



# *LAW #2 - LAW OF PLANNING*

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It's four part series. First week was the Law of Seasons, and we looked at the fact that your life has seasons and then each year of your life has a season as you know, the seasons you're able to prepare for the next season. And also sort of make the most of the season you're in. Today, we're gonna deal with the, uh, the second law, the law of planning. And then the third law will be the law of wise counsel. And the fourth law will be the law of knowing God's will. And the whole goal is for you to work on your life, not just in it. And I love you, and I'm honored to help and serve. So let me, uh, pray and, uh, and we'll get to work. Father God, thank you for an opportunity to teach in a more informal and practical, uh, context. Thank you for, uh, the scriptures, especially Proverbs as we'll. Dig a little deeper into that great book of wisdom tonight. Holy Spirit, we invite you to bring us wisdom so that we could walk in your will, we could walk in your ways, we could walk according to your word. And, uh, father, I'm just, uh, thinking of James one five, where it says, if we lack wisdom to ask for it, and you'll give it in abundance without finding fault. And Lord, when it comes to life, there are certain things that are clear, they're right and they're wrong. There are a lot of other things that we're just not certain what to do. Do we stay in this city? Do we move, do we stay in this house or do we sell it? Do we drive this car or do we upgrade it? Do we, do we continue in this job or do we look for a new one? Do we continue with these friends? Or is it time to, to part ways? There's a lot of decisions, Lord, that weigh on our hearts that we need wisdom for. And so I hope today, Lord, to serve well. And I invite you, holy Spirit, to, to bring wisdom so that we might walk in wisdom and we ask for this wisdom in Jesus'. Good name. Amen. Um, lemme start with a question from a business book. Think of a large cruise ship that has on it, a lot of passengers in their possessions, and it's traveling over a long distance. And the goal, obviously is to get these valuable people in their possessions to the safe destination when it comes to that ship of everyone who's involved in any way with that ship. Who's the most important person Captain? Yeah, almost everyone says the captain. And, and here's the truth, it's the boat builder because you can be a great captain, and if somebody builds you a bad boat, it really doesn't matter. Amen. How many of you have driven a poorly engineered car? How many of you have lived in a poorly built home? How many of you, uh, work in a poorly architected organization or company? Right? Uh, what happens is if something is not well built, it doesn't matter how hard you work or how skilled you are, you are invariably frustrated and thwarted because you can't really make much progress. And so the big idea is that many people spend a lot of time and energy working in their life and, and, and you're god's people. And I'm guessing that most, if not all of you work very hard. You're, you're hardworking, you're exhausted, you're, you're responsible, uh, but you're working in your life not on it. You're, you're doing all the captain work and none of the boat builder architecting construction work. And so what we wanna do today, we wanna pull back and say, let's take a break from working in our life. Let's take a look at our life and, and see if there isn't some work to be done on our life. The proverbial boat. That that, that we are building by God's grace that houses us. If we're married, our, our, our spouse, if we have children, our children, if we have grandchildren, our grandchildren, and all of our possessions, our wealth, if we're in business, it's our coworkers. Other families are depending upon us for their livelihood. What we build is carrying a lot of precious people and precious cargo. And if it's not architected well, starting with our own life and our own family, uh, then we find ourselves in grave danger. And some of you're working very hard and, and you're overworked, exhausted captains. But I I wanna spend some time today looking at the boat that is your life. And that is the law of planning. And so the law of planning is pretty clear throughout scripture. But a lot of the wisdom literature, which is what we're talking about, you need to know that there are different categories in the Bible. There's categories of sin, and there's also categories of folly. And not everything is a sin. Some things are just not very wise. They're, they're foolish. They don't produce results. They're, they're a waste of time and energy. Some books of the Bible will deal a lot with the law and sin, which is the violation of the law. Other books of the Bible will deal with folly and how wisdom overcomes folly. And so the wisdom literature, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, uh, song of Solomon job, James, those are all wisdom books in the Bible. So Psalm 20, verse four, may he grant you your heart's desire and fulfill all of your plans, right? It says that the Lord wants to know what your plans are, and then he wants to help you architect those plans. And then he wants to help bring those plans to pass. And um, Proverbs 1220 says, deceit is in the hearts of those who desire evil, but those who plan peace have joy. What he says is, you

can either plan for good or evil. People who are evil make plans. Some of you know this. There are people that are trying to harm your marriage. They're trying to destroy your family. They're trying to date your teenage daughter. They're trying to, you know, hostile takeover or put out of business your company. There are people who plan evil. And so as God's people, we need to plan for wisdom. We need to plan for peace. And if we don't have a plan, then ultimately we find ourselves in a position we are, uh, being attacked, overcome, and overrun by those who have a plan to do harm and evil. And I would encourage all of you not to have a plan for evil, but to make plans for wisdom and for God's goodness. So let me, let me continue down this, this law of planning. Uh, next slide, please. Uh, planning requires priorities. Planning requires priorities. And I'll, I'll give it away. But ultimately I've got a huge homework assignment for you. There are pages of a homework assignment. If you're willing to do it, you'll need to do it yourself, with your spouse, perhaps even involve your family. And all of this will come into a firm plan. But for planning, we need priorities. Jesus talks about this in Luke 14, 26 through 32. If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and children, and brothers and sisters, it sounds a little harsh, right? It sounds a little harsh. 'cause the Bible says, we're supposed to honor our mother and father, that we're supposed to love our wives, that children are a blessing. That word here for hate means really one of priority. It means to regard someone above someone else. It's, it's a principle of priority. Father, mother, children, brothers and sisters, they are to be lower, lesser priorities, um, than the relationship with God. And, and when God has our priorities in order, then he becomes first in our life. We don't push other people into the position that we have God in. That's how we crush people. We put them in God's place, and then when they disappoint us, we're frustrated with them. And that allows us through our relationship with God to have the love and the joy and the forgiveness and the patience and the wisdom to then invest and divest in the people that we care most about. So planning requires priority, beginning with your relationship with God, uh, and even his own life. He cannot be my disciple, whoever. It does not bear his own cross and come after me, cannot be to my disciple. For which of you, here's a planning principle desiring to build a tower. How many of you are in construction, right? You, you're a builder, you build things. My dad was a, a, a union drywaller. He was a project manager for a large corporate firm for a while. He also had the tool bags and, and hung sheet rock. And then he became a building inspector. In, in the latter years of his life, he was a builder. And, uh, my dad as a, as a builder, and then also as someone who enforced the codes, the first thing he would do when he showed up on the job site is ask who's in charge? Where's the plans? Everything comes down to the plans. You can't build anything without a plan. And you can get in a lot of trouble if you start building something without a plan. Some of you have tried that and that's why you're, you know, former construction workers. You, you gotta have some sort of plan, right? Which means we go get the architects, they then hire the engineers, everybody makes sure that the math works. And then we put together a plan that fits, um, whatever the codes are. And then we bring in those who are the potential builders. They give us a bid for materials and labor. And then you decide, pencil it out, is this worth building or not? Will it stay up? And then secondly, when it's completed, is it something that is actually worthwhile? Or are we gonna go upside down and lose money? And so Jesus is using this planning priority as a principle, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to compete it, complete it, rather otherwise, when he has laid a foundation, is not able to finish all who see it, begin to mock him saying, this man began to build and was not able to finish. I don't know if you've gone out, uh, I think it's the 10. You just head west, west, west, west, west. There's a huge, um, racing track that they poured the stands and they poured the infield and then left. Just think how much time and energy and money was spent on that. And it didn't come to fruition. It was mothballed. Nothing came of it. Massive loss. And what he's saying is, some people, they just are working very hard, but they don't have a plan. And as a result, they either don't complete what they're building or what they build doesn't sustain itself and it collapses. This can be a marriage, a relationship, a business and or a ministry. And some of you are hard, hardworking, but you're not smart Planning. And smart planning precedes hardworking. And you, it requires both. Uh, this man began to build and was not able to finish. Or what king going out to encounter another king in war will not sit down first and deliberate, whether he is able with 10,000 to meet him, uh, meet the one who comes against him with 20,000. And if not, well the other is yet a great way off. He sends a delegation and asks

for terms of peace. He says, consider it in war. Imagine a general in war. Said, I don't know how many there are or what they have. Let's, let's just run ahead and find out. Then all the men die. And, and people do this with their family. I don't have a plan. Let's just go forward. Okay? You're gonna hurt your family. I have a business, don't have a real business plan. Let's just go forward and see what happens. Well, I'll tell you what's gonna happen. You're gonna, you're gonna meet resistance and ultimately you're going to suffer. And there are certain times he says, when you're planning, you plan for war. Other times you plan for peace and you say, this is not a war. We can win. And, and we need to make alternate plans. And, and here's the big idea. Sometimes Christians will just almost legalistically push one another to double down, work harder, try harder, do more, do more work harder, try. Some of you are there. And what you're building is not well architected. And as a result, when it comes to your family, when it comes to your business, when it comes to your ministry, the problem is not your effort. The problem is the lack of wisdom in your plan. Okay? Um, next slide. So what are your priorities? Jesus here is saying, first priority is me. And it can't be you and it can't be your spouse, and it can't be your kids, and it can't be your mom and it can't be your dad and it can't be, you know, your grandkids. They're all priorities. But the first priority has to be God. And everything we build has to be with God. First God, who are you? What do you say? What do you want? How do I build this in a way that is integrous toward your desires? This would be my recommendation, but it's something to consider. God first, that's what Jesus just told us. And then your spouse, there's your covenantal relationship, and then your children, and maybe if you're a grandparent and your grandkids are nearby, your grandkids, okay? Um, and then your work, you gotta pay the bills, uh, ministry and or your hobby. And what this does for us is it establishes for us our, our priorities for planning. So you think, okay, I need a plan for my relationship with God. I need a plan for my relationship with my spouse. If I'm married or get married, if we're gonna have kids, I better have a plan for my kids. If we're gonna have grandkids, I better have a plan for my grandkids. Where are they gonna go to school? Where are they gonna go to church? You know, what is the lifestyle we will have for them? If you're gonna work a job, you better have a plan for your career. Um, if you're gonna be doing ministry, you better have a plan to make that part of your life and fit that into your priorities and schedule. And if you have a hobby, you better have a plan for how that fits in with all your other priorities, and it better not leapfrog your priorities. And so what happens is the principle of jealousy is God is a jealous God. Jealousy is not always a bad thing, right? I'll tell you, uh, if I come home tonight, and there is a guy sitting at my dinner table with my wife and my kids, and he's sitting in my chair and I ask, what are you doing here? He says, well, sometimes you eat here. Sometimes I eat here. You know, there's rotating priorities in this household. Um, I'll be, I'll be, uh, I'll be doing ministry from a jail cell. 'cause that's, that makes me jealous. Amen. That makes me jealous, right? That's my seat. This is my house. That's my wife. These are my kids. That's my plate. You need to get up outta my chair. That's mine. And some of you say, are you jealous? A hundred percent for sure, because that's my place. What you need to know is God is jealous for his place. God's jealous for his place. And what happens is what we will do is we will take one of our lower lesser priorities, we'll put it in the first position, and then we'll tell God, you need to bless my business. You need to bless my marriage. You need to save my kids. You need to fix my problems. You need to, whatever the priority might be. And oftentimes God is saying, I don't mind loving you and helping you and serving you, but I'm jealous that someone or something is in my place and you're using me to get the thing that you really want, and I'm not your highest priority. And there's a whole stream of Christianity that basically says God exists to give you your highest priority. God is not your highest priority. You use him as a means to an end. God gets jealous because he should be in his place first priority. And then what happens is your spouse will get jealous if another priority leapfrogs them. Let's say, uh, your, let's say you're a man and your wife says, man, your hobby takes a lot of time, a lot of money, a lot of effort, and we all have to work around it because it takes up the time and energy and the schedule first. How come it's such a high priority? Oftentimes then the argument ensues. Well, a I need time with the guys. It's not a bad thing. No, it's not a bad thing, but it's in the wrong place. You can have a good thing in the wrong place. And that's where it becomes a problem and it triggers jealousy. Um, what happens as well, oftentimes, um, couple gets married, they're the priority until the children are born. And then all of a sudden the children are so demanding, or they're so delightful either way, that they take all of

the time and energy. And now the spouse feels very sort of displaced and misplaced. Um, and it is saying the children are a priority, but the marriage is the highest priority. That work is a priority, but God is a higher priority than work. That other things are important, but they're not as important. So when you're thinking through your plan, you're thinking through first principles and first priorities. Many people I talk to, even Christians, they do not actually have written out with their spouse and their kids what their priorities are. So when the family goes to make decisions, they're just sort of making it out of midair. Imagine in the United States of America, if we had no constitution, and now we're just trying to establish laws and adjudicate differences, right? Your, your family, your life needs a constitution. It needs the basic essential priorities, and everyone needs to know that. And then the budget and the schedule needs to reflect that. Because a priority is not just what you feel, it's what you do. It's what you do. How you spend your money determines your priorities. How you spend your time determines your priorities. And the principle of priorities is one where we need to actually think about that. And then what you need to realize is there are some people in things that are just not able to make the list. Some of you, when you do this homework assignment, you'll say, I have 27 priorities. You can't, unlike God, your finite, limited time, energy and re resources. You can't just keep adding to your responsibilities. At some point, if you're gonna put someone or something off the list, you have to take someone or something off the list. This is all the, the principle of priority and the principle of planning, I should say. Um, next slide. Couple other, um, planning principles plan with patients. Proverbs 21, 5, the plans of the diligent, that's someone who is consistent, they build momentum over time. Okay? This is someone who is patiently cultivating their relationship with God, their relationship with their spouse, their relationship with their kids, their income stream and their business, their effectiveness in ministry, whatever the case might be. Um, it was interesting, uh, last year, uh, we were watching, uh, NBA playoffs. Any of you watch Steph Curry, he's like a video game, right? I mean, the guy's 15 feet behind the three point line. Nobody's defending him because he is out of range. But for Steph Curry, there is no range. And so he just, he'll throw it up from anywhere. And immediately my son said, dad, let's go shoot hoops. And all my kids are trying to start as Steph Curry, right? We're on the basketball court. And my, my 10-year-old is literally on the other side of the half court line throwing it as far and as fast as he can. And you know what? He didn't make a lot because, you know, to shoot like that is diligence. It's habitation. It's time after time, after time, after time, after time, there's a guy named Malcolm Gladwell. He's got a 10,000 hour principle. He looked at people who are the best in their field world class across the globe, the best cello players, the best guitar players, the best free throw shooters, right? The best concert pianist, whatever the best marksman, whatever their skill may be. And he was trying to find what makes certain people extraordinary while other people remain ordinary. And he came up with something called the 10,000 hour principle. That it basically takes 10,000 hours to be world class at something. That's, that's, that's diligence. That means a concert pianist has sat at a keyboard for 10,000 hours. That means a major league baseball player has been in the batting cage or on the field for 10,000 hours, right? If you do the math, 40, 40 hours in an average work week, 50 weeks a year, that's 2000 hours. That is five years of a full-time job just learning how to throw a curve ball or to slap shot a, a hockey puck, or how to play a violin. It's diligence. And what happens is, people who don't like to plan, they're always looking for a shortcut. And there isn't one, right? That's why there's always some new get rich quick scheme or lose 127 pounds today eating cheeseburger. It just, there's always somebody trying to sell a shortcut. But Proverbs says over and over and over that there just isn't one that the plans of the diligent, the person who has a plan works. The plan is faithful, is diligent, leads surely to plenty right? For you to really know your Bible. It's gonna take some hours for you to really win your wife's heart. It's gonna take some hours for you to really know your kids and invest in them. It's gonna take some hours for you to build an organization. It can be a ministry or a business. It's going to take some hours. If you're in sales to build your client base, it's going to take some hours. Everything that is worth anything requires a tremendous amount of investment, especially when you're trying to get something off the ground. I've got a buddy of mine, his dad was one of the engineers with NASA that will get the space shuttle up into orbit. And he called me when we were launching the church and he said, Hey, I got an analogy for you. He's a pastor and really nice guy. And I said, what's that? He said, well, my dad once told me that to get the shuttle into orbit, they would burn a swimming pool filled with fuel every

second. And once it was in orbit, it got the same. Gas mileage is a suburban. What that means is it takes a tremendous amount of energy to get anything moving, to get an arrow pointed up. And what some people think is, I'll go from this relationship to this relationship, this job, to this job, this church, to this church, you know, this company to this company. I'm sure there's a shortcut somewhere. There isn't. It's the 10,000 hour principle. It's the swimming pool of fuel principle. And if all you're doing is just starting over and over and over without having a plan and working it, what you're doing is you're burning more time, more energy, and more money, and you're just doing it over and over and over. You are actually, you're actually paying the most expensive years over and over and over, and you never get to the good gas mileage. And so Proverbs talks about the diligent. The diligent know this, it takes a while to get something going. It takes something to keep it going. And ultimately, momentum is gained slowly and walk lost quickly. So you need to work very diligently. But those of everyone who is hasty, surely to poverty, what he's saying is you can't rush it. What he's saying is, people who quit, they give up too early. People who don't see things through to completion, people who don't have a plan. So they don't know what their next step is for those people. It's a lot of pain. I say this, not to discourage you, I say this as someone who speaks from personal pain and experience. I've done this myself. A good friend of mine, he's a pastor. He says, it's important to let other people pay your dumb tax, right? That, that you, you learn by making mistakes. Amen. So, so you find somebody who's learned by making a mistake and you let them pay your dumb tax. That's what Proverbs is all about. It's taking the life examples of others and saying, okay, you see what they did, you see how it worked? Let them pay your dumb tax. Be diligent. Don't be hasty. Make a plan and work it. Don't just keep looking for a shortcut. So that's planning with patience, also planning with prayer. Proverbs 16, three, commit your work to the Lord and your plans will be established. Now, what we tend to do when it comes to prayer, we make a plan and then we ask God to bless it. What we need to do is ask God what the plan is. Right? When Grace and I felt called to Arizona, we prayed for months, we fasted, we sought wise counsel. And it was like, okay, Lord, we believe this is your will. We brought it by the pastors and mature people that we trusted. Um, we did a lot of research. I mean, we were talking to God about this all the time. A foolish person either doesn't talk to God or projects their own desires onto God and assumes that that was his voice when it was their voice. Prayer is not what you do after you plan. Prayer is what you do before you plan, as you plan, and after you plan. It's part of the process. It's running everything by the Lord who knows the future. And he will be the one who's most able to help you to prepare for it when it comes to planning as well. Um, next slide, please. Uh, planning with pivot, this is a awkward point, but let me make it. Proverbs 16, nine, the heart of a man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps. Uh, what he's talking about is having a plan and then the Lord being able to pivot you. Okay? There are certain leaders, they're process leaders, other leaders are pivot leaders. Lemme tell you, there's basically two kinds of leaders, process leaders like to do all of their homework, all of their research. They're risk averse. They consider the downside. They're looking for things that could go wrong. They're seeking counsel. They're, they're running research and development. They're, they're getting all of their facts in order. And their hope is to get a process that will lead to the desired outcome. Okay? This can be an engineering, this can be in the field of whatever it might be. Other people are pivot leaders. They don't really have much of a plan. They're more of a gun slinger. They're like, I don't know. I'm more intuitive. I go with my gut. I'll get there and I'll, if I make a mistake, I'll just, I'll just pivot, I'll just change course of direction. Momentum is very important to me. So as long as I'm moving, I don't care. I'll take two steps to the left and I'll take one step to the right. As long as I'm moving, I'll be pivoting. Now, the problem is, if you're only a process leader, then you will put faith in the process, not in the Lord. And you'll be committed to the process, even when the Lord is redirecting your steps and causing you to pivot. Some of you guys are like that. You'll make a plan. And then you think that the plan is all in red letters and Jesus wrote it, okay? And, and then you're committed to it. Like it's a book of the Bible. That's, that's just your plan. And all plans are in pencil. All plans are in pencil. So we plan, we pray, we prepare, we give it to the Lord. We seek to work our plan for our family, for our business, for our ministry, whatever the case might be. And then we have to course correct. Okay, that didn't work. I learned something. New variables have changed. I need to pivot. The guys who are only pivot guys, they, they like the freedom, they like the flexibility. They like the speed by which they can change, but without

a plan. They're like someone who's heading out for a road trip and doesn't have any destination in mind, right? They, they, they have too much confusion. The pivot leader does the, the process leader has too much control for the process leader. Their highest value is control and order for the pivot leader. Their highest value is freedom and flexibility. And what I'm saying is you need both. You need a process. And as you're working your process to be able to pivot. To be able to pivot. And that's what he says here, the heart of the man plans his way. There's a process. But the Lord establishes his steps. He's gonna pivot him. He's gonna move him. Proverbs 19:21, many are the plans in the mind of a man, but is the purpose of the Lord that will stand. You can have your plan, work your plan, walk your plan and be open to God. Redirecting your plan. How many of you have seen this in your life? You're like, I thought this is where we're going and what we're doing. And we went there and we met somebody, we learned something. Oh, and now we're going this direction. And we believe that was the Lord course correcting us. Does that mean that you didn't hear the Lord? Does that mean that you were wrong? Does it? No. No. This is just the faith walk. We walk by faith, not by sight. We have a plan to see as far down the road as we can. And as we venture down the road, now we see more or we see more clearly and the Lord reveals and he redirects. That's just the way that it goes. Don't we Discouraged by that you pivot guys. We'll use as an excuse. That's why I never have a process or a plan. Everything changes. So that's why I don't have a plan. And the, and the process guys will be paralyzed to change in the face of adversity. That's why sometimes even large companies that have been very successful go into a decline cycle because they continue to work the plan that used to work. And they don't pivot and alter and change. You need both. Uh, next one, planning principles. So I'm gonna give you this big homework assignment, okay? You don't have to do it, but if it helps, I hope it helps. This is what I do with my family. This is actually what we do. When I talked about seasons of life and annual seasons, particularly when there's been transitions in our life, seasons, my wife and I literally do this project. This is what we've done for years. So a couple of principles as you're working on your plan, work on a vision plan for your family with your spouse. This is what Grace and I do together, right? The Bible says that she's my helper 'cause I need a lot of help, right? It's obvious. The Bible says in Proverbs that a prudent wife is from the Lord. Um, that, that without grace, I'm just not as good. She sees things for the family and ministry, vocation career that I don't see. Same with me. That's why we're better together. So grace and I actually work this plan together. And what this brings, this brings, um, this brings vision to your family. Division literally means to visions. And what oftentimes happens in a home, a husband and a wife have not done the hard work of a unified vision. And the result is they've each got their own independent vision. That is by definition the vision and a lot of the fights in the marriage over whose vision will be implemented as opposed to the couple agreeing on their vision for their life. Where will we live? Where will our kids go to school? All these questions that I've got in your, uh, homework assignment. Once you agree on the vision now you don't have to argue and fight over what the vision is. Now you can work together to implement the vision. Some of you, the reason you're having a hard time even getting your family or your business to move forward, somebody you're in business with, they have a totally different vision than you. Your spouse has a very different vision than you. Or your children have a very different vision than you and you have division and you can't move forward together building because you haven't agreed on the architecting blueprint. Does that make sense? So I wanna pull back and get rid of a lot of the fights that maybe you're even having with your spouse and saying, let's have the Google Earth big picture discussion before we drill down into the particular details of life. Uh, number two, know the difference between a view, a voice and a vote. When it comes to making a vision plan, you gotta decide who gets a view. They get to see what we're working on. Who gets a voice? They get to speak into it. Who gets to vote? There are parts of our vision plan that we include the children in for two reasons. One, I want to consider them two, I want to train them. If all you ever do is tell a child what to do, they're not gonna grow up and learn how to be wise and see the future and make a plan and prepare for it. And, and let me just say this with girls. If all you do is raise a daughter who just does what she's told by a man, that's a dangerous thing. Because as long as that man is her loving father, maybe she's safe. But if she doesn't know how to think for herself, see the future and have a plan, then when other men start telling her to do things, she will obey them as well. And that's a very dangerous place. So we invite our sons and daughters in into the plan. So for example, before we

moved to Arizona, before we planted this church, before any of this started to unfold, grace and I, through prayer and planning and preparation, we came with a unified vision that included the children. So when it came to the family plan, there were only three votes. God, grace and myself. That's it. And if my young son, who I love with all my heart, if he said, I wanna go to California, 'cause there's Disneyland, I would've said, I love you, but you don't get to vote. I've got five kids, they would out vote us, right? Grace and I would be, you know, homeless, spending all our time at Disneyland, drinking Mountain Dew for breakfast if all the kids got to vote, okay? Some of you, the problem is you have, you will call a family meeting and you'll say, okay, we got a decision to make. What do you guys think? Now they think that they're a jury that's convened and they get a vote. How many of you have done this? And then all of a sudden you're like, uhoh, we just got outvoted by everyone in elementary school on what we're doing with our finances. This was probably not the most brilliant moment we've ever had in our parenting. Okay? So what happens then is you gotta tell the kids, I tell the kids you don't, there are things I will tell 'em. You get to vote on. Where are we going on vacation this year? Where do you wanna go to dinner? You guys vote. Okay, fine. There are other times I'm like, you're not voting on this. You're not voting on this. When we first moved here, my kids didn't, they didn't wanna go to school. They didn't know anybody. They're like, that's it, I'm dropping out. You're in fifth grade, you don't get to vote on that. You're gonna homeschool me. We're not voting on that, right? Mom and dad get to vote. But what we do allow the kids to have is a voice. You can talk to us about this, you can speak into this. And I always tell this to the kids, the more, the more responsible you are, the more freedom you'll have. So if you want more freedom, you need to be more responsible for the kids that are more responsible. We give them a voice. So we'll ask them, what do you think about this? What do you think about that? We're thinking about starting a church. I wanted the whole family to have a voice in that we're not voting but a voice. And I wanted to hear the voice in the heart of every member of my family. And it actually wasn't my idea to plant the church. If my recollection is correct. It was my teenage son's idea. They came up to me. Dad, Mr. Preaching we're a ministry family. How about if we plant a church together as a family? We don't like to do it as a family project. They had a voice. They got to tell me what was in their heart. There are other things that you gotta determine who in the family gets a view of. Maybe you're thinking about moving, but you haven't reached that decision yet. It may not be time to give a view to the kids 'cause you'll freak them out, right? You may be exploring at work your opportunities, but it's not time to give your employer a view into the thought that you might be leaving. It's a little premature. Who gets a view to see what you're working on? Who gets a voice? They're invited to speak into it. Who gets a vote? They actually make the decision. Does that make sense? And so when we make these plans with a family, I'll tell the kids, okay, we're gonna, you get a view of this or you get a voice on that, or you get a vote on this? And, and we'll make it clear. So where we live, some of those things, uh, where we ended up settling the, the family actually had a voice in that. And I wanted to hear and consider and see if there was anything that they would provide that would help Mom and I make a better plan for the family. And the kids were actually very helpful. Number three, the plan must be written down. How many of you, you don't write anything down, okay? You're like, it's all up here. It's all up here. Well, here's the problem. Nobody else lives up here, right? So you need to write it down. Uh, a vision has to be written down so that it can be shared, right? I mean, a lot of plans are in the Bible and they're written down so that we can see them. You wanna write these things down so that they're clear for you. But then you can share them with your wife, with your kids, with your friends, with wise counsel, with your employer, with ministry partners, whatever it is. You wanna be able to write that down. Um, consider the downside and be realistic. How many of you, when you make a plan, you what you, it's not a plan. It's, it's a fantasy, right? Some of you're like, I'm gonna lose a hundred pounds this month and I'm gonna double my income. And no, you won't. Right? And if you do, you're gonna jail. 'cause you stole a lot of money from somebody. Okay? And, and, and you didn't have a plan. Many times you make a plan. And what a plan is, a plan is a realistic goal that has faith, but is not ridiculous fantasy. Because what happens with some people, they will basically exchange a fantasy for a plan. When it doesn't come to pass, then they lose all hope. You wanna build momentum by having a plan that is faith-based. So it's gonna take some god to pull it off, but you want it to be reasonable enough that it actually can come to pass. You're not gonna lose a hundred



pounds immediately. You're not gonna double your income immediately, right? You're not gonna fix a broken marriage with a woman that you've been cruel to immediately. You're not gonna take a wayward child who's very rebellious and recourse. Correct? Immediately God can do a miracle. I get that. But most of the time it's going to take more time. And you need to be reasonable in your plan. Include fun and a margin for error. Some people make a plan and there's no room in the budget or the schedule for fun. How many of you grew up in that home? Your dad's like, we're going on vacation. You're like, no, there's no fun planned. We're driving all day. You know, everything is so plotted out that there's no opportunity to really have fun. We have in our budget, we have in our schedule a, a a lot of fun. So we plan trips and holidays and, and that's part of the voice that the kids get. Where do you want go for spring break? So we're gonna go to California. Okay? What do you want to do for Christmas? We wanna stay home. Okay, what do you want to do for summer? We want to go to the lake and you know, go swimming. Okay, great. Those are all reasonable things. I've, I've heard your voice, mom and I will make a vote. And then we'll make a plan and then we'll execute the plan. And the plan will end up with a lot of inner tubes and kids getting flipped upside down on the lake. So we'll make a plan for fun. Um, include fun and a margin for error. You can't get your budget, your schedule, your life so planned out that you have no margin, right? Life is imperfect. Things are going to happen except the size of your plate. Some of this is an issue of capacity. Some of you, your, uh, you're basically the kind of plate that they put a role on. That's your capacity. Some of you are a dinner plate, some of you are a platter. Some people just have more energy and capacity than others do. Some of you have massive relational capacity. Some of you two friends is a lot, right? That's what you can handle. Some of you business wise. You can manage hundreds of people in your company. You have massive plate size capacity. Others of you, you're a solo worker. Because basically managing yourself is about what you can handle. That's your capacity. And what happens is sometimes when we make a plan, we don't include in that plan our actual capacity. And you need to be reasonable with your capacity. Uh, number seven, then take something off your plate. Whenever something is put on your plate, how many of you, you've got your plate and you're like, well, I've got my job and my hobbies and my friends and my family and my ministry. And you just keep stacking things up. What happens eventually is things start falling off and they start sliding off and you can't keep up. I'll be honest with you, I, today, I kind of found my limit a little bit. Um, I just, I woke up totally tired and just mentally a little foggy and a bit overwhelmed and snowed under with everything that I'm responsible for. And I realized, okay, I've now filled up my plate. This is, I've found my capacity. What I used to do is just stack things up, sleep less, take energy drinks, live off adrenaline, get two intestinal ulcers, and, uh, and blew out my adrenal glands twice. 'cause I was just determined to just keep stacking my plate. And, and ultimately it came out of my, my health. And so health is now a priority for me, and that's part of our plan. And so for me, if I'm gonna put something significant on the plate, I gotta take something off the plate, right? It's baseball season with my three boys right now, which means we got a hundred plus games to go to. That means for a couple of months, some things gotta come off my plate because the boys are going on my plate. That's, and they're my priority. They're more, they're more important to me than some other things. Number eight, use simple systems to keep everything in one place. Um, I use a notebook and I write everything down. Some of you can use your phone, whatever it is, but everything needs to be in one place. Your schedule, your budget, your plans, your communication, everything needs to be in one place. Um, my kids now will tell me this, Hey dad, I need you to write this in your book. It's like the lamb's book of life. If it ain't in there, it ain't gonna make it right. It's, if I don't write it down, I'll forget. Right? I'm 46 and, and I'm, I'm officially having senior moments and if I don't write it down, I will forget. And so I am the guy, I have lists for everything and to-do lists every day. And now I finally got my wife organized. I love my wife with all my heart. She's wonderful. When we first got married, I, she, I was, she would say, oh, I gotta go find my grocery list. I gotta find this. I gotta find that. She put everything on sticky tabs and they're all over the house. And inner person on the bottom of her shoe and trying to get the thing organized was a little complicated. Now she's got one book and she writes everything down and it's glorious at the Driscoll house. It works very, very well. Sync your plan with your family, okay? When it comes to making a plan, a plan doesn't work unless everybody has access to the execution of the details. So years ago, grace and I went to one single unified calendar, okay? We have one digital calendar and

everything goes on there. So I just loaded it up last night. We got our kids school year for 2017, 2018. So I put in all the holidays, dates, vacations, and breaks. I mean, I actually got a little emotional, 'cause I put the graduation of my son on the calendar. It's actually on the calendar. So in, uh, may of 2018, my oldest boy's graduating. But I, I, now, I, okay, now I see that, okay, now we're in a, I know I'm in a season. I've only got my boy for another year and a couple of months. And then my boy's gone. He's off to college. Like, okay, this is a season. And now that I see the finish line before his transition into college, I need to make sure that he's a priority and maximize this opportunity with my son before he leaves home. And what it allows us to do by sinking our calendar, now we know all the kids' activities, school breaks. My travel work. I knew today that Grace had two appointments. One was, uh, basically a, a, a social time to encourage somebody. And one was kind of a counseling time with somebody who was struggling. I know that because it's on our shared calendar. So I text her before, honey, I know you're going into that counseling meeting. I'm praying for you. I'm praying for that woman. Thank you for loving and serving her. I will give you a call after you get out of the meeting. And I need an update just to see how you're doing and how I can pray for you and how it went. It allows grace and I to do life together. We know what one another is doing. How many of you, you come home from work, your spouse comes home from work, maybe you've got your kids, and then it's just total chaos. Erupts like, I didn't know they had sports, or I didn't know there was something at the school, or what the heck we're supposed to be at church? And I thought you were gonna pick up dinner. One organized calendar for the whole family. And then we can give kids access to it if the kids wanna see the calendar. 'cause some of my kids are super organized and some of them they're not. Right? They're butterflies. If the wind blows, they're just gonna, they're just gonna follow it. Others of my kids, they wanna know the schedule. Okay? You can have access to the schedule. You can see everything that the family's doing so that you know too, and it reduces the conflict in the family. And then lastly, uh, a walk with God requires steps. So as I give you a life plan to work on and a vision statement for your family, right? A walk with God requires steps. So the the issue is what, what are first steps? What are next steps? What, what are the priorities? And so that being said, um, the rest is really a reverse engineering practice. It's a, it's a process for you to do this. And you can't do it all now. You'll have to take it with you. I actually take at least a day a year, and I go through the whole thing and I ask Grace to take a day a year and do the whole thing. And then we get together and we share notes and we bring, uh, vision and unity together, and we talk through the details. This comes from a friend of mine who is probably the most effective, successful, impressive person I've ever met in my entire life. I grew up in a, a home where my dad worked hard in construction. My mom stayed home with the five kids. We didn't really have a calendar. We didn't do vacations. I mean, it was Monday through Friday, go to work and Saturday go to baseball and Sunday maybe sometimes kind of go to church. And there really wasn't a plan. So then when I got married and we started ministry and having kids, a man who was older, a lot wiser than me and, and very accomplished and, and has a far larger capacity than me, he sat me down and, uh, he said, anything I can help you with? I was like, yeah, how do you, how do you manage all the people and things that you manage? And when I'm with you, you're still emotionally present. You're not like on your phone and nervous eye twitch like me, right? Like, you could tell I'm not doing good. And this guy is just, he's very calm, very emotionally present, very loving and massive organizations and empires and businesses and just very successful at what he does. I said, how do you do it? And he actually taught me this. He, he said, well, lemme show you. I call it reverse engineering. He said, so what I do, I, I look as far down the road as I can see. He said, sometimes that's only a few months. Sometimes that's years, sometimes that's decades. Be it your family or your marriage or your kids or your health or your business or your ministry. He says, what I do is I look as far down the road as I can see, and in each of those categories, I start to think, okay, God, where do you want me to be in my marriage in two years, Lord, when in my Bible reading in prayer, where do you want me to be in seven years, God, with this daughter of mine, where do you want me to be in three years? God, with my weight and my health? Where do you want me to be in four years, two years, four months, two months, Lord, with my finances? Where do you want me to be in two years, five years, 10 years, 20 years? He said, I look as far down the road as I can anticipate. He said, my wife and I pray, we seek the Lord for wisdom. We seek wise counsel for input. And then we put together a plan. And we agree that we're going to pursue those

goals together in unity, building momentum toward those objectives. So there's a process. And then as things change, we pivot, we make adjustments as the Lord redirects our steps. And so what I'm sharing with you is a modification of that. And I've broken it down into categories of your soul. That's your spiritual life, your physical wellness, your wealth, your possessions, home car, et cetera, your relationships. And what I'm gonna ask you to do and ask your wife to do if you are married, is to at some point in the near future, take this little informal non-scientific survey and see how you score out. You may say, I feel like I'm doing really good in relationships and really poor in finances. Okay then that's the first step. Feel like I'm doing really good in finances, but my walk with God is not great. So that is my next step and my priority. Um, in addition, then there's uh, another section on making changes. Things that need to go in your life, things that need to come out of your life. People who need to go in your life, people who need to come out of your life. Things that you can hand off. Daily habits, weekly schedule holidays. And if you don't plan the holidays, they can be very unpleasant. And also annual routines like family vacations. So, you know, we do this as a family and it actually is something that's fun. So I'll bring to the kids. Spring break is coming up here. Second week in March. Kids, what do you wanna do, dad? We want to go to California. Okay? That's what we're doing. Make a plan. Get it on the calendar. We're all busy. Looking forward to it this summer. We know when our vacation is. We know where we're going, what we're doing. Hotels are booked, everything's set. Flights are booked, ready to go. It's in June. Nailed down. Everybody knows it. We're looking forward to it. Making plans, Lord willing, it'll be really great. We know what we're doing for Christmas. Last year was our first year we went to the family. I, I convened a meeting. I said, you guys aren't boating, but you have a voice. What do you guys wanna do for Christmas this year? Every year we go, you know, back up to where the grandparents are. They're like, we wanna stay here and we want to go to the Grand Canyon. Hmm. We've never been to the Grand Canyon. Okay, well your mom and I will think about that. We decided, we vote yes. We felt like that was God giving us permission. Set aside in the budget, set aside in the schedule, make the plans, book the place we went up. It was one of the most enjoyable Christmases we've ever had. Um, because we all knew what we were doing and we were all pulling in the same direction. It was something that we brought the children along 'cause they had a view of the process. They had a voice on the decision. Mom and I made the vote, we made the plan. And then everybody marches together. I'm gonna close in prayer and let you have a little bit of discussion. Um, I know that your life is difficult and I know that your business is difficult. I know that your family is difficult. I know that your life stage is difficult. And I know that a guy like me sometimes has never been in your shoes, has never had to do the kind of work that you do, has never had to run the kind of company that you run. And so a guy like me will get up and sort of just yell, you know, do more, try harder, be better. You know, toughen up, knuckle down. And honestly, I love you. And if you love God, you want to do the right thing. And sometimes you just don't know what the right thing is or you don't know how to get to the right thing. And so I believe that God will give you wisdom for your business because a preacher doesn't know about your business, but a preacher knows about wisdom, which can help you put together a plan with those who do know your business for your business. I want the same for your family. I want your life to be one that is not perfect, but is making progress. And at least you and the people that you work with and you love and you enjoy and you do life with. There's some unity, there's some harmony, there's some vision. And as a result, you can get some forward momentum together. That's my hope for you. I did not do this well in the early years of our relationship. I did not do this at all. And as a result, we had a lot of conflict between Grace and I and the holidays were the most painful times 'cause we never had a plan. The vacations were always a total Chevy Chase movie. It was a total disaster. Um, things would fall apart and we hadn't anticipated them or prepared for them or left margin for them. And we would both look at one another just like, you fix it. No, you fix it. And how about we fix it? Let's look down the road. Let's make a plan. Let's be honest about where we are. Let's seek the Lord and Wise counsel and the Lord's will, those will be the next two lectures. And let's move together in that direction with a process and then pivot as the Lord leads. Does that make sense? It actually brought tremendous unity into our marriage. And I believe that God blesses unity and it created momentum and it's actually made life a lot better. And we've just come through. I mean, I'm so, lemme close with this. I've, I've, this is all sort of a verbal process, but so we

were living outta state, resigned, felt like it was time to transition. We, uh, then sought the Lord, Lord, where do you want us to go? Because now we have a map of earth and we have to narrow it down. A little overwhelming, to be honest with you. And the kids, they wanted to vote. They were all voting for Sydney, Australia. The kids are like, we're voting for Sydney. Like, you don't get to vote. We're not all becoming Australians because you guys voted okay. Uh, we're gonna stay in America. Um, so we felt called to uh, Phoenix and then went through a process of confirming that as God's will, well, we moved down to Phoenix and got A-V-R-B-O vacation rental by owner. And our plan was, we're not gonna buy a house right away 'cause we don't know where we're gonna end up or what neighborhood we want to be in. The valley's 500 square miles. I don't know. I don't know the place. It's too big. We need to get our mind around it. And a few vision trips wasn't enough. And so we did a vacation rental home by owner and then we had our house for sale up in Seattle with all our stuff in it. So we know the story of 200 foot tree fell on our house up in, up in Seattle. It was for sale. And I, you know, who's gonna buy that? You know, tree house. I mean it's like a 200 foot tree fell on my house, chop my bedroom off. I show up. My bed is like 50 yards away in the woods. That's if I would've been taking a nap on a Saturday, which I do 'cause 'cause I'm old. I literally would've died. And I thought, okay, well this, this is a pivot. I can't sell the home because it's destroyed. It's gonna take months to fix the home. All of our possessions are in the home and now I can't even secure the home. Right? Everything has to pivot. But grace and I prayed. We sought wise counsel, we put together a plan. And God honored that plan. He located our family into a perfect home for our family. Perfect location. Our plan was, Lord, we don't wanna be more than 20 minutes from work or from school. It's less than 20 minutes to the kids' school. It's less than 20 minutes to the church. We prayed, Lord, where do you want us to have a building? God gave us this building. It, it is exactly what God provided. It's less than 20 minutes from our home. Our home is 20 minutes between the school and the church. We asked the Lord for very specific things. We prayed, we sought his will, and we were patient. At least Grace was, and the Lord provided. Does that mean everything's gonna work out for you? I don't know. I hope so. But I know if you don't have a plan and you don't have wisdom going into the plan and you and your spouse and your family, if you're married, are not working that plan together, then it will be very hard for life to come together when there's a lot of division. And one vision helps to resolve that. And so I have just come through the most challenging season of my entire life by a long shot. And we're good. Grace and I are good. The kids are good. Church is doing good. House is good, life is good. It's not perfect 'cause I'm involved, but it's good. You know what I'm saying? And I have more peace and more joy and more certainty than I ever have. And in the middle of it, people would ask me, how are you doing? And I finally just said, I don't even know how to answer that question. Here's what I do know. I'm in God's will. I don't know how I'm doing, but I know that I'm in God's will. 'cause I know what God's will is. And I know that we're walking in that together as a family. And so I don't know what that will produce as results, but I know that in my soul, I feel very much at peace. I feel unified with my wife. I feel at harmony with my children. And I feel the presence of God. And I believe we're in God's will. That's what I want for you. I want you to march forward with that kind of confidence after getting some time with the Lord. And if you're married with your spouse. So Father, thank you for an opportunity to serve Lord. I confess I have, I have done all of this wrong. I have made all of these mistakes and it was wise people, seasoned people, older people, godly people who came and helped me to learn these things. And Lord, so much of it is just found in the great book of Proverbs. Um, Lord, it is amazing to me that the Lord Jesus could say, I don't just do whatever I want to do. I do what the Father told me to do. And I don't just say whatever I wanna say. I say what the Father has told me to say. What that means is Jesus knew what to do and he knew what to say as a result. Lord Jesus, you could proceed forward with a lot of confidence because you knew you were walking in the will of the Father. I pray for us. I I pray for those of us who lead families, lead ministries, lead companies, lead businesses, whatever the case might be, that we would get time with you, that we would have clear vision from you, that we would have a process, we'd be willing to pivot, that we would have a plan that would bring peace to our soul and harmony to our home and unity to our organization so that we could gain some momentum and walk into the next season, Lord God, with a little bit of hope and a little bit of wind at our back and a little bit of joy on the horizon. And Lord, thank you for the way that you've been incredibly faithful to my wife and I and our kids. You

gave us a great process. And then as needed, you pivoted us. And you have been very, very, very good to us, Lord. And I pray that same goodness on my friends. In Jesus'. Good name. Amen.