

STUDENT STUDY GUIDE – July 26, 2026

WALKING BY THE SPIRIT

Choosing God's Will Over Your Own

Based on the message by Blake Bradley

OVERVIEW

Who is leading your life?

Every day you make hundreds of decisions. Some are small, like how you spend your free time or who you sit with at lunch. Others have a much greater impact, shaping your relationships, your character, and the direction of your future. The question is not whether you are being led. The question is who is leading you.

In Walking by the Spirit, Blake Bradley begins in the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus faced the greatest decision of His earthly life. Knowing the suffering that awaited Him, Jesus honestly expressed His anguish to the Father but ultimately surrendered His own will, praying, "Not as I will, but as You will."

Blake then connects Jesus' example with Romans 8 and Galatians 5, where Paul describes the daily battle between the flesh and the Spirit. The flesh encourages us to live for ourselves, chase comfort, follow our emotions, and seek approval from others. The Holy Spirit leads us toward truth, holiness, obedience, and becoming more like Christ.

Walking by the Spirit is not simply about avoiding obvious sins. It is about surrendering every part of our lives to God's leadership. Our thoughts, attitudes, relationships, priorities, entertainment, ambitions, and decisions all reveal whether we are following ourselves or following Jesus.

Obedience is not always easy. Blake points to both Jesus and the Apostle Paul as examples of people who remained faithful even when obedience brought suffering. Following Jesus will sometimes cost us popularity, comfort, opportunities, or acceptance, but the Holy Spirit gives believers the strength to remain faithful.

"There's actually a higher way to live. It's to live with the Spirit of God leading our lives." — Blake Bradley

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read → Respond → Reflect → Pray → Live It

Open your Bible and carefully read each passage before answering the questions.

Allow Scripture—not culture, emotions, or personal opinions—to shape your answers.

As you work through this guide, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas where your desires, fears, or habits may be leading you instead of God.

Take time to journal, pray, and discuss these questions with your parents, youth leaders, trusted friends, or Roads Group.

Don't rush through the questions. Walking by the Spirit is not simply something to understand. It is a daily decision to follow Jesus.

SECTION 1 — NOT MY WILL, BUT YOURS

FOCUS

Jesus showed that surrender begins by choosing God's will above our own, even when obedience is difficult.

READ

Matthew 26:36–39

RESPOND

1. Where did Jesus go to pray?
2. How does Matthew describe Jesus' emotional condition?
3. What request did Jesus bring before the Father?
4. How did Jesus surrender His own desire?
5. What does Jesus' prayer teach us about trusting God?

REFLECT

- Is there an area of my life where I already know what God wants, but I am resisting His direction?
- Do I usually ask God to bless my plans, or do I ask Him to show me His plans?
- What would change if I honestly prayed, "Not my will, but Yours," this week?

Further Scripture Reading

Philippians 2:5–11, Proverbs 3:5–6, Luke 9:23

SECTION 2 — WATCH AND PRAY

FOCUS

Spiritual growth requires more than good intentions. Jesus calls His followers to stay spiritually awake through prayer and dependence on God.

READ

Matthew 26:40–41

RESPOND

1. What were the disciples doing when Jesus returned?
2. What two commands did Jesus give them?
3. Why did Jesus tell them to watch and pray?
4. What did Jesus say about the spirit and the flesh?
5. What warning does this passage give believers?

REFLECT

- What distractions make it difficult for me to stay spiritually alert?
- Am I depending on my own strength, or am I regularly bringing my struggles to God in prayer?
- What habit could help me become more intentional in prayer this week?

Further Scripture Reading

1 Peter 5:8–9, Colossians 4:2, Ephesians 6:18

SECTION 3 — SET YOUR MIND ON THE SPIRIT

FOCUS

The direction of your life is influenced by what continually shapes your thinking.

READ

Romans 8:3–8

RESPOND

1. What did God accomplish through His Son that the law could not accomplish?
2. What do people living according to the flesh set their minds on?

3. What do people living according to the Spirit set their minds on?
4. What is the result of each mindset?
5. Why can the mind set on the flesh not please God?

REFLECT

- What has the greatest influence on the way I think: Scripture, friends, entertainment, social media, or something else?
- Are my thoughts producing life and peace, or anxiety, selfishness, and frustration?
- What practical step can I take this week to fill my mind with God's truth?

Further Scripture Reading

Romans 12:1–2, Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:1–10

SECTION 4 — WALK BY THE SPIRIT

FOCUS

The Holy Spirit gives believers the power to overcome the desires of the flesh and develop Christlike character.

READ

Galatians 5:16–25

RESPOND

1. What promise is given to those who walk by the Spirit?
2. How does Paul describe the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit?
3. Which works of the flesh stand out to you in this passage?
4. What qualities make up the fruit of the Spirit?
5. According to verse 25, how should believers live?

REFLECT

- Which work of the flesh do I most need to surrender to God?
- Which fruit of the Spirit do I most want God to grow in my life?
- What choice can I make this week that would help me keep in step with the Holy Spirit?

Further Scripture Reading

John 15:1–8, Ephesians 5:15–18, 2 Peter 1:3–8

SECTION 5 — WALKING IN OBEDIENT SURRENDER

FOCUS

Walking by the Spirit often means obeying God when it is uncomfortable, unpopular, or costly.

READ

Matthew 26:63–66

RESPOND

1. What question did the high priest ask Jesus?
2. How did Jesus answer?
3. What accusation did the religious leaders make after His response?
4. What judgment did they reach?
5. How does Jesus demonstrate faithfulness in this passage?

REFLECT

- Have I ever stayed silent about my faith because I was afraid of what others might think?
- Is there an area where following Jesus may cost me popularity, comfort, or acceptance?
- What act of obedience is the Holy Spirit asking me to take this week?

Further Scripture Reading

Acts 21:10–14, Hebrews 12:1–3, Luke 14:27

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Jesus never asked the Father to approve His own plan. He surrendered Himself completely to the Father's will.

That same invitation is before you today.

Following Jesus is not about trying harder or becoming a better person through your own effort. It is about surrendering your life to God and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead you one step at a time.

Some days obedience will be easy. Other days it will require courage, sacrifice, and trust. No matter what you face, remember that God has not left you to follow Him alone. The Holy Spirit is with you to strengthen you, guide you, and help you become more like Jesus.

There is a higher way to live. Walk by the Spirit.