Faith IN Practice

A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR

THE CONFERENCE COMPANION

• • •

A 12-Session Faith and Leadership Study

BRANDY TROUT, DSL

WELCOME

Welcome to Faith in Practice

The Conference Companion was designed to help leaders turn learning into action before, during, and after a continuing education event. This guide extends that purpose into a faith-centered conversation, exploring each part of the journey through Scripture, biblical leaders, prayer, and personal reflection.

Each session follows the field guide's progression: preparing before the event, learning during it, and following through after it. You can use this study after a continuing education event, as preparation for the next one, or simply as a season of reflection on how God shapes leaders through learning. 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. The Conference Companion 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 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. Participants should always feel free to pass, and confidential workplace or client details should stay out of the conversation. A good session is not one in which every question gets answered. It is one in which participants leave with clearer insight and one faithful next step.

The Conference Companion includes many blank response pages. These are tools, not assigned reading. Encourage participants to engage the prompts that serve their context. Read each Scripture passage aloud from a preferred Bible, and encourage participants to read the surrounding context.

TWELVE SESSIONS

Session Map

#	SESSION	STAGE	READING	PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	OUR DATE
01	Leading With Intention	Before	pp. 5–9	Proverbs 16:3	
02	From Information to Transformation	Framework	pp. 1–3, 13–15	Matthew 7:24–27	
03	Learning to Listen for What Matters	During	pp. 13–33	Proverbs 18:13, 15	
04	The Conversations That Change Us	During	pp. 35–43	Proverbs 20:5	
05	Curiosity as a Leadership Strength	During	pp. 45–51	1 Thessalonians 5:21	
06	Learning From the Experience of Others	During	pp. 53–55	Proverbs 11:14	
07	The Leadership Lessons Beyond the Stage	During	pp. 57–73	Hebrews 10:24–25	
08	Recognizing Unexpected Opportunities	During	pp. 75–77	Isaiah 55:8–9	
09	Choosing What Deserves Action	After	pp. 79–83	Ephesians 5:15–17	
10	Turning Commitment Into Accountability	After	pp. 85–93	2 Corinthians 8:10–11	
11	Protecting Momentum When Life Resumes	After	pp. 95–105	Hebrews 12:1–2	
12	Becoming a Leader Who Follows Through	The Practice Continues	pp. 107–131	James 2:17–18	

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

FAITH IN PRACTICE

A Biblical Worldview Discussion Guide for The Conference Companion: A Leadership Field Guide for Turning Insight Into Action

© 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 The Conference Companion. 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 / BEFORE THE EVENT

Leading With Intention

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Before the Event, pp. 5–9
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Luke 14:28–30 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Nehemiah 1:4–11; 2:11–18, Nehemiah prepares to rebuild (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Every opportunity to learn is also an opportunity to steward. The time, resources, and attention we invest in growth are gifts. They have been entrusted to us, and how we approach them matters. Many of us arrive at a learning experience hoping something meaningful will happen. We are open, but we are not prepared. We have a schedule, but not a question.

Scripture invites a different posture. It encourages us to bring our plans before God, to count the cost before we build, and to prepare our hearts as carefully as we prepare our calendars. Leading with intention begins long before we walk into the room. It begins with prayer, reflection, and a willingness to ask God what He wants us to learn.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Proverbs 16:3 (NIV)

"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans." This short proverb carries a profound truth. Our plans are not meant to be made in isolation from God. When we commit our work to Him, we invite Him into the purpose behind it.

To commit something to the Lord is to hold it with open hands. It means bringing our hopes, questions, and goals before Him before we act, and trusting Him to shape them. For leaders preparing to learn, this verse raises a simple question. Have we invited God into our learning, or only into our results?

Questions for Reflection

1. What would it look like to commit your next learning opportunity to the Lord before it begins?
2. How often do you pray about your growth as a leader, not just your responsibilities?
3. What plans are you currently holding tightly that you have not committed to God?
4. How might your learning change if you approached it as an act of stewardship?

Part Two / Counting the Cost

Read Luke 14:28–30 (NIV)

Jesus describes a person who wants to build a tower. Before beginning, the builder sits down to estimate the cost and determine whether there is enough to finish. In context, Jesus is speaking about the cost of following Him. But the principle extends to how we approach any meaningful commitment. Wise builders think ahead. They consider what will be required before they begin. Intentional learning works the same way. Before we invest in an experience, it is wise to ask what we hope to build and what it will take to finish what we start.

Consider These Questions

- What are you hoping to "build" through your next season of learning?
- What will it cost you, in time, energy, or humility, to follow through on what you learn?
- Where have you started building in the past without counting the cost?
- How might counting the cost help you choose what to learn and what to set aside?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Nehemiah and the Preparation Before the Plan

Read Nehemiah 1:4–11 and 2:11–18 (NIV).

When Nehemiah heard that the walls of Jerusalem lay in ruins, he did not immediately launch a rebuilding campaign. He sat down and wept. For days he mourned, fasted, and prayed. His prayer was honest and humble. He confessed the failures of his people, remembered God's promises, and asked for favor before approaching the king.

When Nehemiah finally arrived in Jerusalem, he still did not rush. He went out at night and quietly inspected the walls himself. Only after he understood the need did he gather the leaders and say, "Let us start rebuilding." Nehemiah's preparation combined prayer, observation, and patience. He did not confuse urgency with readiness. His intentional approach earned the trust of others and gave the work a strong foundation.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Purposeful preparation does not remove uncertainty. It gives direction to the next faithful step.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you most about how Nehemiah prepared before acting?
2. How do prayer and careful observation work together in your own leadership?
3. Where are you tempted to act before you fully understand the need?
4. What would it look like to "inspect the walls" before your next learning experience?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to arrive with intention rather than simply attending. The biblical perspective adds a deeper layer to that preparation. Intention is not only about setting goals. It is about inviting God into the process. When we pray before we learn, we open ourselves to insight we might otherwise miss. When we count the cost, we are more likely to follow through. Leaders who prepare like Nehemiah, with prayer, observation, and patience, are better positioned to recognize what matters and to build something that lasts.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Prepared Heart Exercise

Before your next learning opportunity, whether it is a continuing education event, a book, or a conversation with a mentor, set aside quiet time to prepare your heart. Work through these questions in prayer.

1. What burden is God placing on my heart right now?

Like Nehemiah, notice what grieves you or stirs you in your leadership.

2. What do I need wisdom about?

Name one question or decision you want to bring before God.

3. What am I hoping to receive?

Be honest about your expectations, and offer them to God.

4. What might it cost me to follow through?

Consider the time, humility, or change that real growth may require.

5. How will I commit this learning to the Lord?

Write a short prayer that you will pray before your next learning opportunity begins.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Thank You for every opportunity You give me to learn and to grow. Help me treat each one as a gift and a responsibility. Before I plan, teach me to pray. Before I act, help me understand. Give me a heart like Nehemiah's, one that is moved by what matters and patient enough to prepare well. I commit my learning to You. Shape my questions, open my eyes, and establish the plans that honor You. Help me count the cost of growth and give me the faithfulness to finish what I begin. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The burden or question I want to bring before God is:

What I hope God will teach me through my next learning opportunity:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

How I will prepare my heart before I begin:

Closing Reflection

Intentional leadership begins with an intentional heart. Before we gather information, we can gather ourselves before God. Nehemiah reminds us that prayer and preparation are not delays. They are the foundation of faithful action. When we commit our plans to the Lord and count the cost of following through, we are far more likely to build something that lasts. Every learning opportunity can become an act of worship when we invite God into it.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Have I invited God into my learning, or only into my results?

Preparing for Session Two

Next topic: From Information to Transformation

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, pp. 1–3 and 13–15

Suggested Scripture: Matthew 7:24–27 and Ezra 7:10 (NIV)

As you prepare, think about one truth you already know well but have not yet fully put into practice.

SESSION 02 / THE FRAMEWORK

From Information to Transformation

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Welcome and The Insight → Reflection → Action Framework, pp. 1–3 and 13–15
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Matthew 7:24–27 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Psalm 119:59–60 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Ezra 7:10, Ezra studies, observes, and teaches (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

It is possible to hear something true and remain unchanged. We have all experienced it. We listen to a powerful message, nod in agreement, and even feel moved. Then life resumes, and nothing in our behavior is different.

This gap between hearing and doing is not new. Jesus spoke about it often. He understood that information alone does not produce transformation. Faith has always called for more than agreement. It calls for obedience, for truth that moves from the mind into the hands and feet. This session invites us to consider what it would take for what we learn to actually change how we live and lead.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Matthew 7:24–27 (NIV)

Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with a story about two builders. One builds on rock. The other builds on sand. When the storms come, only one house stands.

What made the difference? Both builders heard the same words. The wise builder "hears these words of mine and puts them into practice." The foolish builder hears them and does not.

The difference between wisdom and foolishness in this passage is not how much someone knows. It is what they do with what they hear. For leaders who love to learn, this is a sobering reminder. Learning without practice leaves us building on sand.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where in your life have you heard truth but not yet put it into practice?
2. What storms have revealed whether your foundation was rock or sand?
3. Why is it easier to collect insight than to act on it?
4. What would building on rock look like in your leadership this month?

Part Two / Considering Our Ways

Read Psalm 119:59–60 (NIV)

"I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes. I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands." The psalmist describes a simple but powerful sequence. First, reflection: considering one's ways. Then, response: turning one's steps. And finally, urgency: hastening rather than delaying. This is the movement from information to transformation. Reflection is not an end in itself. It leads to a decision, and the decision leads to action without unnecessary delay.

Consider These Questions

- When was the last time you paused to genuinely "consider your ways"?
- What step might God be asking you to turn toward?
- What causes you to delay obedience when you know what to do?
- What would it look like to "hasten and not delay" in one area of your leadership?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Ezra and the Order of Faithful Learning

Read Ezra 7:10 (NIV).

This single verse describes Ezra's life with remarkable clarity: "For Ezra had devoted himself to the study and observance of the Law of the Lord, and to teaching its decrees and laws in Israel." Notice the order. Ezra studied. Then he observed, meaning he practiced what he learned. Only then did he teach others.

Ezra did not teach what he had merely studied. He taught what he had lived. His credibility as a leader came from the integrity between his learning and his life. Many leaders are tempted to move directly from learning to teaching, sharing ideas they have not yet tested. Ezra reminds us that the middle step, personal practice, is what gives our leadership integrity.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *We lead others most powerfully with what we have first practiced ourselves.*

Reflection Questions

1. Which of Ezra's three practices comes most naturally to you: study, observance, or teaching?
2. Have you ever taught something you had not yet practiced? What happened?
3. What insight would you need to live out before you could teach it well?
4. How might devoting yourself to practice change the way your team receives what you share?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy introduces a simple framework: Insight, Reflection, Action. The biblical perspective reveals how ancient and enduring that pattern is. Jesus described it as hearing and doing. The psalmist described it as considering our ways and turning our steps. Ezra lived it through study, observance, and teaching. In every case, transformation happens when insight moves through reflection into practice. Faithful leaders do not stop at what they know. They build on what they do.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Wise Builder Exercise

Choose one truth or insight you have heard recently, from Scripture, a sermon, a book, or a learning event. Reflect on it prayerfully using the questions below.

1. What did I hear?

Write down the truth or insight in one sentence.

2. Why does it matter to God and to the people I lead?

Consider how this truth connects to God's purposes and to the people you serve.

3. What is keeping me from practicing it?

Name the fear, habit, or busyness that keeps this truth in your head rather than your hands.

4. What would obedience look like this week?

Identify one small, specific way to put this truth into practice.

5. Who could I share it with after I have lived it?

Like Ezra, consider who might benefit once you have practiced it yourself.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Father, Thank You for every truth You have placed in my path. Forgive me for the times I have heard and agreed but not obeyed. Help me be a wise builder. Give me the courage to put into practice what I already know, and the humility to keep learning. Teach me to consider my ways honestly and to turn my steps toward You without delay. Like Ezra, help me study, observe, and only then teach, so that my leadership reflects a life that has been shaped by what I have learned. Amen.

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

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One truth I have heard but not yet practiced is:

What has kept me from acting on it:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One step of obedience I will take this week is:

Closing Reflection

Hearing truth is a gift. Practicing it is a choice. Jesus made it clear that the difference between a firm foundation and a fragile one is not what we know but what we do. The psalmist modeled reflection that leads to action. Ezra showed us that lasting influence flows from a life that practices what it learns. Transformation does not happen in the moment we are inspired. It happens in the moments we choose to obey.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What truth am I still holding in my notes that God is asking me to build my life on?

Preparing for Session Three

Next topic: Learning to Listen for What Matters

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section One: Capture the Insight, pp. 13–33

Suggested Scripture: Proverbs 18:13, 15 and 1 Kings 3:5–12 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice how often you begin forming a response before someone has finished speaking.

SESSION 03 / DURING THE EVENT

Learning to Listen for What Matters

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section One: Capture the Insight, pp. 13–33
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 18:13, 15 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Luke 8:18 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	1 Kings 3:5–12, Solomon asks for a discerning heart (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

We live in a world full of voices. At any learning event, speakers, panels, and conversations compete for our attention. Every idea sounds important. Every framework promises results.

In the middle of all that noise, the challenge is not hearing more. It is listening well. Scripture places great value on listening. It warns against speaking too quickly, praises those who seek understanding, and calls us to pay attention to how we receive what we hear. For leaders, listening well is not only a skill. It is a form of humility and an act of discernment.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Proverbs 18:13 and 18:15 (NIV)

"To answer before listening, that is folly and shame." These are strong words. The writer of Proverbs considered premature answers not just unwise, but shameful. Two verses later comes a contrast: "The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out."

Notice that the wise do not simply receive knowledge. They seek it out. Their listening is active, intentional, and humble. For leaders who are used to having answers, this passage is a gentle challenge. Wisdom begins not with speaking, but with listening.

Questions for Reflection

1. When are you most tempted to answer before you have truly listened?
2. What does it mean for the ears of the wise to "seek out" knowledge?
3. How might a discerning heart change what you notice in a crowded learning environment?
4. Who in your life do you need to listen to more carefully?

Part Two / How We Listen

Read Luke 8:18 (NIV)

After telling the parable of the sower, Jesus gives a brief but important instruction: "Therefore consider carefully how you listen." The parable describes seed falling on different kinds of soil. The seed is the same. What differs is the condition of the ground that receives it. Jesus does not only tell us to listen. He tells us to consider how we listen. The posture of our hearts determines what takes root.

Consider These Questions

- What kind of "soil" do you tend to bring to a learning experience?
- What distractions or worries choke out what you hear?
- How might you prepare your heart to receive truth more fully?
- What would it look like to consider carefully how you listen this week?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Solomon and the Request for Discernment

Read 1 Kings 3:5–12 (NIV).

Early in his reign, Solomon had a dream in which God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon could have asked for wealth, long life, or victory over his enemies. Instead, he acknowledged his inexperience. "I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties." Then he made a remarkable request: "Give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong."

God was pleased. Solomon had asked for the ability to listen well and judge wisely, the very thing a leader most needs. Solomon's request reminds us that the best leaders do not rely on their own understanding. They ask God for the wisdom to hear clearly and choose well.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Discernment is not collecting every available answer. It is learning to recognize what matters most for the responsibility entrusted to us.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about Solomon's humility in this passage?
2. If God asked what you wanted most for your leadership, what would you ask for?
3. Where do you most need a "discerning heart" right now?
4. How might asking God for discernment change the way you approach your next learning opportunity?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to capture insights with purpose rather than recording everything they hear. The biblical perspective reveals that this kind of selective, thoughtful listening is a spiritual discipline. Proverbs warns against answering too quickly. Jesus calls us to consider how we listen. Solomon shows us that discernment is something we can ask God to give. When we listen with humility and ask for wisdom, we are far more likely to recognize the few insights that truly matter, and to let the rest go without regret.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Discerning Heart Exercise

Choose a time this week when you will be receiving information, whether in a meeting, a sermon, a learning session, or a conversation. Before and after, reflect on these questions.

1. What condition is my heart in right now?

Before listening, notice whether you are distracted, defensive, rushed, or open.

2. What am I asking God to help me hear?

Pray for discernment about one specific area of your leadership.

3. What stood out to me?

After listening, write down the one thing that seemed to matter most.

4. Why might that be what God wants me to notice?

Reflect on how it connects to your current responsibilities or challenges.

5. What will I let go of?

Release the ideas that do not need your attention right now, without guilt.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, In a world full of voices, help me hear Yours. Give me a heart that listens before it speaks, and ears that seek out wisdom. Like Solomon, I ask for a discerning heart. Help me recognize what matters most for the responsibilities You have entrusted to me. Prepare the soil of my heart to receive truth. Remove the distractions and worries that choke out what You want to grow in me. Teach me to consider carefully how I listen, so that what I hear can take root and bear fruit. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

Where I most need a discerning heart is:

What tends to distract me from listening well:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One way I will practice careful listening this week is:

Closing Reflection

Listening well is one of the most underrated leadership practices. It requires humility, patience, and a willingness to let go of what we already think we know. Scripture calls us to listen before we answer, to seek out wisdom, and to consider carefully how we receive what we hear. Solomon reminds us that discernment is a gift we can ask God to give. When we listen with a discerning heart, we do not need to capture everything. We only need to recognize what matters.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Am I listening to gather information, or listening to discern what God wants me to notice?

Preparing for Session Four

Next topic: The Conversations That Change Us

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section Two: Conversations Worth Remembering, pp. 35–43

Suggested Scripture: Proverbs 20:5 and John 4:4–26 (NIV)

As you prepare, think about a conversation that changed your perspective, and what made it possible.

SESSION 04 / DURING THE EVENT

The Conversations That Change Us

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section Two: Conversations Worth Remembering, pp. 35–43
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 20:5 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Luke 2:46–47 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	John 4:4–26, Jesus and the woman at the well (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Some conversations stay with us for years. They are rarely the ones filled with polished answers. More often, they are the moments when someone spoke honestly, asked a meaningful question, or listened to us so well that we understood ourselves more clearly. Conversations like these do not happen by accident. They require curiosity, patience, and a genuine interest in the other person.

Scripture shows us that meaningful conversation has always been part of how God shapes people. Jesus asked questions. He listened. He engaged people where they were. This session invites us to consider how our conversations might become places of genuine learning and transformation.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Proverbs 20:5 (NIV)

"The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out." This proverb offers a beautiful image. Every person carries depths that are not visible on the surface: motives, hopes, fears, and experiences. Insight does not force those depths into the open. It draws them out, gently and patiently, the way someone draws water from a well. For leaders, this verse describes the art of meaningful conversation. The goal is not to impress or advise, but to understand.

Questions for Reflection

1. Who in your life has drawn out the "deep waters" of your heart? How did they do it?
2. What makes it difficult for you to be patient in conversation?
3. How might seeing others as "deep waters" change the way you listen?
4. What is one question you could ask that would draw someone out more fully?

Part Two / The Value of Questions

Read Luke 2:46–47 (NIV)

When Jesus was twelve years old, His parents found Him in the temple courts. He was "sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions." Luke tells us that everyone who heard Him was amazed at His understanding. Yet notice how He engaged: by listening and asking questions. Even as a boy, Jesus modeled a posture of curiosity and engagement. Understanding grew through dialogue.

Consider These Questions

- Why do you think Luke highlights that Jesus was listening and asking questions?
- When was the last time you asked a question simply to understand?
- What keeps leaders from asking questions in professional settings?
- How might curiosity open doors that answers cannot?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Jesus and the Woman at the Well

Read John 4:4–26 (NIV).

Jesus stopped at a well in Samaria at midday. A woman came to draw water, and He began a conversation by asking her for a drink. This simple request crossed cultural and social boundaries. Jews did not usually associate with Samaritans, and a respected teacher would not normally speak with a woman alone.

Jesus did not lecture her. He engaged her with questions, listened to her responses, and gently addressed the reality of her life. The conversation moved from water to worship, from the surface to the depths. By the end of the conversation, the woman went back to her town and invited others to meet Jesus. One honest, patient conversation changed not only her life, but her community.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Transformative conversations begin with attention to the person, not just the information.*

Reflection Questions

1. What do you notice about how Jesus began this conversation?
2. How did Jesus move the conversation from surface topics to deeper ones?
3. Who might you be overlooking because of differences in background or status?
4. What would it look like to give someone your full attention in your next conversation?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to capture conversations worth remembering. The biblical perspective helps us see why those conversations matter so deeply. God often shapes us through people. A wise question, an honest story, or a patient listener can change our perspective in ways a formal presentation never could. When we approach conversations with curiosity and humility, as Jesus did, we not only learn more. We also become the kind of leaders who draw out the best in others.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Deep Waters Exercise

Think of one person you will have a conversation with this week, a colleague, a team member, or someone you meet at a learning event. Prepare your heart using these questions.

1. What do I really know about this person?

Consider what may lie beneath the surface of your usual interactions.

2. What question could I ask to understand them better?

Write one open question that invites them to share more deeply.

3. What might I need to set aside to truly listen?

Name the agenda, assumption, or distraction you need to release.

4. How can I honor this person in our conversation?

Consider how to show respect, patience, and genuine interest.

5. What did God show me through this conversation?

After the conversation, reflect on what you learned about them, yourself, or Him.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord Jesus, Thank You for the way You engaged people with curiosity, patience, and love. Teach me to listen the way You listened. Help me see the deep waters in every person I meet, and give me the insight to draw them out with gentleness and respect. Forgive me for the times I have rushed through conversations or overlooked people because of differences. Open my eyes to those I might otherwise miss. Make my conversations places of honesty, learning, and grace. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One person I want to understand more deeply is:

What I hope to understand about them:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

What I will set aside in order to truly listen:

Closing Reflection

Meaningful conversations are one of God's quiet gifts. They shape our thinking, deepen our understanding, and connect us to others in ways that change us. Jesus showed us that the most powerful conversations begin with attention, curiosity, and respect. He asked questions, listened carefully, and engaged people where they were. When we approach conversations the same way, we may discover that God is speaking to us through the people right in front of us.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Whose deep waters might God be inviting me to draw out?

Preparing for Session Five

Next topic: Curiosity as a Leadership Strength

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Vendor Discovery, pp. 45–51

Suggested Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:21 and Acts 17:10–12 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice how quickly you accept or reject new ideas, and what influences that response.

SESSION 05 / DURING THE EVENT

Curiosity as a Leadership Strength

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Vendor Discovery, pp. 45–51
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 14:15 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Acts 17:10–12, The Bereans examine what they hear (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

New ideas can be exciting. A fresh approach, a promising tool, or a compelling solution can feel like an answer to problems we have carried for a long time. That excitement is not wrong. It often reflects genuine hope.

But excitement alone is not wisdom. Scripture repeatedly encourages God's people to test what they hear, to think carefully, and to hold on to what is good. Healthy curiosity is not cynicism. It is a willingness to ask questions, examine evidence, and seek understanding before committing. This session invites us to consider how curiosity, grounded in wisdom, can protect both our leadership and the people we serve.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:21 (NIV)

Paul gives a short instruction to the church in Thessalonica: "But test them all; hold on to what is good." In context, Paul is speaking about prophecies and spiritual messages. He did not want believers to dismiss what they heard, nor to accept everything without question. Instead, he asked them to test it.

Testing is not the same as rejecting. It is an act of discernment that separates what is good from what is not, so that we can hold on to what truly matters. For leaders, this principle applies far beyond spiritual matters. Wisdom asks us to examine before we embrace.

Questions for Reflection

1. What does it look like for you to "test" a new idea before accepting it?
2. Are you more inclined to accept new ideas quickly or to dismiss them quickly?
3. What helps you recognize what is genuinely "good" in a new idea?
4. Where have you held on to something without first testing it?

Part Two / The Prudent Give Thought

Read Proverbs 14:15 (NIV)

"The simple believe anything, but the prudent give thought to their steps." This proverb contrasts two responses to new information. The simple accept whatever they hear. The prudent pause, think, and consider where their steps will lead. Prudence is not slowness for its own sake. It is the wisdom to think before committing, especially when the stakes affect others.

Consider These Questions

- Where have you "believed anything" because it sounded promising?
- What does giving thought to your steps look like in a practical decision?
- Who is affected when a leader adopts a new idea without careful thought?
- How can prudence and enthusiasm work together rather than against each other?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

The Bereans and Eager Examination

Read Acts 17:10–12 (NIV).

When Paul and Silas arrived in Berea, they taught in the synagogue. Luke describes the Bereans as being "of more noble character" than others Paul had encountered. What made them noble? They "received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."

The Bereans held two qualities together that are often separated: eagerness and examination. They were open and excited, but they also tested what they heard against what they knew to be true. The result was not skepticism, but faith. Luke tells us that many of them believed. Their careful examination led them to a stronger, more confident conviction.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Openness and careful examination are not opposites. Together, they form wise curiosity.*

Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think Luke called the Bereans "noble" for examining what they heard?
2. Do you tend to lean more toward eagerness or toward examination?
3. What would it look like to hold both qualities together in your leadership?
4. How might careful examination actually strengthen your confidence in a decision?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to explore new solutions with curiosity and thoughtful questions. The biblical perspective shows that this kind of careful exploration reflects wisdom and maturity. Scripture does not ask us to be closed to new ideas. It asks us to test them, to give thought to our steps, and to examine what we hear with both eagerness and care. Leaders who practice wise curiosity protect the resources and trust entrusted to them. They also model for their teams what it looks like to be open-minded without being easily swayed.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Berean Exercise

Think of one new idea, opportunity, or solution you are currently considering. Bring it before God and examine it with these questions.

1. What excites me about this idea?

Name the hope or possibility that draws you to it.

2. What do I need to examine more carefully?

Identify the questions you have not yet answered.

3. Does this align with my values and calling?

Consider whether it fits the purpose God has given you in this season.

4. Who is affected, and have I considered them?

Think about the people who will live with the consequences of this decision.

5. What is good here that I should hold on to?

Even if you do not pursue the whole idea, name what is worth keeping.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

God of wisdom, Thank You for the gift of curiosity and the excitement of new possibilities. Help me approach every new idea with both openness and discernment. Give me the noble character of the Bereans. Make me eager to learn and diligent to examine what I hear. Guard me from believing anything simply because it sounds promising. Teach me to give thought to my steps, especially when my decisions affect others. Help me test everything and hold on to what is good. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One new idea I am currently considering is:

What I need to examine more carefully:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

How I will test it before I commit:

Closing Reflection

Curiosity is a gift. Wise curiosity is a strength. Scripture invites us to be open to what is new while also testing what we hear. The Bereans show us that eagerness and examination can live side by side, and that careful thought often leads to deeper conviction. When we test everything and hold on to what is good, we protect the people we serve and grow in the kind of wisdom that makes our leadership trustworthy.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Am I examining new ideas with eagerness and care, or am I letting excitement make my decisions?

Preparing for Session Six

Next topic: Learning From the Experience of Others

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section Three: Learning From Other Leaders, pp. 53–55

Suggested Scripture: Proverbs 11:14 and 1 Kings 12:1–15 (NIV)

As you prepare, think about whose counsel you value most, and why.

SESSION 06 / DURING THE EVENT

Learning From the Experience of Others

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section Three: Learning From Other Leaders, pp. 53–55
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Proverbs 11:14 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Hebrews 13:7 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	1 Kings 12:1–15, Rehoboam chooses his counsel (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

No leader grows alone. Every one of us has been shaped by the people who came before us. Mentors, colleagues, teachers, and even leaders we have never met have influenced how we think and act. Learning from others is one of the great gifts of community. It allows us to benefit from wisdom we did not have to earn through our own mistakes. But Scripture also reminds us that not all counsel is equal. The voices we choose to listen to shape the decisions we make. This session invites us to consider how we seek, receive, and weigh the wisdom of others.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Proverbs 11:14 (NIV)

"For lack of guidance a nation falls, but victory is won through many advisers." This proverb speaks to the value of shared wisdom. Leaders who rely solely on their own perspective are vulnerable. Those who seek many advisers gain a fuller view.

The emphasis is on "many." No single voice holds all wisdom. When we gather perspectives from different people, we are more likely to see what we might otherwise miss. For leaders, this verse is both an encouragement and a challenge. It encourages us to seek counsel, and it challenges the pride that tells us we should already know.

Questions for Reflection

1. Who are the "many advisers" in your leadership life?
2. Where have you made a decision without seeking enough counsel?
3. What keeps you from asking for advice more often?
4. How diverse are the voices you regularly listen to?

Part Two / Considering the Outcome

Read Hebrews 13:7 (NIV)

"Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." This verse offers a wise approach to learning from others. We are not told to copy everything they did. We are told to consider the outcome of their way of life, and then imitate their faith. In other words, we look at the fruit. We examine the long-term results of how someone lived and led. And what we imitate is not their circumstances or methods, but the faith and character beneath them.

Consider These Questions

- Which leaders in your life have produced good fruit over time?
- What would it mean to imitate someone's faith rather than their methods?
- How do you evaluate the "outcome" of a leader's way of life?
- Who might someday consider the outcome of your leadership?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Rehoboam and the Choice of Counsel

Read 1 Kings 12:1–15 (NIV).

After Solomon died, his son Rehoboam became king. The people came to him with a request: lighten the heavy burden your father placed on us, and we will serve you. Rehoboam first consulted the elders who had served his father. They advised him to serve the people and speak kindly to them. Then he consulted the young men he had grown up with. They advised him to be even harsher than his father.

Rehoboam rejected the elders' counsel and followed his peers. The result was devastating. The kingdom divided, and Israel was never fully united again. Rehoboam did seek advice. His failure was in how he weighed it. He chose the voices that confirmed what he wanted to hear rather than the voices with experience and wisdom.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *The counsel we choose to follow can matter as much as the counsel we receive.*

Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think Rehoboam chose the advice of his peers over the elders?
2. Are you more likely to seek counsel that challenges you or that confirms what you already think?
3. Who in your life has the experience to speak wisely into your situation?
4. How can you weigh different counsel with humility and discernment?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to learn from other leaders thoughtfully, considering both results and context. The biblical perspective adds an important dimension: the wisdom to choose whose counsel to follow. Scripture affirms the value of many advisers. It invites us to consider the long-term fruit of others' lives. And through Rehoboam, it warns us against listening only to voices that tell us what we want to hear. Wise leaders learn from others with humility. They seek diverse counsel, weigh it carefully, and imitate the character behind the results rather than simply copying methods.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Wise Counsel Exercise

Think of a decision or challenge you are currently facing. Prayerfully consider these questions as you seek wisdom from others.

1. Whose counsel have I already sought?

List the people you have talked to about this decision.

2. Whose counsel have I avoided?

Be honest about any voices you have not consulted because you suspect they will challenge you.

3. Who has good fruit in this area?

Identify someone whose long-term way of life reflects wisdom in this kind of situation.

4. Am I listening for wisdom or for agreement?

Examine your motives as you consider the advice you have received.

5. What faith or character could I imitate?

Name a quality you see in a wise leader that you want to grow in yourself.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Thank You for the leaders, mentors, and friends You have placed in my life. Thank You for the wisdom they have shared and the examples they have set. Give me the humility to seek counsel and the discernment to weigh it well. Guard me from the mistake of Rehoboam, listening only to the voices that confirm what I already want. Help me consider the outcome of others' lives and imitate the faith that produced good fruit. And may my own leadership someday be worth imitating, not because of my methods, but because of my faithfulness to You. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One decision where I need wise counsel is:

A voice I may have been avoiding:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One wise person I will seek out this week is:

Closing Reflection

Learning from others is one of God's great provisions for leaders. Through mentors, peers, and examples, He gives us wisdom we could not gain on our own. But the gift of counsel requires discernment. We must seek many voices, weigh them carefully, and resist the temptation to listen only to what we want to hear. When we learn from others with humility and imitate the faith behind their fruit, we grow in wisdom and leave a legacy worth following.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Am I seeking counsel that will shape me, or counsel that will simply agree with me?

Preparing for Session Seven

Next topic: The Leadership Lessons Beyond the Stage

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section Four: Dinner Table Wisdom and Connection & Collaboration Insights, pp. 57–73

Suggested Scripture: Hebrews 10:24–25 and Luke 24:13–35 (NIV)

As you prepare, think about a meal or gathering where you experienced genuine connection.

SESSION 07 / DURING THE EVENT

The Leadership Lessons Beyond the Stage

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section Four: Dinner Table Wisdom and Connection & Collaboration Insights, pp. 57–73
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Hebrews 10:24–25 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	1 Peter 4:8–10 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Luke 24:13–35, The road to Emmaus (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Some of life's most meaningful moments happen around a table. Throughout Scripture, meals are places of connection, revelation, and transformation. Jesus ate with friends and strangers, with religious leaders and outcasts. Some of His most important teaching happened over food.

The same is often true in leadership. Formal presentations have their place. But many of the insights that shape us come from honest conversations after the sessions end. These moments matter because they are personal. When people stop performing and start sharing, real learning can begin. This session invites us to consider how God works through community, hospitality, and the conversations that happen beyond the stage.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Hebrews 10:24–25 (NIV)

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another." The writer of Hebrews describes community as something intentional. We are to "consider" how to spur one another on. Encouragement does not happen by accident.

The passage also warns against neglecting to gather. Meeting together is not optional for growth. It is one of the ways God strengthens His people. For leaders, this verse is a reminder that connection is not a distraction from our work. It is part of how we grow.

Questions for Reflection

1. Who spurs you on toward love and good deeds in your leadership?
2. How intentional are you about encouraging other leaders?
3. What keeps you from gathering with others when you need it most?
4. What would it look like to "consider" how to encourage one specific person this week?

Part Two / Hospitality and Gifts

Read 1 Peter 4:8–10 (NIV)

Peter writes, "Above all, love each other deeply... Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others." Hospitality in Scripture is more than entertaining guests. It is the practice of making room for others, of opening our lives so that connection can happen. Peter connects hospitality with using our gifts to serve. When we open our tables and our time, we create space for God to work through what each person brings.

Consider These Questions

- How do you practice hospitality in your professional relationships?
- What gift do you bring to the table when you gather with other leaders?
- What would it look like to offer hospitality "without grumbling"?
- Who might benefit from an invitation to share a meal or conversation with you?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

The Road to Emmaus

Read Luke 24:13–35 (NIV).

After the crucifixion, two discouraged disciples were walking to a village called Emmaus. Jesus joined them on the road, but they did not recognize Him. As they walked, He listened to their disappointment and then explained the Scriptures to them. When they reached the village, they urged Him to stay. At the table, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them. In that moment, their eyes were opened. Later they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road?" The disciples' understanding did not come from a lecture. It came through walking together, honest conversation, an invitation to stay, and a shared meal.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Some of the most important revelations come not in formal settings, but in shared journeys and shared tables.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about how Jesus revealed Himself on the road to Emmaus?
2. When have you experienced a "burning heart" moment in an informal setting?
3. What role did the disciples' invitation to stay play in this story?
4. How might God be working through the informal connections in your life?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to capture the wisdom shared around the dinner table and in moments of connection. The biblical perspective reveals why these moments carry such weight. God has always worked through community. He uses shared meals, honest conversations, and intentional encouragement to shape His people. Leaders who value connection beyond the stage open themselves to insights they would never find in a formal session. And when they practice hospitality, they create space for others to grow as well.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Open Table Exercise

Reflect on the connections in your life and how God might be inviting you to deepen them. Work through these questions prayerfully.

1. Where have I experienced God through community?

Recall a conversation or gathering that strengthened your faith or leadership.

2. Who has God placed on my heart to encourage?

Name one person who might need your encouragement right now.

3. What keeps me from offering hospitality?

Identify the busyness, hesitation, or self-protection that holds you back.

4. What gift can I bring to the table?

Consider how your experiences, strengths, or presence could serve another leader.

5. What invitation will I extend?

Choose one person and one simple way to make room for connection this week.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord Jesus, Thank You for walking with us on the road, even when we do not recognize You. Thank You for revealing Yourself in shared conversations and at shared tables. Help me value the connections You place in my life. Teach me to spur others on toward love and good deeds, and to receive encouragement from those around me. Give me a heart of hospitality. Help me make room for others and use the gifts You have given me to serve them. Open my eyes to see You at work in the ordinary moments of community. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One person God has placed on my heart to encourage is:

What has kept me from reaching out:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One way I will offer hospitality or encouragement this week is:

Closing Reflection

Formal learning has its place. But God often does His deepest work in the spaces between: on the road, at the table, in honest conversation. Scripture calls us to gather intentionally, to encourage one another, and to practice hospitality without grumbling. The disciples on the road to Emmaus remind us that hearts can burn with understanding in the most unexpected places. When we open our tables and our lives, we make room for God to work through community.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Who might God be inviting me to walk with, sit with, or encourage this week?

Preparing for Session Eight

Next topic: Recognizing Unexpected Opportunities

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section Five: Unexpected Insights, pp. 75–77

Suggested Scripture: Isaiah 55:8–9 and Acts 16:6–10 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice where your plans have been interrupted and what those interruptions might be teaching you.

SESSION 08 / DURING THE EVENT

Recognizing Unexpected Opportunities

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section Five: Unexpected Insights, pp. 75–77
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Isaiah 55:8–9 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	James 4:13–15 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Acts 16:6–10, Paul's redirected journey (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Our plans rarely unfold exactly as we expect. We arrive at a learning experience with an agenda, a schedule, and a list of sessions we want to attend. Then something unexpected happens. A conversation changes our perspective. A comment reveals a blind spot. A door opens that we did not know existed.

Sometimes these interruptions are distractions. But sometimes they are invitations. Scripture reminds us that God's ways are higher than ours. He often works through the unexpected, redirecting our steps in ways we could not have planned. This session invites us to consider how we can hold our plans with open hands and remain attentive to what God may be doing.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Isaiah 55:8–9 (NIV)

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." These words remind us of a humbling truth. God sees what we cannot. His understanding is far greater than ours.

For leaders who are accustomed to planning carefully, this can be both unsettling and freeing. Unsettling, because it means we are not in complete control. Freeing, because it means we do not have to see everything to trust that God does. When the unexpected happens, this passage invites us to ask whether God might be working in ways we did not anticipate.

Questions for Reflection

1. When has God worked in your life in a way you never would have planned?
2. How do you typically respond when your plans are interrupted?
3. What would it look like to trust God's higher ways in your current leadership season?
4. Where might you be holding your plans too tightly?

Part Two / Holding Plans Loosely

Read James 4:13–15 (NIV)

James addresses people who confidently announce their plans: "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." He responds with a gentle but firm reminder: "You do not even know what will happen tomorrow… Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.'" James is not discouraging planning. He is encouraging humility. Our plans should be held with the awareness that God may redirect them.

Consider These Questions

- How would your planning change if you added "if it is the Lord's will" to it?
- What is the difference between careful planning and presumptive planning?
- How might humility about the future make you more open to unexpected opportunities?
- Where do you need to hold a plan more loosely right now?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Paul and the Redirected Journey

Read Acts 16:6–10 (NIV).

Paul had plans. He intended to preach in the province of Asia, but Luke tells us he was "kept by the Holy Spirit" from doing so. He then tried to enter Bithynia, but "the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to." Two doors closed. Paul could have been frustrated or confused. Instead, he kept moving and remained attentive.

That night, Paul had a vision of a man from Macedonia pleading, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." Paul and his companions concluded that God had called them there, and they left at once. This redirection led to the gospel reaching Europe for the first time. What looked like an interruption became one of the most significant opportunities in Paul's ministry.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Closed doors and unexpected detours can be part of how God directs our steps.*

Reflection Questions

1. How do you think Paul felt when his plans were blocked twice?
2. What allowed Paul to recognize the new direction when it came?
3. What "closed doors" in your life might have been redirections?
4. How can you remain attentive to God's leading while still planning wisely?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to capture unexpected insights rather than dismissing them. The biblical perspective shows that God often works through the very interruptions we are tempted to ignore. Isaiah reminds us that God's ways are higher than ours. James teaches us to hold our plans with humility. Paul shows us that closed doors and unexpected visions can lead to remarkable opportunities. Leaders who remain attentive to the unexpected, while still exercising wisdom, are more likely to recognize when God is opening a new door.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Redirected Steps Exercise

Choose one plan, goal, or expectation you are currently holding. Reflect on it before God using these questions.

1. What am I planning, and how tightly am I holding it?

Describe the plan and notice your level of attachment to it.

2. Have any doors closed recently?

Consider whether a disappointment might be a redirection.

3. What unexpected insight or opportunity has appeared?

Name something that has surprised you or caught your attention.

4. How might God be at work in this?

Ask Him to help you see beyond your own understanding.

5. What would it look like to say, "If it is the Lord's will"?

Write a version of your plan that acknowledges God's authority over it.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord, Your thoughts are higher than my thoughts, and Your ways are higher than my ways. Thank You that I do not have to see everything to trust You. Help me plan wisely while holding my plans with open hands. When doors close, give me the patience to keep moving and the attentiveness to recognize Your leading. Open my eyes to the unexpected opportunities You place in my path. Help me distinguish between distractions and invitations. Like Paul, give me the faith to follow when You call, even when the direction surprises me. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One plan I need to hold more loosely is:

A closed door that may be a redirection:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One way I will stay attentive to God's leading this week is:

Closing Reflection

Unexpected moments can feel disruptive. But they may be part of how God guides us. Scripture reminds us that His ways are higher than ours, that our plans should be held with humility, and that closed doors can lead to new opportunities. Paul's redirected journey changed history. When we remain attentive and hold our plans with open hands, we position ourselves to recognize what God may be doing, even when it was never on our agenda.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What if the interruption I am resisting is actually an invitation?

Preparing for Session Nine

Next topic: Choosing What Deserves Action

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Section Six: Turning Ideas Into Action, pp. 79–83

Suggested Scripture: Ephesians 5:15–17 and Mark 1:35–39 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice how many good things are competing for your attention right now.

SESSION 09 / AFTER THE EVENT

Choosing What Deserves Action

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Section Six: Turning Ideas Into Action, pp. 79–83
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Ephesians 5:15–17 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Mark 1:35–39, Jesus chooses His focus (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Leaders rarely suffer from a lack of good options. More often, we face too many. After a season of learning, we return with ideas, possibilities, and responsibilities, all of them worthwhile. The challenge is not finding something good to do. It is choosing what deserves our attention now.

This can feel uncomfortable. Saying yes to one thing means saying not yet, or no, to others. We may worry about disappointing people or missing opportunities. Scripture offers wisdom for this tension. It reminds us that time is a gift to be stewarded, that there is a season for everything, and that even Jesus chose His focus carefully. This session invites us to consider how to choose faithfully among many good things.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Ephesians 5:15–17 (NIV)

"Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is." Paul calls believers to live carefully and wisely. He urges them to make the most of every opportunity, recognizing that time is limited and valuable.

But notice how the passage ends. Making the most of our time is connected to understanding the Lord's will. Wisdom is not simply doing more. It is doing what God intends. For leaders, this passage reframes prioritization. The question is not only "What is most efficient?" but "What is God asking of me in this season?"

Questions for Reflection

1. What does it mean for you to "be very careful" how you spend your time?
2. How do you seek to understand the Lord's will when choosing priorities?
3. Where might you be busy without being wise?
4. What opportunity in front of you right now deserves your full attention?

Part Two / A Time for Everything

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV)

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens." This familiar verse carries practical wisdom for leaders. Not everything belongs in this season. Some good things are meant for later. Recognizing seasons frees us from the pressure to do everything at once. It allows us to choose what fits now and to trust that other good things will have their time.

Consider These Questions

- What season are you in right now as a leader?
- What good idea might belong to a later season?
- How does recognizing seasons change the pressure you feel to act on everything?
- What would it look like to trust God with the timing of the things you set aside?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Jesus and the Choice of Focus

Read Mark 1:35–39 (NIV).

After a day of healing and ministry in Capernaum, Jesus rose very early in the morning, went to a solitary place, and prayed. Simon and his companions went looking for Him. When they found Him, they said, "Everyone is looking for you!" The crowds wanted more. The need was real.

But Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else, to the nearby villages, so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." Jesus did not ignore the crowds out of indifference. He chose His focus out of clarity about His purpose, a clarity that came from time alone with the Father.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Clarity about our calling gives us the freedom to say no to good things.*

Reflection Questions

1. What role did prayer play in Jesus' decision about where to go next?
2. How do you respond when "everyone is looking for you"?
3. What is your "that is why I have come" in this season of leadership?
4. What good thing might you need to leave behind in order to pursue what matters most?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy encourages leaders to choose the one idea that will matter most. The biblical perspective reveals that focus is not only a productivity strategy. It is an expression of faithfulness. Scripture calls us to steward our time wisely, to recognize the seasons God has given us, and to understand His will. Jesus models what it looks like to choose focus through prayer and clarity of purpose. Leaders who choose faithfully are not driven by every demand. They are guided by a clear sense of what God has called them to do now.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Season and Calling Exercise

Find a quiet place, as Jesus did, and bring your list of possibilities before God. Reflect on these questions prayerfully.

1. What are the good things competing for my attention?

List the ideas, opportunities, and responsibilities in front of you.

2. What season am I in?

Describe the season God has you in right now.

3. What do I sense God is asking of me now?

After prayer, name the one thing that seems most aligned with His purpose for you.

4. What will I entrust to a later season?

Release one good thing that does not belong to this season.

5. What is my "that is why I have come"?

Write a sentence that captures your sense of calling for this season.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Father, Thank You for the many good opportunities You place before me. Help me steward them wisely. Teach me to be careful how I live, making the most of every opportunity while seeking to understand Your will. Give me the courage to choose what matters most and the peace to set other good things aside. Like Jesus, draw me into solitary places where I can hear You clearly. Help me find my focus in Your presence rather than in the demands around me. Help me trust You with the timing of every good thing. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

What I sense God is asking of me in this season is:

One good thing I will entrust to a later season:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

When I will spend time alone with God to seek clarity:

Closing Reflection

Choosing what deserves action is not about doing less for its own sake. It is about doing what God has called us to do. Scripture reminds us that time is precious, that there is a season for everything, and that clarity comes from time spent with God. Jesus walked away from crowds who wanted more because He knew why He had come. When we choose our focus through prayer and trust God with the rest, we free ourselves to give our best to what matters most.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What has God called me to in this season, and what am I willing to set aside to pursue it?

Preparing for Session Ten

Next topic: Turning Commitment Into Accountability

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, Your 90-Day Leadership Plan and Final Reflection, pp. 85–93

Suggested Scripture: 2 Corinthians 8:10–11 and Acts 14:26–28 (NIV)

As you prepare, reflect on a commitment you made with enthusiasm but have not yet completed.

SESSION 10 / AFTER THE EVENT

Turning Commitment Into Accountability

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, Your 90-Day Leadership Plan and Final Reflection, pp. 85–93
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	2 Corinthians 8:10–11 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Ecclesiastes 5:4–5 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Acts 14:26–28, Paul and Barnabas report back (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Beginning is often the easy part. We make commitments with enthusiasm. We leave a learning experience with energy and good intentions. We tell ourselves that this time will be different.

But enthusiasm fades. Ordinary life returns. And without some form of accountability, even our most sincere commitments can quietly disappear. Scripture takes commitments seriously. It honors the willingness to begin, but it also calls us to finish. It values faithfulness over impressive starts. This session invites us to consider how accountability, rightly understood, can help us honor the commitments we make before God and others.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read 2 Corinthians 8:10–11 (NIV)

The church in Corinth had enthusiastically committed to a generous offering for believers in need. A year later, Paul writes to encourage them. "Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it."

Paul honors their initial eagerness. But he gently reminds them that desire is not the same as completion. Their willingness needed to be matched by follow-through. For leaders, this passage speaks directly to the gap between intention and completion. Eagerness matters. But faithfulness finishes.

Questions for Reflection

1. Where has your "eager willingness" not yet been matched by completion?
2. What usually happens between your initial enthusiasm and your follow-through?
3. How does Paul's encouragement feel, both gracious and challenging?
4. What work might God be asking you to finish?

Part Two / Fulfilling What We Promise

Read Ecclesiastes 5:4–5 (NIV)

"When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it... It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it." The writer of Ecclesiastes speaks plainly about the seriousness of promises. Commitments are not casual. When we make them, especially before God, we should intend to keep them. This passage also offers practical wisdom. It is better to make fewer commitments and keep them than to make many and abandon them. Integrity is built on follow-through.

Consider These Questions

- How seriously do you take the commitments you make to yourself and others?
- Have you made promises you were not prepared to keep?
- What would it look like to make fewer commitments and keep them faithfully?
- How does following through on commitments reflect your character?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Paul and Barnabas Report Back

Read Acts 14:26–28 (NIV).

Paul and Barnabas had been sent out from the church in Antioch on their first missionary journey. They had been "committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed." When they returned, they did not simply resume ordinary life. They gathered the church together and "reported all that God had done through them."

This moment captures a beautiful picture of accountability. They had been sent with a purpose. They completed the work. And they returned to share what had happened with the community that had commissioned them. Paul and Barnabas modeled accountability as a natural part of shared mission. Their report encouraged the church, celebrated God's faithfulness, and strengthened the community for what came next.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Healthy accountability is not about surveillance. It is about returning to the people who sent us and sharing what God has done.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about how Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch?
2. Who has "commissioned" or supported you in your current leadership work?
3. How might reporting back to others strengthen your commitments?
4. What would it look like to view accountability as celebration rather than scrutiny?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy helps leaders turn insights into a 90-day plan with clear commitments. The biblical perspective adds depth to why that structure matters. Scripture honors eagerness but calls us to finish. It warns against making promises we do not keep. And through Paul and Barnabas, it shows us that accountability can be a joyful act of returning to the people who support us. Leaders who embrace accountability are not weaker. They are more trustworthy. Their follow-through builds credibility and strengthens the communities they serve.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Faithful Finish Exercise

Think of one commitment you have made, from a learning experience, a conversation, or a sense of God's leading. Reflect on it prayerfully using these questions.

1. What did I commit to?

Write the commitment clearly and honestly.

2. Has my eagerness been matched by completion?

Assess where you are in following through.

3. What has gotten in the way?

Name the obstacles, distractions, or fears that have slowed your progress.

4. Who has supported me, and have I reported back to them?

Consider who has encouraged or commissioned you, and whether they know how it is going.

5. What will it take to finish faithfully?

Identify what you need from God and from others to complete this work.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Faithful God, Thank You for being a God who keeps every promise. Help me reflect Your faithfulness in the commitments I make. Forgive me for the times my eagerness has not been matched by completion. Give me the perseverance to finish what I start. Help me make commitments wisely and keep them faithfully. Surround me with people who will encourage me and to whom I can return with honest reports. May my follow-through bring honor to You and build trust with those I lead. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

One commitment I need to finish is:

What has slowed my follow-through:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One person I will report back to this week is:

Closing Reflection

Commitments matter to God. They reflect our integrity and shape the trust others place in us. Scripture calls us to match our eagerness with completion, to fulfill what we promise, and to return to our communities with honest reports. Paul and Barnabas show us that accountability can be a joyful part of shared mission. When we finish faithfully, we not only accomplish our goals. We reflect the character of a God who always keeps His word.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

Is my eager willingness being matched by faithful completion?

Preparing for Session Eleven

Next topic: Protecting Momentum When Life Resumes

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, The 7-Day Momentum Sequence, pp. 95–105

Suggested Scripture: Hebrews 12:1–2 and Acts 2:42–47 (NIV)

As you prepare, notice what tends to pull you away from new commitments once ordinary routines return.

SESSION 11 / AFTER THE EVENT

Protecting Momentum When Life Resumes

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, The 7-Day Momentum Sequence, pp. 95–105
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Acts 2:42–47, The early church devotes itself (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Every mountaintop experience is followed by a return to the valley. After a powerful learning experience, we often feel renewed, inspired, and ready for change. Then we return to full inboxes, urgent requests, and familiar routines. Within days, the inspiration begins to fade.

This is not a sign of failure. It is simply the reality of life. But it means that momentum must be protected intentionally. Scripture speaks often about perseverance. It encourages us to run with endurance, to stand firm, and to devote ourselves to the practices that sustain faith over time. This session invites us to consider how we can carry what we have learned into the ordinary rhythms of life.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read Hebrews 12:1–2 (NIV)

"Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." The writer of Hebrews uses the image of a race. Running well requires throwing off what slows us down. It requires perseverance. And it requires keeping our eyes fixed on the right focus.

Notice that this is not a sprint. It is a race that requires endurance. Momentum is not maintained by a single burst of energy, but by steady, focused perseverance. For leaders returning from a season of learning, this passage offers both encouragement and direction.

Questions for Reflection

1. What "hinders" you from following through when ordinary life resumes?
2. What would it look like to run your current leadership race with perseverance?
3. Where are your eyes fixed when pressure increases?
4. What might you need to throw off in order to protect what you have learned?

Part Two / Standing Firm

Read 1 Corinthians 15:58 (NIV)

"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Paul calls believers to stand firm and remain steady. The phrase "let nothing move you" suggests that pressures will come. The challenge is to remain anchored. Paul also offers a reason for perseverance: our labor in the Lord is not in vain. Faithful effort matters, even when results are not immediately visible.

Consider These Questions

- What tends to "move" you away from your commitments?
- How does knowing your labor is not in vain encourage you to persevere?
- What does standing firm look like in your first week back from a learning experience?
- Where do you need encouragement to keep going?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

The Early Church and Sustaining Rhythms

Read Acts 2:42–47 (NIV).

After the powerful events of Pentecost, thousands of people came to faith. It was an extraordinary beginning. But Luke does not describe only the excitement. He describes what came next: "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

The early church sustained its momentum through consistent rhythms. They met together daily. They shared meals. They prayed. They cared for one another's needs. And the Lord added to their number daily. The early believers did not rely on the energy of Pentecost alone. They built practices that carried their faith into everyday life.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Powerful beginnings need sustaining rhythms. Devotion is what carries inspiration into ordinary days.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about how the early church sustained its momentum?
2. Which of their rhythms (teaching, fellowship, meals, prayer) is most present in your life?
3. What rhythms could help you carry what you have learned into daily life?
4. Who could you devote yourself to growing alongside?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy offers a 7-Day Momentum Sequence to help leaders protect what they learned when they return to ordinary life. The biblical perspective reveals that protecting momentum has always required intentional devotion. Scripture calls us to run with perseverance, to stand firm, and to build rhythms that sustain faith over time. The early church shows us that extraordinary beginnings flourish when they are carried forward through ordinary devotion. Leaders who protect their momentum do not rely on inspiration alone. They build practices that anchor them when pressure returns.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Devoted Rhythm Exercise

Reflect on how you can carry what you have learned into ordinary life. Work through these questions prayerfully.

1. What did God teach me that I do not want to lose?

Name the insight or conviction you want to protect.

2. What is most likely to pull me away from it?

Identify the pressure, routine, or distraction that threatens your momentum.

3. What do I need to throw off?

Consider what might be hindering you from running well.

4. What rhythm will help me stay devoted?

Choose a practice, such as prayer, Scripture, fellowship, or reflection, that will anchor you.

5. Who will run this race with me?

Name someone who can encourage you and help you persevere.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Lord Jesus, You are the pioneer and perfecter of my faith. Help me fix my eyes on You when ordinary life tries to pull my attention away. Give me perseverance to run the race You have marked out for me. Help me throw off whatever hinders me and stand firm when pressure comes. Like the early church, help me build rhythms of devotion that carry what You have taught me into everyday life. Remind me that my labor in You is never in vain. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

What God taught me that I want to protect is:

What is most likely to pull me away from it:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

One rhythm of devotion I will build this week is:

Closing Reflection

Inspiration is a gift, but it rarely lasts on its own. Momentum must be protected. Scripture calls us to persevere, to stand firm, and to devote ourselves to practices that sustain faith over time. The early church shows us that powerful beginnings flourish through ordinary, consistent devotion. When we fix our eyes on Jesus and build rhythms that anchor us, we can carry what we have learned into every ordinary day.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What rhythm of devotion will carry what God has taught me into ordinary days?

Preparing for Session Twelve

Next topic: Becoming a Leader Who Follows Through

Assigned reading: The Conference Companion, pp. 107–131

Suggested Scripture: James 2:17–18 and Luke 19:1–10 (NIV)

As you prepare, look back over these sessions and notice what God has changed in you.

SESSION 12 / THE PRACTICE CONTINUES

Becoming a Leader Who Follows Through

STUDY AT A GLANCE

ASSIGNED READING	The Conference Companion, The 30-Day Check-In, 30-Day Reflection, Letter to My Future Self, and Closing, pp. 107–131
PRIMARY SCRIPTURE	James 2:17–18 (NIV)
SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE	Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV)
BIBLICAL LEADER	Luke 19:1–10, Zacchaeus responds with action (NIV)

An Invitation to Reflect

Real change leaves evidence. When God works in a person's life, it shows. Not always dramatically, and not always immediately, but over time, faith produces fruit that others can see. The same is true of growth in leadership. The measure of a learning experience is not how inspired we felt in the moment. It is what has changed in us and through us since then. Over these twelve sessions, we have considered intention, listening, conversation, curiosity, counsel, community, focus, commitment, and perseverance. Now we pause to ask what fruit has begun to grow. This final session invites us to reflect honestly, celebrate God's work, and commit to continuing the journey.

Part One / The Scriptural Foundation

Read James 2:17–18 (NIV)

"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith; I have deeds.' Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds." James makes a strong point. Genuine faith is not merely an inner belief. It is demonstrated through action.

James is not saying that our actions earn God's favor. He is saying that real faith naturally produces visible fruit. What we believe shapes how we live. For leaders, this passage raises an important question. What evidence would show that what we have learned has truly taken root?

Questions for Reflection

1. What evidence of growth can you see in your life since this study began?
2. Where has your faith been accompanied by action?
3. Where do you still need to move from belief to deeds?
4. What would others say they have noticed in you recently?

Part Two / The Fruit of the Spirit

Read Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV)

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Paul describes the evidence of the Spirit's work in a believer's life. These qualities are not achievements we produce through effort alone. They are fruit that grows as we walk with God. This list offers a helpful lens for evaluating our growth as leaders. Beyond skills and results, God is shaping our character.

Consider These Questions

- Which fruit of the Spirit has grown most in you during this season?
- Which one do you most want God to grow in you next?
- How does character growth show up in your leadership?
- How might the people you lead experience this fruit in you?

Part Three / Biblical Leadership in Practice

Zacchaeus and Visible Change

Read Luke 19:1–10 (NIV).

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and very wealthy. He was also short, so when Jesus came through Jericho, he climbed a sycamore tree to see Him. Jesus stopped, looked up, and said, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." Zacchaeus came down at once and welcomed Him gladly.

His encounter with Jesus changed him. And the change was visible. "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Zacchaeus did not simply feel inspired. He made concrete decisions that affected real people. His response showed that his encounter with Jesus had truly changed him.

> **KEY LEADERSHIP INSIGHT**
>
> *Genuine transformation produces specific, visible action.*

Reflection Questions

1. What strikes you about how quickly Zacchaeus responded?
2. What made his change visible to others?
3. What specific action would show that your growth is genuine?
4. Who might be affected if you followed through on what God has shown you?

Part Four / The Leadership Connection

In The Conference Companion, Brandy closes with 30-day check-ins and a letter to your future self, inviting leaders to look for real evidence of change. The biblical perspective reveals that this kind of reflection is deeply consistent with how God works. Scripture teaches that genuine faith produces visible deeds. It describes the fruit of the Spirit as evidence of God's work in us. And through Zacchaeus, it shows that transformation leads to specific, generous action. Leaders who follow through do not simply remember what they learned. They let it reshape who they are and how they serve.

Part Five / Putting Faith Into Practice

The Evidence of Grace Exercise

Look back through your notes and commitments from previous sessions. Spend time with God reflecting on what He has done and what He is still doing.

1. What has God changed in me through this study?

Name the growth, insight, or conviction you have experienced.

2. What fruit can others see?

Consider what the people around you might have noticed.

3. What still needs to move from belief to action?

Identify one area where you have not yet followed through.

4. What would my "Zacchaeus moment" look like?

Name one specific, visible step that would demonstrate genuine change.

5. What do I want my future self to remember?

Write a brief message to yourself about what God has taught you and what to keep practicing.

• • •

A Prayer for the Journey

Faithful God, Thank You for what You have done in us through these weeks together. Thank You for every insight, every conversation, and every moment of conviction. Let our faith be accompanied by action. Grow in us the fruit of Your Spirit, so that our leadership reflects Your character. Like Zacchaeus, help us respond to You with specific, generous, and visible change. Give us the courage to follow through on what You have shown us. As we continue the journey, keep our hearts open, our hands ready, and our eyes fixed on You. Amen.

My Faith in Practice Commitment

The most important thing God has changed in me is:

One area still waiting for action:

The biblical truth I want to remember is:

My next visible step of faithfulness is:

Closing Reflection

Real change leaves evidence. When God works in us, it shows in our character, our choices, and our relationships. Scripture calls us to faith that acts, to growth that bears fruit, and to transformation that others can see. Zacchaeus reminds us that a genuine encounter with Jesus leads to concrete, generous change. As this study ends, the practice continues. Keep looking for the evidence of God's grace, and keep taking the next faithful step.

A QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

What evidence will show, thirty days from now, that God has changed how I lead?

The Practice

CONTINUES

Every opportunity to learn is an invitation to grow. Bring your questions to God, follow through on what He shows you, and keep taking the next faithful step.

Revisit your commitments at 30 and 90 days, and bring a fresh copy of the field guide to your next continuing education event.

• • •

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.