



BEYOND PERFORMANCE

Abide → Think → Feel → Act



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Purpose of This Session

Most leadership and performance models focus on improving how we think, regulate emotions, and execute.

Those are valuable areas of growth. Clear thinking matters. Emotional stability matters. Discipline and follow-through matter.

But for Kingdom-minded leaders, an important question sits beneath all of them:

What is informing the way we think?

As followers of Christ, we do not simply pursue better thinking. We pursue renewed thinking.

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” — Romans 12:2

This session explores the difference between high performance rooted in self-mastery and faithful performance rooted in dependence on God.

Core Idea

Many performance models can be summarized this way:

Think well + Feel well + Act well = High Performance

That is useful. But Kingdom leadership begins one step earlier:

Abide → Think → Feel → Act

“Apart from me you can do nothing.” — John 15:5

The goal is not merely to perform at a higher level.

The goal is to lead, decide, respond, and act in alignment with God’s assignment.

Abide: The Foundation

To abide is to remain connected to Christ through relationship, dependence, Scripture, prayer, listening, and surrender. Abiding does not remove responsibility. It informs responsibility. Without it, a leader may still be productive, disciplined, and successful by the world's standards—but may be climbing the wrong mountain.

Reflection Questions:

- What helps you remain connected to God during a normal workweek?
- Where are you most tempted to rely on experience, instinct, or effort rather than dependence?

Think: From Clarity to Discernment

The world asks:

- What do I think?
- What is the smartest strategy?
- What decision makes the most sense?

Kingdom leadership adds:

- What is God saying?
- What is true?
- What perspective am I missing?
- What does wisdom require here?

Mental clarity becomes more than intelligence or experience. It becomes discernment.

"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault." — James 1:5

Reflection Questions:

- What decision are you facing that requires more than analysis?
- Where might fear, ambition, or past experience be limiting your perspective?

Feel: From Emotional Regulation to Surrender

Healthy leaders need emotional awareness and resilience. But Christian leaders are not merely trying to manage emotions. They are learning to surrender them.

The goal is not simply: "I can handle this." It is: "God is with me in this."

The fruit of the Spirit includes peace, patience, and self-control—not merely as traits to manufacture, but as evidence of a life increasingly submitted to God.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." — Galatians 5:22–23

Reflection Questions:

- Which emotion most often affects your leadership: fear, urgency, frustration, disappointment, anxiety, or pride?
 - What would it mean to surrender that emotion rather than suppress it?
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Act: From Execution to Obedience

Discipline, consistency, and follow-through matter. But Kingdom leaders must also ask:

Is this what God is actually asking me to do?

It is possible to be highly productive, strategically effective, and deeply committed while moving in the wrong direction. Execution without discernment can take us farther from our assignment. Faithful action means doing what is ours to do while releasing what is not ours to control.

Reflection Questions:

- Where are you executing well but may need to reassess direction?
 - What faithful action have you delayed?
 - What may no longer be yours to carry?
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The Tension

Surrender is not passivity.

It is possible to be:

- Ambitious and surrendered
- Disciplined and dependent
- Strategic and Spirit-led
- Productive and peaceful
- Responsible without becoming controlling

The question is not whether we should perform.

The question is: **What is driving our performance?**

Personal Reflection

Take a few minutes to consider:

1. Which area currently needs the most attention: abiding, thinking, feeling, or acting?
2. Where have you been relying primarily on your own strength?
3. What area of leadership needs more discernment before more action?
4. What would faithful performance look like in this season?

Group Discussion

- What is the difference between high performance and faithful performance?
- Have you ever been highly productive but later realized you were moving in the wrong direction?
- Which part of the model is hardest for you: abiding, thinking, feeling, or acting?
- How do you distinguish between healthy ambition and striving?
- Where might God be inviting you to lead with greater dependence rather than greater intensity?

Practical Application: The Alignment Check

Choose one significant area of leadership, work, or life.

Abide - What do I need to bring before God rather than carry alone?

Think - What truth, wisdom, or perspective do I need?

Feel - What emotion needs to be acknowledged and surrendered?

Act - What is the next faithful step?

Finish this sentence:

This week, faithful performance looks like:

Closing Reflection

The goal is not merely mental performance. The goal is faithful performance in alignment with God's assignment.

The Holy Spirit informs our thinking.

The Holy Spirit steadies our emotions.

The Holy Spirit directs our actions.

As you leave today, consider:

- Where am I trying to perform without abiding?
- What would change if dependence became the foundation of my leadership?
- What is one next step of obedience God is inviting me to take?

Key Takeaways & Shared Insights

As each person shares what stood out most, consider:

- Where do we see shared tension between performance and dependence?
- What language helps distinguish healthy ambition from striving?
- How might this framework change the way we think, feel, and act as leaders?
