Faith IN Practice

A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

GRACE OVER PERFECTION

• • •

A 12-Session Faith and Leadership Study

BRANDY TROUT, DSL

WELCOME

Welcome to Faith in Practice

This guide is an invitation to explore sustainable leadership through both the reflections in Grace Over Perfection and the wisdom of Scripture. It is not a test of how much you have read or how polished your answers sound. It is a place to ask better questions, practice discernment, and consider what faithful leadership looks like in ordinary life.

Each session follows the book's progression through five stages: Recognize, Release, Reframe, Rebuild, and Sustain. The final session brings the journey together with the book's 30-Day Grace Challenge. You are welcome to move at your group's pace. Twelve sessions do not have to mean twelve consecutive weeks.

Using This Guide With Leadership in Practice

Faith in Practice is a complete, standalone resource. It does not require any other guide. Grace Over Perfection also has a free leadership edition, Leadership in Practice, which follows the same twelve session titles and reading assignments.

The two guides are written to complement one another rather than repeat each other. Leadership in Practice explores each theme through practical workplace scenarios and team exercises. Faith in Practice explores the same theme through Scripture, biblical leaders, prayer, and personal reflection. A faith-based leadership group can use both together and experience the same conversation from two directions.

A Suggested 75 to 90 Minute Gathering

- Welcome and An Invitation to Reflect: 10 minutes
- Parts One and Two: Scripture and conversation: 25 to 30 minutes
- Part Three: Biblical Leadership in Practice: 15 minutes
- Parts Four and Five: Connection and practice: 15 to 20 minutes
- Prayer, commitment, and closing: 10 minutes

> *Short on time? Focus on Parts One, Three, and Five, and invite participants to complete the remaining sections on their own.*

Facilitator Notes

Invite participation without requiring disclosure. Some topics may touch burnout, family strain, or difficult leadership experiences, and participants should always feel free to pass. A good session is not one in which every question gets answered. It is one in which participants leave with clearer insight, deeper compassion, and one next step.

Read each passage aloud from a preferred Bible before discussing it, and encourage participants to read the surrounding context. The guide suggests the NIV, but any faithful translation works well. Avoid treating a single verse as a shortcut to complex personal circumstances.

TWELVE SESSIONS

Session Map

#	SESSION	STAGE	READING	PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	OUR DATE
01	The Weight We Quietly Carry	Recognize	pp. 2–7	Matthew 11:28–30	
02	When Caring Becomes Perfectionism	Recognize	pp. 11–16	Colossians 3:23–24	
03	The Rules We Never Questioned	Release	pp. 20–24	Romans 12:2	
04	Grace Is Not the Absence of Accountability	Reframe	pp. 28–30	Ephesians 4:15, 29	
05	The Hidden Cost of Perfection	Reframe	pp. 31–33	Proverbs 3:5–6	
06	Being Needed Is Not the Same as Being Valued	Rebuild	pp. 37–39	Ephesians 2:8–10	
07	The Courage to Receive Help	Rebuild	pp. 40–42	Ecclesiastes 4:9–12	
08	Rest Is Not a Reward	Sustain	pp. 46–48	Mark 6:30–32	
09	Building Everyday Resilience	Sustain	pp. 49–51	Luke 16:10	
10	The Myth of Being Caught Up	Sustain	pp. 55–57	Matthew 6:25–34	
11	Becoming the Leader You Can Sustain	Sustain	pp. 58–60	John 15:4–5	
12	Grace as an Ongoing Leadership Practice	The Practice Continues	pp. 64–82	Philippians 3:12–14	

> *Page numbers refer to the print edition. Bring your copy of the book, a Bible, and a pen.*

FAITH IN PRACTICE

A Biblical Worldview Discussion Guide for Grace Over Perfection: A Leadership Field Guide for Sustainable Growth & Everyday Resilience

© 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. All rights reserved.

This guide is a free reader resource provided for print and personal use, including use by book clubs and study groups reading Grace Over Perfection. It may not be sold, republished, or used in any course not taught or facilitated by Brandy N. Trout, DSL, or From Good To Grace, Inc.

Scripture quotations taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

SESSION 01 / STAGE ONE: RECOGNIZE

The Weight We Quietly Carry

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section One, pp. 2–7
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Matthew 11:28–30 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Galatians 6:2–5 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Exodus 18:13–23, Moses and Jethro (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

There is a particular kind of exhaustion that comes from being the person everyone depends on. It is not always the exhaustion of having too much work to do. Sometimes it is the exhaustion of believing we must be the one to do it. We become accustomed to anticipating needs, solving problems, and carrying responsibilities that others have quietly learned to leave in our hands. And because these behaviors are often praised as evidence of good leadership, we rarely question whether they are sustainable.

But what happens when the desire to serve becomes the expectation that we must carry everything? What happens when our sense of responsibility begins to crowd out our willingness to trust God, receive support, or acknowledge our own limitations? Scripture offers a perspective that challenges the belief that strength requires carrying every burden alone. It reminds us that we are called to serve faithfully, but we are not called to become the source of every solution.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Matthew 11:28–30 (NIV)

In this passage, Jesus extends an invitation to those who are weary and burdened. He does not suggest that meaningful living requires the absence of responsibility. Instead, He invites people into a different relationship with the weight they carry. The passage describes a way of living and learning under His guidance, rather than remaining trapped beneath burdensome expectations. For leaders, this creates an important opportunity for reflection.

We can become so accustomed to carrying responsibilities that we begin to believe our willingness to endure them is evidence of faithfulness. But exhaustion is not automatically evidence of obedience. And constant availability is not necessarily evidence of wise stewardship. Sometimes our greatest challenge is not learning how to carry more. It is learning how to recognize what God is actually asking us to carry.

Questions for Reflection

1. What responsibilities currently occupy the greatest amount of your emotional or mental energy?
2. How do you distinguish between a responsibility God has entrusted to you and an expectation you have placed upon yourself?
3. Have you ever confused being constantly available with being faithful?
4. What might it look like to approach your responsibilities with greater trust rather than greater control?

Part Two / Bearing Burdens Without Assuming Every Burden

Read Galatians 6:2–5 (NIV)

At first glance, this passage presents an interesting tension. Paul instructs believers to carry one another's burdens while also emphasizing individual responsibility. These ideas are not contradictory. They reveal an important distinction.

We are called to support one another, particularly when someone is facing a burden too heavy to manage alone. But supporting another person does not necessarily mean assuming ownership of every responsibility in that person's life. Compassion and accountability can coexist. Paul also asks each person to examine their own work with humility, which means discernment begins with an honest look inward before it ever looks outward.

Consider These Questions

- What does Galatians 6 suggest about the difference between carrying a burden with someone and carrying it for them?
- How might humility shape the way you offer help?
- When has God used someone else's help, rather than your own effort, to carry you through a heavy season?
- What role does prayer play before you decide whether to step in?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Moses and the Weight of Responsibility

Read Exodus 18:13–23 (NIV).

Moses provides a powerful example of a leader whose responsibilities had become unsustainable. As the people brought their disputes to him, Moses attempted to address their concerns personally, from morning until evening. His intentions were understandable. He wanted to serve the people well and help them understand God's instructions. But his approach placed an enormous burden upon him, and it left the people waiting. When Jethro observed what was happening, he named what Moses had not. "What you are doing is not good," he said, and he encouraged Moses to establish a structure in which capable, trustworthy people could help carry the work. The lesson was not that Moses should care less. It was that his leadership needed to become more sustainable. Sometimes the most responsible decision a leader can make is to create room for others to contribute. Delegation is not an admission of weakness. It can be an expression of wisdom, trust, and stewardship.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Faithful leadership does not require us to make ourselves indispensable.*

Reflection Questions

1. In what ways do you identify with Moses in this passage?
2. Are there responsibilities you continue carrying because you believe no one else will handle them adequately?
3. Who in your life might be a "Jethro," someone who sees your situation clearly enough to speak honestly about it?
4. How easily do you receive counsel when it asks you to change the way you serve?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy describes the invisible weight leaders accumulate as they continually accept responsibilities. The biblical perspective adds another dimension. It invites us to consider whether our approach to responsibility reflects trust, wisdom, and faithful stewardship. We may be highly capable. We may genuinely care. We may even be the person best equipped to handle a particular challenge. But capability alone does not establish responsibility. God has given each of us abilities, opportunities, and responsibilities to steward. He has not asked us to become limitless. When we accept that distinction, we can offer support without assuming ownership and recognize that our worth does not depend on being the person everyone needs.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Burden and Stewardship Exercise

Set aside a few quiet moments for personal reflection. Write down the responsibilities currently occupying your heart and mind, then choose one that has become particularly heavy. Bring that one responsibility before God as you work through the questions below.

> *If your group is also using Leadership in Practice, you may draw from the list you created in the What's in Your Backpack? exercise.*

1. Is this responsibility genuinely mine?

Consider whether it belongs to your role, your relationships, or a commitment you have consciously made before God.

2. Am I carrying this responsibility out of faithfulness or fear?

Consider whether your actions are motivated by service, guilt, a need for approval, or a desire to maintain control.

3. Have I allowed someone else to share this responsibility?

Reflect on whether accepting help might strengthen rather than diminish your leadership.

4. What would trusting God look like in this situation?

Identify one practical way to remain responsible for your actions while releasing your need to control every outcome.

5. What step of faith can I take this week?

Choose one intentional step. It might involve asking for help, establishing a boundary, or praying daily over this responsibility before acting on it.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Heavenly Father, Thank You for the responsibilities You have entrusted to me and for the opportunities I have to serve others. Give me wisdom to recognize what is mine to carry and humility to acknowledge what is not. Help me distinguish between faithful service and the expectations I place upon myself. Teach me to support others without assuming responsibility for everything they face. When I am tempted to believe that everything depends on me, remind me that I was never intended to lead through my own strength alone. Give me the courage to ask for help, the discernment to share responsibility, and the peace to trust You with what remains beyond my control. May my leadership reflect faithfulness rather than fear, wisdom rather than exhaustion, and grace rather than perfection. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One burden I need to reconsider is:

The belief that has kept me carrying it is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One step of faith I will take this week is:

Closing Reflection

Faithful leadership is not measured by the number of responsibilities we accumulate. It is reflected in how wisely we steward what has been entrusted to us. We are called to serve. We are called to care. We are called to carry one another's burdens. But we are not called to become the answer to every need. Sometimes faithfulness means stepping forward. Sometimes it means allowing someone else to step forward. And sometimes it means recognizing that the weight we have been carrying was never ours to hold alone.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Am I carrying this because God has entrusted it to me, or because I have convinced myself that everything depends on me?

Preparing for Session Two

Next topic: When Caring Becomes Perfectionism

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Two, pp. 11–16

Suggested Scripture: Colossians 3:23–24 and Luke 10:38–42 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice whose approval you are working for.

SESSION 02 / STAGE ONE: RECOGNIZE

When Caring Becomes Perfectionism

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Two, pp. 11–16
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Colossians 3:23–24 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Galatians 1:10 and Romans 8:1 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Luke 10:38–42, Martha and Mary (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Caring deeply is one of the most beautiful qualities a leader can bring to their work. It shows up in preparation, attention to detail, and a genuine desire to do right by people. But care has a shadow side that is easy to miss. Somewhere along the way, "I just care" can become the reason we cannot rest, cannot release, and cannot accept anything less than flawless. We revise one more time. We check one more time. We stay one more hour. What begins as devotion to good work can quietly become devotion to being beyond criticism. Scripture does not ask us to care less. It asks us to examine who we are working for and what voice we are listening to when the work is done.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Colossians 3:23–24 (NIV)

Paul encourages believers to work wholeheartedly, as working for the Lord rather than for human masters. This passage is often quoted as a call to excellence, and it is. But notice what it emphasizes. The focus is on the orientation of the heart, not the perfection of the outcome. Wholehearted work is offered to God. It is not a performance designed to earn His acceptance.

Faithful effort and flawless results are not the same thing. One is an act of worship. The other can become an act of fear. When we remember who we are ultimately serving, the pressure to impress everyone else begins to lose its grip.

Questions for Reflection

1. What does it mean to you to work "with all your heart" without working from a place of fear?
2. How would your work change if you truly believed God was the primary audience?
3. Where has excellence become a way of protecting yourself rather than serving others?
4. What does wholehearted work look like on a day when your best is limited?

Part Two / The Audience and the Inner Voice

Read Galatians 1:10 and Romans 8:1 (NIV)

In Galatians 1:10, Paul asks a searching question: "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God?" He recognized that seeking human approval can quietly compete with faithfulness. Romans 8:1 adds a second truth. There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For many perfectionists, the harshest critic is not another person. It is the voice inside that replays every mistake. Together, these passages invite us to examine two things: whose approval we are chasing and whose voice we allow to define us when we fall short.

Consider These Questions

- Whose approval do you find yourself working hardest to earn?
- What does your inner voice say to you after a mistake?
- How does Romans 8:1 challenge the way you speak to yourself?
- What would it mean to receive correction without receiving condemnation?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Martha, Mary, and the One Thing Needed

Read Luke 10:38–42 (NIV).

Martha opened her home to Jesus. Her service was generous and sincere. Hospitality mattered in her culture, and someone needed to prepare the meal. But Luke tells us Martha was "distracted by all the preparations." When she asked Jesus to send Mary to help, He answered gently: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed, or indeed only one."

Jesus did not condemn Martha's service. He named her anxiety. Her care had become so consumed by getting everything right that she was missing the very presence she had opened her home to receive. Leaders can fall into the same pattern. We become so focused on getting every detail right that we lose sight of the people, the purpose, and the presence of God in the middle of our work.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Anxious striving can cause us to miss the very purpose our work was meant to serve.*

Reflection Questions

1. Where do you see yourself in Martha's story?
2. What "preparations" are currently distracting you from what matters most?
3. How do you respond when others seem less concerned about details than you are?
4. What might Jesus say to you about the things you are worried and upset about right now?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy explores how "I just care" can become the language we use to justify impossible standards. The biblical perspective helps us look beneath the behavior to the heart. Perfectionism often presents itself as a virtue. But underneath it may be a fear of disappointing others, a need to prove our worth, or an inner voice that never quite believes we have done enough. Grace does not lower the standard of meaningful work. It changes the motivation behind it. When our identity is secure in Christ, we can pursue excellence as an offering rather than as a defense.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Audience of One Exercise

Choose one area of your work or life where you tend to push past what is truly required. Spend a few quiet minutes with the questions below, and invite God to show you what is driving your effort.

1. Who am I trying to please?

Name the person or group whose approval feels most important in this area. Be honest about whether that includes God.

2. What do I fear will happen if this is less than perfect?

Write down the specific outcome you are trying to prevent.

3. What does my inner voice say when I fall short?

Write the words as you hear them. Then ask whether they sound like condemnation or correction.

4. What does God say instead?

Write a truth from Scripture that speaks to your worth apart from your performance.

5. What can I offer to God this week as "good enough"?

Choose one task you will complete wholeheartedly and then release, without one more revision.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Thank You for giving me a heart that cares about good work and about the people I serve. Shape that care so it reflects Your love rather than my fear. Keep me diligent without making me harsh, and teach me to seek Your approval above the approval of others. When I fall short, quiet the voice of condemnation and help me hear Your voice of truth and grace. Remind me that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. Help me choose what is better, as Mary did, even when there are many preparations calling for my attention. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One area where caring has become perfectionism is:

The approval I find myself chasing is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One task I will offer to God as good enough this week is:

Closing Reflection

Caring deeply is a gift. It becomes a burden when we believe our care must be proven through flawless results. God does not ask for our perfection. He asks for our hearts. He invites us to work wholeheartedly, to receive correction without condemnation, and to remember that only one thing is truly needed. When we work for an audience of One, we can still pursue excellence. We simply no longer have to carry the weight of earning our worth through it.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Am I working to honor God, or am I working to avoid ever being found lacking?

Preparing for Session Three

Next topic: The Rules We Never Questioned

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Three, pp. 20–24

Suggested Scripture: Romans 12:2 and Mark 7:1–13 (NIV)

As you prepare, pay attention to the phrases "I have to" and "I should" in your thoughts, and ask where each one came from.

SESSION 03 / STAGE TWO: RELEASE

The Rules We Never Questioned

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Three, pp. 20–24
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Romans 12:2 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	John 8:31–32 and 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Mark 7:1–13, Jesus and human traditions (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Some of the rules that shape our lives were never spoken out loud. We learned them through praise and disappointment, through family patterns, through early jobs, and through watching the leaders who came before us. Over time, those rules stopped sounding like expectations. They started sounding like truth.

We may believe we must do everything ourselves, that we must always be needed, that rest must be earned, that we must handle everything without complaint, or that our worth is measured by what we produce. Rules like these rarely announce themselves. They simply guide our choices until we no longer notice them at all. Scripture invites us to examine what has been shaping our thinking. Not every familiar belief deserves the authority we have given it.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Paul urges believers not to conform to the pattern of this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. The result is the ability to test and approve what God's will is. This passage reminds us that our thinking is always being shaped by something. If we are not intentional about what forms our beliefs, the expectations around us will do the forming for us.

Renewal is not simply positive thinking. It is a process of discernment. It asks us to hold our assumptions up to the light of God's truth and to notice where they do not match. Some of the rules we live by may have been formed by culture, fear, or old wounds rather than by God's wisdom.

Questions for Reflection

1. What patterns or expectations have shaped your understanding of what a "good leader" must be?
2. Which of your beliefs about work, worth, or rest have you never examined in light of Scripture?
3. What would it look like for your mind to be renewed in one specific area of leadership?
4. How can you tell the difference between God's will and an expectation you have simply inherited?

Part Two / Truth That Sets Us Free

Read John 8:31–32 and 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

In John 8, Jesus connects freedom with holding to His teaching. "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Freedom is not merely permission to do less. It is the possibility of living according to truth rather than inherited pressure.

In 2 Corinthians 10:5, Paul speaks of taking every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ. In context, Paul is addressing arguments that set themselves against the knowledge of God. A careful personal application is this: not every thought that feels familiar deserves to be obeyed. Together, these passages give us permission to question. We can examine a belief, ask where it came from, and decide whether it belongs in a life shaped by Christ.

Consider These Questions

- Which of your unwritten rules feels most like "truth" even though you have never tested it?
- What would freedom from that rule look like in your daily life?
- How might bringing a thought "captive" to Christ change the way you respond to it?
- Where do you need the courage to question something you have always believed?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Jesus and the Traditions We Hold Too Tightly

Read Mark 7:1–13 (NIV).

In this passage, religious leaders criticize Jesus' disciples for not following the traditional practice of ceremonial handwashing. Jesus responds with a sharp observation: "You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions." The problem was not that tradition existed. The problem was that human practices had been elevated to the level of divine command. In some cases, they had even become a way to avoid what God actually asked of His people.

Jesus did not dismiss everything the leaders believed. He simply refused to let unexamined traditions carry more authority than they deserved. Leaders and organizations develop traditions too. Some are wise and worth keeping. Others quietly place burdens on people that God never placed there. Discernment requires the courage to tell the difference.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Not every expectation we have inherited carries the authority of God.*

Reflection Questions

1. What "traditions" in your workplace, family, or ministry might be held more tightly than they should be?
2. How do you respond when someone questions a practice you have always followed?
3. Which of your personal rules might be keeping you from what God is actually asking of you?
4. What would it take for you to set aside one human tradition in favor of greater faithfulness?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy names five false rules that many leaders live by without realizing it. The biblical perspective invites us to see those rules for what they are: human traditions that have taken on the weight of truth. These rules often began with good intentions. They may have helped us survive a difficult season, earn trust early in our careers, or meet expectations that felt nonnegotiable. But what helped us once may now be holding us back. God is not threatened by our questions. He invites us to examine our beliefs in the light of His truth and to release what no longer reflects His heart for us.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Renewed Mind Exercise

Choose one of the five false rules from the book that feels most familiar. Write it at the top of a page, and then sit with the questions below in a spirit of prayer.

1. Does this rule reflect God's character?

Consider whether the rule sounds like the God of grace you see in Scripture, or like a harsh taskmaster.

2. What Scripture speaks to this rule?

Find a passage that either supports or challenges the rule. Read it in context.

3. What has this rule cost my relationship with God?

Reflect on whether this belief has affected your rest, your prayer life, or your trust in Him.

4. What truth will I hold instead?

Write a replacement belief grounded in Scripture, not in a new standard to perform.

5. Who can help me remember this truth?

Name one person who can gently remind you of what is true when the old rule returns.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Gracious God, Thank You for being a God of truth and freedom. Reveal the assumptions I have treated as unquestionable, and give me the courage to examine them honestly. Renew my mind. Help me distinguish between Your wisdom and the expectations I have inherited from others or placed upon myself. Where I have been holding on to human traditions instead of Your truth, loosen my grip. Where I have obeyed rules You never gave, set me free. Teach me to take every thought captive to Christ, and to lead from a mind that is being transformed by Your grace. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One unwritten rule I have been living by is:

Where I believe this rule came from:

The biblical truth I want to hold instead is:

One way I will practice this truth this week is:

Closing Reflection

Many of the rules we live by were formed long before we thought to question them. They may have helped us at one time, but that does not mean they are true. God invites us into a renewed way of thinking, one that is shaped by His truth rather than by the patterns of the world around us. That renewal takes time. It requires honesty, humility, and the willingness to let go of what feels familiar. Freedom does not come from abandoning all structure. It comes from building our lives on what is true.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Which rule am I obeying that God never actually gave me?

Preparing for Session Four

Next topic: Grace Is Not the Absence of Accountability

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Four, pp. 28–30

Suggested Scripture: Ephesians 4:15, 29 and John 21:15–19 (NIV)

As you prepare, reflect on a time when someone corrected you in a way that made you feel both challenged and valued.

SESSION 04 / STAGE THREE: REFRAME

Grace Is Not the Absence of Accountability

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Four, pp. 28–30
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Ephesians 4:15, 29 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Colossians 4:6 and Proverbs 27:6 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	John 21:15–19, Jesus restores Peter (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Grace is one of the most beautiful words in the Christian faith. It is also one of the most misunderstood. Some of us have been taught that grace means overlooking what went wrong. Others have experienced accountability delivered with so much harshness that it left no room for grace at all.

Neither picture reflects the heart of God. Throughout Scripture, God holds His people to a standard while never ceasing to love them. He tells the truth about sin and failure, and He also restores, renews, and recommissions. For leaders, this raises a meaningful question. Can we tell the truth about a problem without reducing a person to that problem?

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Ephesians 4:15 and 4:29 (NIV)

Paul describes a community that grows into maturity by "speaking the truth in love." Truth and love are not competing priorities. In healthy relationships, they belong together. Later in the same chapter, Paul offers a guideline for every conversation: speak only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

These verses give us a filter for difficult conversations. Is what I am about to say true? Is it spoken in love? Will it build this person up, even if it is hard to hear? Truth without love can wound. Love without truth can leave people stuck. Grace holds both together.

Questions for Reflection

1. Which comes more naturally to you: speaking truth or expressing love?
2. Where in your relationships do truth and love feel most difficult to hold together?
3. When have you spoken truth in a way that did not build the other person up?
4. What would it look like to apply Ephesians 4:29 to your most difficult relationship right now?

Part Two / Words Seasoned With Grace

Read Colossians 4:6 and Proverbs 27:6 (NIV)

Colossians 4:6 encourages believers to let their conversation be "always full of grace, seasoned with salt." Salt preserves and gives flavor. Grace-filled words are not bland or empty. They carry substance.

Proverbs 27:6 offers a striking contrast: "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses." Sometimes the most loving thing a friend can do is say something difficult. Together, these verses remind us that gracious speech is not the same as avoiding hard conversations. Grace shapes how we speak. It does not determine whether we speak.

Consider These Questions

- What does it mean for your words to be "seasoned with salt"?
- Who in your life has wounded you as a trusted friend, and how did it help you grow?
- When might "multiplying kisses" be a way of avoiding responsibility for a relationship?
- How can you prepare your heart before a conversation that requires both grace and honesty?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Jesus Restores Peter

Read John 21:15–19 (NIV).

After Peter denied Jesus three times, he may have wondered whether he still had a place among the disciples. In John 21, Jesus meets him on the shore. Jesus does not pretend the denial never happened. He asks Peter three times, "Do you love me?" The repetition is intentional, and Peter is hurt by it. The conversation is honest about what was broken.

But Jesus does not leave Peter in his failure. After each answer, He gives Peter a renewed responsibility: "Feed my sheep." Restoration includes both acknowledgment and recommissioning. Leaders cannot replicate every element of this encounter. But we can learn from its combination of honesty, relationship, and renewed trust.

KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

Restoration does not pretend failure never happened. It refuses to let failure become someone's permanent identity.

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you most about the way Jesus approached Peter?
2. Have you ever experienced being restored after a failure? What made it meaningful?
3. Is there someone you have quietly given up on after a mistake?
4. What might it look like to offer someone both honesty and a renewed opportunity?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy makes the case that grace is not the absence of accountability. The biblical perspective confirms this and deepens it. God's grace never ignores sin or failure. But it also never treats a person as beyond hope. Accountability rooted in grace names what happened, clarifies what needs to change, and invites the person forward. When leaders understand grace this way, we no longer have to choose between being kind and being clear. We can hold a standard with integrity and still treat the people we lead with dignity, patience, and hope.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Truth in Love Exercise

Think of a conversation you have been avoiding or a relationship that needs honest attention. Before you plan any words, use these questions to prepare your heart.

1. What is the truth that needs to be spoken?

Write it plainly, without exaggeration or softening.

2. What do I genuinely want for this person?

Reflect on whether your desire is their growth, your relief, or being proven right.

3. Where do I need grace myself in this situation?

Consider your own part, even if it is small. Humility changes the tone of every conversation.

4. How would Jesus approach this person?

Think about the way He spoke to Peter. Consider what restoration might look like here.

5. What will I pray before I speak?

Write a short prayer asking God to guard your words and soften both hearts.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord Jesus, Thank You for meeting me in my failures with both honesty and grace. You have never ignored what was broken in me, and You have never given up on me either. Help me speak the truth in love. Give me the courage to address what needs to be addressed, and the gentleness to do it in a way that builds others up. Guard me from avoiding hard conversations in the name of kindness, and from using harsh words in the name of truth. Make me a leader who restores rather than condemns, who holds people to a standard while never ceasing to believe in who they can become. Amen.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One conversation I need to approach with truth and love is:

What I tend to do instead (avoid or overcorrect):

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One way I will prepare my heart this week is:

Closing Reflection

Grace and accountability are not opposites. In the heart of God, they work together. We are called to tell the truth. We are called to love. We are called to restore one another gently. And we are called to remember that the same grace we extend to others has been extended to us many times over. When we hold both truth and grace together, we lead the way Jesus led. Honestly, patiently, and with an unwavering belief in the possibility of restoration.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Can the people I lead trust me to tell them the truth and to believe in them at the same time?

Preparing for Session Five

Next topic: The Hidden Cost of Perfection

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Four, pp. 31–33

Suggested Scripture: Proverbs 3:5–6 and Esther 4:12–17 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice where you are waiting for certainty before you are willing to act.

SESSION 05 / STAGE THREE: REFRAME

The Hidden Cost of Perfection

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Four, pp. 31–33
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 3:5–6 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	2 Corinthians 12:9–10 and Psalm 46:10 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Esther 4:12–17, Courage without control (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Perfection can look like commitment from the outside. On the inside, it often functions as protection. If every detail is controlled, perhaps no one will criticize us. If we never admit uncertainty, perhaps no one will doubt us. If we never let anyone see us struggle, perhaps we will never be found lacking.

But perfection carries a cost. It narrows our trust. It slows our decisions. It keeps others at a distance. And for people of faith, it can quietly replace dependence on God with dependence on our own ability to manage every outcome. At its root, perfectionism can be a trust issue. This session invites us to ask a searching question: what am I trying to protect when I insist that everything must be perfect?

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Proverbs 3:5–6 (NIV)

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." These words are familiar to many of us. They are also deeply challenging for leaders who are accustomed to relying on their own judgment. This passage does not discourage planning, wisdom, or careful thought. Elsewhere, Proverbs praises all of these. What it challenges is the belief that our own understanding is sufficient to secure every outcome.

Leaning on our own understanding can look like overpreparing, overcontrolling, or refusing to move until we are certain. Trusting God with all our heart looks like doing what is ours to do and releasing what is His. The promise is not that every path will be easy. It is that He will make our paths straight.

Questions for Reflection

1. In what areas of your leadership do you lean most heavily on your own understanding?
2. How does your need for control reveal where you struggle to trust God?
3. What does "submitting" your ways to God look like in a practical decision you are facing?
4. Where might your perfectionism be a way of trying to guarantee an outcome only God can secure?

Part Two / Strength Made Perfect in Weakness

Read 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 and Psalm 46:10 (NIV)

In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul describes pleading with God to remove a difficulty in his life. God's answer was not removal, but a promise: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." For a perfectionist, this is a remarkable statement. God's power is not displayed through our flawlessness. It is displayed through our weakness. Psalm 46:10 adds a gentle command: "Be still, and know that I am God." Stillness is not inactivity. It is a posture of trust that stops striving long enough to remember who is truly in control.

Consider These Questions

- What weakness are you working hardest to hide?
- How might God's power be displayed in the very place you feel most inadequate?
- What makes stillness difficult for you?
- What would it mean to stop striving long enough to remember that God is God?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Esther and Courage Without Control

Read Esther 4:12–17 (NIV).

Esther faced a decision with enormous consequences and no guarantee of success. Approaching the king without being summoned could cost her life. Remaining silent could cost the lives of her people. Mordecai reminded her that she may have come to her royal position "for such a time as this." Esther did not respond by demanding certainty. She asked her community to fast with her for three days. Then she made a plan and acted with courage.

Her words are among the most honest in Scripture: "If I perish, I perish." Esther did everything that was hers to do. She prepared, she prayed, and she sought the support of others. But she could not control the outcome, and she did not pretend she could. Leaders are often tempted to wait until every risk is eliminated before moving forward. Esther reminds us that faithfulness sometimes means acting wisely in the middle of uncertainty and trusting God with what lies beyond our reach.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Faithful action does not require guaranteed results.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you most about how Esther prepared for her decision?
2. Where are you waiting for certainty that may never come?
3. Who could you invite to pray or fast with you about a decision you are facing?
4. What would it look like to say, in your own situation, "I will do what is mine to do, and I will trust God with the rest"?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy asks a pointed question: who benefits from your perfection? The biblical perspective helps us see that the answer is often our own sense of security. Perfectionism promises safety. It tells us that if we control enough details, we will avoid failure, criticism, and disappointment. But that promise asks us to carry a weight that only God can carry.

Grace offers another way to lead. We can prepare carefully, act courageously, and release outcomes into the hands of a God who is trustworthy. That is not a lower standard. It is a deeper trust.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Surrender Exercise

Choose one situation in which your need for control has become exhausting. Find a quiet place and move through these questions slowly, inviting God into each one.

1. What am I afraid will happen if I let go?

Name the specific fear beneath the control.

2. What have I already done that was faithfully mine to do?

Acknowledge the preparation, effort, and care you have already given.

3. What am I holding that belongs to God?

Identify the outcome, timing, or response you cannot actually control.

4. What promise of God speaks to this fear?

Write down one passage that reminds you of His faithfulness.

5. What will I place in His hands today?

Write a simple prayer of surrender. Consider praying it daily this week.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Sovereign God, You are God, and I am not. Thank You for the reminder that I do not have to hold everything together. Expose the fears hidden beneath my perfectionism. Show me where I have been leaning on my own understanding instead of trusting You with all my heart. Give me the courage to act faithfully without demanding certainty. Help me prepare wisely, pray earnestly, and then release the outcome into Your hands. When I feel weak, remind me that Your grace is sufficient and Your power is made perfect in weakness. Teach me to be still and know that You are God. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One area where I am holding on too tightly is:

The fear beneath my need for control is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One thing I will surrender to God this week is:

Closing Reflection

Perfection promises control, but it cannot deliver peace. Only trust can do that. God does not ask us to be careless or unprepared. He asks us to do what is ours to do with wisdom and integrity, and then to trust Him with what is beyond us. Like Esther, we may face decisions without guarantees. But we never face them alone. The same God who was at work in Esther's story is at work in ours.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What am I trying to control that God is asking me to trust Him with?

Preparing for Session Six

Next topic: Being Needed Is Not the Same as Being Valued

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Five, pp. 37–39

Suggested Scripture: Ephesians 2:8–10 and John 3:22–30 (NIV)

As you prepare, consider how you would describe your worth if no one needed anything from you this week.

SESSION 06 / STAGE FOUR: REBUILD

Being Needed Is Not the Same as Being Valued

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Five, pp. 37–39
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Ephesians 2:8–10 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Psalm 139:13–14 and Isaiah 43:1 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	John 3:22–30, John the Baptist (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

There is something deeply satisfying about being needed. When people call on us, rely on us, and turn to us for answers, it feels like evidence that our presence matters. And in many ways, it does. But being needed can slowly become the foundation on which we build our identity. We begin to measure our worth by how many people depend on us. Without realizing it, we may resist the very growth in others that would make us less essential.

What happens to our sense of worth when the phone stops ringing? When a role ends? When someone else learns to do what we once did? Scripture offers a foundation for identity that does not shift with our usefulness. It reminds us that we are valued because of whose we are, not because of how much we do.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Ephesians 2:8–10 (NIV)

Paul begins with a clear statement: we are saved by grace through faith, not by works, so that no one can boast. Our standing before God is a gift. It cannot be earned. Then Paul continues: we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

The order matters. Grace comes first. Good works follow. We do not work in order to become valuable. We work because we have already been made valuable by God. For leaders who measure worth by contribution, this order changes everything. Our work can be an expression of our identity rather than the source of it.

Questions for Reflection

1. How does the order of grace and good works in this passage challenge the way you think about your worth?
2. In what ways have you tried to earn value through being useful?
3. What does it mean to you to be God's "handiwork"?
4. How might your leadership change if you truly believed your worth was settled before you accomplished anything?

Part Two / Known by Name

Read Psalm 139:13–14 and Isaiah 43:1 (NIV)

Psalm 139 celebrates the intimate care with which God forms each person. "You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." In Isaiah 43:1, God speaks to His people with tenderness: "I have summoned you by name; you are mine." Neither passage measures human value by productivity, title, or how many people depend on us. Our worth is rooted in being known, formed, and claimed by God.

Consider These Questions

- What would change if you began each day remembering that you are known by name?
- Where have you looked to other people's need for you as evidence that you matter?
- How does being "fearfully and wonderfully made" speak to the parts of you that feel unseen?
- What does it mean to belong to God apart from anything you contribute?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

John the Baptist and the Joy of Becoming Less

Read John 3:22–30 (NIV).

John the Baptist had a thriving ministry. Crowds came to hear him. People were baptized. He had disciples who followed him.

Then Jesus began His ministry, and the crowds started going to Jesus instead. John's disciples were troubled. "Everyone is going to him," they told him. John's response is one of the most remarkable statements of secure identity in Scripture. "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven." He described himself as the friend of the bridegroom, filled with joy at the bridegroom's voice. Then he said, "He must become greater; I must become less." John could release his place of prominence because he knew who he was and whose he was. His worth was not threatened by someone else's growth. Leaders who are secure in God's love can develop others freely, even when it means being needed less.

KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

A secure identity allows us to celebrate when others grow beyond their need for us.

Reflection Questions

1. What does John's statement, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven," suggest about where our roles come from?
2. What made it possible for John to respond with joy rather than resentment?
3. Where might God be inviting you to "become less" so that others can grow?
4. What would it look like to find joy in someone else's success without needing credit for it?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy draws a clear line between being needed and being valued. The biblical perspective gives that distinction a foundation that cannot be shaken. When our identity rests in usefulness, every successor feels like a threat and every boundary feels like a risk. But when our identity rests in God's love, we are free to develop others, share credit, and step back without losing ourselves. God's love for us is not based on our indispensability. It was settled before we did anything at all. That truth allows us to lead from a place of security rather than scarcity.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Identity Exercise

Take a sheet of paper and divide it into two sections. Spend some quiet time moving through the questions below, writing honestly and asking God to show you what is true.

1. What roles and responsibilities define how I see myself?

List the titles, tasks, and relationships in which you are needed.

2. Which of these would be hardest to lose?

Circle the one that feels most tied to your sense of worth.

3. What does God say about who I am?

Write down at least three truths from Scripture about your identity in Christ.

4. Which truth do I most need to believe right now?

Choose one and write it somewhere you will see it daily.

5. Who can I help grow beyond their need for me?

Name one person, and ask God to give you joy in their growth.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Father, Thank You that my worth is not earned through constant usefulness. Before I did anything, You knew me, formed me, and called me by name. Forgive me for the times I have found my identity in being needed rather than in being Yours. Help me serve from a secure place rather than striving to prove that I matter. Give me the heart of John the Baptist. Help me rejoice when others grow, even when it means I am needed less. Let my leadership point to You rather than to myself. Remind me each day that I am Your handiwork, fearfully and wonderfully made, and fully loved. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One role I have allowed to define my worth is:

What I fear would be true if I were needed less:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One person I will help grow beyond their need for me is:

Closing Reflection

Being needed can feel like being valued. But they are not the same thing. Our value was settled by God long before anyone needed anything from us. It does not rise with our productivity or fall with our limitations. It rests on His love, His design, and His claim on our lives. When we believe that, we can lead with open hands. We can celebrate the growth of others, release roles when it is time, and find joy in becoming less so that what matters most can become greater.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Who am I when no one needs anything from me?

Preparing for Session Seven

Next topic: The Courage to Receive Help

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Five, pp. 40–42

Suggested Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 and 2 Timothy 4:9–13 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice how you respond when someone offers to help you, and what you feel in that moment.

SESSION 07 / STAGE FOUR: REBUILD

The Courage to Receive Help

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Five, pp. 40–42
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	1 Corinthians 12:12–27 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	2 Timothy 4:9–13, Paul asks for help (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Many leaders are generous with help and guarded about receiving it. We encourage our teams to collaborate. We tell others it is fine to ask for support. We readily step in when someone is struggling. But when we are the ones who need help, something inside us resists.

Asking for help can feel like admitting weakness. It can expose limits we would rather keep hidden. It can feel like a burden placed on someone else. Yet God never designed us to live or lead in isolation. Throughout Scripture, His people are formed, sustained, and strengthened in community. This session invites us to consider whether our self-sufficiency is truly strength, or whether it may be a form of pride or fear that keeps us from the community God intended.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9–12 (NIV)

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up." The writer of Ecclesiastes describes the practical wisdom of companionship. Two people working together accomplish more. When one falls, the other helps. When it is cold, they keep each other warm. When one is attacked, two can defend themselves. Then comes a memorable image: "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." This passage does not frame mutual help as a fallback for the weak. It presents it as the wiser way to live for everyone.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where in your life are you trying to stand as "one" when you were designed to stand with others?
2. Who has helped you up when you have fallen?
3. What has it cost you to work alone when help was available?
4. How might a "cord of three strands" describe the support God wants for your leadership?

Part Two / Designed for Interdependence

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 (NIV)

Paul describes the church as a body with many parts. Each part is different. Each part is needed. And no part can say to another, "I don't need you."

For leaders, this passage carries a quiet challenge. We may readily affirm that every team member is valuable. But do we live as though we need them? Interdependence is not a sign that the body has failed. It is the design. God has arranged the parts so that each one depends on the others.

Consider These Questions

- Which part of the body do you tend to see yourself as?
- Who have you, in practice, treated as though you do not need them?
- How does Paul's image challenge the belief that strong leaders do not need help?
- What gifts in others have you overlooked because you were too busy doing everything yourself?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Paul and the Humility of Asking

Read 2 Timothy 4:9–13 (NIV).

Near the end of his life, the apostle Paul wrote a letter to Timothy from prison. Paul had planted churches, written much of the New Testament, and endured shipwrecks, beatings, and imprisonment. Yet in this passage, Paul makes simple, specific requests. "Do your best to come to me quickly." He notes that only Luke is with him. He asks Timothy to bring Mark, "because he is helpful to me in my ministry." He even asks for his cloak and his scrolls.

There is something striking about this. Paul, one of the greatest leaders in Christian history, openly named his needs. He was cold, lonely, and in need of companionship, and he said so. He even asked for Mark, the same young man he had once refused to take on a journey because Mark had left an earlier mission. Paul's requests remind us that receiving help is not a failure of faith or leadership. It is part of being human. And sometimes the people we need most are the very ones we once overlooked.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Spiritual maturity does not eliminate our need for others. It makes us honest about it.*

Reflection Questions

1. What surprises you about Paul's requests in this passage?
2. How specific are you when you ask for help, if you ask at all?
3. Is there someone like Mark in your life, someone you may have overlooked who could be "helpful to you" now?
4. What would it take for you to name your needs as honestly as Paul did?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy explores why help can feel like failure for so many leaders. The biblical perspective reveals that our resistance to help may have more to do with pride or fear than with strength. Receiving help requires humility. It means acknowledging that we have limits, that others have gifts we lack, and that God often provides for us through the people around us. When leaders model the courage to receive help, they give everyone around them permission to do the same. A team where help flows in both directions reflects the body Paul described, and the community God designed.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Open Hands Exercise

Hold your hands open in front of you as you begin. Let this posture be a reminder that receiving requires open hands. Then reflect on the following questions with God.

1. Where do I need help right now?

Name one area where you are struggling, even if you have not admitted it to anyone.

2. What keeps me from asking?

Be honest about the fear, pride, or belief that holds you back.

3. How might God be providing for me through someone else?

Consider who He may have already placed in your life for this need.

4. What would humility look like in this situation?

Reflect on what it would mean to receive without needing to repay or justify.

5. Who will I invite in this week?

Name one person and pray for the courage to reach out.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Thank You for creating me for community. Forgive me for the times I have tried to carry everything alone, believing that strength meant never needing anyone. Free me from the pride and fear that keep me isolated. Help me recognize the gifts You have placed in others and receive their support with gratitude. Give me the humility of Paul, who named his needs honestly. Help me see the people I have overlooked and welcome what they have to offer. Teach me to build communities where help is both offered and received, where no one has to say "I don't need you," and where Your grace flows through every part. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One area where I need help is:

What has kept me from asking is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One person I will invite in this week is:

Closing Reflection

Self-sufficiency is often praised as strength. But Scripture paints a different picture. God designed us to need one another. Two are better than one. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. No part of the body can say to another, "I don't need you." Receiving help is not a failure of leadership. It is an act of humility, an acknowledgment of God's design, and a gift to the people who are waiting for the opportunity to contribute.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What am I missing by insisting on carrying this alone?

Preparing for Session Eight

Next topic: Rest Is Not a Reward

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Six, pp. 46–48

Suggested Scripture: Mark 6:30–32 and 1 Kings 19:1–8 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice what you tell yourself must be finished before you are allowed to rest.

SESSION 08 / STAGE FIVE: SUSTAIN

Rest Is Not a Reward

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Six, pp. 46–48
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Mark 6:30–32 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Genesis 2:2–3 and Psalm 127:1–2 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	1 Kings 19:1–8, Elijah under the broom bush (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Many of us have learned to treat rest as a prize. We tell ourselves we will rest when the project is done, when the season slows down, when everything is caught up. Rest becomes something we earn by finishing. But the finish line keeps moving. There is always another message, another need, another task that could justify postponing recovery.

For people of faith, there is another layer. We may feel that resting is somehow less spiritual than serving. We may admire those who pour themselves out without pause, and quietly feel guilty when we cannot keep up. Scripture tells a different story. From the very beginning, rest was woven into the rhythm of creation. It was never meant to be a reward. It was meant to be a gift.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Mark 6:30–32 (NIV)

The apostles had just returned from a demanding season of ministry. They gathered around Jesus and reported all they had done and taught. Mark notes that so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat. The needs were real and urgent.

Jesus' response is striking: "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." He did not wait until the crowds were gone. He did not tell them they had earned it. He simply invited them to rest because they needed it. Jesus understood something we often forget. The people who serve have needs too. And caring for those needs is part of faithful service, not a departure from it.

Questions for Reflection

1. What conditions do you believe must be met before you are allowed to rest?
2. How does Jesus' invitation to rest in the middle of real need challenge you?
3. When was the last time you accepted an invitation to "come away" without guilt?
4. What might Jesus be saying to you right now about your need for rest?

Part Two / The Gift of Rest

Read Genesis 2:2–3 and Psalm 127:1–2 (NIV)

In Genesis 2, God rests on the seventh day, blesses it, and makes it holy. God did not rest because He was tired. He rested to establish a rhythm, a pattern woven into the fabric of creation itself. Psalm 127 offers a sobering perspective: "In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat, for he grants sleep to those he loves."

These passages remind us that rest is not a sign of laziness or lack of commitment. It is an expression of trust. When we rest, we acknowledge that the world does not depend on our constant effort. It depends on God.

Consider These Questions

- What does it mean to you that God built rest into the rhythm of creation?
- How does Psalm 127 challenge the belief that more effort always produces more fruit?
- What would it look like to receive rest as a gift rather than earn it as a reward?
- How might rest become an act of trust in your life?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Elijah Under the Broom Bush

Read 1 Kings 19:1–8 (NIV).

Elijah had just experienced one of the most dramatic victories in the Old Testament. Yet shortly afterward, threatened by Queen Jezebel, he fled into the wilderness. He sat down under a broom bush, utterly depleted, and told God he had had enough. Elijah was emotionally, physically, and spiritually exhausted.

What God did next is deeply instructive. He did not lecture Elijah. He did not give him a new assignment right away. Instead, an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." Elijah ate, drank, and slept. Then the angel came again: "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." God attended to Elijah's physical needs before addressing anything else. This account should not be reduced to a formula for every form of distress. But it reminds leaders that our bodies and our spirits are connected, and that God cares for both.

KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

Sometimes the most spiritual thing we can do is eat, sleep, and allow ourselves to be cared for.

Reflection Questions

1. Have you ever reached a point like Elijah, where you simply had nothing left to give?
2. What does it mean to you that God's first response was food and rest, not instruction?
3. What "journey" in your life right now might be too much for you without rest?
4. How do you respond when someone tries to care for you in practical ways?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy challenges the belief that rest should be a reward. The biblical perspective goes further: rest was never meant to be earned at all. When we treat rest as a prize for productivity, we place ourselves on a treadmill that never stops. But when we receive rest as a gift from God, we acknowledge our humanity and His sufficiency. Leaders who rest well are not less committed. They are more sustainable. They model for others that faithfulness includes caring for the body, the mind, and the soul God has entrusted to them.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Sabbath Rhythm Exercise

Find a quiet moment, ideally at the beginning or end of a day. Reflect on these questions honestly, and ask God to show you what rest He is inviting you to receive.

1. What does my current rhythm say about what I believe?

Look at your typical week. Consider what your schedule reveals about your trust in God.

2. What guilt do I carry when I rest?

Name the specific thoughts or feelings that arise when you stop working.

3. What would a Sabbath posture look like for me?

Consider what it would mean to set aside regular time for rest, worship, and delight.

4. What would I need to trust God with in order to rest?

Identify the responsibilities you fear will fall apart if you step away.

5. What invitation to rest will I accept this week?

Choose one specific time to "come away" with God, and protect it as an act of faith.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

God of rest and renewal, Thank You for creating me as a human being, with limits and needs. Thank You that rest is not something I must earn, but a gift You freely offer. Forgive me for the times I have treated exhaustion as a badge of faithfulness. Help me remember that the world does not depend on my constant effort. Teach me to receive rest without guilt. When I am depleted like Elijah, help me accept care. When You invite me to come away, give me the courage to say yes. Shape in me a rhythm of work and rest that honors You, sustains me, and allows me to serve others well for years to come. Amen.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The belief that keeps me from resting is:

What I fear will happen if I rest:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One time I will set aside for rest this week is:

Closing Reflection

Rest is not a reward for finishing. It is a gift for those who are loved by God. From the rhythm of creation to the invitation of Jesus to the care shown to Elijah, Scripture consistently reveals a God who values rest. He does not expect us to run endlessly. He invites us to stop, to be replenished, and to trust Him. When we receive rest as a gift, we are not stepping away from faithfulness. We are stepping into it.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What would change if I believed that God grants rest to those He loves, including me?

Preparing for Session Nine

Next topic: Building Everyday Resilience

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Six, pp. 49–51

Suggested Scripture: Luke 16:10 and Daniel 6:10 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice the small practices that steady you, and which ones disappear first when life gets busy.

SESSION 09 / STAGE FIVE: SUSTAIN

Building Everyday Resilience

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Six, pp. 49–51
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Luke 16:10 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Zechariah 4:10 and 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Daniel 6:10, An established practice of prayer (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

When we think of resilience, we often picture dramatic moments of endurance. A leader who holds steady in a crisis. A person who perseveres through extraordinary pressure. But most resilience is not built in dramatic moments. It is built in ordinary ones.

It is formed in the small, faithful practices we return to day after day. A morning prayer. A conversation we choose not to avoid. A boundary we keep. A moment of gratitude. A pause before reacting.

These practices rarely feel significant. But over time, they shape who we become. And when pressure comes, they are often what holds us steady. Scripture places great value on small faithfulness. This session invites us to consider how God shapes resilience through ordinary obedience.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Luke 16:10 (NIV)

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much." Jesus speaks these words in the context of how we steward what has been entrusted to us. The principle is simple but profound. Faithfulness in small things reveals and shapes our character.

We often wait for the big moment to demonstrate our faithfulness. But Jesus suggests that the small, unseen choices matter just as much. Perhaps more. Resilience is not something we summon in a crisis. It is something we cultivate long before we need it, one small act of faithfulness at a time.

Questions for Reflection

1. What small practices of faithfulness are currently part of your daily life?
2. Where have you been waiting for a big moment instead of honoring the small ones?
3. How has faithfulness in small things shaped your character over time?
4. What "very little" might God be asking you to steward well right now?

Part Two / Small Beginnings and Steady Faithfulness

Read Zechariah 4:10 and 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (NIV)

In Zechariah 4:10, the Lord asks, "Who dares despise the day of small things?" The rebuilding of the temple seemed insignificant compared to its former glory. But God was at work in the small beginning. In 2 Thessalonians 3:13, Paul offers a simple encouragement: "Never tire of doing what is good." Together, these passages encourage us to value consistency over intensity. Small beginnings are not insignificant to God. And steady, ordinary goodness, repeated over time, is a form of faithful endurance.

Consider These Questions

- Which small beginning in your life have you been tempted to dismiss?
- What good thing have you grown tired of doing?
- How does knowing that God values small things change the way you see your daily practices?
- What would it look like to choose steady faithfulness over dramatic effort?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Daniel and the Practice Already in Place

Read Daniel 6:10 (NIV).

Daniel served as a high official in a foreign empire. When his rivals persuaded the king to issue a decree forbidding prayer to anyone but the king, Daniel faced a serious threat. What he did next is quietly powerful. He went home, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, and got down on his knees to pray three times a day, "just as he had done before."

Daniel did not invent a new spiritual practice in the moment of crisis. He simply continued the practice that had already shaped his life. His resilience was not built in the moment of pressure. It was built in all the ordinary days that came before it. Daniel's established rhythm of prayer did not guarantee him an easy outcome. But it gave him a steady foundation from which to face whatever came next.

KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT

Resilience is often strengthened by what we practice before we urgently need it.

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about the phrase "just as he had done before"?
2. What practices in your life would you want to be steady enough to continue under pressure?
3. Which spiritual practices tend to disappear first when life becomes demanding?
4. What small practice could you begin now that might hold you steady in a future season?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy reminds readers that resilience is built through the small things, done often. The biblical perspective affirms that God has always worked this way. Faithfulness is rarely formed in a single dramatic moment. It is formed through ordinary obedience: prayers offered, words kept, kindnesses shown, and boundaries honored. For leaders, this is good news. We do not need extraordinary strength to become resilient. We need small, faithful practices, repeated with grace, that keep us anchored in God when pressure comes.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Small Faithfulness Exercise

Reflect on your current daily rhythms. Invite God to show you which small practices are sustaining you and where He may be inviting you to begin something new.

1. What small practices already anchor me in God?

List the habits, however small, that help you stay connected to Him.

2. Which practice have I abandoned under pressure?

Identify one spiritual rhythm that tends to disappear first when life gets busy.

3. What small beginning is God inviting me to start?

Consider a simple practice: a brief morning prayer, a verse before a meeting, a moment of gratitude at day's end.

4. What will remind me to return to it?

Choose a daily cue that is already part of your routine.

5. What truth will I hold on to when I fall short?

Write a short reminder from Scripture that God's mercy is greater than a missed day.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Faithful God, Thank You that You value small things. Thank You for working in quiet beginnings and in ordinary days. Teach me to be faithful with little. Help me honor the small practices that anchor me in You, even when they feel insignificant. When I am tempted to wait for dramatic change, help me begin with what is possible today. When I grow weary, help me never tire of doing what is good. Like Daniel, let my faithfulness be steady enough to hold me when pressure comes. Build in me a resilience rooted not in my own strength, but in my daily dependence on You. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One small practice that anchors me in God is:

One practice I tend to abandon under pressure is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One small beginning I will commit to this week is:

Closing Reflection

Resilience is rarely built in a single moment. It is built in the small, faithful choices we make every day. God sees those choices. He values the day of small things. He honors the person who is trustworthy with little. And He strengthens us through the ordinary practices that keep us connected to Him. We do not need to wait for a crisis to become resilient. We can begin today, with one small act of faithfulness, offered with grace.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What small act of faithfulness am I overlooking because it does not feel significant enough?

Preparing for Session Ten

Next topic: The Myth of Being Caught Up

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Seven, pp. 55–57

Suggested Scripture: Matthew 6:25–34 and Luke 12:13–21 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice how often you think "I'll feel better once I'm caught up," and what that belief costs you today.

SESSION 10 / STAGE FIVE: SUSTAIN

The Myth of Being Caught Up

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Seven, pp. 55–57
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Matthew 6:25–34 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Philippians 4:6–9 and Psalm 90:12 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Luke 12:13–21, The rich fool (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

The promise of finally being caught up is persuasive. We imagine a day when the inbox is empty, the project is complete, and the calendar is clear. On that day, we tell ourselves, we will finally be able to breathe. But for most leaders, that day never comes. As soon as one task is finished, another appears. As one season closes, the next begins. If our peace depends on completion, it will always be postponed. Jesus spoke often about worry and the illusion that we can secure our future through effort alone. This session invites us to consider what it would mean to find peace in the middle of unfinished work.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Matthew 6:25–34 (NIV)

In this passage, Jesus addresses worry directly. He points to the birds of the air and the flowers of the field. They do not toil or spin, yet God cares for them. "Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" Jesus asks. The answer is clear. Worry does not change outcomes. It only steals peace.

Jesus then offers a different focus: "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness." And He closes with a deeply practical word: "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." This is not indifference to responsibility. It is an invitation to live faithfully in the present, trusting God with what has not yet arrived.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where has worry about what remains unfinished crowded out your trust in God's provision?
2. How has worry about tomorrow affected your ability to be present today?
3. What would it mean for you to "seek first his kingdom" in the middle of a full schedule?
4. How do the birds and flowers in this passage speak to your own anxieties?

Part Two / Peace in the Present

Read Philippians 4:6–9 and Psalm 90:12 (NIV)

In Philippians 4, Paul encourages believers to bring everything to God in prayer with thanksgiving. The result is a peace that transcends understanding, guarding hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Paul then directs attention to whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable. Peace is connected not only to prayer but also to where we place our focus. Psalm 90:12 adds a prayer for wisdom: "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Numbering our days is not about anxiety over time. It is about recognizing that today matters.

Consider These Questions

- What would you bring to God in prayer if you trusted Him with everything unfinished?
- Where does your mind tend to dwell when your work is not complete?
- How does "numbering your days" change the way you see today?
- What would it look like to experience peace before everything is done?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

The Rich Fool and the Illusion of Security

Read Luke 12:13–21 (NIV).

Jesus tells the story of a man whose land produced an abundant harvest. His response was to build bigger barns to store everything. Then, he told himself, he could finally "take life easy; eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you."

The man believed that once everything was secured, he could finally rest. He was always planning for a future moment of ease. But that moment never came. The parallel for leaders is not that planning is wrong. It is that we can become so focused on reaching a future state of completion that we miss the life God has given us today.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *No completed checklist can guarantee a meaningful or secure life.*

Reflection Questions

1. What "bigger barns" are you building, hoping they will finally give you peace?
2. Where have you postponed living fully until some future moment of completion?
3. What does it mean to be "rich toward God" in your current season?
4. How might you hold your plans more loosely while still being responsible?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy names the myth of being caught up. The biblical perspective reveals why that myth is so persistent: it promises a security that only God can provide. We chase completion because we believe it will finally give us peace. But Scripture tells us that peace is not found at the end of our to-do list. It is found in trusting God, one day at a time. Leaders who embrace this truth can work diligently and still rest at the end of an unfinished day. They can plan for tomorrow without being consumed by it. And they can be fully present to the people in front of them, even when there is more to do.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Daily Bread Exercise

At the end of a workday this week, set aside a few minutes before you transition home. Reflect on these questions in a spirit of prayer.

1. What did God provide for me today?

Name the strength, wisdom, people, or moments of grace you experienced.

2. What did I faithfully complete?

Acknowledge the work you did, without measuring it against what remains.

3. What remains unfinished that I can entrust to God?

List what is still undone, and consciously place it in His hands.

4. What am I worried about for tomorrow?

Name it, and then remind yourself that tomorrow will worry about itself.

5. How will I receive the rest of this day?

Choose to be present to the people and moments still ahead of you.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Father, Thank You for providing what I need for each day. Help me trust You with what remains unfinished. Forgive me for postponing peace until everything is complete. Teach me to seek Your kingdom first and to find rest in the middle of an unfinished life. When worry about tomorrow tries to take my attention from today, remind me that You are already there. Guard my heart and mind with the peace that transcends understanding. Teach me to number my days, so that I may live today with wisdom, gratitude, and presence. Amen.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The "finish line" I keep waiting for is:

What that belief costs me today:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One way I will practice peace before everything is done is:

Closing Reflection

Being caught up is a myth. There will always be more to do. But peace is not a reward for completion. It is a gift for those who trust God with their unfinished lives. Jesus invites us to live faithfully today, to bring our worries to Him, and to trust Him with tomorrow. When we stop chasing a future moment of ease, we may discover that God has been offering us peace all along, right in the middle of our ordinary days.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What would change if I believed peace was available to me before everything is finished?

Preparing for Session Eleven

Next topic: Becoming the Leader You Can Sustain

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, Section Seven, pp. 58–60

Suggested Scripture: John 15:4–5 and Nehemiah 6:1–4 (NIV)

As you prepare, consider which parts of your current way of leading you could faithfully continue five years from now.

SESSION 11 / STAGE FIVE: SUSTAIN

Becoming the Leader You Can Sustain

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, Section Seven, pp. 58–60
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	John 15:4–5 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Micah 6:8 and Philippians 1:6 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Nehemiah 6:1–4, Staying on the wall (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Growth can be impressive from the outside and costly on the inside. A larger role, a fuller calendar, or greater recognition may look like progress. But sometimes that progress quietly consumes the very relationships, health, and spiritual life that make leadership meaningful. Many leaders can push hard for a season. Fewer can sustain a way of leading that remains faithful for years.

The question is not only "What am I building?" It is also "Can I sustain the person I am becoming while I build it?" Scripture reminds us that fruitful lives are not built through relentless striving. They are rooted in connection with God and in a clear sense of what He has called us to do.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read John 15:4–5 (NIV)

Jesus describes Himself as the vine and His followers as the branches. "If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." This image challenges the way many leaders measure success. Fruitfulness is not the result of how hard a branch strains. It is the result of how well the branch stays connected to the vine.

A branch does not produce fruit by trying harder. It produces fruit by remaining. For leaders, this is both a relief and a challenge. Our effectiveness is not ultimately determined by our capacity to push. It is shaped by our willingness to stay rooted in Christ.

Questions for Reflection

1. What does "remaining" in Christ look like in your daily life?
2. Where have you been trying to produce fruit through striving rather than abiding?
3. What happens to your leadership when you become disconnected from the vine?
4. Which part of your work produces lasting fruit, and which mainly produces activity?

Part Two / What God Requires

Read Micah 6:8 and Philippians 1:6 (NIV)

Micah 6:8 offers a beautifully simple summary of what God asks: "To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." These are not achievements to collect. They are qualities to embody over a lifetime. They describe a way of being rather than a list of accomplishments. Philippians 1:6 adds a word of encouragement: "He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Our growth is ongoing. And God, not our own effort alone, is the One who brings it to completion.

Consider These Questions

- How does Micah 6:8 challenge the way you define a successful life?
- Which of the three (justice, mercy, or humility) is most at risk in your current pace?
- What would it mean to trust that God is completing His work in you?
- What do you want to remain true about your character five years from now?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Nehemiah and the Great Work

Read Nehemiah 6:1–4 (NIV).

Nehemiah was leading the effort to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. As the work neared completion, his opponents sent repeated invitations to meet with him on the plain of Ono. Nehemiah recognized that they intended to harm him. His response was clear: "I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you?"

They sent the same message four times. Each time, Nehemiah gave the same answer. Nehemiah's clarity protected both his calling and his wellbeing. Not every invitation deserves a yes. Sometimes faithfulness requires saying no, repeatedly, to things that would distract us from the work God has given us.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Sustainable leaders know what God has called them to and have the courage to decline what pulls them away from it.*

Reflection Questions

1. What "great work" do you believe God has called you to in this season?
2. What invitations or distractions are pulling you away from it?
3. Which requests do you find hardest to decline, and why?
4. How might clarity about your calling help you sustain your leadership over time?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy invites readers to become the leader they can sustain. The biblical perspective reminds us that sustainable leadership begins with staying connected to God. When we are disconnected from the vine, we try to produce fruit through our own effort. We say yes to everything. We measure success by activity. And eventually, we run dry. But when we remain in Christ, we can lead from a deeper source. We gain clarity about what God has called us to, courage to decline what pulls us away, and the patience to trust that He is completing His work in us.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Abiding Exercise

Set aside some unhurried time for this reflection. Picture the vine and the branches as you work through each question, and invite God to show you where you are connected and where you have been striving.

1. When do I feel most connected to God in my leadership?

Name the practices, places, or moments when you sense His presence.

2. Where have I been striving rather than abiding?

Identify an area where you are pushing in your own strength.

3. What is the "great work" God has given me in this season?

Write it in one sentence.

4. What do I need to decline in order to protect it?

Name one invitation, commitment, or distraction that is pulling you away.

5. What will help me remain in Him this week?

Choose one practice that will keep you connected to the vine.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord Jesus, You are the vine, and I am a branch. Apart from You, I can do nothing. Thank You for inviting me to remain in You. Forgive me for the times I have tried to produce fruit through my own striving. Help me stay connected to You, so that my leadership flows from Your life rather than my own effort. Give me clarity about the work You have called me to, and the courage to say no to what pulls me away from it. Shape me into a leader who acts justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with You. And thank You that the good work You began in me, You will carry on to completion. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The great work God has given me in this season is:

One thing pulling me away from it is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One practice that will help me remain in Christ this week is:

Closing Reflection

Sustainable leadership is not about how much we can endure. It is about how well we remain connected to the source of our strength. A branch does not bear fruit by trying harder. It bears fruit by staying connected to the vine. When we abide in Christ, we can lead with clarity, decline what distracts us, and trust God with the long work of our formation. The leader we can sustain is not the one who does the most. It is the one who stays rooted in Him.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Is the way I am leading today a way I can faithfully sustain for years to come?

Preparing for Session Twelve

Next topic: Grace as an Ongoing Leadership Practice

Assigned reading: Grace Over Perfection, 30-Day Grace Challenge, pp. 64–79; "The Practice Continues," p. 80; "In Closing," p. 82

Suggested Scripture: Philippians 3:12–14 and Joshua 1:1–9 (NIV)

As you prepare, look back over the past eleven sessions and notice what has already begun to change.

SESSION 12 / THE PRACTICE CONTINUES

Grace as an Ongoing Leadership Practice

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	Grace Over Perfection, 30-Day Grace Challenge, pp. 64–79; "The Practice Continues," p. 80; "In Closing," p. 82
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Philippians 3:12–14 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Lamentations 3:22–23 and James 1:22–25 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Joshua 1:1–9, The next faithful step (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

The end of a study can feel like a finish line. But the most meaningful outcome of these twelve sessions is not the completion of a guide. It is the beginning of a different way of living and leading, one that continues long after the last conversation ends. Over these weeks, we have recognized the weight we carry, released rules we never questioned, reframed what grace and accountability mean, rebuilt our understanding of worth and help, and considered what it takes to sustain faithful leadership.

None of this is finished. Old patterns will return. New pressures will come. And we will need grace, again and again. That is not failure. That is the nature of growth. And God is faithful to meet us in every new beginning.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Philippians 3:12–14 (NIV)

Paul writes with remarkable honesty: "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on." Paul, one of the most influential leaders in Christian history, did not claim to have arrived. He described his growth as ongoing. He chose to forget what was behind and strain toward what was ahead.

This is a freeing perspective for anyone recovering from perfectionism. We do not have to be finished to be faithful. We simply have to keep pressing on. Growth in grace is not a destination. It is a direction.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where do you feel pressure to have "arrived" in your growth?
2. What do you need to leave behind as you move forward from this study?
3. What does "pressing on" look like for you in this season?
4. How does Paul's honesty about being unfinished encourage you?

Part Two / New Every Morning

Read Lamentations 3:22–23 and James 1:22–25 (NIV)

Lamentations 3 was written in the middle of grief and devastation. Yet in the darkness, the writer declares: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." James 1 adds a challenge: do not merely listen to the word, but do what it says. James compares someone who hears without acting to a person who looks in a mirror and immediately forgets what they saw. Together, these passages offer both grace and a call. God's mercies are new every morning, so we can always begin again. And His word invites us to put what we have learned into practice.

Consider These Questions

- What does it mean to you that God's mercies are new every morning?
- How will you respond on the days when you fall back into old patterns?
- What is one truth from this study you are most at risk of forgetting?
- How will you move from hearing to doing in the weeks ahead?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Joshua and the Next Faithful Step

Read Joshua 1:1–9 (NIV).

Joshua stood at the edge of the Jordan River, facing a calling much larger than himself. Moses, the leader who had guided Israel for forty years, had died. Now the responsibility belonged to Joshua. God's words to him were direct: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River." Then came a promise and a charge, repeated again and again: "Be strong and courageous."

God did not ask Joshua to become Moses. He did not promise the journey would be easy. He gave Joshua a practice to sustain him, meditating on His word day and night, and a presence to accompany him: "The Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Every leader eventually stands at the edge of something new. A new season. A new role. A new way of leading. Joshua reminds us that courage does not come from certainty about the road ahead. It comes from confidence in the One who walks it with us.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *We do not need to see the whole journey. We need courage for the next faithful step, and the assurance that God goes with us.*

Reflection Questions

1. What "Jordan River" are you standing at the edge of right now?
2. What practice will help you stay grounded as you move forward?
3. Where do you need to hear God say, "Be strong and courageous"?
4. How does the promise of God's presence change the way you face what is ahead?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In Grace Over Perfection, Brandy offers the 30-Day Grace Challenge as a bridge from insight to everyday practice. The biblical perspective reminds us that grace is not a concept we master. It is a gift we receive and a practice we return to. Over these twelve sessions, we have explored what it means to lead with grace rather than perfection. We have considered the burdens we carry, the rules we follow, the identity we claim, and the rhythms that sustain us.

Now the invitation is simple. Keep going. Keep returning. Keep receiving God's mercy each morning, and keep taking the next faithful step.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Next Faithful Step Exercise

Look back through your notes and commitments from the previous sessions. Spend some quiet time with God reflecting on what He has been teaching you, and then consider these questions.

1. What has God revealed to me through this study?

Write down the truths that have spoken most deeply to you.

2. Which session or Scripture do I want to return to?

Choose one passage to revisit regularly in the coming month.

3. Which old pattern is most likely to return?

Name it honestly, so you can recognize it with grace when it does.

4. Who will walk with me as I continue?

Name one or two people who can encourage you and pray with you.

5. What is my next faithful step?

Choose one practice from the 30-Day Grace Challenge to begin this week, and write down the date you will start.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Faithful God, Thank You for what You have revealed and begun in us through these weeks together. Thank You for meeting us in our honesty, our questions, and our growth. Help us carry these truths into ordinary days and difficult decisions. When we fall back into old patterns, remind us that Your mercies are new every morning and that we can always begin again. Give us the courage of Joshua to take the next faithful step, and the humility of Paul to keep pressing on without claiming to have arrived. Make grace visible in how we lead, how we speak, how we rest, and how we serve. And thank You that the good work You have begun in us, You will faithfully complete. Amen.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The most important truth God has shown me through this study is:

The old pattern I need to watch for is:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

My next faithful step is:

Closing Reflection

Grace is not something we master. It is something we practice, receive, and return to again and again. These twelve sessions are not an ending. They are an invitation to keep walking. There will be days when old patterns return and days when progress feels slow. On those days, remember that God's mercies are new every morning. We do not have to be finished to be faithful. We simply have to keep pressing on, one faithful step at a time, with the assurance that God goes with us wherever we go.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What is my next faithful step, and will I trust God to walk with me as I take it?

The Practice

CONTINUES

Growth in grace is not measured by flawless execution. It is measured by the willingness to return, again and again, to what matters most.

Choose a start date for your personal 30-day grace practice and keep this guide close along the way.

• • •

MORE FREE RESOURCES

Find Leadership in Practice and other free reader resources for the From Good To Grace Leadership Tools Collection at fromgoodtograce.com/resources.

 | © 2026 From Good To Grace, Inc. | For print and personal use only |