smith ([28:16](#)):

And again, I'm not gonna spend a ton of time on this, but, um, I remember listening to a leader and he just talked about why we shouldn't drink as leaders are, are really just as people in general. And he said, um, you can't trust yourself and you should have no confidence in your flesh. And he said, there hasn't been one major blow up in the kingdom of God in the last 10 years where alcohol wasn't involved. And what makes you think that you have the strength to overcome it when so many people don't. So basically don't mess with alcohol. And that's a decision that I've made in my life and I think it's a wise

decision. And I'm not here to tell you what to do, but I would tell you to consider it. I work at a rescue mission and I see every single day the devastation that alcohol brings on individuals' lives and families' lives.

Doug Smith ([29:00](#)):

And um, a lot of people that I talk to actually that do drink pretty consistently, they don't want to, and they don't actually see the value in it anymore. They just have always done it. It's just a habit to them. And so I just wanna challenge you, the, the thing that really made me wanna share that is that last quote that I just shared, that there hasn't been one major blow up. One leader that has fallen in the kingdom the last time years, 10 years, where alcohol wasn't involved in some capacity. That alone is enough to say, man, if if that would have any risk in my life of me not making it to my finish line and me making a, a bad decision in my life, I'm, I just, I would rather not have it in my life. So more of a personal conviction, but again, these are my top lessons learned in 2022.

Doug Smith ([29:39](#)):

And so I hope that they added value to your life. Again, this was part one. I would love to learn what you learned in your life when it comes to spiritual growth and character development. Always looking to grow myself. So please feel free to share that with me. And just a reminder that in part two, next episode, I'll be sharing my top lessons in marriage, family and parenting, money and leadership. And I think it'll be a lot of fun. So thanks for listening. I look forward to talking to you next episode. Well, hey Leader, thank you so much for listening to my top lessons Learned in 2022. Part one, I hope that it added value to your life. You can find links to everything that I discussed in the show notes l3leadership.org/355. And leaders always want to challenge you that if you wanna 10 x your growth this year, can you need to either launch or join in L3 Leadership mastermind group.

Doug Smith ([30:20](#)):

Mastermind groups have been the greatest source of growth in my life over the last eight years. And if you don't know what they are, they're just groups of six to 12 leaders that meet together on a consistent basis for at least one year in order to help each other grow, hold each other accountable and to do life together. So if you're interested in learning more about launching or joining a group, go to l3leadership.org/masterminds or email me at dougsmith@l3leadership.org. And as always, I'd like to end every episode with quote and I'll quote Gerald Brooks today who said this, he said, leaders don't fail less, they just give up less. So good. Well leader, know that Laura and I love you. We believe in you and we say it every episode. But don't quit. Keep leading the world desperately needs your leadership. We'll talk to you next episode.