



# ENCOUNTERING the WARRIOR KING

A 5-day Plan

Adapted from chapter three of  
Michael Thompson's book *King Me*

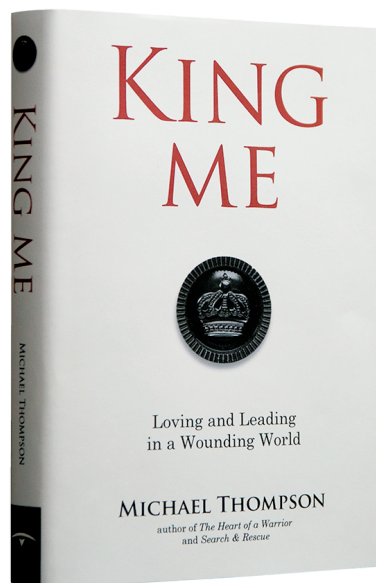


# Encountering the Warrior King

## a five-day plan

### **Plan Description:**

Men, to love and lead well, we need to follow a good King. How you view Jesus, the King of kings, matters. Is Jesus a good, moral guy or a hero you deeply desire to imitate and walk alongside? In this five-day plan, we will dig into who Jesus is, how we see him, and how seeing him rightly makes all the difference in living on adventure with the King.



**Adapted from chapter three of Michael Thompson's book  
*King Me: Loving and Leading in a Wounding World.***

# Day 1: If I could be like...

## Scripture:

- **Luke 18:15–17** People were also bringing babies to Jesus for him to place his hands on them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”
- **John 6:8-13** Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, spoke up, 9 “Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?” Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.” 13 So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten.
- **Luke 8:49-56** While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” he said. “Don’t bother the teacher anymore.” Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed.” When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child’s father and mother. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. “Stop wailing,” Jesus said. “She is not dead but asleep.” They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and said, “My child, get up!” Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.
- **Luke 9:37-43** The next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met him. A man in the crowd called out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. A spirit seizes him and he suddenly screams; it throws him into convulsions so that he foams at the mouth. It scarcely ever leaves him and is destroying him. I begged your disciples to drive it out, but they could not.” “You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you and put up with you? Bring your son here.” Even while the boy was coming, the demon threw him to the ground in a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the impure spirit, healed the boy and gave him back to his father. And they were all amazed at the greatness of God.

## **Devotional:**

When I was little, I used to dress up as my heroes. Sometimes, I was Superman. A towel or sheet would do for a cape. I'd stand with my fists on my hips, then jump off the couch and "fly" for a second. I'd leap over Lincoln Log buildings with a single bound and lift whatever rock or log I could to show my strength.

Other times, I was one of my sports heroes, announcing my name as I swung a bat or dribbled a ball. The play-by-play always dramatically moved to two outs with bases loaded or to the countdown of the game clock: "Three, two ... Havlicek fakes, he shoots ... Celtics win!"

Imitation is truly the greatest form of flattery. Who can forget the commercial in 1992 when Gatorade sold us more than a drink—they sold us a dream.

Sometimes I dream that he is me.  
You've got to see that's how I dream to be.  
I dream I move, I dream I groove Like Mike.  
If I could be like Mike.  
Oh, if I could be like Mike.

Tongues out and the number 23 on their shirts, many a boy and girl thought if I could be like Mike.. aspired to be like Michael Jordan.

Jesus had that same effect on young hearts. Children flocked to him. Jesus was their hero. Maybe it was because he healed them or because he called them to be part of miracles like the feeding of thousands or maybe because he just listened to them.

Jesus said we would need a faith like theirs, like a child's, if we were ever going to come into the kingdom. I believe the children not only wanted to be with Jesus but also wanted to be like Jesus.

**I wonder why most men don't see Jesus that way today, as someone to be like? How has Jesus lost his status in the world, in our hearts, lost the position of who we want to be?** It is one of the greatest spells Satan has ever cast over the world and reinforces daily: making Jesus seem irrelevant or making our becoming like him seem unrealistic, unwanted, or both.

Too often, who we are told we need to be as Christian men is very different from the person we dreamed of becoming. We need to reclaim an accurate image of Jesus in all his goodness, kindness, generosity, and strength, his fierce strength. If he isn't inviting enough or his life attractive enough or his way engaging enough, then we are in trouble.

In the face of oppression, injustice, suffering, and an ever-lurking distorted religiosity in which service to God replaces intimacy with God, the authentic Jesus must be recovered. To be good kings, we need to experience a Good King. The apostle Paul wrote, "Those whom He foreknew [and loved and chose beforehand], He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son [and ultimately share in His complete sanctification], so that He would be the firstborn [the most beloved and honored] among many believers." (Romans 8:29 AMP)

**As you ponder all this with God today, consider asking Him:**

*Father, would you show me how I viewed Jesus as a boy and how my view of him has changed (or not changed) over the years?*

*Jesus, open my heart to see you as you TRULY are. What is heroic about you, and if I could be like you, what can I aspire to? Would you show me more of you so that I might become more like you?*

*Spirit, would you show me who I have modeled my life after throughout my story? Who have been my heroes and what has been their impact on me?*

# Day 2: Encountering the King

## Scripture:

- **Luke 3:22** ...and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."
- **Genesis 16:13** She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen[a] the One who sees me."
- **Zephaniah 3:17** The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing."
- **Psalms 139:23** Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.

## Devotional:

When I was thirty-eight years old, the King of kings came after me. For far too long, I had Jesus wrong. But, as John Eldredge put it, "an intimate encounter with Jesus is the most transforming experience of human existence."

The most significant conversion in my life came to me in a quiet moment sitting on the side of a mountain, disrupted by the sense of my own futility. "God, how do you see me?" I asked him. "Who am I to you?"

**You are my son in whom I am well pleased.**

That was the next thought that entered my mind. More was to come.

**I see you, and I love what I see. You are mine. You are enough.**

Through tears, I said, "That's what I wanted."

**I know.** And, as if with a wink, **There's more. I'll show you. Stay close to me and I'll show you.**

For thirty-some years, I had been a Christian. But that day, I became his; and he, mine. He lifted the weights of performance off me and overwhelmed me with his attention and affection. And ever since, his training for me hasn't been about doing more; it has been about becoming more—about being entrusted with more, without the pressure, striving, or proving, but from a settled heart. Unfinished, yes, but not unsettled. And that has made all the difference.

I can tell you from experience, if you have Jesus wrong, you can't get right.

**As you ponder all this with God today, consider asking Him:**

*Father, where have you intimately been at work throughout my story, where were you pursuing me, drawing me closer, even if I did not realize it at the time?*

*Jesus, how do you see me? Who am I to you?*

*Spirit, is there any hurtful way in me, anything blocking my ability to be loved by you?*

# Day 3: Renovation of the Heart

## Scripture:

- **Romans 8:1-4** Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
- **Romans 8:14-17** For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.
- **Romans 8:29** For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.
- **2 Corinthians 3:18** And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate [a] the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

## Devotional:

If I get Jesus back, if I recover the one true King, then I've got a real shot at recovering who I myself am—who I have it in me to be, how I'm known in heaven...my true self who bears the image of the King. And that is exactly what God has arranged. Jesus became like me so I could become like him.

This is what Romans 8 is all about: Jesus became like us "sinful man" by clothing himself in flesh and taking on the sin of the world so we could become glorious men like him. What has the prince of darkness done to our hearts to blunt us to this truth? **What spell has dimmed our perception of Jesus so that we don't intensely desire to be like him?**

What the Father wants to do in us, and what the Spirit is joyfully committed to working out inside our heart, mind, will, and soul, is **a renovation where the blueprint is gloriously and simply Jesus**. My prayer is "Father, remake me to be like the Son."

This renovating process is called *sanctification*. It's another word for being transformed from the inside out into who you and I truly are as each of us bears God's image uniquely. It won't happen in a moment, renovation; it's going to take some time. All great works of art



do. But make no mistake: this is the reason God saved us in the first place, to see us remade.

**The growth process will be stunted, though, if we don't have a hero we want to be like, the Warrior King.** Knowing Jesus by name—all his names—is a good place to start. Exploring his identity can help us discover ours, since he is the one whose image we are being conformed to (Romans 8:29).

**What if we could truly feel and think that way, believe in our bones that nothing could be wilder or greater than to be like the real Superman, the God-Man, the Son of God and Son of Man?** After all, that's his purpose in redeeming us. As C. S. Lewis aptly wrote, "The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God."

**As you ponder all this with God today, consider asking Him:**

*Father, how did my young heart look for purpose and validation from my abilities or skills, or from the opinions of others?*

*Jesus, how do you want to remake me to be more like you in this season, settled in who you say I am, how you see me?*

*Spirit, open my mind to the ways my mind is dulled to who Jesus truly is. How have I misunderstood Jesus? Where did the kingdom of darkness deposit subtle lies that produce these false ways of seeing Jesus and get in the way of trusting him with more of my story?*

# Day 4: Are We His Intimate Friends or Useful Servants?

## Scripture:

- **John 15:13-16** Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.
- **Exodus 33:11** The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.
- **Revelation 19:16** On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords.

## Devotional:

Jesus is called many things: *Messiah, Lord, the Christ, Son of Man, Son of David, Son of God, Teacher, Savior and Shepherd ... and King*, a kind Warrior King to be sure. In Revelation 19:16, John declares that Jesus is the “King of kings and Lord of lords.” A *king* reigns over a territory and its people; a *lord* exercises his will over all that is under his care and control. How a king reigns and rules, whether well or badly, depends on his heart. Jesus loves fiercely; takes responsibility for those under his care; and gives, not depletes. He focuses on others and is life-inviting and life-producing.

As New Testament scholar N. T. Wright has said, “If you want to know who God is, look at Jesus. If you want to know what it means to be human, look at Jesus. If you want to know what love is, look at Jesus. If you want to know what grief is, look at Jesus. And go on looking until you're not just a spectator, but you're actually a significant part of the drama which has him as the central character.”

Jesus doesn't call us “sidekicks.” He calls us friends. That's what he is after with us: not usefulness or servitude but intimacy, because “useful” produces one kind of relationship, while “intimate friends” makes for something quite different.

**How I see Jesus and what he wants from me directly relates to how I interact with him.** To believe lies about him is detrimental to my personal *becoming*, the evolution of me into me. But to grasp the truth—wow. No telling where that can lead, but you can bet it'll be good.

**As you ponder all this with God today, consider asking Him:**

*Father, open my eyes to both the truth of scripture and moments in my story where Jesus shows himself to be a Warrior King, fighting for me as well as kindly loving me.*

*Jesus, how does it make a difference in my life and story that you call me your intimate friend rather than your useful servant?*

*Spirit, would you open my heart to see how you see me? Would you remove any lies I am believing that are blocking me from deeper intimacy with you and becoming a kind and strong image bearer, just like Jesus?*

# Day 5: Called into More

## Scripture:

- **John 10:10** I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## Devotional:

More deeply personal encounters followed the first one I wrote about in day 1, and in the ensuing weeks and months God came for more. And my Father's agenda became clear: more of his love for me to experience, more life, more freedom. Honestly, I didn't know those things existed. Now, through experience, I know.

God has big plans for me—and for you. The early years of our restoration mostly involve healing from the past and getting things out of the way that are in the way of receiving his love. That healing doesn't just alter a man's relationship with God; it begins to alter every relationship.

In my own life today, most days now are about *training*—training for reigning. I also still need healing, both from a long and treacherous past and from the daily attempted woundings that are on par for life's course. The difference is, that now, I know how to defend myself. I know how to respond and, very importantly, how *not* to respond when someone sins against me or otherwise hurts me. **The Warrior King is teaching and training me to be like him, showing me how I bear his image and what it is to be called into more, overcoming and becoming a good man, a warrior king.** It's a lot of work, but it's the best kind.

He's looking for other recruits as well, other apprentices. Are you ready to be found and to become a good king?

The King of kings wants you. He wants to give you the life you have always wanted but can never earn or provide for yourself. What have you got to lose other than all that stands in the way of your becoming who you were made to be?

**The One who created you wants to walk with you into more—more than you can imagine, down a path only he can make, in a direction only he knows.** Healing and training, validation and initiation, the maturation of a kingly heart within—these await you. And other hearts await your experience and wisdom as your personal kingdom expands within that of the great, all-governing King of kings.

So tell God you're willing, if indeed you are—willing to walk with the King—to know him, learn from him, experience his love, his correction, his guidance, his encouragement, his

provision, his companionship. Consent, declare, come into more, and say it out loud:  
“I’m willing to learn how to wield your power and authority on behalf of others. I’m willing to lose my preconceptions and church-speak and gain the mind and language of a heart settled in the Father’s love.”

In the words of Dallas Willard, “The most important thing in your life ... is not what you do; it’s who you become. That’s what you will take into eternity.”

What say you? You in?

**As you ponder all this with God today, consider asking Him:**

*Father, would you open my mind and heart to what your invitation is, to come into more and sign on for a kingly adventure?*

*Jesus, as my willing heart spoke the words above, would you show me or tell me your feelings on the matter of accepting your invitation?*

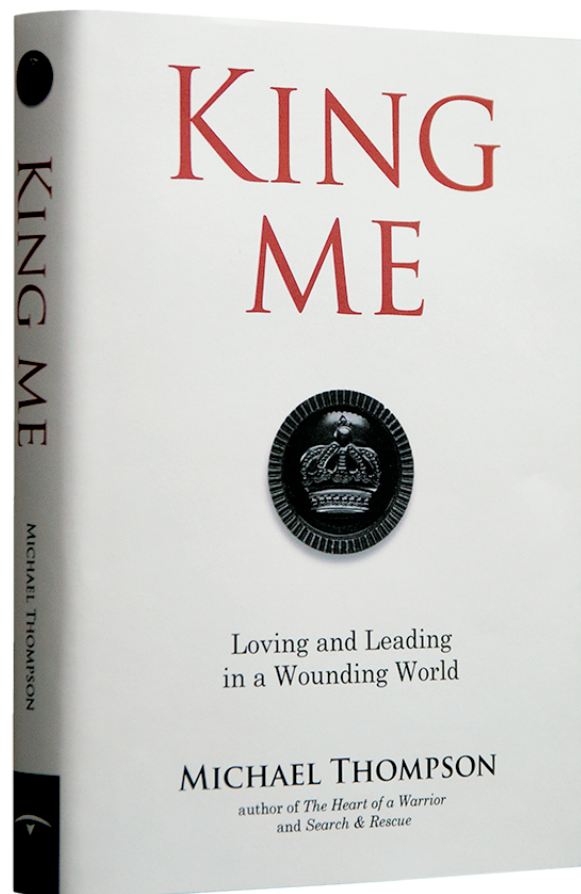
*Spirit, where do I need to go from here in my training? What do you have next for me on this journey of overcoming and becoming a good king?*

**If you enjoyed this devotional...**

Check out the book it comes from:

**Michael Thompson's**  
***King Me: Loving and Leading in a Wounding World***

(These five days were taken from chapter three.)



You can find the book on  
**Amazon, Audible, and Zoweh.org/kingme**

