

- [Voiceover] This is The Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast.

- Hey, welcome to another episode of The Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I'm super thankful that you spend some time with me every single month. Thank you for investing in your leadership. When the leader gets better, everyone gets better. If you're brand new, I wanna tell you that we actually do this one time every month. We'll release a new teaching the first Thursday of every single month. A big and special thank you to those of you that are sharing on social media. It means so much to me to get the word out. Also, thank you for rating this or leaving a review on iTunes. That makes a really, really big difference. What we do each month is we dive into a very quick and specific teaching. Also, if you have questions, comments, ideas, I'd love to hear from you. You can email me anytime at leadership@life.church. Also, if you'd like to receive the notes from these teachings, you can go to life.church/leadershippodcast, send us your email, and we'll be happy to send you the notes every single month. What I wanna do is answer a couple of the questions that came in from the last episode, and then we'll dive into some teaching today on decision making. When we make decisions, that will determine what we're able to do in our organizations, decision makings are so, so, so important. Then we're gonna review, I'll ask you some questions, and then, we will lead as we're empowered to lead. Let's dive in, Jimmy asked this question, Jimmy asked, "How do you encourage creativity in your organization?" How do you help your team to become more creative and innovative? Fantastic question because an innovative culture never happens by accident. You actually create a creative culture. I'd give you a few quick thoughts, Jimmy. Number one, embrace your limitations. Embrace your limitations, most people think that to be more creative, we need more. This is simply not true, we need more people, we need more money, more time, more energy, more resources, whatever. I would argue that limitations breed innovation. Limitations breed innovation. A lot of times when someone doesn't have something, they're gonna say, "I cannot because I don't." Instead, we're gonna train our leaders to say this, "I can because I don't. "I can do more even though I do not have more." The challenge is, and you'll find, Jimmy, as organizations age, they often become resource-rich, and you actually find that resource-rich organizations are generally less innovative, less creative, than those that don't have as much. See limitations as a breeding ground for innovation. The second thing, number one, is embrace your limitations. Number two, allow for failure. Many things you try will not work. Not only is that okay, but that's actually really, really good. In fact, I always teach our leaders, that if you're not failing every now and then, you're playing it way too safe. Most of the innovative things that we do as an organization were actually born out of something we tried that didn't work. In fact, we do multiple-site ministry in cities and states across United States. The first time we tried this, out of our state, we failed miserably. What we learned from that failure actually helped us to become more creative and effective at other places. Also, the YouVersion Bible app, with over a quarter of a billion downloads, this was born out of a failure. We created a website to help engage people in the Bible. The website failed, and that one failure led to something that was very, very innovative. Embrace your limitations, allow for failure, and then number three, very simply, decide you can do something about the problem. When there is a challenge, determine we can do something about this. We have to remind ourselves whenever there's a problem, we can make progress or we can make excuses, but we cannot make both. I try to remind myself that within every problem, there's a hidden opportunity. If you can tell yourself that again and again, within every problem, there is a hidden opportunity, you can be innovative in the middle of great problems. I try to get away from the office whenever I'm working on a breakthrough idea. I'll often even leave town, a change of environment leads to a change of perspective. If you need to get innovative, get out of the normal workplace, see things differently, believe you can do something about the problem, and you can make a really big difference. Limitations, they're the breeding ground for innovation. Have a can-do mindset, we can do something even though we don't have everything we think we need, and we're gonna make adjustments and grow, and

have some breakthrough ideas. Let's deal with another question, this is from Chris. And he said, "I just finished reading "The E-Myth Revisited on your recommendation. "I'm wondering how you have a highly "orchestrated culture that's also empowering. "What is the line between excellent orchestration "and systems, and micromanagement?" Chris said, "I wanna avoid being a micromanager, "but make sure the systems are orchestrated well." That is a fantastic question, and I love the way you phrased it, Chris, you said, "Where is the line?" And I would say that there needs to be a line, but that line should never ever be fixed. The line should be floating because we don't always put the line in the right place the first time. And if the line is pretty much in the right place, over time your organization is going to change, therefore the line needs to change as well. The way we phrase it behind the scenes in my organization is we say, "Where's the balance between flexibility and control? "What are we gonna be flexible on "and what are we gonna try to control?" And in this balance, here's our goal. The problem is, whenever systems are too strong, whenever too strong on systems and controls, our leaders start to think more like managers, and that's not good, we don't want managers, we want leaders. Whenever we're too light on systems, then we drift from the culture and we lose efficiencies and effectiveness. So, the goal is this, we want the right systems to eliminate problems and to elevate efficiency. We want the right amount of systems that will eliminate problems and elevate efficiency, but we don't want so many systems that it slows the process, duplicates efforts, or stifles leaders. Let me say this again because it's a little bit complicated but really important. We want the right systems to eliminate problems and elevate efficiency, but not so many systems that you slow the process, duplicate efforts, and stifle your leaders. Now, a side note, when it comes to your team leaders, you can play favorites. There's some people in your organization that you wanna give more flexibility. Others you wanna have a little more control. If you got a rookie, that's just learning, you may wanna control that rookie. If you got a seven-year veteran, you may wanna say, "You know what, you're a seasoned leader. "I'm gonna give you more flexibility." So the line could actually be in different places for different peoples, if that fits your situation. Bottom line is, draw a line, evaluate the placement of that line, change it whenever the needs of the organization changes. Let's dive into the core teaching for today. We're gonna talk about decision making. In fact, I have a brand new book out called Divine Direction: Seven Decisions That Will Change Your Life. Seven decisions that will change your life. If you're interested in getting a copy of this book, you can get it at Amazon, at Barnes and Nobles, Mardel, anywhere books are sold, and a key line from the book is this. The decisions that we make today, determine the stories that we tell tomorrow. The decisions that we make today, determine the stories that we tell tomorrow. If you're gonna be successful in your business, in your ministry, in your career, a lot of people will look on and think, "Well, you must "have made a few really big, great decisions." And you're gonna know the truth that no, no, no, you made hundreds of smaller, faithful, behind the scenes, daily decisions, consistently making wise decisions over time. The problem is, many of us as leaders, we are not the best decision makers. So many of us, we end up making permanent decisions based on temporary emotions. We have to get above our emotions, disconnect our emotions to make wise decisions. In fact, I've done some research that's really fascinating to me. I'll share with you a little side note, and then we'll get into how to make wise decisions. Millennials, the kind of emerging generation, they're having a little bit more challenge making decisions than some previous generations, they're more indecisive. I asked one of our younger team members, "Are you indecisive?" True story, and he looked back at me and said, "Well, yes and no." No joke at all, "Are you indecisive?" "Ehh, I'm not sure, yes and no." And the research shows three big reasons why it's a little bit, or a lot more difficult for the emerging generation to make decisions. One is because of all of the options. For example, if I'm on an international flight, and I've got five comedies to choose from, and I wanna watch a movie, I can choose one of those. If I'm on Netflix, and there's an unlimited number of movies to choose from, I can't make a choice. And the emerging generation has had so many options, it looks like options are a blessing, but it ends up being a curse, it's more difficult to

make decisions. Second problem is, this is the first generation that's had, what we call the illusion of perfection, the illusion of perfection. When you look at social media, what do you see? You see someone else's highlight reels and think, "Wow, their life looks perfect!" You compare that with your behind the scenes. You see their perfect body, their perfect vacation, their perfect relationship, their perfect meal. You compare that with your Pinterest fail, and you think, "My life is not any good." So what happens is, we wanna make the perfect decision, but when we fear that we might make an imperfect decision, many people end up making no decision, which ends up becoming a really poor decision. The illusion of perfection leads to a fear of failure, not wanting to miss what's perfect. And thirdly, a lot of people just haven't developed the skill of decision making because as parents, my generation would have been known as the helicopter parents. When I was growin' up, my parents said, "Go outside and play" and so all day long, we had to decide what we're gonna do. Now, my generation over-programmed the next generation. You're goin' here, you're goin' here, you're goin' here. And took away the freedom to make decisions. We said, "Here's what you're gonna do." And they didn't have the option to decide, and so, they didn't develop the skill of decision making. All that, as a foundation, how do we, as leaders, make better decisions? Just like we can get better at casting vision, leading meetings, strategizing, delegating, we can improve as decision makers. Let me give you five big thoughts, number one. When you're making decisions, avoid either-or scenarios. As often as you can, avoid either-or scenarios. What do we wanna do, anytime we're thinking, should I do this or that, we wanna try to expand the options. I wanna encourage ya, anytime you're trying to decide between one thing or the other, ask yourself, "Is there a third thing, a fourth thing, a fifth thing?" For example, should I fire this staff member or not? Should we add a new campus to our church or not? Should I hire this person or not? Expand the options, should I fire this person? Or should we try to get them coaching? Or should we move them to another department where they might be more successful? Or should we put them on probation with some goals? Or should we send them to a conference? Expand the options, should we add another campus or not? How 'bout this, should we add another service before we add another campus? Should we add three staff members and some programming before we add another campus? Or, instead of saying, should we add one more campus, maybe we say, should we add three more campuses? Expand the options, should I hire this person or not? How 'bout, should I add three part-time people instead of one full-time person? Or, should we utilize volunteers? Or, should we contract this out, expand the options? One of my favorite breakthrough ideas came in our organization when we expanded the options. I was asked an either-or question. Should I have Sam preach for me when I'm off this weekend or Chris preach for me, Sam or Chris? And someone said, "What if we had a bunch "of different people speak at the different locations?" And we ended up having 86 different speakers on one weekend when what happened? We got out of the either-or mindset. Breakthrough idea came when we expanded the options. Avoid either-or scenarios as much as possible. Number two, avoid decision fatigue like the plague. Avoid decision fatigue like the plague. We talked about all the options that people have when you're trying to wade through so many options. We actually get tired when we consistently make decisions. In fact, the New York Times did a fascinating study on 1,100 decisions that a small panel made on whether to give people parole or not. There were 1,100 decisions, this panel of three judged all 1,100 decisions and they gave a third of the prisoners parole. Now I wanna show you what happened. The prisoners who appeared before this panel early in the morning, got parole 70% of the time. So if you were on at 8:30 and the panel's very likely to say, "Yes, you can have parole." Those who appeared late in the day got parole only 10% of the time. I want you to think about this. 70% were paroled early in the day. Only 10% late in the day, why? Because the panel got tired, tired of making decisions, tired of hearing excuses, they were worn out, and it was so much easier to say no than it was yes because they had decision fatigue. I am crazy passionate about avoiding decision fatigue. Every time you make a decision it takes mental energy and effort, so what I wanna do, is I wanna delegate as many decisions as possible. One of the best

leadership ideas you can have is to delegate decision making every time you can. Your goal as the leader is gonna be this, to make only the decisions that you can make. Make only the decisions that you can make, and delegate the rest, so I delegate things that would even make you laugh. For example, I'm colorblind, and so, picking out an outfit that matches for the weekend is very stressful for me, so I've just delegated it. When I show up for the weekend, a team of people that love this kinda stuff, will have three outfits and say, "You can choose from any of these" and I've delegated that. If there was such thing as Garanimals, back when I was growin' up, the tiger on a shirt, matched the tiger on the pants, I'd be in business. But instead, I delegate that, it takes stress off me because I can't tell if things match. As simple as what are you gonna have for lunch today? In my office, I don't go out for lunch. We always bring lunch in, saves a lot of time. Everyday someone would come in and say, "What do you want us to order for lunch today?" And I have to stop and think, "Hmm, what I am in the mood for?" So what did I do, I said, "Hey, here are my "five favorite things, everyday you pick. "Just bring me one of the five." And here's what's so fun, everyday something comes in. They put it in front of me and I go, "Wow, it's one of my favorites." So simple, so small, but anything that we can delegate, anything at all, we're empowering other people, we're freeing up mental energy in our own minds. The strength of your organization is often reflected by how deep into your organization people have the power and the freedom to make decisions. You wanna strengthen your leaders, delegate decisions and you free up mental and emotional capacity to do more. Number three, become your own personal adviser. You wanna become better at decision making? Become you own personal adviser. Ask yourself, what would I tell myself, if I was giving myself advice about this situation. What you're doing here is you're separating emotion from the decision making process because when we're involved, we get too emotionally connected. For example, I had a team member that was not successful in one role, so I helped move him to another role. He wasn't successful there, so we moved him again. He wasn't successful there, so we moved him a third time. We all liked this guy and we were saying, "What should we do now?" I asked myself, "Craig, if you were "advising yourself, what would you do?" And it was really, really clear. If I was advising myself, I'd say, "We have a common problem, this guy doesn't work anywhere. "He's not the right guy, you should remove him." Whenever I advised myself, it separated the emotion that I liked this person, and suddenly I could see it's very, very clear that this is not the right person for our organization. I would say you could ask these two questions, ask, what would a great leader do? You're trying to make a decision, what would a great leader do? If you're parenting, it might be what would a great mom do? What would a great dad do? What would a great leader do? And then ask yourself this, ask yourself, what would my successor do? If someone replaced me, what would they do? Years ago, my church is based in Oklahoma. We launched in Phoenix, and it just wasn't working. And we knew it was probably the right thing to go ahead and close it down, but we just couldn't do it. I sat around the table with a group of our executive leaders and decision makers and we said, "If someone replaced us, what would they do?" And all of a sudden it was very clear. If someone replaced us, the first thing they would do, is they would shut that down, hands down, no question to ask, it was the right thing to do. Separating ourselves, becoming the adviser, gave us the wisdom and the emotional altitude to make the right decision. Become your own adviser, number four. Decide when you're going to decide. If you wanna become a better decision maker, decide when you're going to decide, why? Because procrastination is the number one enemy of progress. And what do we do, so often we procrastinate, we put it off, we put it off, so on my list of things that I'm going to do, my priorities for the day, I have a to-do list and I have a to-decide list. These are two separate lists, these are the things to do. Here's a whole 'nother separate category to decide, and I don't want to mix those because they're actually different. One takes action, the other's gonna take even more emotional energy. I would recommend that you bulk the decisions that you need to make, and then have a specific time during the week when you're making decisions. For me, it's Thursday, I try to make very few decisions before Thursday because by Thursday, my message

preparation is finished, I've done all the things that I need to do. Suddenly the weight and the pressure is lifted off, and I've got the emotional clarity to tackle decisions, put them into a certain time, I know we're gonna do them then, we're gonna get to them. Bulk them and then, if you still can't make a decision, remind yourself of the cost of no decision. Remind yourself of the cost of no decision. When you can't make a decision, you lose leadership credibility, people around you will not trust you or follow you, and you also lose opportunity. I always teach leaders this, if you wait until you're 100% sure about a decision, you're probably too late. Make the decision, put it in a category, we're gonna come together, make it at this time. Become your own adviser and decide when you're gonna decide. And then, number five, and let me give you a little preface for this one. I understand that many who listen are not Christians like I am, and I am totally thankful that you're listening. I completely respect your beliefs and I hope you respect the fact that I am a Christian pastor, and so I believe that there is a spiritual edge to decision making. You don't have to agree, but number five, I would say this, is listen for spiritual direction. Listen for spiritual direction, in fact, that's the name of my book, Divine Direction. I love a verse of scripture and I'll try not to get preachy, but this is what scripture says, that we can make our plans but the Lord determines our steps. If you are a spiritual person, if you're a Jesus follower like I am, here's something you can do. You can very simply keep a list of every time you feel prompted during the day, and chances are, you'll think, "Oh, I should reach out to this person." "Oh, I should send a thank you note to this person." "I should send an encouraging note "to this person on my team." "I should call this person and say, "'Man you knocked it out, that presentation was amazing.'" "Oh, I need to have a difficult "conversation with this person." If you start to write down whenever you believe you might be prompted, suddenly you're gonna recognize, perhaps, God is actually directing my steps. And when you recognize that there is a power beyond this world, that actually cares about what you're doing, step by step, you can say, "You know what, I believe you're "leading me in this direction." And you can have confidence to move forward and make decisions, not just with your own power, but with faith you're actually doing something that God wants you to do. To summarize, here's a couple big thoughts. If you don't wanna develop leaders, make all the decisions. Let me say it again, if you do not want to develop leaders, make all the decisions. If you want your organization to reflect your weaknesses, make all the decisions. If you wanna develop leaders, give decisions away. Delegate as many as possible, make only the decisions that you can make. Make as few as decisions as possible, and whenever you make them, make them wise. A quick review, how do we become better at decision making? Number one, avoid either-or scenarios. As often as you can, expand the options. Number two, avoid decision fatigue like the plague. Delegate as many decisions as possible. Number three, become your own personal adviser. Ask yourself, "What would a great leader do? "What would my successor do?" Number four, decide when you're going to decide. Procrastination is the number one enemy of progress. Have a to-do list and a to-decide list. Remind yourself of the cost of no decision. You lose leadership credibility, you might lose opportunity. If you wait until you're 100% sure, you're often too late. And number five, listen for spiritual direction. Keep a list of every time you feel prompted. If you don't wanna develop leaders, you make all of the decisions. If you want your organization to reflect your weaknesses, make all of the decisions. Don't make many, as often as you can, delegate them. A couple of application questions. Number one, if you're trying to make an either-or decision, what is a third or fourth option you can add to the mix? Remember, every time you're trying to make an either-or decision, expand the options. Number one, if you're trying to make an either-or decision, what is a third or fourth option you can add to the list? Number two, what three decisions are you making that you can delegate? What three decisions are you making that you can delegate? Empower someone else, they'll get better, and they'll free your energy to focus on other things. Now, in the next episode, we're gonna talk about recruiting and hiring onto your team. And this is so important, why? Because the potential of your organization rests in the strength of its people. If you wanna be great at something, what do you wanna be great as a

leader? You wanna be great at identifying, developing, and empowering the right people, and we're gonna talk about that in the next episode. Again, thank you so much for sharing this on social media. Thank you for being a part of our community. The new book is called Divine Direction: Seven Decisions That Will Change Your Life. You can get it anywhere books are sold. Remember, as a leader, you're called to make a difference in people's lives. Be yourself, why, because people would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right.

- Thanks again for tuning in for another episode of The Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, you are in luck because Craig Groeschel's latest book, Divine Direction: Seven Decisions That Will Change Your Life, is available today wherever books are sold. Or at divinedirectionbook.com, plus you can go deeper with additional resources and show notes at life.church/leadershippodcast. You can also sign-up there to have those notes delivered to your inbox each and every week. Plus you can do us a huge, huge favor. You can rate, review, and share this podcast on iTunes. It's a great way to get the word out to help others grow in their leadership as well. Again, thanks for joining us here today. We've got new episodes dropping the first Thursday of each and every month, and we'll see you back here next time for another episode of The Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast.