

Todd Chipman Video

Dr. Rick: [00:00:00] All right. Welcome again to the Think Orphan Podcast. This is Rick Morton, along with my cohort, Phil Darke. How are you doing today?

Phil: [00:00:07] I'm doing well. I'm doing well. And I just realized that you said cohort. That's the only one letter different from cohort. So either way we're good to go,

Dr. Rick: [00:00:15] But we are more, we are more than we are more than cohort to each other. We are friends and buddies and colleagues, and all that kinds of stuff. So, absolutely. Well, man, really excited for this episode and kind of our second, our second video interview.

So

Phil: [00:00:33] I know, it's kind of a whole different. It's third. Well, second interview,

Dr. Rick: [00:00:37] Third.

Phil: [00:00:39] Second interview, you know, and it's just a whole different whole different ball game, especially with your library behind you.

It's so, it makes me feel so uneducated.

Dr. Rick: [00:00:49] Well, I have to, I feel like because of our guest today that I have to have a fairly ostentatious library because we are talking to a scholar today.

Phil: [00:00:58] Yeah. I'm very much looking forward to this conversation. As we talked about before we recorded, I was really impressed with this book and excited to dig into it a bit more. Folks out there, if you haven't read it, Rick is going to tell you a little bit more about it right now. As well as our guest, I know it's a friend of Rick's. And, like I said, really excited for today. And I am just not really sure where it's going to go because this guy has so many stories that he had in his book and it could go a lot of different directions, all of which are going to be awesome.

So, or would be awesome, 'cause we can't go for all of them. Right. Rick?

Dr. Rick: [00:01:33] Absolutely. But today we're welcoming as our guest, Todd Chipman. Todd is a professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. He also has written the book, *Until Every Child is Home: Why the Church Must Care for Orphans*. And remember sitting down with Todd a few years ago and hearing his vision for a book and what he was going to try to accomplish. And the idea of telling that through the stories of some great folks.

And so we're going to welcome Todd in and get into the details about the book and hear a little bit more about the occasion of writing, but, we just want to say welcome all the way from Kansas City. Thanks for joining us, buddy.

Todd Chipman: [00:02:16] My pleasure, Rick.

Dr. Rick: [00:02:17] We were just talking as we were kind of rolling to the interview. I mean, I remember, several years ago, sitting down with you at CAFO and having a conversation about this book and just about the heart and the passion behind it and the stories that you were kind of collecting and moving through that.

And so really, really excited for us to today to be able to dig in with our audience and point them to what is one of the stellar resources out there in orphan care.

Todd Chipman: [00:02:48] Thanks so much.

Phil: [00:02:49] Yeah. And I echo those things and you know, one of the things I always love hearing from our guests.

It's just the story, your story, just how you got to be called to write a book about orphan care, how you called to be passionate about loving the orphan and the vulnerable. What led you to write the book? What led you to cite to Orphanology twice and only mention Rick once. Things like that are really interesting to me. So, so Todd, can you just share that a little bit?

Yeah.

Share your story and, love to hear that from you.

Todd Chipman: [00:03:26] Yeah, well, before I met Rick, my life was a mess and I really struggled with a number of things. But let me just jump there, Rick and I met at CAFO a couple years ago, and then I'll kind of tell some back story of the book itself.

Went to CAFO that year as someone who was a new adoptive parent. I had heard a little bit about CAFO and sort of the world of Christian orphan care and adoption ministries. Though my wife and I had already adopted, and we had some resources, basically Russell Moore's, *Adopted for Life* and related literature and stories, I had no idea how big CAFO was or how many other folks were in this. But for me, what I had realized in the process of fostering and adopting was that my world, my theological and my ministry world was opening up. I liken it somewhat to a person who later in their life becomes addicted to it jazz music, you know, they just can't get enough.

It's Herbie Hancock, and Louis Armstrong and Dizzy Gillespie, and all the great jazz musicians. I'm from Kansas City, we have the History of American jazz Museum here and so forth. And, someone who gets addicted that later on just loves it. They come to a point where, what, where was this all my life? Where, I was just missing out on this.

Well, for me, in some ways, fostering and adopting opened my mind, even though I already had been a pastor for more than 15 years at the same church has a long track record of ministry experience. I had a PhD in New Testament. And I had been teaching at a seminary. So that's just, how did I miss out on some of these things? Because fostering and adopting provides a relational proximity to practice what God has done for us. And so I went to CAFO with newly opened eyes. Like that person who's at a jazz museum now and just, Oh, this is incredible. For me it was opening my eyes and realizing that I had an opportunity to connect

some dots in ministry from a perspective of someone who is a pastor, who was a theologian, and who is now an adoptive parent and help to shape both ends of that spectrum in terms of helping those who are fostering, adopting, they have theological depth and power in what they're doing. And as a theologian, to help folks who are into books, see the practical way that foster care and adoption deals with cultural apologetics, I think in, in so many tangential ways. So that's, that's really the story of the book. And, I do remember that conversation. They're just bouncing these ideas off of you. You had more experience in this line and I'm like, I just need to do something here 'cause I've got stories to tell, and I've got experience and I've got Biblical knowledge.

I want to put it all together. And I do remember your encouragement there and others, and so here we are.

Dr. Rick: [00:06:38] Absolutely. Well, I'm glad you did. I'm glad that the Lord really has used you to shape this in a way that I think really speaks to pastors as well. And you've broken down the idea of caring for orphaned and vulnerable children into a very consumable kind of idea for churches that are busy and at times overwhelmed in the things that they're doing. One of the images that you use in the book is this idea of becoming a funnel for God.

Like the idea of being that channel of blessing. And we'd love for you just to talk about that. And particularly from the perspective of a theologian about how our Christian worldview, how our biblical worldview informs how we should love orphaned and vulnerable children around the world and why that's such a gospel imperative.

Todd Chipman: [00:07:26] I think about Deuteronomy 24. So, we're here toward the end of the book of Deuteronomy and, the, there are a number of, of laws here and some of them seems to kind of coordinate some. We have to try to think about how the coordination works. But, here toward the end of Numbers or excuse me, of Deuteronomy 24.

Moses is commanding Israel to care for orphans and widows. And he says, when you reap the harvest in your field and you forget a sheaf in the field, do not go back to get it. It's left for the foreign resident, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord, your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

So leaving this there is actually trusting God to bless us. So we're leaving that there, but God's going to take care of us. And, and when you, when you knock down the fruit from your olive tree, you must not go over the branches again. What remains will be for the foreign wisdom, the foreign resident, the fatherless, the widow.

When you gather grapes in your vineyard, you must not glean what is left. What remains will be for the foreign resident, the fatherless, the widow. Over and over we have this refrain. In the last verse of Deuteronomy 24 is the rationale. Here's why. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, therefore I'm commanding you to do this.

Here's all these imperatives regarding your field, your groves, the resources that you have and leave some behind, because let me remind you, I take care of you so I want you to go take care of them in a subsidiary kind of way, because remember, I did this for you. And so this is that funnel idea that what we've received from God we're ready to give away, and

foster care and adoption allows us to do that in ways that I have never experienced as a pastor.

And I've had a variety of festival experiences. I've done weddings, I've done funerals. I've preached sermons. I've done baptisms. I've been in the hospital. I've, you know, I've been at people's homes for service project. I did a whole gambit for many years, but proximal relational ministry in my own family and adopting kids has forced me to think about relying on God in ways I've never relied on him before. Emotionally, in terms of a leader in helping my family to adjust, my children to welcome new siblings. All of these kinds of ideas have put certain strains on me that I never felt in pastoral ministry or in the library working through scripture interpretation. But I've had to hear and it's helped me.

Phil: [00:10:16] Yeah. That's, you know, I love that. I love that analogy too. I just love, I always love talking about that as far as just, our heart breaks for what God's heart breaks for. And we also do what God does for us, for others. And, and just the idea of, whether it's an overflow conversation or it's, God is in our heart and we are doing what he does. And that's just, that's just, as you said, with orphan older children, something that it's hard to explain to people too, when they haven't done it, you know, but to help people understand the idea so that when they actually are able to go into it, it gives them something to hopefully understand a little bit more about what is actually happening. With that, I think it's a good transition into the next question that we have for you. And you talked about your role as a pastor. You talked about how you've had different experiences as a pastor, but one of the things I want you to be able to share and a lot of people ask me this question is how can you as a pastor, how can other pastors really make the care of orphaned and vulnerable children part of the DNA of their churches, rather than kind of a side ministry, which it, which it often becomes where it's like, Oh, Sarah is a passionate, adoptive parent so Sarah does all our orphan care ministry and therefore we can check the box and say we love the orphans and widows in their affliction. So how can a pastor do that? I know you've told some stories in your book, but also just from your perspective, as you have been able to do that. What does that look like and how can you encourage other pastors to do the same?

Todd Chipman: [00:11:41] That was some of the reason for writing the book and why I wanted to go to that CAFO meeting and I met Rick there and connected is because I saw personally how strategic, this kind of ministry is, and this is where, I try to write from that perspective of the book. Early on one of the titles that we were thinking about for the book was something along the lines of the strategic value of orphan care for the local church.

So it really it helps us. And what I argue in the book is that if churches and church leaders take just a few steps in to foster care and adoption they will quickly begin to address issues that they often are burdened about and want to address. Their thinking, let's see, how can I address racial tension right now?

What pastor in America is not wanting to, right? What pastor in the United States right now is not thinking about that? Well, that's a touchy subject, isn't it? Boy, it's difficult. And this is an issue that has a history that we need to think about. We have individual contexts in our ministries. But if we involve ourselves in foster and adoption, we're going to begin to address it.

And not just on Twitter. Anyone can address these kinds of issues on Twitter, right. But actually in our homes and as a model for our churches and for our communities, because disproportionately in the foster care system, the African-American race is represented. It's just, that's a fact, that's not any commentary by me.

That is just a fact from the statistics. And so if we step into this, we are going to begin to deal with African American children and families, and their cultural issues and be able to learn about them. And many white families will take in African American children and think about that and grow in racial sensitivity and in demonstrating how the gospel provides unity and how helpful that is for many churches.

So there's one issue that we will deal with. We will also deal with abortion and preventing abortion. We will deal with the issues of human trafficking, which aren't getting quite as much attention right now in our culture because of COVID and because of the racial issues, but that's happening. It's happening every day in the United States that children are trafficked and those children, those girls become women who often lead a life of prostitution.

And I write about that chain of events in my book, and we can step in and, and prevent some of that in a very, very real way. We can deal with human trafficking. So racial issues, human trafficking, we can deal with poverty. And it's strategic. If you step into this ministry, you find that it has outlets for so many ministries and cultural concerns that are right on the front burner of many pastors' minds.

So what I want to do is think help pastors to think about the strategic nature of this ministry. That it actually helps their churches, if they can frame it and think about it in that way.

Phil: [00:15:05] Absolutely. And I just thought, you talked about each of those conversations you just mentioned are a different chapter of the book and in each of those chapters, what we neglected to really talk about is you've interviewed presumably or you made up stories about these people, but I don't think that was the case.

You were able to interview some great people, some friends of ours, several of whom have been on the show. and you dove into their story in ways that that told the story, about how we can really address a lot of these issues. And one of those things that you just talked about is the connection, not only the connection between orphan care and the sex trafficking epidemic, but just really how we can realistically get involved as the church. Because the reality is 99.9% of churches are not going to probably a higher percentage than that are not going to go in and rescue children out of brothels. You're not going to now you may prevent them from ever getting there, but what are some ways that churches realistically can get involved and maybe use one of the stories you had from the book, but what does that look like in the Church in the context of the orphan care and how it's connected with preventing it from happening by loving the children early?

Todd Chipman: [00:16:16] Yes, that's it. So I write in the book, I have seven sections in the book and one of them is on trafficking there. Three different chapters in there. In each of the chapters I interview a different expert in this field. And I don't think I'll ever forget when I

went down to Children's Mercy Hospital. Children's Mercy is a huge hospital in Kansas City. It's had different campuses. It's a research facility. They do incredible work. And I heard one of their nurses speak had an orphan care event here in Kansas City about trafficking. And so when I got the contract to write the book, I circled back with her and said, "I'd like to interview you and get some information." I'll just, I don't think I'll ever forget sitting down in her office at Children's Mercy Hospital and her beginning to share about children whose lives were just under this situation of human trafficking and who had been trafficked and abused and talking about the number of children that they see who are brought in. Nearly all of them were in the foster care system.

And if you just do the math these children were once in the foster care system and now they're living on the streets and owned and used. And she just told me the stories and I began to listen to her and others and do research. Even FBI statistics of BUS and so forth. And the scenario runs something like this. These children who are eventually prostitutes or who are owned by a pimp, their lives were characterized early on by crime and drugs. So their parents were involved in crime and drugs. Mom or dad are arrested. There's abuse, neglect, often involved in that. So they go to an extended family, a kinship placement, as we know the language often. Well, those folks lives are characterized by crime and drugs as well.

But then they're in a more vulnerable position because these folks who are adults who are leaving unstable lives, they don't have as close of a relationship with these children. And so there's a degree of extension there and a degree of distance. So there's more abuse, more neglect. So the state has to step in again, and then they're placed with a foster family.

Well that foster families is even further separated relationally from them. And so now even if the environment of these children is not characterized by crime and drugs, their minds are. That's what's familiar to them. And so they are often heading in that direction and they run. So by this time they're in their maybe early teen years or even 10, 12 years old, but they're on the street.

And on the street, they go to crime and drugs. They are found by a pimp and I write about the sad world of women who work for pimps and who recruit these kids and who prey on group homes and begin to buy gifts for those girls and boys as well. And they're just groomed for that kind of a lifestyle.

So when Christians, when we step in and partner with our churches to foster and adopt, we cut the supply chain of pimps. And they have a business model that they use. And I write about that in the book and it's not fiction this, the FBI documents this. This is a cold, hard crime, and it's a, it's a sad world and we can do something about it.

Dr. Rick: [00:20:05] You know, Todd, one of the things I really appreciate about the book and I just, and I appreciate about you is that we all share the conviction that the whole church needs to live out James 1:27. We, you know, that this is not a, it's not a calling for a few, but it's a. You know, it's, it's a, it's a general calling. But, but one of the things I really love about the book as a resource for the church is that it, that you don't leave it in this, in this general sense of man, we all need to do this, but the stories really provide a vehicle to get very

inherently practical and, and just really to get down to, you know, to places where people can see themselves reflected.

And, and, you know, one of the things that you, that you talk about in the book is through the lens of, fostering and adopting. And, and, and so maybe I'd describe it this way. I think, you know, sometimes we, especially now working in ministry with foster and adoptive families, you know, we kind of realized that those of us that step into fostering and into adopting it, it's a little, a little bit like being the part of the Green Berets.

And that's not to, that's not to elevate the status. It's just to say, you know, there, there's a, like, it's an extreme thing. It's a, it's a calling and, and it, it, and, and there's, and it's not like that's not everybody's road, but yeah, James 1:27 is for everyone. And so you really, you talk about these five essential relationships that adoptive and foster parents need to have, and, and really how that, you know, extends much of that, that understanding of the way that the body of Christ, you know, gets involved in and is involved. And I just love it if you could just kind of unpack for our listeners a little bit, just give him a little bit of a tease of those five relationships and who they are and why they're important. And then we'll, we'll leave them the read the depth of it in the book, because we want them to go there and grab it as a result of this interview.

But, you know, we'd love for you to just kind of expound on that a little.

Todd Chipman: [00:22:10] Yes. The five relationships is an idea that helps potential foster and adopt of parents recognize that as Green Berets, they are going to need other soldiers around them that they are going in. I, Rick, I just appreciate your honesty there and it's truthfulness.

Sometimes when we talk with folks about this kind of ministry, there are two extremes. But over here is, this is so hard and all of us who are doing it are just the most mature, the best people, all the rest. And that's not true at all. On the other hand, in fact, the more you do it, the realize you realize how dependent on God you are.

On the other hand, if we say, Oh, it's not really that big of a deal, we're lying to people. It's hard. It's it is hard. It's harder than anything I've ever done, far and away. So we've got to be honest with that and recognize God's Providence and, and all the rest.

So these five relationships help the Green Berets and it's true that it is hard. And it's God's grace upon you to do it. And there are people who can gather around you to help you and make it as successful in God's Providence as it can be. And the first one was obviously your spouse. It's often the case that the Lord puts this kind of a ministry on one spouse's mind first. But they are one flesh with another human. And so there has to be a partnership. We have probably all seen and we can tell stories of couples who one person drove ahead and the other was being drug along. Right? They just were dragging their heels, didn't want to be involved. Well, there has to be sense of partnership there and you have to work together and make sure that you're both on target. Often it's the woman who really senses this first. Well, she has to be patient; develop a partnership with her husband. The husband who wants to run into this needs to make sure his wife's on board. So it's a, it's a partnership

there, it's a partnership with children who are already in the home. And this is something that parents need to be sensitive to.

Even if they're just fostering and it may be respite kind of care, just weekend care, it will affect the children in your home and you have to begin to shape their thinking. You need to develop a true partnership with them and help them to see how this will be challenging, but how, how it's going to be something that our family is going to do and how you're going to help them with it.

How in the end it might even be good for them. And that's going to take time. There has to be . . . In any partnership there's often a series of meetings and relationships and engagements that help that, that relationship to foster and to grow and, and even with your own children, you're gonna want to do that.

And then with your church, your pastor, get them involved, to, to help them see the value of this ministry for the local church, the value of this ministry for them and how you're going to need their help. And if you can get your pastor on board before you jump in, it's going to be much better than afterward.

Too many couples have just run ahead and then after the kids are ready to be placed in their home, "Hey pastor, I forgot to tell you, I've neglected to tell you I've been busy and haven't told you that tomorrow foster placements come in to our home, could you help organize some things for me?"

That's just not going to go well, you know, you have to recognize that your pastor's busy and there are a number of demands. And so develop that partnership early on along the way. Develop a partnership with your parents. This is perhaps one of the most important and often neglected aspects of foster care and adoption. Grandparents play a critical role.

They may be the most critical role. If you can help kids who come into your home have a relationship with your parents. Those kids who come into your home will have a sense of connectivity unlike anything else. They have, they have multiple generations now interested in them and I cannot emphasize enough how important that is.

I often tell parents or tell prospective parents, if you have good parents, you have a good relationship with your parents. They're generally healthy. They, they kind of live near you, even if it's just a few hours away, but they can be around in some ways, you have an asset for foster care and adoption unlike anything else because you can get them in those kids' lives. My mother who's still living. My inlaws are living and even just this last weekend they were together with our kids doing puzzles, planes. It's just, it has helped our kids so much, and it's a great resource. So that relationship is absolutely crucial.

The final relationship is the local school district because chances are if you're fostering or adopting kids locally, that school has been family for your children. Schools are family for many, many children in the foster care system. My, my daughters, who are now been with us several years, the school district was their family for most of their life.

When we picked our children up to bring them to our home permanently. We pick them up from school that day, the foster family that they were living with didn't even want to take off work to make the exchange. We picked them up from school. The school had a party. When we adopted our girls and that adoption was final and we had a party for. our, our children in Kansas City, the, the Principal of the school they were at, which is about three hours away, drove to be at our party. Drove to Kansas City to be there because school was, she was their parent essentially. And so school is you. And I try to be specific there to go to the school, make an appointment with the principal, talk about what you're trying to do, say this is probably going to be the school where my kid comes. Can I just come and watch? Can I see what's going on? And then after your children start attending there, be the best volunteer that school's ever had. You're doing recess duty. You're doing lunch duty.

You're bringing cookies for teachers. Just be there and that also will show your child love and it will help you have another connecting point. Which that bonding mechanism is so important with, with kids. And if you get in the schools, you're going to be along the way. So with your spouse, with your children in your home, with your pastor, with your parents, with the school.

Dr. Rick: [00:28:56] Yeah, Todd, I love that so much. And I think there's a, you know, there's, there's also, you know, this idea of, of realizing that in some of those extended relationships, particularly in the, in the school, you know, relationships we have with CPS and in places like that, those are like, they're, there are rich gospel opportunities in all of that.

And it's our relationship, you know, with our kids and through our kids that, that bring us into. You know, connection with those people and, and, and those relationships are my accident. Those things are, those things are part of God's Providence as well. And so just now I love just the kind of the 360 degree thinking of, you know, really being intentional about all those relationships? Well, one of the things that we do routinely with our guest is, certainly we want them to, you know, to get your book and we want them to, you know, to digest that because, because we've seen it as a great resource, but, but we also know that part of being a part of this community is just connecting with other resources and with other things that are good.

And so anytime we have, you know, somebody like you on the show, one of the questions that we want to make sure and ask is, you know, what have you read or what have you, you listened to, or what have you watched that has, has really impacted your thinking about how to love and to serve orphaned and vulnerable children well.

Todd Chipman: [00:30:22] I think, and not to just blow smoke, but Orphanology, your book with Tony Merida is excellent. I think you, you, you set out a parameter of issues that just helps folks to get connected and to, to see, you know, the landscape. Obviously Russell Moore, *Adopted for Life*, I think is perhaps one of the books that has had maybe the biggest impact on, on many Christians, of the last 20 years. It doesn't get that much, that high level, but I think, boots on the ground ministry, it has affected so many churches and so many lives.

So I think those two books, I think as far as podcasts. The Fostering and Adopting Home Podcast that Lynette Ezell leads is excellent. She and her partner do great interviews and they're just great interviewers and, they have an array of guests on who are in the know. I think we've mentioned already CAFO, but Christian Alliance for Orphans and their annual Summit.

I would just highly encourage your listeners here to attend if they haven't already at some point. I go every year now some, because I, I get to do a little bit to serve there, but I just get energized and I tell folks. And so I, I get from a, a perspective of a seminary professor and a pastor, I get to go to some cool conferences. It's part of the deal. It's neat. But, and, but I tell folks, as far as the depth of spiritual commitment, folks at CAFO are far beyond anything I go to for pastors, for theologians. Just the, the vulnerability, the need for God, God's presence, people who are just right on the front lines, truly Green Berets.

They are just my heroes just as much as authors of books who helped me understand Scripture better. When I see people fostering and adopting special needs children who will never walk on their own, I just think that's, that's Jesus Christ's spirit living in these people and they do it and they love and they care and they go the extra mile.

So, yeah, those are some resources I would say.

Phil: [00:32:42] Yeah, there's some great resources, that, I, I think I, I don't know that I've listened to that podcast yet, but I'll have to, I'll definitely have to check it out, but, The other ones, I

Todd Chipman: [00:32:51] One other name comes to mind, Jason Johnson, who works for CAFO, but his blog and his books, Reframing Orphan Care or Reframing Foster Care.

It's what his book is called, his most recent one. But anytime I hear him talk about foster care and adoption it's always within the framework of discipleship and the local church. And it's just spot on. I just keep finding myself saying Amen. And so his resources were very helpful.

Phil: [00:33:20] Yeah a lot of us say that with Jason's stuff. We were fortunate to have him and I think the other ones, the other folks on there, the only one we haven't had is Tony. And it's probably 'cause Rick doesn't want to, you know, have him come on and then make everyone realize that he wrote most of the book and you know, then that, that gets awkward.

So

Dr. Rick: [00:33:37] I knew we were going to get there. Just because you mentioned the book I knew we were going to get there.

Todd Chipman: [00:33:42] I think, I think you should have them on and have people vote for the best beard.

Phil: [00:33:47] Well, you know, yeah. Although I did see a picture on Instagram recently and he was pretty yoked and I, I don't know that, that I, I think I'd be intimidated even over, over Zoom.

So I don't, I don't know about that.

On that note, you know, the last question we have, you know, I always love hearing what, what books and like Rick said, I, I totally agree, like folks out there, if you haven't read Todd's book, check it out. That, that last part about the five most important, that was the Appendix. The five most important relationships. So that's the Appendix. Think about how much goodness is in the not Appendix. Okay. No, the, the, the regular body, I guess, right? So, and, and that isn't an appendix you want to remove, but the, that was a dad joke for us. But the last question we ask our guests. It's always, while it may be one of the people you've already mentioned, but it may be somebody else.

But what one person has most impacted your thinking on how we can love orphaned and vulnerable children with excellence?

Todd Chipman: [00:34:43] I think probably Russell Moore, and his book Adopted for Life and hearing him speak. Our call to speak of CAFO again, a few years ago at CAFO, when he was talking about churches and the value of this kind of ministry in a local church.

And he's an articulate guy. I mean, he, you know, he speaks on lots of issues pretty quickly and often with the kind of language that you afterward you say, I don't think anyone could say it better than that. You know, that's what, that's the idea. It's very clear. He couldn't get words. And I remember I was kind of struck and I think the audience was he's having trouble getting words to articulate the kind of culture that exists in a local church where orphan care is a part of the ministry in a natural way. But it's not all that the ministry does like in a cultish kind of way, but, but is part of the DNA and it propels the whole ministry on. He was having trouble sort of getting at the idea. And I just say that because there is an intangible kind of spiritual quality where the local church is healthy and scripture pervades the congregation's thinking so that orphan care is a part of what we do but it's not all that we do. So it's healthy and it grows and it's strong and everyone participates in some way to help just as in other kinds of ministry. So, Russell Moore, I would say has probably been someone was very influential toward me in that.

And the privilege that he wrote the forward for my book was an honor for me.

Phil: [00:36:20] Yeah. That's a name that I imagine a lot of people would mention, but, you know, I, I very much appreciate, Todd, you coming on, I appreciate the book that God wrote through you. What you're doing, it's very, very encouraging, inspiring to me.

So, so thank you very much.

Todd Chipman: [00:36:39] You're welcome brothers. Thank you for your work, friend. Likewise. All the best to you.

Dr. Rick: [00:36:44] Alright, Phil. Great interview.

Phil: [00:36:48] Yeah, that was a lot of fun. That was a lot of fun. I look forward to meeting Todd in, in person in the future. So that would be good. Yeah.

Dr. Rick: [00:36:57] Just, you know, and the thing, the thing I love about Todd is that he, he really is, and he's, he's pretty humble when he comes into a setting like this. But he's a, he's pretty much a consummate scholar and, and to, he, but it, especially, you can just see the passion.

Well love in him when he's talking about, you know, orphaned and vulnerable children. And, and there is a, he has an ability to, to, you know, maybe put the cookies on the bottom shelf a little bit. And I just, I really appreciate that, that, you know, that he doesn't, he doesn't stay in the clouds, but really gets down to the practical things that the church can do.

Phil: [00:37:39] Absolutely love.

And that was one of the things that you could tell just the way he was processing and just was very deliberate, very intentional. How he answered the questions. The, the word choice, the, how he said what he said. And you could really see that in the book as well. It was, it was, it was just very intentional. And that's the word that just keeps coming to my mind because I think he's, he's, he's got a purpose. He's got a vision. He's got a mission for that book clearly. But it wasn't just shoving things down people's throat. Like you said, I mean, putting the cookies on the bottom shelf. Not something I'd like to do in my house, but, but it, it's not something, you know, it's something I need to work on quite frankly.

'Cause I think sometimes, you know, as I've said on this show, my wife will say, "Phil, do you realize what you just said?" And I said, yeah, I said this. She says, "that's not what everyone heard." And you know, and sometimes that can be a good thing that they didn't hear it properly, but most of the time, it's not a good thing when they don't hear it properly.

And just when you leave room for interpretation, sometimes people will, people will always interpret it all over the place. And so to be able to, to make it as, not dumbing it down, but to make it more simple. To make it, you know, to make it a simple, conversation that really makes the main thing, the main thing that, that

brings it down to, okay, this is what I want to make sure people understand at the end of this conversation. And that's something that is such a great skill and you know, it, it's something that comes with a lot of practice, right? I mean, you can tell that he's done this a long time. He's professor, he's a pastor.

And as you said, the passion for what he does. This is not something he's doing because James 1:27 says that, you know, it's a command to do it. He does it because God has transformed his heart and he is clearly just doing this because he is a child of God who is doing what God loves.

Dr. Rick: [00:39:40] Well, and I think, you know, the, the thing I would want to, you know, want to leave our listeners with about, about the book is if, if you're, if you're out there and

you're trying to figure out ways to, ways to get the body of Christ in wall. If you're, if you're out there trying to think creatively about how, how can our church, really, you know, be mobilized into, into caring for vulnerable children this is a great book to pick up because I think it, and, and, you know, and, and even some of the things that he talked about, you know, in the interview with so much more depth, but just the, you know, delving into the issue of human trafficking and really looking at that from multiple angles and the relationship between, you know, between that and orphan care.

But it's done in a really accessible way. You know, you, you said it in, in the, in that part of the interview, that this is not a man, that's a problem, but we can't, like, it's not accessible to us. It's done in a way that, that it's just really accessible to the church. And I think I love the way, you know, most of that's told through the eyes of someone and, and through someone's story and what you, what you kind of walk away with a sense of is, is like none of these people are changing clothes in a phone booth. Right? They're not superhuman. They're not, they're not kinda other than. They're just, they're just normal people like, like me and you. And it really gives a great view to how, you know, just inherently normal people can be used by an extraordinary guy to do, you know, to do things that are, that are important, you know, for the kingdom.

And I really appreciate his contribution.

Phil: [00:41:18] Yeah, I agree. And I, and I do think as I, as we talked about one, the questions we asked and one of the, one of the answers, it's just really, if you're in a church and you're trying to figure out ways to, to connect with your pastor on what does it look like? You know, what, what is, how, how can we actually get our church involved?

The thing that I love about it, like he said, is the issues we're facing in our world. Like. It's all it's all. And we talk about that all the time on this show, right? The interconnectedness of all of the stuff that we're working on. The interconnectedness of the everything going on in the kingdom. And the, the care for orphaned and vulnerable children is absolutely interconnected with all of those things.

And I love how this book goes into a lot of them. Not at all of them, but a lot of them. And, and it's a, it was done in a way that was that, you know, as a pastor, he's, he's speaking to pastors as well as to, you know, the congregations out there and to, to Christians. So, I absolutely recommend this book. I don't think that I have recommended it as, as an official Phil recommends. So I'm doing that today. Dr. Rick and Phil recommends here it is, there it is. I'm, I'm fully recommending this book. I think it's one that has so much good to, to share with us. But also it's going to challenge you. It's going to have you think about things that you might not have thought about before.

And it's going to give a, as, as we've talked about a really accessible way for people who might not otherwise understand what, you know, what this thing called orphaned and vulnerable child care looks like, across the way. And, and I think that it's, it's a different take on it then, like an Orphanology, or, you know, some of the other books that might be kind of the landscape of orphan care, right? It's, it's a different it's from a different perspective and a lot of different perspectives. That's one of the other cool thing is a lot of the guys that, as I

said, who have been on the show, their stories are further, you know, they dive into, he dives into those stories a bit more, and it was really cool.

So very much appreciate it. Rick. any last parting words before we close it out?

Dr. Rick: [00:43:28] Brother I think I'm good. I think we covered it well. We had a great guest. We had a, you know, a little bit of a chance to visit together and, I think this has been another good episode.

Phil: [00:43:40] I agree. So folks out there, as we're, bringing it to a close, always remember to connect with us on Facebook. Connect with us if you want to send us an email info@thinkorphan.com. You can, you can, sign up for the, the newsletter as well. As I said, I think it was a couple episodes ago. If you want to be a part of the newsletter. And you want a newsletter to actually happen, then sign up on the contact page of thinkorphan.com.

'Cause if we have like three people and it's my mom and Rick and me signed up, I don't think Rick signed up yet, then we're not going to do it. Cause it's, you know, it's a, it's a lot of time and we have a pretty short staff. So if you want that, you know, and we can and get that out more and then you can share it a little easier, maybe, sign up on the contact page of thinkorphan.com, a little popup will pop up and you can fill it in there. It's simple. And then, you know, ask us questions, give us different guests that you think would be good to talk with. I know that a lot of the guests we've had have come from that. You know, you guys recommending them.

So folks, especially now that we're not going to be seeing each other in person, really, at least in the foreseeable future. CAFO may happen this year, but they may not given all the different changes, the ever changing landscape. So right now, this is our way we can connect. This is our way we can ask the hard questions.

This is our way we can have these tough conversations and very much want you to be doing that. So the other thing as always that we want you to be doing is taking what you learned today, taking what you're hearing, you're watching, you're reading, and really, you know, let God use it to help you understand how you can love orphaned and vulnerable children better and better each and every day. Thanks a lot. Have a great week.