

- [Narrator] This is the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast.

- Hey, welcome to the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I'm really honored that you'd take a little bit of time to spend with us. We're talking about leadership, because we know that when the leader gets better, everyone gets better, and I am very passionate. My goal is to help you become the leader that others love to follow. If you're new with us, welcome to our community. We release a brand new teaching on the first Thursday of every single month, and if you have not yet subscribed, I would love to invite you to subscribe. If you're interested in receiving the notes, a lot of people like to go over the notes and questions with groups, you can go to life.church/leadershippodcast, scroll down to the bottom. Send us your email, and we'll send you very detailed notes of every single episode. If this is helpful to you, if you enjoy, if you're getting something out of this, it would mean the world to me if you would invite others to be a part of the community. Share it on social media, tell people that you work with about the podcast, because when we do get better as leaders, we can make a really, really big difference. Now next month, let me tell what we're gonna talk about. I'm very excited about it. We're gonna talk about how to inspire your team to action. What do we need to be as leaders? We need to be inspirational, but we don't just wanna inspire to make people feel good, but how do we inspire people to action? You may think I'm not naturally inspirational. I've gone great news for you. You don't have to be a charismatic leader to inspire. We're gonna talk about that next month. Today, what are we gonna talk about? I'm really excited to talk to you today about what I call the Four Essentials of Innovation. The Four Essentials of Innovation. As a leader, you're gonna want to innovate, seeing new ideas. In fact, to talk more about this subject, I'm very excited to tell you that on Tuesday of next week, we have another bonus episode. It's absolutely free. They're all free, and I'm gonna interview one of the leaders that Fast Company named one of the top 100 most innovative leaders in America, Bobby Gruenewald. He's a creator and founder of the YouVersion Bible app now on 330 million devices. He built and sold two tech companies before he graduated from college. That is unusual. We're gonna talk to him next Tuesday. Let's talk today about the four essentials of innovation. I'll start out with this big statement. If you wanna lead a breakout ministry, dominate an industry, change a city, help a nation, solve massive problems or meet the needs of thousands of hurting people, you will have to learn to innovate. Let's talk about how we do it. What is innovation? Well, innovation is different from creativity. Creativity is thinking up new things, but innovation is actually doing new things. In other words, people with ideas are not necessarily innovators. People who do the ideas are the innovators. I love what Sarah Ban Breathnach said. She said, "The world needs dreamers, "and the world needs doers. "But above all else, what the world needs "are dreamers that do." I love that. We're gonna be dreamers that actually do. What do we know? If you're successful right now, things are going well, what I wanna tell you is enjoy it, because you're gonna have to change soon. In other words, if we don't change and adapt in what we're doing, our success will not last forever, because the world is changing way, way, way too fast. William Pollard said this. He said, "The arrogance of success "is to think that what you did yesterday "will be sufficient for tomorrow." What's gonna happen? We know, in our industry, competition is gonna emerge, someone's gonna get better, cheaper, faster, more convenient, whatever. New categories, whole categories are gonna be born with products and ideas. If we're lucky, we'll just lose ground. If we're unlucky, we can become irrelevant. In other words, it's safe to say that the most successful companies in the future will be doing things that no one is doing today. Let me say it again. The most successful organizations in the future, they're gonna be doing the ideas that no one has even thought of yet today. In fact, to

illustrate, think about the journey from 1980 all the way to today. If the year was 1980 and you're reading your newspaper because that's what you had in 1980, what are the four companies that are gonna make the headlines? Every single time, it's gonna be GM, Walmart, Exxon and Ford, the companies they're talking about more than any others. If you fast forward to today, who makes the headlines? Who do we hear about? Apple, Amazon, Facebook and Google. Think about this. For many of you who are listening right now or watching, you were not even born when some of these companies were born. There are companies that did not even exist when you were born, that are now doing things that no one dreamed absolutely possible. What's coming in the future? How do we innovate? I like what Alan Kay said. Alan Kay said, "The best way to predict the future "is to create it." Let's talk about it. The four essential qualities of innovative leaders. What are they? Number one, what do we need? We need a problem to solve, plus we need limited resources, plus we need a willingness to fail, and number four, plus we need a crazy idea. What do we need? A problem to solve plus limited resources, plus a willingness to fail, plus a crazy idea can equal explosive innovation. Let's unpack them one by one. What do we need to be innovative? Number one, we need a problem to solve. The good news is you probably have some problems to solve. Think about it. Every great innovation is simply a solution to a problem. Therefore, problems are not things to be feared, but opportunities to embrace. It's really fun for me to think about this, that many great innovations are solutions to a problem that people didn't even know they had. Think about things we enjoy today. No one was asking for an iPod or an iPad or an iPhone. No one ever thought, wouldn't it be amazing if I could have a device in my bedroom that listened to what I said and could send me whatever I order or play music and I could give her a name if I wanted to? No one ever thought, hey, wouldn't it be amazing if I could have a phone that would recognize my face, and some of you think, I wish my phone didn't recognize my face, because it doesn't always work the way I wish it would. What do we need to do? We need to train our minds. Every time we see a problem, we train our minds to see problems as opportunities for something new. Let's say you have a problem. You lose a key staff member. You lose a big account. You can't close on the land, or you can't get the loan. What do we know? Problems equal opportunity. Why? Because every innovation is a solution to a problem. What do we need? A problem to solve. Number two, we need to limited resources. You may think, is that a miss, did you misspeak? We need a lot of resources. No, we actually need limited resources. In fact, the number one cop out for what I call want to be innovators is this. I don't have what I need. If we had more, whatever it is, fill in the blank. If we had more time, more ideas, more good people, more people, more money, whatever it is, if we had more, we could be innovative. This is simply not true. In fact, I would argue all day long that innovation is more about mindset than money. In fact, the lack of money is what drove our church to be innovative. Whenever we were running out of space in our buildings and couldn't add more services, and didn't have enough money to build, someone said, "Well, what if we did in church "in more than one location?" A big breakthrough idea that we had wasn't because we had a lot of resources. It was because we were limited in the resources. In other words, if you always believe that you cannot do something because you don't have more, you're gonna prove to be right. In fact, I'm gonna argue that having more isn't always better. What does more do? Well, more people can slow things down. Too much time, that can actually make you lazy. Too much money, what does it do? It trains you to buy solutions rather than to create them. When you think about it, most innovative companies, they're startups, that they don't have much, or they're mature organizations that enforce what I call artificial restraints. What is an artificial restraint? Let's talk about it. If you have a lot of anything, let's say you have a lot of time, or for some reason, you have a lot of excess capital,

you've got a lot of manpower, what I'd like to ask you to do is consider enforcing artificial restraints. They're restraints that are artificial. They're not real. In other words, if you have six months to get a project done, you might create an artificial deadline and say, "What if we only had six weeks? "Not six months, but six weeks." Guess what that'll do? That'll drive innovative thinking. Let's say you've got \$25,000 budgeted for some project. What if you said, "Hey, what can we get done for \$2500?" Suddenly, the artificial restraint is gonna force you to think creatively. Artificial restraints, or any types of restraints, can drive innovation. Why? Because limited resources are breeding ground. A limited resource is a breeding ground for innovation. Some more thoughts about this. I would even encourage you, when you're looking for a breakthrough idea, to try to avoid either/or scenarios. We can do this or we can do that. If you wanna be innovative, why don't you say this? Can we do both? Or, what if we did neither? Let's pretend like we couldn't do A or B. Sometimes, the most innovative ideas are born when you say, "Let's not do one or the other. "Let's do a whole new idea." What do we need? We need a problem to solve. We need limited resources. Number three, we need a willingness to fail. Curt Richardson says this. Curt says, "Failure is a part of innovation, "perhaps the most important part." I love that quote. Some people will say this. They'll sometimes say, "Well, for us, failure's not an option." What I would say is you're absolutely right. Failure is not an option if you wanna be innovative. It is a necessity. You're gonna have to be willing to fail. Elon Musk, he says this. He says, "Failure is an option here." Then he says, "If you're not failing, "you're not innovating enough." What do we know about our organizations? We're all gonna make mistakes, right? When we make mistakes, the type of mistakes we wanna make are aggressive ones. We wanna make mistakes attempting something new, not passive mistakes holding back and always playing it safe. In fact, in our organizations, this year, we're gonna launch five brand new church locations, and the chances of them succeeding are quite high, because of what we've learned. Where did we learn? We learned through failures. Years ago, we tried to launch two brand new church locations in Phoenix, Arizona. They didn't work well, so we quickly combined the two to become one, and then a couple of very painful years later, we ended up closing the one. Through all the mistakes that we made, guess what we learned? We learned opportunities and ways to do it much better. The only reason we're able to do five this year is because of a couple that failed years ago. We're actually better because of what we learned from our mistakes. I'm gonna tell you this right now. If you're not failing every now and then, you're playing it way too safe. What do we need? To be innovative. We need a problem to solve, we actually need limited resources. We need a willingness to fail, then number four, we need a crazy idea. Now when I say a crazy idea, I don't mean a crazy, dumb, stupid, harebrained idea. I wanna add a sub point. A crazy idea that, if it works, could make a big difference. A crazy that if this actually works, it could be a game changer for our organization. A lot of people have crazy ideas. But it's the potential value of the idea. It's the potential win. The potential value of the crazy idea is what will actually drive the innovation. The reason it seems crazy at first is simply because it's never, ever been done before. In fact, next week, we'll celebrate the 10 year anniversary of the YouVersion Bible app, an app that our church created to give the Bible away for free. It's now on 330 million devices. I'll never forget when Bobby Gruenewald walked into my office years ago, and said, "I've got an idea to put the Bible on an app," when I barely even knew what an app was, because it hadn't come out yet. I thought that's a crazy idea. Sometimes, a crazy idea can become a breakthrough idea. When it does, follow one crazy idea to the next. I call it following the crazy trail. In other words, that was one crazy idea that led to many others. In fact, very soon, later on this year, we're gonna release another app. It's called the Bible Lens. It's different from the YouVersion Bible app, but I believe it's gonna be

innovative and a game changer. It was born out of a crazy idea, when someone said, "What if we could just take a photo and then create the technology that would actually recognize exactly what is in the photo?" In other words, it might be a wedding ring on a hand. It might be a smile. It might be a sandwich. It might be a shoe. It might be your ear. It might be a picture frame, whatever it is, then what if we could take what's in the photo and connect it to the most appropriate verses from the Bible? Then, follow the crazy trail. What if we could allow that Bible verse to then be put on the image, and give people creative ways to format the image? In other words, people were already doing this themselves. About a half a million people a day would take the YouVersion Bible, and put a verse on their own image. What if we do it for them? Then, follow the crazy trail. What if we go back through all of their old photos, and give them the ability to take any photo on their phone and connect the Bible verse that best represents that image and put it on their photos? What are we trying to do? We're trying to help them see the way the Bible applies to daily life. It might be a picture of a shoe that says, "The Lord directs my steps." It might be a picture of someone smiling, and the verse might be, "The joy of the Lord is my strength." My guess is we're gonna go from seeing a half a million people sharing Bible verses a day to literally millions and millions, hopefully tens of millions. What are we doing? We're following the crazy trail. One crazy idea leads to another crazy idea, leads to another crazy idea. The value of the idea will drive the innovation. How do you create that technology? Well, I don't know. It seems valuable enough, therefore, we'll figure it out. Now, I hope you'll understand this. The YouVersion Bible app, it came out of the church that I lead, but it was not my idea. It was Bobby Gruenewald's idea. The Bible Lens, guess what? That was not Bobby Gruenewald's idea. That was someone on his team's idea. And this is what's so great about being an innovative leader, is this. The idea doesn't have to be yours, as a leader. What do you need? You simply need the wisdom to recognize it, and the courage to attempt it. Let me say it again. The innovative breakthrough idea doesn't have to be yours. You simply need the wisdom to recognize it, and the courage to attempt it. What is the good news? The good news is you've got some problems to solve. Your product's not moving, there's new competition that's crushing you, your organization is stalled. You're not reaching as many people as you'd like, whatever it is. And guess what else? You likely have limited resources. You don't have an unlimited amount of money, you don't have an unlimited amount of time. And guess what you can develop? A willingness to fail. Then somebody, maybe it's you, maybe it's somebody else, they're gonna have a crazy idea, that what if idea, that if we could solve this problem, this could be a really, really big breakthrough. If you put all of this together, and you attempt something crazy, you will not always succeed. But every now and then, one idea out of three, one out of five, one out of 20, one out of a hundred, it could be a breakthrough innovative idea. One day, you'll be looking at what everyone else was looking at and you will see what no one else saw. You'll see the innovative opportunity, and you won't just think it. You will do it. Why? Because you are an innovative leader. Let's review, then we're gonna get to application questions. If you wanna lead a breakout ministry, dominate an industry, change a city, help a nation, solve massive problems, or meet the needs of thousands of hurting people, you will need to learn to innovate. Innovation is different from creativity. People with ideas are not necessarily innovators. People who do the ideas are innovators. Four essentials of innovation: a problem to solve, limited resources, willingness to fail, a crazy idea. Put those together, and you can have explosive innovation. What is a problem? Every great innovation is simply a solution to a problem. Problems are not things to be feared, but they are opportunities to embrace. Remember, many great innovations are solutions to a problem people didn't even know they had. Limited resources. Innovation is more about mindset than money. If you have

a lot of anything, consider enforcing artificial restraints, because limitations are breeding grounds for innovation. Try to avoid either/or scenarios. Ask yourself, can we do both? Can we combine them, creating a new innovation, or let's pretend we can't do either one, and force ourselves into a third option or fourth option or a fifth option. You also need a willingness to fail. Some say failure is not an option. Okay, it's true. For us, failure is not an option. It is a necessity if we're gonna be innovative. Everyone's gonna make mistakes. When we do, it's gonna be attempting something new. One day, you're gonna have a crazy idea. The reason it seems crazy at first is because no one has done it before. The idea doesn't have to be yours, but what do you need? The wisdom to recognize it, and the courage to attempt it. Then every now and then, one day, you will be looking at what everyone else was looking at, but you will see something that no one else saw. You won't just think it, but you're going to do it. Why? Because you are an innovative leader. Questions for application. This is where the rubber meets the road. I hope you'll go over these with your team. Question number one. What problem do you have that, if you solved it, could be a game changer for your organization? You're gonna wanna ask this question over and over and over again. What problem that, if you solved it, could be a game changer for your organization? Number two. I want you to do this. I want you to name every excuse that you have, that you feel is limiting your progress. We don't have enough money, enough time, enough staff, whatever it is. Then ask yourself this. How can that perceived limitation become a catalyst to innovation? Let me ask again. Name every excuse that you feel like is limiting you. Now ask yourself, how can that perceived limitation become a catalyst to innovation? Buried within that limitation could be your next innovation. Number three. What crazy idea do you have? Think about it. What's been in the back of your mind? What have you talked about? What have you looked at for a long time? What crazy idea do you have, and this, what are you going to do about it? One day, you're gonna stop dreaming, stop talking, stop planning, stop analyzing, and you're just gonna get in the game, take the next step and see what happens. In the next episode, I'm really excited to talk to you about how to inspire. You may not feel like you're naturally a charismatic leader. The good news is you don't have to be to inspire your team to action. Please talk about this. If it's helpful to you, share on social media, invite others to be a part of our community. Subscribe, rate, and review the podcast. If you have time, that would make a big difference to me, and then go out there and lead. It's what leaders do. You're a leader. You make a difference, and when you do, be yourself. You don't have to always get it right. Just be who you're created to be. Remember, people would rather follow a leader who's always real than one who's always right.

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