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2 CORINTHIANS 2:12-13

2 Corinthians Series

Let's lift our hearts before the Lord.

[PRAYER] Lord, settle our hearts before we transition now into your word. Lord, we're asking that you would speak to us through it. We thank you for people like Paul in the Bible who are examples and we can kind of learn from their thinking, what they're thinking about as they're trying to make decisions. So as we do that today, Lord, I pray that you would give us insight that we can take home with us. We want to be able to take Jesus home into our lives every day. So we're asking for some practical truths that will apply to us and help us to be effective in our daily walk before you. Lord, we want to draw close to you. We love you. The busyness of the holidays, the busyness of life in general kind of gets in the way of that. So it's in this moment that we set aside everything else and we open our hearts up and ask you to write on them. Write on our hearts the message that you would have us embed into our lives this week. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen.

I want to know God's will for my life. Not just in the big things, but in the small things that happen every day. So when I read a story like I'm going to read today in 2 Corinthians and we get insight to Paul and how he makes a decision, my ears go up and I start to listen. In fact I was really kind of taken aback by what I read this week, so I wanted to pause there.

I want us to think about this idea of understanding and doing God's will. Like when you're making a decision, how do you know what to do in that decision? How do you know how to respond? So in preparation for looking at our passage today in 2 Corinthians, I want to first look at a passage in Romans that Paul also wrote that talks about knowing God's will. I'd like you to stand with me as I read this in honor of God's word.

This is from Romans 12:1-2. It says – *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then (I like that word then) you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Wow. There's a lot in that passage about understanding God's will. We'll reflect on that a little bit as we go through because our study today is how. How do you do that? How do you determine God's will? How do you conform yourself not to the pattern of this world, but be transformed. How do you do that? That's what we're going to talk about. So hopefully today

when you leave you'll have some ideas about how to apply that scripture and the one we're looking at today to your personal life as you make decisions.

Paul starts his book in 2 Corinthians by giving us a number of pieces of theology, very practical things. We've spent our time looking at those pieces of theology over the last few weeks. Theological truths that help us to know how to live, how to think, how to operate, even how to feel at times as we're trying to live our lives. But one of the purposes of the book of 2 Corinthians is to help us understand more about Paul's plans. He wants to inform the Corinthians of what he's doing now, what he has done, and what he's going to do. He's trying to help them understand what his travel itinerary is, what his plans are so they can be a part of that. He's informing them.

The interesting thing is in 2 Corinthians 2:12-13 (our passage today) he makes reference to a decision that he has to make. As we get to see his heart and as we get to see him thinking about this, we are drawn into a very perplexing, I think, situation. In fact I had to pause myself and say, "What's going on here?" This seems a little bit odd, as I might say. So I'll show you what that looks like as we go through.

But I want you to see here that Paul starts out in verse 12 with an interesting statement. This is only the first half of the sentence, but let me read the first half, which is verse 12. *Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me...* We're not done with the sentence yet, but we'll pause there even in the middle of the sentence. Because this idea of having a door opened is very interesting and we need to think about that for a moment.

I love being a Christian. I love being led by the Lord. I like it when God seems to open a door for me and I go, "Yes! This is just what I was praying for, or I didn't even pray for and that's just what I need. Yes, that is so great!" It's one of the blessings, I think, about following the Lord, because then He leads you, and you go through a door, and you experience that blessing, and go, "Yes, God has done something here and I really appreciate it." It's the blessing. It's part of the blessing that we have of being a Christian is to be led by Christ, that God opens doors for us.

Paul is saying here that a door opened for me in Troas to preach. So there's a preaching opportunity. Obviously the people were receptive, it was a positive environment. So he's very grateful for this.

But I don't think it's that simple sometimes when we're trying to make decisions. Because sometimes good things happen and when those good things happen we might interpret them as an open door when really they aren't an open door. So sometimes it's hard to know whether the things we're experiencing are an open door or not. So we find ourselves sometimes perplexed by should I do this? Should I take on this new job? Or I found the love of my life, I think? Is this the one? Or I think I'm going to buy this car, which seems to be just the kind of car that I need. So we come to these position points where we have to make a decision and we're wondering is this the opportunity that God wants or not? So we're trying to evaluate it in our own lives.

Sometimes we do it based on good things that happen. But I think that's dangerous. Because we never know whether the good things are really from God or they're just something else that may be leading us down a path that may not be the best.

On Tuesday this week I had a very busy day. I had my day planned on a little piece of paper that was going to take me from early morning till the evening with all kinds of activities on it. One of those activities was at noon to go to a gym where I was going to meet a trainer. You see I have this pain in my hip I'm trying to get rid of. The problem is caused because the large muscles in my hips are strong because I exercise, but the small muscles are weak. So I have to do some alternative exercises to strengthen the small muscles. The trainer is giving me some ideas about how to do that.

Well I got to the gym and when I went to the trainer desk they said, "Oh he called in sick today." My first thought was, "Oh good," because my day is so busy already that I just freed up an hour and a half of my time where I can go. And that's what I ran with on that day. I said, "Okay, I'm out of here." So I leave the gym and I had an extra margin in the rest of my day, which I really appreciated.

But as I'm driving around, I'm wondering this question: Was that God who was freeing up my day so I could have a more peaceful day? Or was that an obstacle that God wanted me to overcome and still do the exercise that I really should be doing on my hip in order to strengthen it? An important question. Obviously I went and did my chores and things I needed to do and I took advantage of the margin, but it might have been the other alternative to stay here and overcome the obstacle. I just want to suggest that just because something good happens in our lives doesn't mean that all of a sudden God is necessarily directing because of the circumstances. In fact I would suggest that we really need to think more broadly about that.

I like the story about the man who comes into work with a dozen doughnuts. His work partner says, "I thought you were trying to lose weight?" He says, "Yeah, but I've been doing pretty well, so I asked the Lord this morning if I go to the doughnut shop and the parking space is available right in front of the shop, then I'll take that as a sign from you that I should go in and buy some doughnuts." He said, "Oh really? Is that what happened?" "Well yeah, but I had to drive around the parking lot eight times before it opened up."

I would suggest sometimes we force the will of God. We kind of imagine that God is working in ways that He isn't and we find ourselves then in a rather perplexing place. You've got to understand this. Just because something good happens to you doesn't mean you pursue it. I think what happens sometimes is a person takes the medication and it relieves the pain and we're very grateful, aren't we, for modern technology and medical technology that allows us to experience relief from pain. That feels really good, so I'm going to take some more and I'm going to take some more. It's not long until a good thing is turned into an addiction. Just because something good is happening doesn't mean God is working. We need something bigger. We need some tools to understand God's will.

I want to show you the next part of the verse because this is what stopped me in my tracks. God opened the door to preach. Obviously that's what you should do. But Paul doesn't do that. Look at the next verse 13 – *I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there. So I said goodbye to them and went on to Macedonia.*

Did you see that? The Lord opened a door. Good things were happening, but Paul did not go through it. Why? What's going on? I just had to ponder this for a minute and say, "What's happening?"

Well let me give you a little bit of background so you understand. This is a map. Ephesus is over there to the right and Troas is the red pin on the map. That's where Paul had arranged to meet Titus. They didn't have GPS or Find Your Friends or something like that. Cell phones, internet, texting, they didn't have any of that. So he got here and he didn't find his friend.

Now it's very important that he find Titus because Titus is coming down from Corinth down here at the bottom. Titus is going to be coming up there to Troas to tell Paul about what's going on in Corinth. Paul is really interested in the problems they are experiencing they are trying to work out. Some of those were accusations against him personally. So he has a personal interest in what's going on and he's waiting for Titus to come back, but he goes to Troas and he's not there.

Now he has a problem. It runs pretty quickly if you read over the verse, but you must think about the predicament that Paul is in. Okay, I've got an opportunity to preach, good things are happening here, but I feel uncomfortable. I feel this sense of obligation to find out what's going on in Corinth. What happened to my friend Titus? So he must have wrestled with that for a little bit. He decides to abandon Troas for the period of time and go up there to Philippi in order to see if he could find him. And certainly he does. He finds him, he gets relief from that, he finds out what's going on, and he's hearing that information in that story.

I'm zeroing in and in my own study this week I zeroed in on the decision. What do you do when good things happen, but you're wrestling with something else and maybe this isn't the best thing?

So I want to take some time now and I want to share with you ten steps. I know it's a lot. We usually limit our sermon points to three. So ten steps for determining God's will. I'm going to throw them up there. Each one is going to be up there for about a minute. You can take notes, and I would encourage you to do that. But if you're interested in doing this on your own, we have a Bible study at the information table or just put on your communication card "please send me the Bible study" and I will email it to you in electronic form as a PDF if you would like the Bible study in that form that takes you through these ten steps.

If some of you have already gone through this Bible study, this will be a refresher for you. In fact I hope that there will be opportunity for me to share this with you next year because I think every year we really ought to be reminded about how to determine God's will. This is where the rubber meets the road because we're not just talking about the big things; we're talking about the small

things in our lives. What does God want me to do today and how am I going to do it? So I want to share with you ten different steps to determine God's will.

The first step in determining God's will is this: Accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. This is really important. You've got to understand this. Maybe you're thinking, "That's not what I was thinking." If you are trying to determine God's will and you're not yet a Christian, then you've got to understand that God's primary goal for you is to first accept Him as your Lord and Savior so then you can be led by Him as His child. He wants to lead you. So the very first step that you can make if you want to determine God's will is to make sure you're a child of God. We've got to start there. Accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

So 2 Peter 3:9 says – *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.* He doesn't want anyone to perish (that's His will), *but everyone to come to repentance.* The first step in determining God's will is to become a Christian. To accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

Now in each one of the steps you have to understand you're going to see a stop sign here. Because this isn't like punching buttons one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten and out pops the little tape that says 'yes' or 'no'. It doesn't work that way. We must learn to listen to the shepherd's voice. The Bible says that the sheep know the voice of the shepherd.

So we're going to become a Christian. That's the first thing and then we want to just pause. Okay God, what do you want me to do? We want to listen to what He has to say. So every one of these steps we're going to end it with this stop-and-listen diagram to remind you that you need to just spend time listening to the Lord.

The second step we want to look at, and it's important for us if we're going to determine God's will, is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Be filled with Spirit. What that means is regularly in the course of the day you're saying, "God, fill me now, fill me now. I need to be filled." Why do we continually ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit? One pastor said it this way, "Because we leak." The reality is we sin, we get busy, all kinds of things happen. We need to continue to pray, "God, would you fill me right now? I want to be focused on you, I want to be centered on you."

So regularly in the course of our day we want to be filled with the Spirit. Why? Because the Holy Spirit *guides us into all truths*, according to John 16:13. The Holy Spirit is this guide that helps us understand what to do and where to go. So we want to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

The third step is to be obedient to what you already know. Be obedient to what you already know. Here's what happens. If you're disobedient, that means you're on a different path at the moment. If you're disobeying God in a particular area of your life and something good happens to you there, you might think that's validation for staying in that bad place. The first thing you need to do is get on the path where you're obeying. So if you don't know what to do in this situation, go back to the last time God spoke to you. What did He tell you to do? If He's telling you anything that you're doing wrong, you want to do the right thing right away.

In James 1:22-25 it illustrates this with a picture of a mirror. It says – *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.*

You want to do what God wants you to do. You want to obey Him. In the midst of that obedience then God often leads us to the next step. If you're stuck somewhere and you're wondering what should I do, you want to stop before you even try to make a decision about that time. Say, "Am I honoring God in these other areas that He's already spoken to me about?" Go back and look at your life and say, "Lord, is there something you're putting your finger on that you want me to change already?" So as you're doing that, you're aligning yourself with the Lord and His will so that He can speak to you, and then of course we do some stop and listen. And now we're obeying Him. "Lord, what's the next step?" You can't take the next step if the previous step is the wrong one. You've got to get on the right path in order to do what's right.

Now those first three steps are all steps that are kind of preliminary steps that help us understand more about what it means to get ourselves ready to determine God's will. Let me give you another one.

Let's go to number four. Search the scriptures. Do you know that if you're going to buy a new car there's information in the Bible about that? Well not about cars, but the Bible has something to say about every decision that we make. If you're aligning your schedule, students, for the next year and you're trying to decide should I take this subject or that subject, God has something to say about that. And so as we read His word, we understand there are principles that guide us as we're making those decisions.

For example, if you're trying to decide I'm interested in this person but that person is not a Christian that I'm interested in and I'm thinking maybe I'm going to have a relationship with that person, maybe even move toward marriage, then you want to look at scriptures because the Bible does say something about that. In 1 Corinthians 6 it says – *Do not be unequally yoked with nonbelievers.* Now that's really a passage talking about a business relationship that we shouldn't get into an equal partnership with someone who's a non-Christian, because that's often a dangerous thing. So there's governing guidelines about that, but we take that and also apply it to the marriage relationship because that's the ultimate partnership. Be careful about that.

God has something to say about everything that we do. God understands email and He understands Twitter and He understands your computer. I just want you to know that. He understands all those things and He has wisdom in His word that will help us make decisions about our lives. So that's why Psalm 119:105 says – *Your word is a lamp for my feet* (it's going to guide me so I know what direction to go), *it's a light for my path.* So we read the words and then we stop and we listen to what God might have to say to us from His word.

The next principle, number five, is to fast and to pray. Fasting is this saying no to our body for physical food. We say I'm not going to eat any food for a period of time, miss a meal or miss a

day's worth of food. What I'm going to do is I'm going to tell my body, "You're not in control, body. I'm in control of you. You're not going to dictate what you're going to tell me to do." It gives us a greater sense of self-discipline. It gives us a greater sense of control over our urges. It helps us to be able to control ourselves when our eating gets out of whack of it. It also is a spiritual exercise, which allows us to say no to physical desires so that we can focus more on the spiritual things God wants to do inside of us.

Fasting is a valuable thing and we see it in Ezra 8:23. *So we fasted and petitioned our God about this, and he answered our prayer.* Fasting and/or praying are very valuable tools to grasping God's word. "Let's pray about it," we'll say, before we make a decision. I think it's a very valuable thing.

But when we pray we want to stop and listen because a lot of times we pray and it's just a one-way conversation. We're just doing all the talking. If we would just stop for a minute and allow God to speak, He would reveal something to us that we need that we could use for this particular decision. Fasting and praying is an important part to determining God's will.

Another step, step number six, is to check your motivation. What is my motivation for going after this particular thing or making this decision? The psalmist wanted to have his motivations checked when he wrote in Psalm 139:23 – *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.* I would suggest that there are a lot of people today who make decision based on their anxiety. I'm anxious about this; therefore I'm going to do this or that. I'm going to try to relieve my anxiety by buying this thing or making this decision, and then I will be settled. Because it's hard to go on in life without having things settled. So our anxiety sometimes drives us.

Let's check our emotions, let's check our motivation as to what's driving this. Is this just going to put another notch on my belt so I can feel better about myself to raise my ego a little bit? There's nothing wrong with raising your ego, but if that's your primary motivation we may have a problem. So what we're doing is we're measuring our motivation. We're checking ourselves. Is what's driving me the most important thing here or am I being driven by something that's more worldly and God has told me not to conform myself to this world, but to be transformed instead. If I'm trying to be conformed to the world and meet the world's standards and so on, my motivation needs to be checked. So it's a very important step, number six, to check that motivation.

The seventh step is to seek confirmation from the conscience, from your conscience. If we just go back one chapter, Paul is saying in 2 Corinthians 1 – *Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relationship with you, with integrity and godly sincerity.*

The conscience is not the ultimate standard. You cannot say, "I feel at peace with this," and think that's the ultimate answer. The scriptures are our standard for living. But God has placed a conscience inside of every one of us that pricks us at points and says, "I don't think this is the right thing to do." So you're looking at that internal entity or system that God has placed inside of you called a conscience that gives you a check. Am I doing the right thing here?

Sometimes somebody else might be able to do it fine, but your conscience says no and you can't do something that somebody else is doing. So that conscience becomes an important thing that we're instructed in the scriptures to use as part of the tool to evaluate whether you eat meat or not eat meat. That's the illustration used in the scriptures. What are you going to do about that? Well I could be anything, not just eating meat or not eating meat. It has to do with making decisions that are kind of in that gray area about whether I can do this or not. Very important question that we seek confirmation from our conscience and then we stop and we listen.

The eighth one, number eight, is to obtain godly counsel. Godly counsel is important because it helps us evaluate all of the others. Somebody might share with you a scripture that might be helpful for you in that situation. Somebody might help you sort out some things you're wrestling with in your conscience. Someone might help you evaluate your motivations.

Young people, I would encourage you that you find several counselors that you can go to, starting with your parents. Go to your parents because they know you well. Even if your parents aren't Christians, I say go to them. That doesn't mean when you go to your parents that you always have to accept everything that they say. But ask them why. Because it's within the "why" that the reasons come out and they become these very important truths that you can evaluate and you can decide where you're going from here and what you're going to do. Parents, grandparents, teachers, friends of your parents, people that you can go to to obtain counsel.

Proverbs 11:14 says – *For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is one through many advisors.*

It would be wise for you as a young person to say, "Can I tell you my plans, what I'm thinking to do, advisor? Would you see if you have any red flags that come up in your mind? I just want to hear what you have to say." It's not so much "would you give me your stamp of approval or your blessing." That would be nice sometimes, but what we're talking about here is not just getting the 'yes' or the 'no'. We're asking the question, "Are there any red flags that come up in your mind? I want to hear what you're thinking, what this raises in your mind." So we're getting advice from these godly counselors that can help us make our decisions.

The ninth step is to consider the implications. What I mean by that is to exercise wisdom. Wisdom is the ability to see future consequences now. If you're only thinking about now or this week or this day and you're not thinking about the implications of your current decision, then you'll find yourself in a place down the road that you didn't want to be. So wisdom allows you to see past that. If you say, "Oh I really need to buy this thing, but it means going into debt," then wisdom says I need to look at the consequences of what this will look like down the road.

Parents often realize that they can get their kids to do a lot of things by yelling at them. Oh it's a fast trick. If you yell at your kids, you can get them to do things like be quiet, like get in the car, like go to bed. It works if you yell at your kids, but it pays a price. It's not wise because down the road the future consequence of that is it damages the relationship between the parent and the child.

See, wisdom is so important. So asking the question about what are the implications of this decision that I'm making that will be helpful. Ecclesiastes 7:12 says – *Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves those who have it.* It's using wisdom and comparing it to money.

It's a benefit to have money. I would encourage you to have some money set aside. Because here's what money does for you. It gives you flexibility if you want to buy something, you want to make a decision. "Ah I don't have enough money for that." But if you have some money set aside, then you have some flexibility that allows you to make those kind of decisions. That's why it's recommended that you have six months of your income set aside in some bank account. It's just a matter of wisdom so you have some flexibility in your life when opportunities find themselves come your way. Flexibility comes with the money.

But the same thing is true with wisdom. It provides flexibility in our lives because we see the future events. We see the consequences of our actions, so we're able to then make decisions based on that. We have a little more flexibility. We're not making the decisions based on the moment because if I have to make decisions based on the moment, then I'm driven by instant gratification, I'm driven by the things I need now. I've got to get rid of my emotional challenge, so I'm going to make this decision now. That's a problem. Sometimes we end up making decisions that are mistakes.

So step number nine is to consider the implications and then just pause and listen to what God might say in the midst of that.

After we go through all nine of those things we come to number ten. Number ten is to wait on the Lord. Oh that's a hard thing to do, isn't it? You've got to wait. Because God hasn't freed you up to move from where you are because you're still working on some other things. You just need to wait on the Lord. You're evaluating the implications of what's going on because you have this opportunity.

You're doing well as a dad or a mom and you're trying to do those things, but now you have an opportunity to take on a hobby or take on a promotion at work and you go, "Oh I'm not sure that's the right thing to do. If I do, then I'm going to have to ask my family to sacrifice with me for a period of time as I get started over here," which may be okay. Or maybe I say, "No, I'm not going to do that because it may put pressure on my family." That's okay. I don't know which is going to be best in those situations, but sometimes just waiting on the Lord and allowing Him to lead and open up the door and to provide some good things in our lives, but also to provide the direction will help us to be most effective.

As I look at decision-making with the Lord and things that come up, I often realize that what my dad taught me when I was young is that this is true. He said, "Satan often puts his best forward before God presents His best." So the first thought that comes to my mind about how to solve this problem may not be the best one. Maybe Satan is giving me a quick fix, a short answer, some quick way to get out of this problem or something that will relieve the immediate tension. But maybe if I wait on the Lord a little bit, God will reveal a solution that's much broader, much

bigger, and much more effective that I can use in my life. So I need to wait on the Lord and I just need to stop and listen. I need to allow Him to speak to me.

Those are ten steps to determining God's will, but it's not like baking cookies where you stick in all the ingredients and out comes the cookies. It's a process. It's a way of learning how to listen to God, looking at several different avenues, doing some things and then pausing and thinking about what we should do.

So when I read these words that Paul is writing, *Now when I went to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ and found that the Lord had opened a door for me, I still had no peace of mind, because I did not find my brother Titus there.* I feel in this passage the wrestling that Paul is making. What a great opportunity. What else could you do better than preach? But there's something else, this sense of obligation he has to Titus and to the Corinthians. So he's going to say no to something good, at least for the time being, in order to pursue something that's necessary.

I would suggest there are going to be times in our lives when good things happen. We need to evaluate whether this good thing happening is something God really wants me to pursue or not. It's fascinating to me this wasn't just a good thing that happened. This good thing that happened was a door that the Lord opened up. But as he wrestled with this, he realized that even though this good thing happened that the Lord opened up, I feel uncomfortable, I feel I have this sense of duty, there's something I need to do, and he makes the decision to go a different direction. I just think that's fascinating and one that we can learn from in our lives.

It's much easier to just randomly make decisions and think, "Oh God must be in this because something good happened." But I think we find ourselves down the road in a bad place because we followed the good path. I don't want us to make the mistake and I don't want us to overemphasize this because God is the author of good. God does so many good things in our lives. We just need to be careful to realize He's not the only one doing good things in our lives.

So we go back to these verse that we started with in Romans 12:1-2 – *Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God.* You're giving yourself to the Lord. You're saying, "I want to accept the Lord as my Savior. I want to have the holiness of God. I want the Holy Spirit running my life. I want to be doing the right thing."

Do you see what he's saying there in that first part? *Living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true and proper worship. Do not conform* (now we're making our thinking patterns in alignment with God) *to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.* Because you have to interpret the world and what's going on through the lenses of God and His direction. *Then* (and only then we read the conclusion) *you will be able to test and approve what God's will is; his good, pleasing, and perfect will.*

I trust that in the midst of all of that God will use that. If you're in the middle of making a decision now, maybe you ought to just go back and start going through the steps. If not, tuck it away. Grab the Bible study. Because you'll be going through difficult decisions in your life next

week and when you do, pull it out and take a look at it and just ask God how He wants to lead you through this process. As He does, you're going to gain greater confidence in being able to listen to the shepherd's voice. He wants to lead you, He wants to direct you, He wants to protect you, and He wants to guide you.

Let's stand together and pray.

[PRAYER] Lord, it's with honor that we serve a Savior and a Lord who you don't just save us and set us on our own to kind of live life, but you lead us and guide us and direct us in the course of our lives every day. I'm really grateful for that. The communion we can enjoy with you every day, the fellowship we can experience in our daily decision-making is so valuable. I just pray, Lord, that you would motivate each one of us to draw close to you and allow you to direct us and lead us in our lives. Lord, we ask now that as we ponder these thoughts and sing this next song that you might speak words of wisdom into our hearts of what we need to do. Lord, show us what that next step is, maybe asking for forgiveness, seeking your word, or setting up a bank account. Whatever that is, Lord, we ask that you would direct the course of our lives and speak to us now as we sing together. In Jesus' name, amen.