

5-Day Study Guide

Message Title: The Idol of Me – When Kings Go to War

Speaker: Blake Bradley

Main Scripture: 2 Samuel 11; Psalm 51

This 5-day study guide helps us go deeper into the message “The Idol of Me – When Kings Go to War.” Blake Bradley shows how King David’s decision to stay behind when he was called to battle led to compromise and sin. But through repentance, David found restoration in God’s presence.

This study invites you to examine where you may be spiritually passive, challenged by temptation, or placing yourself at the center of your life instead of Jesus. God is calling each of us to a higher level of obedience and deeper intimacy with Him.

Use this guide:

- On your own in personal devotion
- With your spouse or family around the table
- In your Roads Group to grow in accountability and truth together

Day 1 – Called to the Battlefield

Big Idea: When we stay behind in seasons God calls us to engage, we open the door to passivity and compromise.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:1 (ESV)

“In the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab... But David remained at Jerusalem.”

Sermon Quote:

“David was supposed to be leading the armies of the Lord, but he stayed behind. When we’re not where we’re called to be, we become vulnerable.”

Discussion Questions

New Christians:

1. What does it mean to follow God’s calling in your current season of life?
2. Have you ever felt God nudging you to take a step forward but hesitated?

Mature Christians:

1. What signs tell you it's time to shift into a new spiritual season?
2. How do you respond when God leads you into uncomfortable territory?

Jr. & Sr. High Students:

1. What areas of your life are you tempted to “stay behind” instead of stepping up?
2. How can you recognize when God is calling you to engage more?

Families with Young Children:

1. Why do you think it's important for all of us to do what God asks us to do—even if it feels hard?
2. Can you think of a time when our family did something brave for God together?

Families with Teenagers:

1. What's a current season or situation where God may be asking our family to step forward instead of staying comfortable?
2. How can each of us take part in being spiritually engaged in this season?

Personal Application

- **New Christians:** Take one step today toward where God is calling you—big or small.
- **Mature Christians:** Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal if you've become passive in any area.
- **Students:** Identify one way to engage your faith more intentionally this week.
- **Families w/ Young Children:** Practice stepping into God's leading by praying together before making a decision.
- **Families w/ Teenagers:** Talk together as a family about what “spiritual battle” looks like in your home or school life.

Day 2 – Feeding the Flesh or Following the Spirit

Big Idea: When we stop following God's lead, we start feeding our flesh—and it always wants more.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:2–4 (ESV)

“It happened... that he saw from the roof a woman bathing... And David sent and inquired... and lay with her.”

Sermon Quote:

“Your flesh is like a toddler on steroids. It just wants more. When we stop following God, we start feeding it.”

Discussion Questions

New Christians:

1. What are some daily habits that help you say no to your flesh and yes to God?
2. Why is it important to recognize temptation early?

Mature Christians:

1. In what areas might you be subtly feeding the flesh without realizing it?
2. How does spiritual discipline help weaken the power of the flesh?

Jr. & Sr. High Students:

1. What does it look like to “feed the flesh” in your daily life (social media, friendships, etc.)?
2. How can you be more aware of what’s influencing your decisions?

Families with Young Children:

1. What are some things we can say “no” to when they try to pull us away from doing what’s right?
2. How can our family help each other make good choices that follow Jesus?

Families with Teenagers:

1. What are some temptations that we all might face in today’s world?

2. What's one way our family can support each other in saying no to those temptations and yes to God?

Personal Application

- **New Christians:** Choose one temptation to surrender to God in prayer today.
- **Mature Christians:** Fast from a flesh-feeding habit this week and replace it with prayer.
- **Students:** Make a decision to walk away from something that pulls you away from God.
- **Families w/ Young Children:** Talk about what it means to “make good choices” and include prayer.
- **Families w/ Teenagers:** Commit to a media or phone fast together one day this week and reflect.

Day 3 – Confronting the Idol of Me

Big Idea: The real idol isn't always out there—it's often the person in the mirror.

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:27 (ESV)

“But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.”

Sermon Quote:

“If I refuse correction, who's really sitting on the altar of my heart? It's me. The idol of me.”

Discussion Questions

New Christians:

1. What does it mean to put Jesus on the throne of your life?
2. How do you respond when God gently corrects you?

Mature Christians:

1. Where has the idol of self been creeping into your spiritual life?
2. What helps you stay humble and teachable?

Jr. & Sr. High Students:

1. Why is it hard to admit when you're wrong?
2. Who can you trust to speak the truth to you—even when it's hard to hear?

Families with Young Children:

1. What does it look like when we each put ourselves first instead of God?
2. How can we make sure Jesus is the most important in our hearts each day?

Families with Teenagers:

1. In what ways can we all struggle with wanting our own way more than God's way?
2. How can we hold each other accountable in keeping God first?

Personal Application

- **New Christians:** Reflect on who is truly leading your life today—you or Jesus?
- **Mature Christians:** Invite someone to speak truth into your blind spots.
- **Students:** Ask a trusted adult to help you identify a “me-first” mindset.
- **Families w/ Young Children:** Practice saying “I’m sorry” and modeling forgiveness at home.
- **Families w/ Teenagers:** Hold a conversation on what surrender really means.

Day 4 – A Heart That Hears

Big Idea: Repentance isn't just saying sorry—it's returning to the presence of God.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10–11 (ESV)

“Create in me a clean heart, O God... Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me.”

Sermon Quote:

“David said, ‘Don’t take your presence from me.’ That’s the heart of someone who knows where life comes from.”

Discussion Questions

New Christians:

1. What does repentance mean to you?
2. Why is God's presence more valuable than anything else?

Mature Christians:

1. When was the last time you truly repented—not just confessed?
2. How do you stay sensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit?

Jr. & Sr. High Students:

1. What does it look like to turn your heart back to God when you've messed up?
2. Why is it hard to admit sin sometimes?

Families with Young Children:

1. Why do we need to say sorry to God when we make wrong choices?
2. What helps us feel close to God again when our hearts feel far away?

Families with Teenagers:

1. What does true repentance look like in our lives—not just saying "sorry," but really turning back to God?
2. How can our family practice forgiveness and restoration with one another?

Personal Application

- **New Christians:** Write a simple prayer asking God to create a clean heart in you.
- **Mature Christians:** Journal about an area where God is calling you to return.
- **Students:** Spend time in worship or prayer alone—just you and God.
- **Families w/ Young Children:** Sing or pray together about God's love and closeness.
- **Families w/ Teenagers:** Set aside time to repent and seek God together as a family.

Day 5 – A Limp That Marks the Line

Big Idea: Wrestling with God leads to legacy—your obedience today impacts generations.

Scripture: Genesis 32:26 (ESV)

“But Jacob said, ‘I will not let you go unless you bless me.’”

Sermon Quote:

“You will have generations that walk with a limp because you blazed and went after the Lord.”

Discussion Questions

New Christians:

1. What does it mean to wrestle with God in your spiritual journey?
2. How could your obedience impact those around you?

Mature Christians:

1. Who is being impacted by your daily walk with Jesus?
2. How are you contending for your family line?

Jr. & Sr. High Students:

1. What does it mean to carry a “spiritual limp” after encountering God?
2. Who do you want to influence through your obedience to Jesus?

Families with Young Children:

1. What does it mean to chase after God even when it’s hard?
2. How can we help each other never give up on following Jesus?

Families with Teenagers:

1. What kind of spiritual legacy do we want to leave as a family?
2. How can our faith today shape the lives of those who come after us?

Personal Application

- **New Christians:** Commit today to keep wrestling for more of God.
- **Mature Christians:** Write a prayer over your children or spiritual legacy.
- **Students:** Pray that your life would influence others to follow Jesus.
- **Families w/ Young Children:** Start a family tradition that reflects your faith in Jesus.
- **Families w/ Teenagers:** Share your testimony as a family and pray over your legacy together.