

TWO PATHS. CHOOSE ONE.



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INTRO

We are all on a journey, often finding ourselves standing at the convergence of truth and its imitation. These convergent moments have the power to alter our lives and impact God's kingdom for eternity. But, how do we decide in which direction to move? Studying the journey of David, you will be challenged to apply godly discernment by trusting God completely, to recognize the difference between God's truth and men's advice, to realize the impact of their decisions, and to surround yourselves with people who reinforce the need for godly wisdom.

POINT OF INCEPTION

Psalm 62:1-2

SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 17:26-52; Ephesians 2:1-10

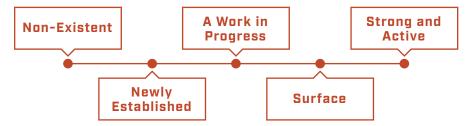


READ EPHESIANS 2:1-10.

Are we able to save ourselves from our sin? Why or why not?

DIAGNOSE

On the scale below, mark where you are at in your relationship with Christ.



MOVE

The ultimate decision that we all must make is whether or not to accept Christ as Savior and Lord of our lives. Acknowledging Christ as Savior saves us from sin and eternal damnation. Accepting Christ as Lord is where the relationship comes in. We are to live our lives allowing Him to lead us, guide us, direct us, and to be a part of every aspect of who we are. Once we have made that decision and formed that relationship, we have guidance and confidence as we make future, daily decisions. We simply have to trust and rely fully on Him.

PRAY

Read the verse below and include it in your prayer as a way to acknowledge Jesus as Lord in your life.

I am at rest in God alone; my salvation comes from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I will never be shaken" —PSALM 62:1-2

Psalm 111:10

SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 24:1-15; Romans 1:1-11; 6:23

THINK 1. We must submit to the authority and lordship of Christ in our lives.
READ 1 SAMUEL 24:1-7.
When Saul arrived at the cave, what were David's options of responding? Which of the options was the one that God desired for David to choose?
READ ROMANS 1:1-11.
What does this passage reveal about the internal battle between the Spirit and our flesh?
How do we discern what God wants for us versus what the world around us wants us to do?
2. We must do what is right, not what is easy or easily justified.
READ 1 SAMUEL 24:8-15.
Why would David have been justified for killing Saul in the cave?
How did David respond to Saul in this text? Why was he able to respond in such a way?
How does instant gratification often play into our decisions? Should it?

Why does right (God's truth) always trump what is easy or justifiable? DIAGNOSE What does the Bible say that we deserve? What did God do for us instead? How does this motivate us to extend grace and mercy to others? We deserve death and destruction, but in God's grace He gave us life and eternity with Him. In return, we can extend that grace and mercy to others as a way to bring Him glory. MOVE Use the piece of fabric you received from your leader as a reminder to always base your decisions on God's truth and not just what is easy. PRAY Looking back at your answers in the Diagnose section, take some time to reflect what Jesus did for you. Pray and ask God to remind you of His truth and for His strength to live out that truth in every decision that you make.

POINT OF RECONCILIATION

Psalm 31:4-5

SCRIPTURE

2 Samuel 11 & 12

NOTES THINK 1. One Bad Decision Leads to Others Why was David a prime target for temptation from the enemy in this situation? What are some situations we put ourselves in when we become Satan's target? What are some ways you can be on guard and fight against temptation? 2. Judgment and Consequences What were the consequences of David's sin? What are some consequences of sin that you have personally experienced? How did David respond in verse 20?



DIAGNOSE

We are all broken pieces, but together we make a beautiful picture. Even though we make mistakes, we are still a part of the body of Christ and are valuable pieces in the expansion of His kingdom. Brokenness and mistakes reveal our need for Jesus and reconciliation.

What past mistakes do you need to let go of and allow God to redeem?

How have you grown from past bad decisions?

MOVE

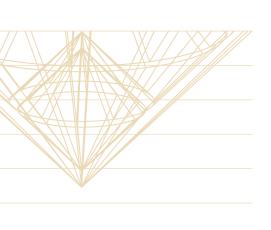
Read the verse below. Read it through ten times and commit this to memory. Let this verse be a reminder of what Jesus wants to do in your life.

You will free me from the net that is secretly set for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I entrust my spirit; you have redeemed me, LORD, God of truth. —PSALM 31:4-5

PRAY

As your leader prays through this verse to end your time together, make it a prayer of your own.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his faithful love toward those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He knows what we are made of, remembering that we are dust. —PSALM 103:11-14



KEY VERSE

POINT OF CONNECTION

Psalm 133:1

SCRIPTURE

1 Samuel 12,18-19

NOTES THINK

1. A True Friend's Character

What is an equivalent of Jonathan and David's relationship or act of devotion that you have seen or experienced in your own life?

2. A True Friend's Influence

What was Jonathan's advice to David? What did Jonathan tell Saul?

How does Jonathan portray a picture of Jesus in your life?

What was Nathan's influence on David's life?

Why is it important to have friends like Nathan and Jonathan in your life? What does this kind of community look like?

DIAGNOSE

Who would you consider to be a Nathan or Jonathan in your life? How has their influence pointed you to Jesus?

How are you using your influence and speaking into the lives of others today? How can you be more intentional in pointing others to Christ?

MOVE

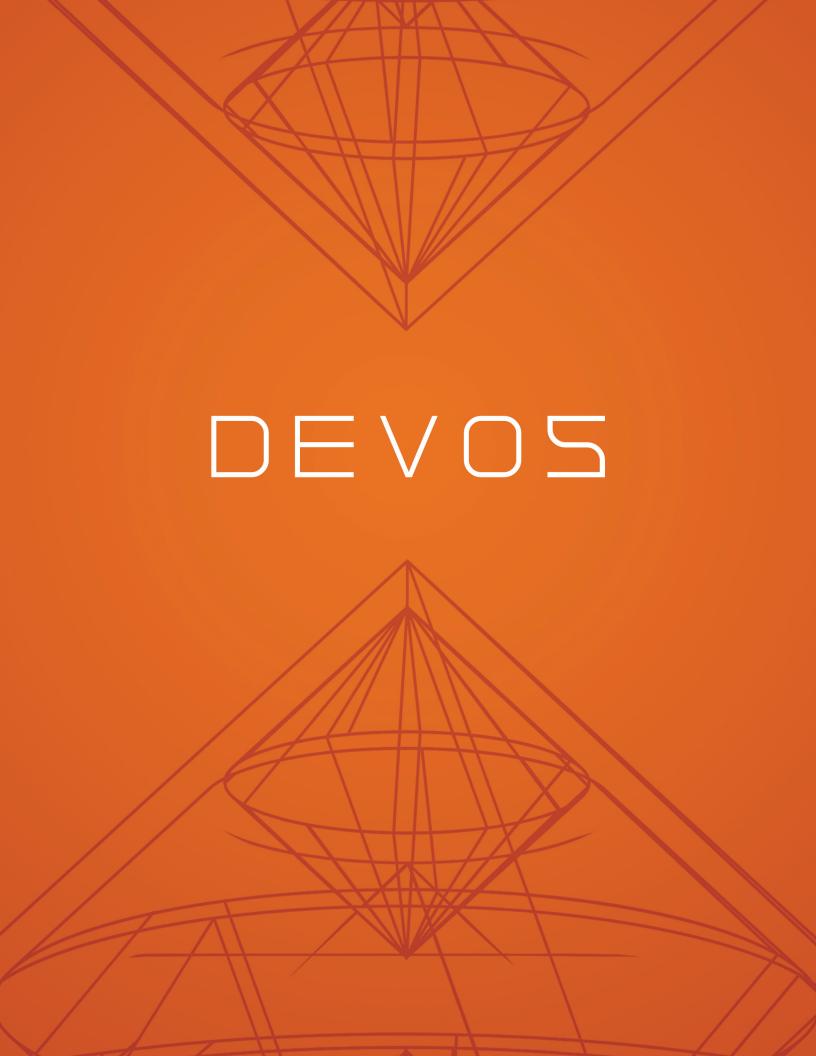
What are you willing to do to create community and accountability in your life? Are you willing to allow people to speak into your life and help you live the life that Jesus wants you to live?

Write under each label the names of people who can help you in those areas.

Community

PRAY

As you pray today, ask God to give you the courage and the strength to be a person who lives in community with other believers and seeks accountability. Ask the Lord to lead you to the people who will help you become a person whom others will look up to and want to follow.





HNOW THE WORD

THINK

Every good coach has a playbook and a game plan. The playbook includes Xs and Os for each play to show what each player should do. The game plan is made in preparation to face a certain opponent. The team creates a game plan to attack specific weaknesses of an opponent and to defend against specific strengths of an opponent.

Through His Word, God gives you a playbook for everyday living. Sometimes, though, you may have trouble knowing the game plan because you struggle to see how God's Word speaks to the decisions you make each day.

For example, the Bible doesn't come out and give directions on whether or not you should watch a specific movie, so how can you make this decision based on God's Word?

READ 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17.

Based on this passage, how can you profit from God's Word?

What are some ways that you can better apply the truth of God's Word in your life?

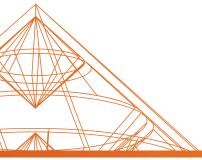
In order to handle or apply God's Word, you must know His Word. If you know God's Word, then you can use the principles you learn in order to make good decisions every day.

Why have you struggled to prioritize spending time in God's Word up to this point?

How will you make God's Word a priority this week?

PRAY

Ask God to give you the desire to know and apply His Word. Share with Him any struggles you may have when you approach His Word and ask Him to give you the strength to overcome them so you can find the discernment and wisdom to take on whatever life may bring you.





PLEASING GOD OR PLEASING OTHERS

THINK

When was the last time you struggled with making a decision because you were worried about what another person or group of people would think? Everyone, at some point, struggles with worrying about what other people think. In the process of making a decision, you may come to a point where you know that no matter what choice is made, someone will not be satisfied. Most Christians genuinely don't want to do anything to give another believer reason to struggle, but at the same time we want to obey God in everything.

God's Word speaks to this struggle that we all face.

READ GALATIANS 1:10.

What struggle did Paul describe here? Describe a time when you felt this struggle in your own life.

Whom should you strive to please as you make decisions?

Give an example of when you have tried to win the approval of others in the past.

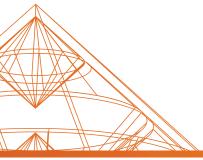
Although you probably could have answered this question without reading the verse, it is good to know that Paul—who penned a good part of the New Testament—thought about this issue. He felt the pressure to please people, yet he chose to please God. This verse can encourage you in your decision-making struggles.

Concentrate on seeking God's approval in the things you do and say today.

What are some decisions that you are facing in your life right now that you need to focus on God's approval?

PRAY

Spend time with the Lord, asking Him to help you seek pleasing Him above anyone else in your life. Praise Him for giving you everything you need to make the decision that most glorifies Him.





OVE OF THOSE DAYS

THINK

Think about the last time you had "one of those days" where your schedule was packed from the time you woke up until the time you went to bed . . . and on the same day, the teacher added an extra assignment and you couldn't remember where you left your cell phone. On days like that when you haven't had time with the Lord, you probably wouldn't have the time or energy to help someone who crossed your path. Days like that can cause you to question whether all the plans you make really matter.

READ PROVERBS 16:9 AND 19:21.

What do these verses say to you about all the plans that we often make?

Who has the best plan? Why?

God has a plan for you—not just any plan, but a good plan. It is reassuring to know that in spite of the way life seems so out of control sometimes, you can rest knowing that God is in control and you don't have to be.

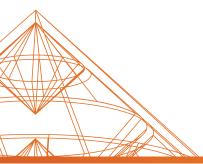
How does it make you feel to know God has a plan-especially a plan for you?

What can you do to help yourself remember that God is in control and has a plan the next time you are having "one of those days"?

Remember, God's plan is a good plan. Try following His plan today.

PRAY

Spend several minutes simply praising God for being King above all of heaven and earth. Thank Him for always having the best plan for your life. Ask Him to rule in your heart this week no matter what may come your way.





TAKE THE PLUNGE

THINK

Do you remember the first time you jumped off a diving board into a pool? How did you feel?

Sometimes making a big decision is like jumping off the diving board. It is really scary, but after you finally do it, you wonder why it took you so long.

Do you think fear sometimes keeps you from making decisions? Why?

READ HEBREWS 11:1-6.

What does this verse say that it takes to please God?

What do you discover about faith in these verses?

When you are trying to make a decision, there comes a point when you just have to step out in faith and trust that God is not going to let you fall if you have been seeking Him.

Even if you make the wrong decision, God is still faithful. The key is to trust in God's character and not your understanding of the situation. (Sound familiar? See Prov. 3:5.)

How does it make you feel to know God has a plan-especially a plan for you?

What can you do to help yourself remember that God is in control and has a plan the next time you are having "one of those days"?

How do you need to trust in God's faithfulness in your decision-making right now?

PRAY

God can handle whatever situation or decision you are facing right now. Bring it before Him and ask Him to help you make the right decision to please Him. Ask God to renew your faith in Him to trust in His faithfulness no matter the consequences.



ASH THE EXPERT

THINK

You probably seldom read a newspaper, but if you flip through one, you will find advice columns on a wide variety of issues. You have more places to seek advice than ever before in history. Sure, you have your friends, but there are other places too. You can read magazines, read other people's blogs, or ask experts online, just to name a few.

Where do you turn when you need advice? Why?

READ JEREMIAH 29:11-13.

Where do these verses say to seek help?

Why should we seek help from God?

Many people can quote verse 11, but too often we miss the promises in verses 12 and 13.

How are you supposed to seek the Lord?

When you pray and seek the Lord, what do these verses say will happen?

God desires for you to go to Him when you need help making wise choices. Unlike us, God sees the past, present, and future. He knows what is best for you and has good plans for you.

You probably already know that He has good plans, but do you go to Him in prayer and wholeheartedly seek out His good plans? If not, take some time right now to do that.

PRAY

Call upon the Lord for His help with whatever you are facing right now. Tell Him where you are struggling with trusting Him. Acknowledge His desire and ability to be everything that you need and ask Him to reveal Himself to you more clearly.



SERMON NOTES	DATE
NOTES	SPEAKER

SERMON NOTES	DATE
NOTES	SPEAKER

SERMON NOTES	DATE
NOTES	SPEAKER

SERMON	DATE
VOTES	SPEAKER





We live in a broken world. All around us there is violence, suffering, poverty, and pain. There are broken lives, systems, and relationships, but there is one broken relationship in our lives that is more important than all others. This plan of salvation shares about our broken relationship with God and how that relationship can be restored.

GOD'S DESIGN

Although there is brokenness in our world, there is also beauty. When we take time to look around, we can see purpose and evidence of God's design all around us (Ps. 19:1). In the Bible, we are told that God originally designed and planned a world that worked perfectly. He created man and woman to worship Him and walk with Him (Gen. 1:31).

SIN

Man did not follow God's design. There was an angel of God who was very beautiful and smart. He wanted to be like God and to have the angels worship him instead of God. God is the one who deserves worship and praise. Therefore, God cast out this bad angel, now called Satan, and all of the other angels who listened to him out of Heaven. After the first man and woman were created, Satan tempted the woman to eat fruit from a tree that was forbidden. The woman fell into Satan's temptation and then gave some of the fruit to her husband (Gen. 3:1-7). Because the man and woman ate the fruit, they disobeyed God, which is also known as sin. Life does not work when we do disobey God and don't follow His original design for our lives. When we sin, we focus more on our selfish desires rather than God's desires for our lives. Romans 3:23 says that all have sinned and fallen short. The consequence of sin is separation from God forever.

BROKENNESS

Sin leads us to a place of brokenness and separation. Sin is why the world is a broken place. When we realize we are broken, we begin to try to go so many different directions and figure out things on our own (Prov. 14:12). When we are led to a place of brokenness, we begin to realize we have a need for something greater, something that can fix us because we cannot fix ourselves.

GOSPEL

Things seem hopeless at this point. We are broken and need a way to be fixed. There is good news though! Because of God's love for us, He does not leave us in our brokenness. In our brokenness, we cannot have a relationship with God so He sent His son Jesus. Jesus was God in human flesh and came to live a perfect life according to God's design. Jesus came as our rescuer. He came so that we could be restored to God because we could not do it ourselves. Jesus paid for our sins and brokenness by dying on a cross (2 Cor. 5:21; John 3:16; Col. 2:14). The story does not end there, though! Jesus rose from the grave and defeated sin and death once and for all (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Because Jesus did this, our brokenness can be restored and we can enter into a relationship with God.



REPENT AND BELIEVE

This is good news for us, but just hearing this good news of the gospel is not enough. Satan also knows the story of Jesus. In James 2, Scripture tells us that even the demons believe in God. In addition to believing that Jesus is God's Son, we must also admit that we have sinned against God and that we are broken people. We have to tell God that we do not have the ability to fix our brokenness on our own and that we need to be rescued. We can ask God for forgiveness of our sins. We then must turn away, or repent, from our sin and trust only in Jesus. By doing these things, we repent and believe that Jesus is our Savior (Mark 1:15). Believing in Jesus gives us new life, and we begin to follow God (Rom. 10:9).

RECOVER AND PURSUE

Once we have admitted that we need Jesus and our relationship with God has been restored, we begin to see that we have a new purpose in the broken world that we live in. We can now pursue God's design for our lives (Phil. 2:13). We will still sin, but we know the path to be restored is through Jesus. Once we are followers of Jesus, His Spirit gives us the ability to pursue His design for our lives (Eph. 2:10). We are assured to have a relationship with Him for the rest of our lives and all of eternity.

