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I actually broke down, and when I was reading this to somebody, I just got a text message from our lead gang member of this entire community. He just said, hey, man, thank you so much for what you've done for our city. He's like, you got my vote. Thank you so much for what you've done for our community and our kids.

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It's really cool when you go into these communities. Communities. Not many people will go into and you hear like, hey, Mr. Rahm, we're voting for you. But what has changed my mindset in this is I just met with a very large pastor of Jacksonville, and I said, where are you at? And he says, we're not where we thought we would be.

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We got Donna in the office from the black community. And I said, well, y'all doing that again? And he said, nope. And people are tired of hearing the same old dog and pony show and not receiving any kind of action.

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Welcome back to code Red. I'm Zack Terry, your host. And on this edition, on this episode we have Ron Armstrong. Ron is a pastor. He's a minister. He runs not for profit, and he is running for mayor of a large city here in the southeast, Jacksonville, Florida. It's quite an undertaking. And I want you to hear the story and learn the principles that have led to his wanting to lead in this civic arena.

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Welcome to code Red. I'm.

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Ron Armstrong, welcome to the code Red podcast. Thank you. It's so good to have someone who's, As we encourage our people all the time to get involved in, civic, organizations to get involved in the political process, because we need people who represent Jesus Christ and those areas. And I don't know your full story at least first hand.

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I've read about you. Kind of stalked your social media, that sort of thing. But I want to hear it from you. Who who are you? Where do you come from? And what brings you to the point in life that you're going to tackle something like running for mayor in a major, major city?

Yeah. First off, thank you so much for having me.

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What an honor it is to sit here and I think the journey starts, the very young age of 12, I tell people all the time is, you know, my life was just, you know, I was developed in a trauma filled life. And so my local, you know. So I grew up in Daytona Beach, okay. And so Volusia County was my home town, Holly Hill, and so grew up there.

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And the reason I can't remember you know, before 12 years old is my my father was the heroin addict. My, my mom was the full blown alcoholic. And so my kind of stories were coming home from school, finding my parents passed out on the floor, my dad shooting heroin in the room. And it was just something I wasn't used to.

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And so really never seen my parents together. Grew up in a household where kind of drugs really just made their way into our family at a very young age. And so it kind of attracted that bloodline and generational curses, and it came from my grandfathers and their parents. And so it kind of streamlined into my life. And so when I kind of, you know, understood what was going on around the house, then it was my turn to play with it.

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And so 12 years old is when I was introduced to the drug world in, in Daytona and started running with some really heavy people around the city and doing some things that I know I shouldn't have been doing, but, it's all I knew. What was your what was your gateway? You know, so a lot of stuff, a lot of different things.

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So it started out with smoking weed and then doing crack cocaine and then running with some big drug dealers and doing some things in the shorelines that literally, you know, were against the law. And so that all came to a head from 12 to 16, never got caught, skipping school, barely graduated. But then one night, you know, was my kind of eye opening experience when we got pulled over for doing some crimes that we knew it was just a matter of time before we got caught and got caught, caught a couple of felony charges and kind of thought that was my wake up call.

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But the problem was that my parents went missing and so didn't know where my mom was. She took off. Are you an only child who has siblings? Okay, yeah. So it was just me and mom took off to South Florida. She got involved with a biker gang called Hells Hells Angels, and, my dad took off, and he went to Texas on a drug run.

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And so it was just me. I was, you know, as the phrase would say, couch surfing and trying to find a place to stay. And but when I got locked up in Daytona, that was kind of my eye opening experience. And the judge basically said, hey, you're you're going to catch three felony charges, which was probably about a ten year sentence for the things that we we did.

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Or you can leave Volusia County and you can make a phone call to a family member, close relative. And so I called my uncle in the panhandle of Florida, off the Gulf of Mexico. And I just said, hey, can I come stay with you? And so I got out of there. And I thought that was my reset to life.

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And no word from my mom, no word from my dad. I was on my own, but then moved to a small town called Perry, Florida. And, you know, a couple of traffic lights, no big grocery stores. Everyone knew everybody and got involved in high school. Was clean for a little while. No drugs in my system. But is, you know, like small towns when somebody does something, everyone knows about everything.

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And so I was invited to a party, and a really good looking girl invited me to this party. And then that was the start again to my drug addiction. So, you know, in these small towns, there was a lot of drugs. There was known for drugs. And so I was reintroduced to cocaine on a very heavy level.

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And that just kind of took my life for the next ten years and got into all types of things from drug trafficking to running trap houses and, you know, being heavily addicted to multiple drugs and drinking every night. And was it still in the Panhandle? Yeah, still in the Panhandle. But I thought, you know, it's funny because I believe now you got God uses a lot of wakeup calls in your life, and he kind of knocks on your door.

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And, you can either listen or you can kind of shut the door. And so that came again when I got a phone call that my mom was found on the streets of West Palm Beach, Florida, and she wasn't going to make it. And so she tried to get out of this biker gang. And the biker gang basically beat her, you know, to the basically till death.

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So she was on life support, got a call, went down and seen her hooked up to all the machines and, just thought that that was another start for me, but it wasn't, you know, even seeing my mom hooked up to life support and seeing the kind of state that she was in, it was really, for me, like, I just wanted to run even further, and even harder.

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And so I went back in, got back into drugs and, you know, for the next probably ten years of my life, just travel the United States, doing work, try to commit suicide multiple times, airlifted to multiple hospitals, kind of went down a really just dark path. Seeing my friends get killed in front of me. And it was just the reality.

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Like it was just something that I knew was not right. And it wasn't normal for somebody such and such as, you know, young age as I was. What age were you at this point? So I was 17. And the one thing that my father always taught me, he was, you know, he said, if there's one thing you can learn on the journey of life, even in the middle of his addiction, he said, learn how to use your hands.

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And because one day we'll come to a point where no one wants to really work anymore and no one wants to use their hands, and it's honestly the age we're living in now is everything is, you know, technology driven. And so I travel the United States doing construction. And then one day, you know, I was 22 years old, I was running into trap house during the day.

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Explain what that is. Trap house. Yeah. A lot of people, you know, really don't know what that means, but that's just the drug house. Okay. So my drug of choice at that time still was cocaine. And so I was trafficking cocaine from Florida to Georgia. And so we would stored at our house, and ours would be kind of a deliberate delivery drop point.

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And so at any given, given time, we would have, you know, cocaine all over the place. So one day we heard a knock at the door, had about ten people in my home. And the next thing you know, my door was kicked in and it was the, you know, what they would call the feds. And so for my people got locked up.

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They went straight to prison. And then I never was touched. And so I saw that as just, you know, now as being a believers. God's hand was just truly on, on my life at that point in your life. I mean, I know you weren't raised in a Christian church context, but did you have any faith system or any like, like, would you have considered yourself a believer in God at that point?

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Or where were you at spiritually? No. No one even talk to me about point on your radar? No. No church, no Jesus, nothing like that. And, so when that happened, I kind of just ran harder and, fled the state. So I made my way up to Virginia and DC and chase and work. And so that was probably for the next four years and up to 24 years old, you know, I was just wore out.

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I was tired, and at this time, I got a call from my mom in South Florida. So she made it out of the hospital, got off a life support. She was recovering, and she went straight into a rehab facility. And in this rehab facility, she told me about this experience that she had with Jesus. So on the back porch of this rehab facility, she called me up and she said, son, I just I had an encounter with God.

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And she said, you know, the Lord has something planned for you that I can't even imagine, like I've been praying for you. And at this time, I didn't really want to hear it. Like I was making tons of money. I had everything I needed, and, but she called me every day. She was just telling me about Jesus every day, and I didn't want to hear it.

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And so 24 came around, my last stop was hamlet, North Carolina, and I lost my job and so stole a bunch of company property because of my addiction. Came home and the CEO of the big company and a couple sheriff's office, officers were in my front yard, and I was right back

to where I was when I was 16.

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So I had a decision to make, either to get locked up or they just said, hey, we're just going to call it quits. You know, we don't need you in employment with our company anymore. So I put out my resume in 2009, and a gentleman in Jacksonville, Florida, with Sunbelt Rentals, called me up and he said, hey, you have a very impressive resume for such a young man.

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I'd love to meet you in South Carolina. Let's talk about a job in Jacksonville. And so we met at a Cracker Barrel on 95, and he offered me the job. And so 2010 made my way to Jacksonville. And at this time I was closer to my mom, which really all that was, you know, was a meaningful moment for me because I didn't have a mom growing up.

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My dad was still out of my life and so came to Jacksonville, took a very big contract with the Navy, did amazing things, managed about a \$6 million project. And, it was in that moment in 2010, 11, my crane operator walked on the flight deck of a United States destroyer and just walked straight towards me and he said, hey, man, I want to invite you to church.

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And I was like, I've never been. I don't know what that means. Like he's like, I'll pick you up on Sunday. Just come with me. And, and that was the invitation that changed my life. And so I walked into a church for the first time at 25 years old and heard the gospel. And, you know, God grabbed my life, and the rest is history.

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Wow. So at that point, had you dropped out of high school, do you finish? I just got by. Okay. Yep. Just got got school free. Okay, cool. So and so from there, your career and I know that you've done some, like, not for profit work. You've been involved in some ministries in the area. How did that develop.

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Yeah. So when I gave my life to Jesus, he put me on this path. He said, hey, it's, you know, now it's time to get to true work. And so the only, the best way I can say it was I felt like the Holy Spirit was saying, hey, the life that you lived is no longer the life you're

going to live.

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And there's a new life that you're going to live. And so he sent me straight to international mission work. So he sent me to Haiti for a good while, came back from there. He sent me to Brazil for a good while. Were you were you working with Austin Homes or. No. So the church of 1122 did some mission trips and they were looking for some leadership stuff.

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And I was just saying, hey, I'll go. And so I think that's the biggest thing that I've learned now is, you know, after following Jesus for 15, 16 years is I've just always said, yes, Lord, where do you want me? Send me. Have you have you met the home family, you know, Austin or Lockwood Homes that I'll try to make a connection for you there.

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Unknown

But they've got a great work in Haiti, and it was probably connected if it was 1122. Yeah. To what Austin's doing. But they've got several businesses in Jacksonville that they're involved in. So. Okay. But a great work in Haiti. So you, you, you went on you were in-country in Haiti working. Yeah. We, port au Prince was kind of our thing and then went into Locais for a good while and did mission work there, came back home, went into Brazil, voodoo capital of Brazil and Caddo in the mountains.

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Came back from there, went to Israel. So I was on this path of just really wanting to serve and came back. And then the church offered me a job to help build their hopes. Closets in Jacksonville. So ran that for three years, as the store manager and kind of really brought ministry into the corporate world, and which was something I loved, was seeing the gospel transform people's lives inside of, you know, an average thrift store.

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Unknown

Yeah. And so, I loved every minute of it. It was great. And then 2017 came around and I was sitting in service one day and God said, hey, it's time for you to go back into corporate America. So I went back into corporate America, took a VP job in Jacksonville, made tons of money, helped the company do some amazing things.

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Unknown

And then I was just my heart was not, was not set on my true purpose yet. And so wrestled a little bit with the Lord and went through some, prayer and fasting for a good while. And then the Lord revealed where I was supposed to go and, you know, never forget it was just kind of like a dream.

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Unknown

One night he said, I'm going to send you to a place you've never been before. And so that's where I was sent in 2018 to the Murder Capital zipcode of Jacksonville, the oh nine zip code. And he sent me right into the murder. Murder capital apartment complex, the old Cleveland Arm Apartments in Jacksonville. And so, yeah, we started our nonprofit there, left corporate America in 2018.

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Unknown

And so I've been running nonprofit work for the last eight years, and it's kind of where we are now. Okay? We ended. When did, running for office come on your radar? And how did you go? I mean, you know, I think my son's a political science major at UF, and, you know, probably the typical route would be to start small early and work way up.

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Unknown

Jacksonville's quite a city. Yeah. And, you know, there's a lot of issues. Oh, yeah. And it's a, it's a, you know, it's highly contested office. You're running for sure. So, I know a little bit about mayoral politics. My grandmother was, mayor for 16 years in our hometown, back in Alabama, out of here. And so I was door to door putting up signs, all that stuff back in the day, you know, grew up around a lot of that, but I can't imagine what would, you know, entail a race and it's 2027 would be the election, right.

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March of 27. I applaud you for starting this soon because it will take that, oh, you know, to, to build the recognition and, knock on the doors, shake the hands, all that kind of stuff coming on shows like this. I really, really applaud the the effort in the work. But but how did that come on your on your radar.

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Unknown

Yeah. So never thought I'd be in political office or running for office. Never was on my radar in about eight. Are you a jockey or you locking up? You're a junkie. It's a junkie. Political. Are you a political junkie? No. I mean, I don't even know half the stuff that's going on. And I think that's, you know, the crazy thing about this was

so eight months ago, our nonprofit has been in a great spot.

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God has been so faithful. You know, he's allowed me to start a coffee company. I mean, everything was running so smooth and still is to this day in the work that we're able to do. And I just asked the Lord, I said, Lord, is there another thing you need me to do? Is there another season? Because I had all the right people in place and just was praying one day and went out to mow my grass on a Sunday.

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Unknown

Never forget it. And I wrote this down and I'm mowing my grass and just heard clear as day, mayor. That's all I heard, mayor. And I was just kind of taken back. And I was like, what? And so I walked in and I told my wife, I says, hey, babe. I said, I think the Holy Spirit just wants me to run for mayor.

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And she says, yeah, that sounds about right. And I was like, I'm not. I wasn't expecting you to say that, but it's the same thing he did with the nonprofit when he said one word local poverty. That's what I did. And when he said one word, coffee company, that's what I did. And to look at where it's at now and the ministry that happened.

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Unknown

So I've been very familiar with that one word from the spirit of like, okay, Lord. And so that's what I did. I wrote it down. We fasted, we prayed, we gathered friends and family. We've got the permission from the elders and our pastor and, and I said, all right, Lord. I said, the only way that I'm going to do this is if people show up, if they believe in this.

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And so we sent out probably about 50 texts to some family and friends and said, hey, we want y'all to come together. And I just want to share a vision that I believe the Lord has given me. We had 160 people show up, and it was just this phenomenal worship experience, because I think what we've noticed is even in the political agenda, it's a massive undertaking.

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But in all reality, there's been so much peace about it because I know that a lot of people are tired. And we've never really had a spiritual forerunner or a pioneer that has really declared the gospel from a

political level in Jacksonville. And then I researched the history of the Huguenots. And back in the 1800s of where this all started for Jacksonville.

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And so it started to make sense. And then doors just started opening. I want you to unpack that in particular, because I find it fascinating. But to tell me a little bit about your coffee company. Yeah, yeah. So in 2021, with our nonprofit, our kids and our community had a hard time finding work. And so came home one day, I was driving home, and I literally passed an auto dealership, on Mayport Road.

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And I saw this huge white military bus. And the Lord was like, buy that bus. And I was like, okay. And so got \$5,000, bought this bus pulled up in my front yard, didn't even tell my wife. And I said, you know, went inside, got her, walked out. She's like, what are you doing? And I said, the Lord said, buy this bus.

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Unknown

And so we transformed that into a full espresso, military school bus. And year one, it did 60,000 year to it did 120,000. We were hiring our kids. It was great. It was all over the news, blah, blah, blah. And then God just started opening up more doors. And so now we have four locations in Jacksonville. It's like a food truck style.

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Unknown

Yeah. So we have our mobile unit as one and then we have three brick and mortars. Okay. Where are they located. So we have one off of University Boulevard by Jacksonville University. We have one downtown. We have one at the beaches inside a famous bakery called sonatas. And then we have some on the south side. Cool Mart.

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Unknown

I'll check those out. I love coffee. You should tell me how to price. Well, yeah, man, we just got back from Honduras. As you know, that's where I've been, so. Okay, I sort of imagine, a lot of a lot of great, ranches or farms down there. So do you, do you source it already? Roasted. You roast your own beans.

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Unknown

Oh, being come straight from Honduras. And, we've got a roaster in Jacksonville is very connected to there. And, it's obviously been one of my dreams ago to find out exactly where the bean comes from. Right.

So you can tell the full story, but. Yeah. That's awesome. Yeah, yeah, I started when I came to Christ at 94.

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The first person to invite me to church was a Guatemalan Gallaudet University, and we ended up going to her hometown on a mission trip. And I was able to to, like, see it from the plant. Yeah. You know, the whole process, it was so cool. Yeah, I need to do that. But yeah, Honduran, Central American coffee in the Highlands especially.

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Unknown

It's really interesting, because even, like in Cuba, the best cigars, no longer Cuban or Honduran, because they've got that volcanic soil and, yeah, the elevation. And it's just perfect for creating that product. So the Lord gives you the word mayor. Yeah. And then you start moving toward, pulling your friends together, getting that affirmation from your church.

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How do you create a battle plan for that? Oh, I love that word. Battle plan. Yeah. We're still figuring that out. My biggest thing was I knew I couldn't do it alone, and so I needed people to join me in this journey. And it was probably about 30 days here. He allowed me to just be close with him.

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But then once 30 days got over with, people just started showing up. Whether that was somebody from marketing, somebody from strategic leading, somebody from political background. And so now we have this incredible, diverse team that has stepped in because I think the reality, when we were able to share the vision was it was just different. And so what we've noticed in Jacksonville has been, I hate to say it's a good old boy town.

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Yeah. And everyone knows everyone. There's about 12 to 15 people who financially own the city. And so in order to get into this, these gatekeepers, it was impossible if you didn't have any kind of background. So when we showed up on the scene and people started hearing about like, who is this Ron Armstrong running for mayor? There was no backgrounds, there was no ties, I wasn't bought, I wasn't paid for because money does a lot of things in the political realm, and it was just different.

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And the only way that I can describe it was God was sending people every day, whether they were donating, whether they were helping with that battle plan, whether they were helping with, you know, vision. And these were people from Texas or Jacksonville, South Florida. And I've only been on the road 115, 130 day so far. And we've got a long way to go.

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But it was it's been really neat to see the ripples that have started because one of my faith, we haven't had a really strong follower of Jesus. Everyone claims they're Christian, but a true follower of Christ that has taken a stand in the political field because I think everyone is afraid. Like, hey, you really can't mix those those two things.

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But we have found out that actually you can because it's where it's actually started from. And so now seeing the people of faith that are getting behind the kind of movement has been incredible. I was listening to a conversation this morning on the way in and the guy was talking about he said, I don't really worry about government.

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I don't step into that sphere because I'm all about gospel. And the Great Commission said, for us to go into all the world, make disciples, baptizing and teaching. And the first thought that came to mind is why when we we know that's true, but why do we, segment out government leaders from that teaching? Because, you know, every realm of existence is called to, to to bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Amen. And that means, the pastor's office and the mayor's office, you know, and so, you know, just coming from that, that, that family that had that engagement and, and civics, I saw there's a lot of similarities between the mayor's job, especially in a small town and a pastor summer job, because everybody has the sense that that they pay your salary.

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You work for them in some ways. So it's not unusual that, you know, late at night, you're following a ring and a problem that you may not think is worthy of a nighttime phone call. She would get calls. Hey, there's a dog barking in my neighborhood. Can you get somebody to take

care of that? Well, that's the same kind of call a pastor may get.

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You know, pastor, you know, this is your issue. And. And somehow we're supposed to solve it. But, so there's things that that ministerial heart that you have, will serve you well in that capacity, I can't imagine. How do you how do you your infrastructure as you're building it out? And I know it's kind of putting the plane together in mid-flight, but the people that God's brought around you do you have like a regular standing meeting?

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Do you do that online? How do you. Yeah. So there's zoom calls there because now we have people that are not from Jacksonville that are advising and part of our team. So some of them are in Texas because they have the political background. We have zoom calls. We have weekly meetings. It's a lot, obviously, and being married, three kids running a multi-million dollar foundation in a coffee company.

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And so there's a lot of moving parts that are going on. But I think it's it's what I've been created to do. And so, you know, I've been able to be ordained as a pastor through this whole thing that I've been working on for a full year. That was a huge win for me personally. Was nominated to be a pastor for the homicide unit for the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

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So I, I see everything that's going on in the city. Do I have every answer to every plan? Because everyone wants to kind of put on their political hat and say, well, how are you going to oversee the millage rate? Or, you know, how are you going to oversee a \$1.9 billion budget? And I think that's the problem is people are so quick to go after something rather than just take a take a step back and realize, like, you can't manage a \$1.9 billion budget, but the right people can.

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It comes down to team and leadership. Same thing as a pastor running a church and I think a lot of times people just think like one person is supposed to have the answer to the problems of Jacksonville, but I just see it as like it's the body of Christ, like it's the right people that will care for the city of Jacksonville.

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So I was speaking about my assistant that you met earlier. Her husband is, works for the fire department in Jacksonville, and he just wanted to let you know that if you win, he would like to be your chief, but, but he he was asking about some of those issues, and, you know, things that the the overlap between state government and city government in Florida is interesting.

00:27:15:17 - 00:27:38:21

Unknown

Oh, it is, you know, and some something's come out of Tallahassee that affect those firemen over in Jacksonville. And that's a lot to try to like, as you said, wrap your mind and your heart around how do you how do you prepare for that? Like, what do you read, what do you how do you get ready if God is in this and he, you know, you win the election, he will he will appoint you or not.

00:27:38:21 - 00:27:53:23

Unknown

Right? Right. He sovereign in that way. But assuming if he's calling you, he must have a plan here. Yeah. So how do you. What? What do you do? What are you reading right now? Politics for dummies?

00:27:54:01 - 00:28:11:20

Unknown

No, I mean, it's, There's a lot of a lot of codes. You're always picking apart the city budget. So there's an 800 and something page budget right now that I'm just constantly studying. Because you want to find out as a taxpayer, no matter what, you want to know where your money's going, right? How is it being used?

00:28:11:20 - 00:28:34:19

Unknown

How do you know? How do you best, Stuart? People's talents, their treasures. But even like Jfrd is, one thing that I'm so passionate about is I want to get those men and women to a 2472. And so the reason for that is like, we are so burnt out when it comes to our first responders, they're not even getting enough rest and no one's thinking about, well, how do we fix that problem?

00:28:34:19 - 00:28:52:14

Unknown

Or Saint John's? They just had six suicides from first responders. And you go down and you talk like, well, what was the problem anyway? Everybody's tired. And so explain it. So I didn't ask you that question. Yeah, that was his question. It's what are you going to do with that? Because I didn't know where you were at on it.

00:28:52:14 - 00:29:14:02

Unknown

I know if you had read up on it. So, how did you come to that even knowing that issue? So big, big component of my that I think the Lord wanted me to run on was mental health. And so I see every suicide. So last month we had 30 suicides in Jacksonville. No one wants to talk about the suicides in the city.

00:29:14:02 – 00:29:35:18

Unknown

So there's a suicide happening every single day in the city of Jacksonville. Wow. And so you take those 30 people or you want to find out what what happened to why? Well, we just had eight months ago, we had a police officer do the same thing. So my buddy is on the fire department, Saint Johns County. He calls me and he says, hey, man, we just lost four people, first responders and due to suicide.

00:29:35:18 – 00:29:50:08

Unknown

And I said, man, this is a big problem. He's like, yeah, people are just tired. We don't have enough rest. We don't have enough resources. So I met with the chief, before he retired and I said, hey, man, what's the solution? And he says, a Kelly day. And I said, all right, tell me more. What's a Kelly day?

00:29:50:10 – 00:30:11:16

Unknown

So it's a basically it's a rest day for both agencies. But the problem is that you have to hire a whole nother shift. Well, that shift costs money. And so we're talking millions and millions of dollars to get, you know, 100 to 200 more Jfrd or Jacksonville Sheriff's Office. And no one wants to spend that money because it's not a priority.

00:30:11:17 – 00:30:30:17

Unknown

So until we have somebody in office that prioritizes mental health from a first responder standpoint, it's just going to be that same old thing, you know, can't get it done. How hard can you work? And I just think from a family standpoint and a mental health standpoint, like you're putting a lot of people at risk. Absolutely. We we're we're located on Amelia Island.

00:30:30:17 – 00:30:53:06

Unknown

You've driven over here to be with us. We have a large presence in Jacksonville and Duval County through our radio ministry. That's going to be this this program. Some people will be hearing it on the radio for the first time. So we're I'm not a voter in Jacksonville, but a city of that size is going to have ripple effects that's going to affect all of us.

00:30:53:06 – 00:31:19:23

Unknown

And, we go on date nights. We're going down to Neptune Beach, we go to, we're going to, to Town Center. We're going downtown, whatever it might be. Downtown is a dangerous place. It feels dangerous when we go down there. And I'm taking my wife. I tell her, I want you to be, carrying. If you're in downtown, you know, what have you seen and what kind of ideas do you have to correct that?

00:31:19:23 – 00:31:46:20

Unknown

Or is it doable? Can you can you revitalize a, a downtown Jacksonville? Yeah. So what people don't realize is, through all the research that I've been doing, we spent \$8 billion in the last ten years on downtown Jacksonville. And we still don't have a product to show for. And so I'm just scratching my head in the fact of, like, we've been doing this for so long, and yet we still do not have anything where has the money gone to?

00:31:46:22 – 00:32:04:23

Unknown

And so for me, what people don't realize is when you take an office as a mayor in a big city like Jacksonville, you have such a short period of time to actually do the work. So if we walk through the timeline, year one, you get elected. That's an administration year. Like you're making sure you have the right people in place, that the right protocols are there.

00:32:04:23 – 00:32:21:12

Unknown

Like you want to make sure you have a good handle on what's getting ready to happen. Year two, you might be able to start getting in the community and start getting a feel for everything. And okay, my initiatives can start coming into play. Year three. You're already thinking about, well, who's going to run against me for my next term?

00:32:21:14 – 00:32:40:01

Unknown

So now you're trying to put together a plan for your campaign for your for because you're for your campaigning to win your seat again. Because the reality is, you know, we've had one term mayors and they haven't done anything. And so if you win second term, that gives you another four years, then you can kind of take a breath and say, okay, let's get back to our initiatives.

00:32:40:03 – 00:33:01:00

Unknown

But people think like as soon as you get in office, you got to start getting right to work. And I do believe that's part of it. But you have such a short window to do the actual work. And so downtown Jacksonville, like right now they're spending billions of dollars on

development. But even if Donna Deegan, if she gets back in office as an incumbent, you know, she'll have four more years.

00:33:01:02 – 00:33:19:17

Unknown

But the problem that we've had as Jacksonville, every mayor that has come into office, their initiatives are wiped off the table because we have a pride issue. The new mayor comes in and says, I ain't doing none of that stuff. I'm doing all the stuff I want to do. And we've never had a great turnover. We've never passed the torch in the right way.

00:33:19:19 – 00:33:38:15

Unknown

And so we've had a challenge as an administration and leadership of saying, you know, I think we've got to put our pride down and say what truly is working for the city and the people, rather than just saying, well, I'm going to go paint rainbows on the sidewalks for my initiatives. Right? Well, that doesn't align with me. So it gets a it gets very confusing.

00:33:39:06 – 00:34:08:15

Unknown

You've got to take off very small bites. And like, right now in downtown Jacksonville, I got three kids. I don't want to go nowhere near downtown. And so it's a problem that I think is going to be ongoing for the next ten years. When, when I, when I anytime I go into a church, I look for other churches that have the same demographics, same city, make up, that sort of thing and try to find best practices, what's worked when I came to Amelia Island, are there other coastal cities where First Baptist Church is flourished?

00:34:08:17 – 00:34:38:01

Unknown

And so I'm looking for those identifying those trying to connect with those leaders. Is there a city that you think may serve as a blueprint for Jacksonville, that where a downtown has been revitalized and things have been, you know, turned around and you've seen it come back to life? Yeah, I would say Tampa. Okay. So Tampa had this window of a ten year span where it was completely garbage as what people would say.

00:34:38:02 – 00:34:59:23

Unknown

And then in ten years, they just turned it around. And it wasn't just with development, it was with community voices. It was with leadership. It was people joining their hands together and saying, if we don't change something like, we are not going to have a downtown in Tampa. So now it's a destination. So we've got to get to the mindset of like, how do we create a destination for where people can actually

enjoy their city?

00:35:00:01 – 00:35:21:03

Unknown

Because Jacksonville is the highest transit, city right now in the nation, like people are saying, oh my gosh, Jacksonville's being flooded with 1.2 million people. But what they're not talking about, people are leaving every single day going to Yulee, Saint Johns County, coming up here northward. And so there's something missing where people don't want to stay in Jacksonville.

00:35:21:03 – 00:35:40:03

Unknown

Right. What do you see is the church's role in that? How what how can a city government align with what God's doing through the local church? That's my sweet spot. So I do believe God called me to run for mayor, to activate and to encourage the local body of Christ to get in the game. There was a bill that was just passed from the state level.

00:35:40:03 – 00:36:03:04

Unknown

But now on the Senate's level is that churches can now endorse. Now, that's what we got to be very careful in that, because, you know, somebody that you trust that you want to get behind is one thing. Rather than slinging names that, you know. So there is a bill that's passed now. And I think that should have been a light bulb for the pastors and the local churches, like, hey, we're not going to lose our status.

00:36:03:06 – 00:36:27:04

Unknown

We can actually talk about this. We can have voter registration, we can endorse a candidate from stage, somebody we truly believe in, because the reality is we only had 21% of people show up to the polls in Jacksonville at our last mayoral election, 1.3 million people, and we only had 21% of people show up. And so our current mayor, she only needs 110,000 votes.

00:36:27:06 – 00:36:49:18

Unknown

I mean, the churches in Jacksonville, we have over 20, 200 right now. If you just got the local body involved, we're not saying to win, but just to make an impact. I mean, I think there's just so much it's huge. It's huge and is and pastors are afraid of it. They are not just for the the what people would consider the legal restrictions or whatever on a not for profit.

00:36:49:22 – 00:37:12:09

Unknown

That, you're right, have been, the Johnson Amendment is, you know,

this this in some ways, it knocked out the Johnson Amendment or the threat of that. The truth is, the Democratic Party had been, using the churches, in minority communities for years, and they never enforced the Johnson Amendment. But it scared, everyone else to death.

00:37:12:11 – 00:37:42:01

Unknown

And so it will be interesting to see, many, many churches because they want to reach everybody. They take sort of an apolitical perspective on it, you know. Yeah. But in in so many ways, the civic government is stepping into what we would consider moral and ethical territories. I'm thinking about things even like, the expansion of, like, legalizing marijuana.

00:37:42:01 – 00:38:02:17

Unknown

Yeah. Considering your background, how were you approached that? Yeah. I mean, a lot of people have brought up my drug abuse. They've already started using that on the campaign. You know, he's only been clean for 15 years. How can you how can you run a city? And I think a lot of people are just looking for someone like that because there's nothing to hide.

00:38:02:17 – 00:38:25:18

Unknown

It's full transparency. This is who I was before Christ. This is who I am now. And even with the the legalizing of marijuana, we had a conversation with a Democratic party and they said, you know, how can you even run for an office when you, you yourself was were smoking weed and now you're going to ban it from a state or ballot perspective?

00:38:25:20 – 00:38:44:02

Unknown

And I said, that's who I was. That's not who I am now. And so I know the, I know what that did to me then. And I know what it can do to people now because I think we've gotten to a place, even, as you know, a society is where we become dependent on something. And when we become dependent on it, then everything else falls through.

00:38:44:02 – 00:39:08:02

Unknown

Yeah. So so you would oppose. You would have. Absolutely. Okay. Absolutely. Yeah. It's the kind of thing even people that I know that are in favor of it being legal. They don't want to walk down the mall and and smell that everywhere they go. So and it's becoming that I Gainesville right now, everywhere you go, my kids are in school down there, and everywhere we go, you're smelling it.

00:39:08:04 – 00:39:28:11

Unknown

Even though it's it's not legal. They're not enforcing that any longer. And so you don't want that. And just generally speaking, from a very practical approach to it, any young man that I've known who started that ask, I can't think of an exception to where this guy, man, he was really struggling in life. But you know what made the difference?

00:39:28:13 – 00:39:51:09

Unknown

He started smoking weed. Yeah. Now he's the winner. You know, I can't think of any of those examples. I'm sure it's helped probably in medical cases for some people. But, with with statewide initiatives and things coming out of Tallahassee, you know, right now there's some issues, where, the dose the state does just wanting to come into Jacksonville.

00:39:51:11 – 00:40:22:07

Unknown

And it seems like Deegan is putting up a few roadblocks, for the, do you see yourself working well with whatever if it is a conservative administration at the state? Do you see that being, something that you could dovetail with effectively? Yeah, I'm all for them. They're actually there today in office and starting to do their work, and I think it's beautiful because what I've noticed and I'm not in office yet, but what I've noticed from the outside is there is a lot of leakage.

00:40:22:07 – 00:40:42:20

Unknown

And one of my stories that I just did two days ago was Donald Regan. She came out to the news station, said, hey, we're going to build a \$6 million cover for our veteran wall, and I'm all for veterans. And it just didn't make sense. \$6 million for an area that was going to be used once or twice a year.

00:40:42:22 – 00:41:16:09

Unknown

Why not rent tents when we have, you know, those kind of events downtown? But that was just something small, \$6 million of taxpayers dollars that are going to something that was not even local. So she wanted to hire an outside company from Orlando to come in. And it just doesn't make sense. And so the biggest one that I have right now, that when I do get in office, that I will fight tooth and nail for, is there are three organizations that are doing the same exact thing in Jacksonville that are averaging about 70 to \$80 million of taxpayer dollars to the funds come in the city.

00:41:16:09 – 00:41:45:22

Unknown

The city allocates them back out to certain areas, and then it goes into the community. The problem I have is everyone's doing the same thing. We have over 30 board members overseeing each one of these executive salaries that are through the roof, and it's just too complicated. And so I think one of the gifts that God has given me, in my lifetime, is just looking at problems and calling them out and saying, why are we using so many resources in so many areas when we can kind of slim down areas?

00:41:46:00 - 00:42:04:12

Unknown

So I will save, Jacksonville some money? And I'm going to be super excited when you know, you can stand on the doorsteps of City Hall and say, hey, we just found \$1 million. We just saved the taxpayer \$1 million in Jacksonville. We're going to continue to dive into this, but it's already happening and City Council is already finding money.

00:42:04:12 - 00:42:24:13

Unknown

So I think it goes back to the good old boy system is when you're in charge and you have, you know, developers that you've been eating dinner with for 30 years and there's deals happening in your homes, I get it, but it's I think it's just time for someone else to come in. Yeah. There's, there's a reason that massive donations are made.

00:42:24:13 - 00:42:45:16

Unknown

The campaigns we mentioned earlier, the Huguenots, this, this area and and people these stories aren't known widely and even in our area. But this was an area that people came to, for religious freedom. Yeah. And so I'm, I'm sure you've heard about some of the prophecies that were made early on. Tell us about those. Yeah.

00:42:45:16 - 00:43:04:04

Unknown

I mean, and I'm still learning. I was just on a prayer call. Excuse me, two nights ago and from people all over the region, and they are just praying heavily over Jacksonville because they just believe something is coming. There's a shift. There's this, you know, this prophecy of a gun handle that the trigger has been pulled back.

00:43:04:17 - 00:43:26:01

Unknown

So that's that's, David, Johnny Cho. Okay. He was the pastor of the largest church in the world at one time in Seoul, Korea. And and he came to the States. And that was one of the prophecies that he made. Is that the state of Florida, it resembles a gun. And he believes that the first movement came out of, the Gulf Coast.

00:43:26:01 – 00:44:11:20

Unknown

Yeah. And then a second one would come, come out of the Jacksonville region, which we're pulling for Amelia here. Fernandina. But, y'all get some of that? Yeah. Yeah, yeah. But, but that's that's a long time prophecy. Yeah. When, was it Ribault? When when he was arrested, he quoted a psalm, and the psalm had to do with it being, a catalyst with this, this region being a catalyst for the gospel and for religious freedom, which, you know, not not just in a self-serving way, but we as, pastors, you know, we want to be able to know that our rights are protected and that, you know, getting the

00:44:11:20 – 00:44:40:06

Unknown

job done is our business, but in the Lord's business. But if if I go to jail, if if everybody wants to talk about national politics and what's going on with ice and all those things, but if I'm imprisoned for preaching the gospel, it's going to be the sheriff. Most likely that comes and arrest me. And, and the federal government really can't come into an area unless the local government, the sheriff says it's okay.

00:44:42:10 – 00:45:02:23

Unknown

How will you lead in a way that will ensure religious freedom? What is your thought on, you know, the people who are in those offices championing those causes? Yeah. So it's different right now. We have a far left first, administration. And so I know some of them very well. And we just had a conversation two weeks ago.

00:45:02:23 – 00:45:19:11

Unknown

They were in our community and literally look them in the face. And, you know, they don't stand for what you stand for. Four weeks ago, we just met with the leader of the LGBTQ community because they heard that I was running for mayor and quickly wanted to know what I was going to do to support their community.

00:45:19:12 – 00:45:39:15

Unknown

And it was very simple because I looked at this leader and said, do you agree with what I stand for as a Christian man? And she said, no. He said, I don't know what you know. Yeah. They said no. And I said, okay, so are you are you going to ask me, do I stand for what you believe in?

00:45:39:17 – 00:46:05:17

Unknown

And that person said, yeah. Do you believe in what we stand for? I said, no, I said, so right off the bat, we are on the same playing

field. You don't agree and I don't agree. But how do we move forward? How do we support each other? And we got to this kind of conversation where it didn't really end with, you know, what we're going to do about it, but we just realized, like, it's okay to to not believe in and support what you're doing because you're doing the same thing for us.

00:46:05:19 – 00:46:30:00

Unknown

But how do we join hands and move forward as a community? Because as the LGBT community, you know, they believe that love wins everywhere. Well, we believe love wins everywhere too. But the message is completely different, right? And it's the same thing in administration. So the thing that excites me the most is the church. The local body has never had a voice inside of the administration from a mayor stand the seat at the table and never had a seat at the table.

00:46:30:00 – 00:46:46:14

Unknown

We have not been supported. They took away our prayer breakfast is they've took away the support from the church. They're not giving any money to the churches. So I think that's another reason why the Lord is calling me to do this and to fight. Because what a beautiful picture. If the church actually had a seat at the table in Jacksonville.

00:46:46:18 – 00:47:07:06

Unknown

Well, and I think I applaud you for having those conversations with, with groups that you may not align with. So many times, if we can just have a civil conversation that's well and be able to coexist in the same area, I, I really don't wake up in the morning thinking about who somebody else sleeps with. Right? You know, that's just not on my radar.

00:47:07:12 – 00:47:29:21

Unknown

I've got other things to worry about. I have my convictions and my belief systems, but, I even though somebody may be diametrically opposed what I would hope for their life, I do believe that there are certain amount of civil liberties that as a citizen that I want them to enjoy, just like I do. And so I applaud you for, you know, I encourage you to keep those conversations going.

00:47:30:07 – 00:47:56:04

Unknown

Even with people that you disagree with. I'm assuming you're a Jax fan. It's funny, I'm I, I am, but I don't watch football. Okay, so the the redo of the stadium, that's, you know, that's a big topic right now. Oh, yeah. How much should the city be involved in that?

What's your take on. Yeah, the whole situation I mean, there's the city owned the, the stadium or is it the, the bank that owns the stadium.

00:47:56:04 – 00:48:16:20

Unknown

So it actually just went through another thing with, gosh, the bank, the bank had it. Jags bought it, then it went back into someone else. Now she had cons in it. And so there's, there's a lot of moving parts. And I haven't met Shahid Khan personally I heard he's a great guy. I heard that he supports a lot of things in Jacksonville.

00:48:17:03 – 00:48:35:08

Unknown

Very grateful for what he's done for the city. But at the same time, we've got to look outside of Shad Khan. And so we've got to continue to make sure that our communities around this stadium are taken care of, which right now a lot of residents and families are being pushed out. And so that's my biggest thing.

00:48:35:18 – 00:48:55:06

Unknown

The stadium is going to move forward no matter what, whether they're going to raise the taxes on the the actual people. That may come if Donna wins her second term. We can't afford it. We're already in debt in Jacksonville, so we're pulling money that we don't even have. We're putting stuff on loan that we don't even have the money for.

00:48:55:20 – 00:49:12:23

Unknown

Do I think it's going to bring a lot of revenue, to the downtown area? Yeah, I think four seasons, the stadium, but who can afford it? And so these are people that are going downtown that can afford it. These are not average people that are living on the outskirts of the stadium. They just can't afford it's too expensive.

00:49:13:14 – 00:49:32:15

Unknown

But it's also what else has to happen downtown in order for this to be a final destination for Jacksonville? So the next big topic is the jail. And so the jail is a \$1 billion project. As well, so that they want the jail to get out of downtown, which makes sense I totally agree with that. But we can't afford it.

00:49:32:17 – 00:49:52:09

Unknown

But yet we are going to raise taxes in order to do such a large project. So, you know, until I have all the information, I really can't make a decision like being pro for it or not. And we have close family members that are Jags players that, you know, they're not even

concerned about it. This is this is an inside business deal.

00:49:52:11 - 00:50:14:05

Unknown

And for an average person like you and me, we really don't even have a seat at the table. No, I agree, if it coming from both in your not-for-profit work and your life, you've really invested in, difficult parts of the city that have had high crime. And yeah, I'm assuming you have good relationships in those areas.

00:50:14:07 - 00:50:33:23

Unknown

And so at the same time, most of those communities are not typically supportive of a Republican candidate. So do you think you can change that. Do you think you could have some minority support. Do you think you can have some maybe rally some people from parts of the city that don't always engage in the civic process?

00:50:34:03 - 00:50:58:06

Unknown

Yeah, it's actually been funny. So I just got a text message from our lead gang member of this entire community two days ago, and he sent me a message on Facebook, and he and I actually broke down. And when I was reading this as somebody, because it meant so much to me in the fact of like, this guy is like in the streets there stuff that like you don't find on this guy, but he just said, hey, man, thank you so much for what you've done for our city.

00:50:58:07 - 00:51:16:03

Unknown

He's like, you got my vote. Thank you so much for what you've done for our community and our kids. And it just meant a lot. But, you know, it's really cool when you go into these communities and communities, not many people will go into and you hear like, hey, Mr. Ron, we're voting for you. Or like, you're the mayor of the city.

00:51:16:03 - 00:51:34:17

Unknown

And and they they understand because I've been with them eight years. But what has changed my, my mindset in this is I just met with a very large pastor of Jacksonville and took him to lunch and I said, hey, man, where are you at? Like and he says, we're not where we thought we would be. And I said, well, what do you mean by that?

00:51:34:17 - 00:51:55:11

Unknown

And he said, we got Donna in office from the black community, and he was in charge of, black votes Matter. And I said, well, y'all doing that again? And he said, nope. And it's been the same story with every mayor. So every mayor walks the black community, the Hispanic

community looks great on a campaign show. We're going to do X, Y, and Z.

00:51:55:11 – 00:52:15:06

Unknown

Well, now your two and a half years in coming up on three years and you haven't done one single thing for the community. And it's once again, people are tired of hearing the same old dog and pony show and not receiving any kind of action. So to answer your question, I think absolutely, we're going to have some support if, if that if you can get the support of that community, you can win that election.

00:52:15:06 – 00:52:36:16

Unknown

I believe so, period. Yeah. You know, the little bit and it's not apples to apples at all, but but but that was the key, for, for my family and my grandmother when she was mayor. If she could get the support of the minority community, because they do, they they they know how the system works. They've been taught it for generations.

00:52:36:18 – 00:53:08:14

Unknown

And if they get behind Joe, they're they're loyal. They're they're going to they're going to vote. They're going to be there. And so that's key. But it's it's difficult. It has been difficult for conservative Republican candidates, even though there's so much we agree on. Oh, yeah. You know, they're typically have a traditional worldview about so many things that, it should be something that that we can fellowship over and, you know, see a lot of things the same way a, a stumbling block, a difficulty in that.

00:53:08:14 – 00:53:30:07

Unknown

Let me ask you, how would you approach this from all the research that I did on what are the the trending topics in Jacksonville? What are the things that you know are going to get the most, tweets, retweets, all that kind of stuff. And I've never done that search before. Yeah, but I ask Grau to tell me, what are people in Jacksonville mostly concerned about?

00:53:30:07 – 00:53:54:13

Unknown

Yeah. The number one by far wasn't a close second, was eyes. And what do you do with immigration? In the city of Jacksonville. And it was all over the map. Some very strong opinions both ways. So from the, the mayor's office perspective. Yep. To what degree are you going to cooperate or not cooperate with federal, immigration enforcement?

00:53:54:15 – 00:54:21:16

Unknown

Yeah. And I think we're making this very we're making this too complicated because I have a very close story that I will always relate to. Illegal immigrant. Was driving one night, under the influence. Killed one of our friends in a car accident. No documentation, clearly illegal, and got away with it. And so whatever the state Attorney's office did, don't even know where he's at.

00:54:21:18 – 00:54:49:01

Unknown

But we lost a very close loved one because of a situation. I'm all for people coming to Jacksonville, but just do it the right way. And so we do have people that are on the streets that I think that are running businesses that are living in homes, that are here illegally. But I think it needs to be a clear message, like, if you're going to be in Jacksonville and not try to do anything to become legal, there are going to be consequence to that.

00:54:49:01 – 00:55:15:12

Unknown

And so you're in favor of cooperating with eyes fully on. Absolutely. And would you favor, a fast track for amnesty or for, citizenship for those who are already here? Yeah. And I think that is a great point, because look at our small businesses in Jacksonville, almost 68% of businesses are small businesses in Jacksonville. I don't know how many of those are ran by people that are outside country owners or whatever that case may be.

00:55:15:14 – 00:56:00:21

Unknown

But I think we need to find out who is here legally and illegally, because I think that has a lot to do with business as well when it comes to group dynamics. And it's not been as bad in Jacksonville, thank thankfully. But it you know, any day you may wake up on any given Monday and look at the news that morning and we're having you know, major protests are going to close down the city streets, from the mayor's office, from the cities that I've observed, the cities that have gotten more of that to where gridlock, everything shut down for hours or for days is because the mayor, allowed it to happen and,

00:56:00:23 – 00:56:29:05

Unknown

you know, pulled back the the law enforcement there, in Jacksonville, how do you ensure freedom of speech? And our right to protest, not encroaching on those. Right. How do you enforce, the statutes and the limitations of, you know, what a person can do when they're they're trying to, to let their voice be heard? Yeah.

00:56:29:05 – 00:56:52:18

Unknown

I think it comes back to partnership. So we do not have a healthy

partnership with the mayor's office and Jacksonville Sheriff's Office right now. Know TC very closely. He's doing an incredible job. He's faced with a lot of challenges currently, but he doesn't get the support that he needs from the mayor's office. And there has to be this dynamic of whoever is in office from Jfrd or Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

00:56:52:20 - 00:57:18:18

Unknown

There has to be this, three three cord strand that's not easily broken. And we haven't had that yet. And until we we get there, I think there's always going to be a disunity amongst the administration of the mayor's office and law enforcement. I mean, if we look at what, you know, Mayor's Deacon's office did, right when she got in office, she was snatching down statues, historical monuments that, I still believe need to be up.

00:57:18:20 - 00:57:37:21

Unknown

But everyone wanted to throw in the race card. And so we really haven't had a mayor who wants to get in the middle of the mess to talk about it, because they think that, you know, there's some, you know, their job may be on the line or the reputation, but I think it goes back to people are hurting and they don't know how to deal with their emotions.

00:57:37:21 - 00:57:52:17

Unknown

And so and they don't know how to deal with their emotions. We see some of the stuff that's happened in our city. Absolutely. And the other part of it is I don't even think half the people that are at these protest, I know even who they are now. There's busses, there's big money behind a lot of those things.

00:57:52:17 - 00:58:18:18

Unknown

Yes. You know, when you as we get closer to the, to the election, you have kids. How old are your kids? So Jubilee is she's four, Remington is seven, and Ezekiel is eight. Okay. So I would think it would be better that they're that age instead of teenagers when you're when you're stepping in, I guess arena because things are going to be said about you.

00:58:18:19 - 00:58:34:01

Unknown

Oh yeah. Stories would be made up, made up and, things will be dug up. All this type stuff. How do you how do you shepherd your family through that? Your wife's going to see all those things? Yeah, she's going to hear all those things. Have you all talked about it and kind of what's your approach to it?

00:58:34:03 – 00:58:52:16

Unknown

Yeah. So it's already happening. We've already gotten some letters. We've already gotten some stuff on social media and because I'm an outsider and I do have a lot of dirt and they're going to bring it up, they're going to post stuff. And even when I met with Daniel Davis, they did the same thing with him, and they put out some really aggressive stuff.

00:58:52:17 – 00:59:13:15

Unknown

And my my plea to that would be, is this how it always has to be? Like, can we not just run a clean race? And I think that's why so many people have been turned off by politics. But it's now it's, you know, I told my wife she has one job in this whole thing. If she ever thinks that the time is to end it, I'm ending it.

00:59:13:20 – 00:59:32:19

Unknown

And so a lot of times you get in these rooms, which I've been in lately, and you hear that people are now divorced or they've had affairs or the money has gotten to them, and it's just a broken system. And the enemy has done a fantastic job of slithering his way into these types of offices and arenas.

00:59:32:21 – 00:59:50:18

Unknown

But that's not going to happen with my family. And she was she was on board. And as a minister of the gospel, that's our first priority is our family. So and we need that as citizens. We need 100% people who are in leadership, just championing their family above. Yeah. The city. Yeah. You know, we need we need you to keep that strong.

00:59:50:20 – 01:00:06:11

Unknown

What kind of practices do y'all have? Do you do date night? What do you do there? Yeah. Date nights are good. We love sitting on the back porch just eating ice cream and drinking a cold root beer. Watching Shark Tank. That's our. That's our love language is sitting down and watching all these people make tons of money off of the stupidest ideas.

01:00:06:11 – 01:00:28:09

Unknown

Yeah, I'm just like, what a scrub, daddy crying. Does she have any background in this? Does she know what she's getting into with it? No. She's been a faithful minister of 1122 for 14 years. She's one of the originals left with Jody Martin, and she's, she is just a Bible nerd. She went to college. Her bookshelf is loaded up.

01:00:28:09 – 01:00:47:04

Unknown

She teaches, she preaches, so that's all she does. I am the the radical, you know, having the faith to do these types of things. And she's always just been like, hey, if you believe God's calling you to do it, then I'll support you. How is Joe being as far as. Can he endorse? Can he? How does he feel about it?

01:00:47:06 – 01:01:03:03

Unknown

So I met with him in his office. We sat on the chair and, had a really big opportunity from a company standpoint, making tons of money or do this. And I didn't know at that time what I was going to do. But he looked at me and said, hey, man, if you do decide to run for mayor, I would love to support you.

01:01:03:08 – 01:01:31:05

Unknown

Well, and so that's a big that's a big, that's huge. We haven't dived and dove into it just yet, but I mean, there God's using that church in big ways. And I would understand if he said, because here's the thing. If a if a megachurch pastor endorses, it carries it, it reveals his influence. Yep. Really as much or more than it will yours.

01:01:31:05 – 01:01:53:18

Unknown

Yeah. I remember, church of the Highlands in Birmingham, Alabama. Chris always was hesitant to get behind the Christian candidate, and it wasn't that he didn't want him to win. He wanted, Scott Dawson is a good friend of mine. Scott ran for governor in Alabama, and he always wanted, church, the Highlands support, because they have campuses all over the state.

01:01:53:20 – 01:02:16:21

Unknown

But if if he supported Scott and Scott lost the election, that would say something about the influence that church of the Highlands or Chris has over the state. And so even though he was by far the obvious Christian candidate. Chris was always hesitant. So I would understand that from Joe B if Jobe was hesitant to get behind anybody.

01:02:16:23 – 01:02:37:23

Unknown

But but man that would between that and if you can get influence in the minority community in Jacksonville, that would be that would be massive. Yeah. What about fundraising? How how what is your plan for raising the funds? Because it's an expensive thing to run for. Yeah, run for mayor. So last election, Daniel Davis raised almost \$8 million.

01:02:38:09 – 01:03:02:16

Unknown

It was the highest raised amount of money in an election for money out race. Oh, yeah. Yeah. She only came in at, like, 3.5. Okay. And so right off the bat, that was one of my biggest fears. Like, God, how are we going to do this. And he's made it very clear. And then also had some confirmation through other people that if he puts me in office, it's not going to be because of millions of dollars, it's going to be because of the voices of the people.

01:03:02:18 – 01:03:20:20

Unknown

You know, I'm not saying where we would hit some numbers, but, I'm guessing I would love to get in office at a half \$1 million and show the world that it can be done because everyone thinks, oh, you need millions and millions. That's all the conversations I. How much money on your bank? And so we've been on 100 and something days.

01:03:20:20 – 01:03:43:19

Unknown

We've raised \$25,000. And it that has allowed us to do what we need to do. We're a year and a half still out and as closer we get, you know, we know we're going to need more funds to ramp up on some things. But like, our social media has just been one of our biggest things. The fliers that we're passing out, we've done some, community meetings, so we don't need a lot of money.

01:03:44:12 – 01:04:06:21

Unknown

What we need is just people to understand, like, who I am. Because name recognition is big in Jacksonville. But at the same time, you take Daniel Davis, who raised over \$8 million and, you know, he lost. And so that should show everybody it's not about money. Right. And so I'm a big, you know, believer that it's not going to be with millions of dollars.

01:04:06:21 – 01:04:28:17

Unknown

And then it's going to show the state of Florida than other cities like, hey man, you just see what happened in Jacksonville. Like that guy just won with half \$1 million. So that's kind of where we're at. I think you I think you can raise more than that. I think even if you hit that big numbers, that Davis did, you can't replace just hard work boots on the ground.

01:04:28:18 – 01:04:53:07

Unknown

No. You know, getting out in the communities, meeting people. There's just no substitute for that, you know? And, and it's obvious that

you've been doing that. People that I've talked to in Jacksonville have already met you. And, they're saying good things about you. And so, I hope that that continues. If somebody is watching or listening and they want to get on Team Ron and they want to learn more, if they want to donate and support what you're doing, how do they go about that?

01:04:53:10 – 01:05:15:16

Unknown

Yeah, just go to our website dot the Ron armstrong.com the Ron Armstrong be Ron Armstrong has all of our initiatives. Simple easy way to donate. We've got swag on there. We've got people that are already buying shirts from in different states, which is cool because people send you pictures from the mountains of the Carolinas. And so, yeah, that's all the all you need to do.

01:05:15:18 – 01:05:33:02

Unknown

Excellent, excellent. What's your social media? How do we follow you? Yeah. So Ron Armstrong, that's my platform. It goes over to Instagram, but a lot of my personal stuff because I'm just a, you know, I feel like I'm just who I am. And I'm sure all that's on the website as well. Yep. Awesome. Well, brother, our prayers are with you.

01:05:33:04 – 01:05:50:07

Unknown

Wish you the best. Keep in touch. Maybe we can do this again before. Before the vote comes around. Thanks for the.