- [Announcer] This is the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast

- Hey welcome to another episode of the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I'm incredibly honored that you spend a little bit of time with me each month where we are on a mission helping you become the leader that others love to follow. If you're new with us we release a brand new leadership teaching on the first Thursday of every single month and I know a lot of you go through this with your teams which I think is brilliant Because when the leader gets better everyone gets better. I want to say thank you to those of you who are sharing about this on social media or inviting your friends. It means the world to me when you actually get the message out because we can do so much more when we're doing leadership together. Notes are available if you'd like us to send them to you you can go to leadership@life.church. You can email us with questions, comments, ideas. You can request that we send you the show notes every single month. If you haven't subscribed I hope that you will subscribe so this will come to you immediately on the first Thursday of every single month. Let's go ahead and dive in today. I'll deal with a couple questions and then we'll dive in to the new content. First of all Priscilla asked this. Priscilla said I've been listening to your podcast and I know I'm a controlling leader. What are specific ways I can change this? And first of all Priscilla I just want to say congratulations on admitting this. You cannot change what you can't define and so the first step to change is defining the problem. Let's talk about controlling leaders. Honestly, the addiction to power and control is not unusual, The ability to admit to it is. And so this is a significant step that you're making just admitting to it and the truth is most of us as leaders, we battle with trying to control something because we have high standards and we want everything the way that we want it. Here's what most leaders don't understand. And this is so important. Not only does a controlling leader become the biggest hindrance to an organizations progress but the best way to lose control is to try to control everything. In fact what does a controlling leader do? Over time excess control kills morale, productivity, and innovation. Also leaders never thrive under a controlling leader, why? Well good leaders find it difficult to grow under a controlling leader and the best leaders will not stay under a controlling leader. So how do we change this? Priscilla you asked it, great question. I would suggest very simply just start with baby steps. Find something you're currently controlling and trust that to someone else. Just force yourself to give it away. And let's be honest, at first this other person may not do quite the job that you know how to do. But with coaching and with time the right person will not only do a job as well as you did but the right person will do a job and bring innovation to it and do it much much better than you ever could. So push yourself to give some things away. What's going to happen is over time you're going to see the value as other leaders emerge, as leaders get better than you are in certain things and suddenly you're going to get really really excited about empowering and trusting people. You can grow, I promise you. You can grow from being a controlling leader to being an empowering and trusting one. Take the first step, give something away and see what happens. Let's deal with another question. Rodrigo asked this he said I'm looking for a good process to assimilate people that are ready for leadership. What is the process and how can we implement it? Then he asks we're a year old and ready to build a leadership bench and pipeline. We currently have one but it needs a definitive process. So what is a definitive process to build leaders? Well my answer may frustrate you but I'm just going to give it to you anyway. This is my opinion but my opinion is this. The goal is not to create a leadership track or leadership training or leadership process. More than just having a program what we want is a culture. We want a culture that is consistently developing leaders. For example there are some things that you are going to want everybody to go through, a class, a training. We all want to read these certain books or we all want to learn our Meyers Briggs or we all want to grow an emotional intelligence or we all want to learn and grow as interviewers to help select people for our team. So we might have certain classes or certain books or certain tools that we're all going to go through together. But more than having just an organized track

what we want is a culture that builds leaders. So here's what we want. We want a few things that we all do together so we learn the same language, the same skills, but just a few things. Then we want dozens or even hundreds of things that are informal. So my advice would be pick those few things, the books, the classes, the training that you want everyone to experience. But more so create a culture where other leaders are developing leaders who are developing leaders who are developing leaders. For example in my organization I hear all the time about new ways, new systems of developing leaders that are happening deep in the organization not because I implemented it or not because our executive leaders implemented it but instead we have a culture that just embraces developing leaders. So there's a few things we all go through but moreso we are creating a culture that consistently develops leaders. What I want is I want leaders who on their own are forming mentoring relationships, doing reading groups, going to conferences, sharing articles, giving feedback, we're not going to live under the illusion that a leadership program is the goal. The goal is creating a culture that creates leaders as we move forward. Alright let's dive in to some brand new content for this session and I want to start it with a question to me that is kind of fun. What is the shortest word in the english language that has the letters A, B, C, D, E, and F? What is the shortest word in the english language that has the letters the letters A, B, C, D, E, and F? The answer is feedback. How do I know that? I don't know, I assume it's true, I read it on the internet so it has to be true. That's what I want to talk about in this episode is the very important and valuable and essential tool of feedback in your organization. If you get this right it can help change your organization, become everything that it's supposed to be. We're going to talk about in this episode and in the next it's so important it deserves two episodes. I'll start with an illustration. Thomas Goetz wrote an article in wired.com about a big problem in Garden Grove, California. Years ago there was so many motorists that were speeding in school zones it was making it very very dangerous for the students. And so the community tried everything. They tried new signs, flashing lights, ticketing, everything they could do to stop the speeding motorists. And so someone had this idea in 2003, it's a very common idea today, but evidently this was the first time or at least the first time it was written about. They put up speed displays showing drivers how fast they were traveling. In other words if you were driving 35 in a 25 it would say 35 right as you would drive by. And essentially what they were doing is they were giving the motorist feedback in real time. Now, what's interesting about this is that all the drivers already had speedometers in their cars. In other words every single driver in that school zone could self monitor. But when the feedback came from an outside source in real time the behavior changed dramatically. Not only did the speeding drop significantly but in three school districts it averaged well below the speed limit. So what happened? Feedback improved or solved much of the problem. Now as we talk about feedback I hope you'll apply this to every area of life. Apply it to your friendships, apply it to your marriage, apply it as a parent and of course apply it in your business or in your non-profit. So without a doubt one of the most important tools to develop in your organization is a consistent culture of feedback. I like what Kim Blancher said, he said feedback is the breakfast of champions. Here's what I say. Without honest and timely feedback your personal and organizational growth is always limited. Let me say it again. Without honest and timely feedback your personal and organizational growth is always limited, why? Because everyone is blind to so much about themselves. No matter how self-aware you are you've got blind spots. You don't know how you'll come across, you don't know how your performance is perceived by others, you don't know when you're being annoying with other people. You think you're funny and you're not. The bottom line is this. We don't know what we don't know. What's funny to me is that 90% of managers rank themselves in the top 10% of managers. 90% think they're the best 10%. That means 80% or more are vastly wrong. So how do we grow beyond this? Feedback is the number one most important tool for personal growth. Feedback is the number one most important tool for personal growth. What's interesting is that when it comes to feedback most of us don't know how to give helpful feedback. And what's equally challenging is that so many

people don't know how to receive feedback or to go out and get it. How does it break down? Well if you're giving feedback, you're the feedback giver, chances are you don't like how others receive it. You did a good job but they got their feelings hurt or they didn't implement it, what's wrong with them? On the other hand if you're receiving feedback, your boss or your supervisor is telling you something, chances are you don't like how they give it. They weren't polite, they don't know what I do, that wasn't a fair assessment and on and on and on. I want to recommend a book to you if you want to dive in to this subject. The book is Thanks for the Feedback by Sheila Heen and Douglas Stone. It actually helped shape some of the content for this teaching and it's a very very helpful book. What they would say and I would agree is this. Many people think well, we don't do feedback in our organization. We don't have a high feedback culture. And the reason you may feel that way is because you often don't know where you stand. You feel like no one ever tells you that they appreciate you, you don't know how you're doing until you do something wrong. So you might say we don't do feedback. But that's a very inaccurate assessment. We have to understand that feedback is everywhere. I would say it this way. Feedback is common but helpful feedback is rare. Feedback is common but helpful feedback is rare. The truth is we get feedback from everywhere all the time. It may be intentional feedback, it may be unintentional. It may be implied, it may be direct, it may be rude, it may be obvious, it may be subtle. But your whole life you're graded, you're ranked, you're rated, you're scored, you're chosen, you're accepted, you're rejected, you're invited, you're left out, all of this is feedback. You get feedback every time you take a test, you get feedback when you ask someone on a date and they pause and they hesitate and they shuffle and then they stall and they say they have to check their calender. That was feedback and honestly it wasn't good. You get feedback when a salesperson is friendly or when a salesperson is rude. You get feedback when you're hired and six months later you're let go, both those are feedback. You get feedback when you get a meet's expectation on your review. We get feedback all the time. Someone honks at you, that's feedback. Pain is feedback. Rolled eyes is feedback, a big smile is feedback. Crossed arms is feedback. What you want to do in your organization is decide we will develop a culture of honest, timely and helpful feedback. Let me say it again. In your culture decide, all of us together, we will develop a culture of honest, timely and helpful feedback. Why is this important? Because your unwillingness to accept and give feedback will ensure your inability to achieve growth. One more time, your unwillingness to accept and give feedback will ensure your inability to achieve growth. Let's talk about giving and receiving feedback. Today let's talk about receiving. Factors that matter in receiving feedback. Most of us want to know when we're doing something right. But most of us fear hearing when we're not doing something right. And the reason is because we don't understand the value of feedback. So here's a few thoughts. Number one, when it comes to feedback, number one. Don't dread feedback, crave it. Don't dread it, crave it Remember feedback helps us grow. Feedback is not something that we endure, it's something that we embrace. I'm not dreading feedback, I'm looking forward to it. I don't tolerate it I need it. For example I communicate regularly on the weekend usually on Saturday night and then a couple of times on Sunday morning. And so after my message if I don't have people to give me feedback I literally panic. What I need is people that I trust to tell me hey, you went a little too long there, you thought that was funny and it wasn't, you were talking too fast, hey that was a really valuable point, and you just kind of brushed over it, could you expand a little more, you weren't clear there. If I don't have that feedback I get nervous, I don't feel like I'm equipped the way I want to be equipped to do the job again and so I don't dread feedback, I need it, I crave it. And this is what happens over time. You want it because you see the value in it. In fact I reviewed this talk with some of my team before giving it and they told me they didn't crave it at first but over time they said we developed trust. And because I trust you to give me feedback, giving feedback is something I crave, need, all the time. So number one, we don't dread feedback, we crave it. Number two on receiving feedback we're going to separate the do from the who. We're going to separate the do from the who.

One reason why we don't like feedback that tells us how to improve is because we feel like it's a critique of who we are. If you're telling me my performance isn't strong I feel like you're criticizing me as a person and this just isn't accurate. The best feedback is all about what we do not about who we are. It's all about performance and actions not about identity. So when someone gives feedback its easy for me to become defensive and say no, that's just not fair, you don't understand my whole situation. But what I want to do as a leader is refuse to hide behind the excuse this is just the way I am. Don't tell me that, this is just the way I am. What I need to remember as I'm receiving feedback is I am not fixed in what I do. In fact another book recommendation is by Dr. Carolyn Dweck. She writes about this in the book called Mindset and what she says is we shouldn't have a fixed mindset. Instead we want to have a growth mindset. So if you're giving me feedback about my performance I have the ability to change my performance. I'm not fixed in what I do. I want to tell myself I'm getting better every day. Your feedback is valuable because it's given me objective insight to my performance and it's helping me get better. Your job in receiving feedback is to stay open-minded. Now this is really important, pay careful attention. When you find yourself getting most defensive, that's when you really need to listen. Whenever someone is giving me feedback and I don't want to hear it at all and I want to argue back with everything in me here's what I always try to tell myself. The more I want to push back indicates the more that I need to listen. Let me say it again. The more that I want to push back and say no, you don't understand, that's not me, no that's not right, that's not accurate. The more I want to push back is often an indicator that that's a vulnerable area that I have the most opportunity to grow in. So when someone's giving you feedback and you just hate it and say that's not right, that's not fair, that may be an indication that that's the area where you have significant room to grow in. So don't dread the feedback, crave it. Separate the do from the who. Number three, ask clarifying questions. Clarifying questions. What you don't ever want to ask is hey, do you have any feedback for me? That's a terrible question. About what? About your goals, about our friendship, about how you look and what you're wearing? We have to remember general questions rarely lead to specific answers. The same is true with feedback. General questions rarely lead to specific feedback. So we're receiving feedback we want to say something like well help me understand specifically what you mean by that. Or can you give me an example to help me understand. Or how could I do better the next time? Or you might say what do you do that helps you think that way? What we want to do is ask clarifying questions when people are giving us feedback so we'll truly understand the benefit or the treasure of what they're trying to communicate. Now when you hear something you don't like don't say that's not true. Train yourself to say tell me more or help me understand. For example I had a lot of people for a long time tell me that I wasn't good with people one-on-one. And this really hurt me and offended me because I felt like I was good with people and the reason I felt like I was good was because I cared. It was only when I asked clarifying questions like tell me specifically what I'm doing wrong. And they said well, when you're out in the lobby talking to people at church sometimes you'll be kind of looking around and you're not making eye contact. And I say well I'm looking around because I'm trying to see how many other people that I need to talk to. And they said well what you're doing is your communicating that you don't value the person in front of you. I was like oh, I just didn't see that. The problem is I don't know what I don't know. That very specific feedback helped empower me to make real and specific changes. So when possible get feedback before an event. I like to think in sports terms get feedback before game day. For example a football team may play once a week but they're going to get feedback four or five times during practice before they ever play on game day. When possible do the same. Before a presentation, before a speech, before you submit a written document, before you go in for an interview, before you ask the boss for more responsibility try to do a practice run on the front end when you can and get feedback. I do this every single week before my messages I talk through the messages with people ahead of time and ask them what do you not care about, what am I too into, what am I

forgetting, what am I not applying in your area, and I get feedback on the front end. I do that with these podcasts as well, I go over the teaching with other people to help really really understand what adds the most value. Don't just wait for feedback, seek it and seek it on the front end when possible. I can point to several times when feedback totally and completely changed my leadership. The biggest example was years ago when Jerry Herling sat down with me and said Craig, you're controlling everything. And you're not letting anybody else do specifically what they were created to do and Jerry said very lovingly if you'll trust me to do what I do and you focus on what you're really gifted at we can actually reach a lot of people. And that conversation was the turning point for me being a controlling leader to now being excited and passionate about empowering other people. It was direct feedback that specifically changed my leadership. Don't rob yourself of the value of direct and helpful feedback from those around you. They see things in you that you do not see, you don't know what you don't know. So lets try to wrap this up. Helpful and honest feedback can be the difference between you being a good leader and you becoming a great leader. To quote Andy Stanley he says this. Leaders who don't listen to others will eventually be surrounded by people who have nothing to say. Let's review. Without honest and timely feedback your personal and organizational growth is always limited, why? Because everyone is blind to so much about themselves. No matter how self aware you are you have blind spots. You don't know what you don't know. Many would say we don't do feedback in the organization, this is not true. Feedback is everywhere. Feedback is common, helpful feedback is rare. What are we gonna do? We're going to develop a culture of honest, timely, and helpful feedback. Because your unwillingness to accept and give feedback will insure your inability to achieve growth. Let's talk about receiving feedback. Most want to know when they're doing something great, they don't know when they're doing something wrong because they don't understand the value of feedback. Number one, we don't dread feedback we crave it. Feedback helps us grow. It's not something we endure it's something that we embrace. Number two we separate the do from the who. One reason we don't like feedback, because people are telling us how to improve because we confuse it. We confuse the who with the do. They're not criticizing who we are, they're helping us get better at what we do. The best feedback is all about what we do not about who we are. When you find yourself getting defensive let that be an indicator this may be an area where you specifically need to listen. This may be a real blind spot that will help you grow. Number three, ask clarifying questions. General questions rarely lead to specific feedback. When you hear something you don't like train yourself to say tell me more, help me understand. Whenever possible get feedback ahead of time. Its going to make you better and its going to value those around you. Why is this so important? Helpful and honest feedback can be the difference between you being a good leader and a great leader. Alright let's wrap it up with five very important application questions. This is where the rubber meets the road, you want to honestly answer these. Number one, on a scale of one to ten, ten being the highest, How strong is your team at giving and receiving feedback? On a scale of one to ten, ten being the highest, how strong is your team at giving and receiving feedback? Now what could you do to specifically improve your feedback culture, very important. Number two, in what area of your leadership could you use feedback? Think about it specifically, in what area, be specific, could you use feedback? Then ask yourself who are three people you could enlist to help develop you to improve? Name them specifically, who are the three people who could help give you great feedback? Question number three, what are three specific questions you could ask them to help you grow? Don't ask general questions but specifically what do you want to ask them to help you grow? Number four, is there an area of your leadership that you could get feedback in before game time? What are you going to do about it? I get feedback before I give a talk, where could you get feedback before, there may not be an area but hopefully there is. Number five, what is the number one skill you're currently developing based on recent feedback? What are you working on right now because of what someone told you recently? If you can't answer that question directly and immediately you

know you have work to do. In the next episode we're going to talk about how do we give feedback. Today was receiving next episode is giving. Thanks again for listening, thank you for sharing on social media and in any way. My goal is to help you become the leader that others love to follow. Ill work to give you helpful content and when you share it with others it means the world to me. Above all else be yourself. Be genuine, be yourself because people would rather follow a leader who's always real than one who is always right.

- Thanks again for joining us on another episode of the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. We hope you enjoyed it and if you did and would like additional show notes or resources you can find all of that simply by going to life.church/leadershippodcast. You can also sign up to have those resources sent directly to your email the moment they become available. And if you've been enjoying this podcast one thing you can do to help spread the word and build leaders around the world is simply rate and review it on Itunes. Plus Craig loves hearing your questions and comments. If you have a question that you would love for him to answer in an upcoming episode you can send those to us simply by sending an email to leadership@life.church. And the end of the year is a great time for us as leaders to look back and celebrate the accomplishments throughout the year while also looking ahead and realigning our focus on the year to come. Here at Life.Church we would love to invite you and your family to a special Christmas Eve service happening at all of our Life.Church locations. And if there's not a location near you you're in luck because we have services happening throughout the week at Church Online. For a full list of service times and locations as well as dates you can find that at life.church/christmas. Thanks again for joining us here at the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast, we'll see you next time.