

Day 1: Be Men | Our Stories & How this Works

MEETING PREP CHECKLIST:

1. Watch the [Day 1 Leader Video](#) (4 min).
2. Set a meeting place & time with your men. Have them bring a Bible, a journal, and a pen.
3. Review this Leader Guide & prep the challenge.
4. Preview the [Day 1 Group Video](#) (12 min).

BRING TO THE MEETING:

1. Bible, journal, pen, & this guide.
2. Video display with Day 1 Group Video cued up.
3. Cookie cutter (object lesson).
4. Snack.

Leader Tip of the Day:

The key to get a group talking is asking questions in the right *order*. Follow the **S.P.I.T.** guide to help them open up:

- Start **Simple**. Make it easy to speak up.
What does the verse say about... ?
- Then ask about **Personal experience** to help them connect and relate. *Have you ever... ?*
- Next ask for **Insight** with *why* and *how* questions to make them dig deeper. *Why do you think God says... ?*
- Finally ask a **Thinker** and help them ponder questions without clear answers.
What would you do if... ?

Day 1 Goals

1. **Start the conversation** by talking through what it means to *be a man* in our own lives.
2. **Begin a perspective shift** where we stop seeing manhood as us *conforming* into some masculine image and begin to see it as part of God *transforming* us into His image.

DISCUSSION PREP: Men bond over words. Guide them!

1st Corinthians 16:14 includes a simple call to “act like men.” Some Bibles translate it as “be courageous,” but the original language is *be men*. It’s a stirring call for every young man, so we’ll start the conversation there. Key talking points will be:

Defining Manhood. Every boy grows up with conflicting definitions. Help your young men articulate their ideas, and share what manhood meant in your youth and how your view changed as you grew up.

Four Pillars. Every day we’ll come back to the four pillars of manhood in 1st Corinthians: ***faith, courage, strength, & love.***

Conform vs. Transform: As we begin this journey of identity formation, Romans 12:2 provides essential guidelines. Don’t conform, be transformed.

Object Lesson: cookie cutter.



THE MANHOOD TALKS | DAY 1 LEADER'S GUIDE

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”

– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Day 1 Group Meeting! Step-by-step guide to a great small group.

Group Challenge

Knots! [Click here for directions.](#)

(Optional. 10 mins)

ICE BREAKER (8 mins): What's the weirdest thing you had to do because you're the man? Why do you think men are called on to do certain things?

GROUP VIDEO (12 mins): [Be Men \(click here\)](#). **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (30 mins).** Start with prayer and the Rules of Engagement: *Speak with Grace, Listen with Humility, & No Shaming*. Value everyone's input and create a trusted space.

Part 1: Be a Man. Read 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 in several translations (NIV/NKJV differ from ESV/NASB).

- **Simple:** Why is the phrase “*act like men*” also translated “*be courageous*”? How do those relate?
- **Personal Experience:** What does it mean in your world when someone says *man up* or *be a man*?
- **Insight:** When each man shared what *man up* meant, which answer did you relate to? Why?
- **Thinker:** All of the men said their answers changed as they grew up. How do our views of what it means to be a man grow & change as we mature?

Part 2: Conform vs. Transform. Read Romans 12:2. Challenge the guys to restate it in their own words.

- **Object Lesson:** How does a **cookie cutter** illustrate *conforming* to this world?

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

- **Simple:** How is transforming different from conforming? How does the verse say it happens?
- **Personal Experience #1:** Name some things that we do to *conform* to an image of masculinity.
- **Personal Experience #2:** What things in your life pushed you to actually grow up and man up?
- **Insight:** How does “renewing your mind” happen? What sort of man is God transforming us into?
- **Thinker:** Is conforming always wrong? Does church ever push us to conform, and is that wrong?

Take Home Truth

Every young man is called to man up.
 The world presses us to *conform* into a manly image.
 God *transforms* us into His image.

WRAP-UP: Review the take-home truth. Verify that everyone is on the *Manhood Talks* plan on their phone and on the same group chat for daily discussion questions. Pray together to close.

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”
 – 1 Corinthians 16:13-14



Day 2: Faith, Strength, Courage & Love

MEETING PREP CHECKLIST:

1. Listen daily to the audio guides.
2. Check in daily on your discussion group.
3. Watch the [Day 2 Leader Video](#) (4 min).
4. Review this Leader Guide & prep the challenge.
5. Preview the [Day 2 Group Video](#) (13 min).

Day 2 Goals

1. **Establish four pillars of godly manhood:** faith, strength, courage & love.
2. **Begin to redefine** each of those according to God's terms.

BRING TO THE MEETING:

1. Bible, journal, pen, & this guide.
2. Video display with Day 2 Group Video cued up.
3. Snack.

Leader Tip of the Day:

What *not* to do for great discussions!

- **Do not... talk too much.** As you talk, aim for 30% you, 70% them.
- **Do not... teach too much.** They heard teaching all day. This is time to process.
- **Do not... answer too much.** Easy answers are easily forgotten. Let them search and they will remember what they worked for.
- **Do not... handle hard issues alone.** Talking about identity can bring up complex issues, so find good resources and call for backup.

DISCUSSION PREP: Men bond over words. Guide them!

This day's audio guides walked through the creation story in Genesis 2 to find four key gifts of God to mankind and with those the foundations of our four pillars of godly manhood.

Faith: Mankind was made **in God's image** (Gen 1:27). Faith is crucial because by it we see the image we were made in.

Strength: God set Adam in the garden to **work** (Gen 2:15). Work requires strength in many forms (skill, power, wisdom, etc.).

Courage: The Lord gave Adam **free will**, with the freedom to eat any fruit in the garden but a restriction against one

(Gen 2:16). Courage is the key to choosing right and resisting wrong.



THE MANHOOD TALKS | DAY 2 LEADER'S GUIDE

Love: God's greatest gift to Adam was also the solution to his aloneness: the gift of **others** (Gen 2:22). Love is both the key to relationships and the primary reflection of God's image in us.

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**."

- 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Day 2 Group Meeting! Step-by-step guide to a great small group.

Group Challenge

Circles of Difficulty! [Click for directions.](#)

Modify to your group. **(Optional. 10 mins)**

ICE BREAKER (8 mins): What's the *toughest* thing you had to do because you're the man? Do you see themes in the answers (courage, responsibility, etc.)?

GROUP VIDEO (13): [Faith/Strength/Courage/Love](#)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (30 mins). Start with prayer & the Rules of Engagement: *Speak with Grace, Listen with Humility, & No Shaming*. Ask your guys what they thought of TeDese's story and how they relate to it. (See link to TeDese's full interview below). Then open your journals to discuss these:

Re-Definition #1: Faith. Share your definitions of the word faith. (See journal for Day 2).

- **Read:** Hebrews 11:1 for God's definition of faith. How do your answers compare?
- **Think:** We are all made in God's image. How does faith help us reconnect with that?

Re-Definition #2: Strength. Share your definitions of the word strength. (See journal for Day 3).

- **Read:** Proverbs 16:32. How does that verse change the way we view strength and power?
- **Think:** Work is a gift from God. What different forms of strength do you need for work?

Re-Definition #3: Courage. Share your definitions of the word courage. (See journal for Day 4).

- **Read:** Joshua 1:9. How does "the Lord your God will be with you" affect your courage?
- **Think:** God gave mankind free will. How does courage help us live out that will?

Re-Definition #4: Love. Share your definitions of true love. (See journal for Day 5).

- **Read:** 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. How do your definitions compare with the list here?
- **Think:** How does loving others relate to being made in God's image. (Hint: 1st John 4:8).

WRAP-UP: Review the take-home truth. Remind everyone to listen daily to the *Manhood Talks* plan and share answers to the daily discussion.

Share this link to [watch TeDese's full story later](#).

Next day: bring Bible, pen, & journal. Anyone who doesn't have a journal yet... *man up!*

Take Home Truth

We are all made in God's image.

By faith we see God and reflect His nature more clearly.

As we grow in faith, we redefine strength, courage & love by His nature.

"Be on your guard; stand firm in the *faith*; be *courageous*; be *strong*. Do everything in *love*."

- 1 Corinthians 16:13-14



Day 3: Remade in God's Image

MEETING PREP CHECKLIST:

1. Listen daily to the audio guides.
2. Check in daily on your discussion group.
3. Watch the [Day 3 Leader Video](#) (4 min).
4. Review this Guide, prep challenge & activity.
5. Preview the [Day 3 Group Video](#) (16 min).

Day 3 Goal

Identity (re)formation: We want each young man to see the power of Jesus' resurrection and begin to see himself remade in His image.

BRING TO THE MEETING:

1. Bible, journal, pen, & this guide.
2. Video display with Day 3 Group Video cued up.
3. Giant paper or board with plenty of room for all to write, plus markers. At the top, write "How God Sees Me." Split the page with a line and write "Old Self" and "New Self" on either side.

Leader Tip of the Day:

A safe space is one where views can be shared, challenged, and changed without fear. Follows these keys to make it happen:

- **Speak with Grace.** Grace means better than you deserve. Speak as if you can see God's image in them. If you see it, they'll begin to see it themselves and each other.
- **Listen with Humility.** Humility is a hallmark of godly wisdom. Remind them that sometimes wrong answers are the only path to getting it right. Encourage them to share & listen with a willingness to grow and change their views.
- **No Shaming.** Guys love trash talk, so it's on you to set boundaries of respect. Set clear boundaries & challenge them to act like men.

DISCUSSION PREP: As we focus in on identity formation, we want to help our young men see themselves and one another the way that God sees them. That starts with the humbling realization that we are all sinners. But then Jesus steps in to tell us that we're all worth dying for. This day's audio guides went deep into the heart of the gospel, so the group discussion is your opportunity to make sure they got it and took it to heart.

Broken Image: In Genesis 3 mankind fell and the image of God in us was broken.

God in Our Image: The 2nd Commandment warns of the downward spiral of remaking God to reflect us.

The Image Returns: Jesus is God's image. He came to do more than forgive us. He came to restore us back to the image we were created for (Colossians 3:10-11).



Do Not Conform: Cookie-cutter Christianity is not real manhood. Renew your mind and be transformed!

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”
– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Group Meeting! Step by step guide to a great small group.

Group Challenge

[Pen Ball Challenge! Click for directions.](#)

(Optional. 10 mins)

ICE BREAKER (8 mins): What is your favorite “be a man” movie? Why do we like those movies?

GROUP VIDEO (16): [Remade in God's Image.](#)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (30 mins). Start with prayer and the Rules of Engagement: *Speak with Grace, Listen with Humility, & No Shaming*. Ask your guys what they thought of Gabriel's story and how they relate. (See link to Gabriel's full interview below). Then open your journals to discuss these:

Simple: We've been talking a lot about *identity*. What does identity mean?

Personal Experience: Name some things in your life that affect your identity and how you see yourself.

Insight: Which matters most to identity: how others see you, how you see yourself, or how God sees you?

Thinker #1: Read Colossians 3:9-10. If you have an old and new self, which one do you think God sees? **Thinker #2:** What do you think it means that we are remade in the image of our Creator? How does that work?

Share: Open your journals to Day 6 where we wrote “How God sees me.” Have volunteers read their lists.

ACTIVITY: Lay out the large paper/board with “How God

“...you have taken off your **old self** with its practices and have put on the **new self**, which is being renewed in knowledge in the **image of its Creator**” (Colossians 3:9-10).

Sees Me.” Explain: The amazing thing about God is that he sees both the old and new self, and by the power of Jesus’ resurrection he calls us to take off the old and put on the new. Give everyone a marker, and have them write all the words from their list, and put each word on the side where they think it belongs. Encourage them to add more as they think of new things.

Take Home Truth

We were made in God’s image.

We broke God’s image.

Jesus is God’s image.

He remakes us in His image.

Discuss: Look over the board. Each man pick a word that’s important to you, then discuss why that one matters.

Challenge: How do we take off the old & put on the new?

WRAP-UP: Review the take-home truth. Remind everyone to listen daily to the *Manhood Talks*.

Share this link to [watch Gabriel's full interview later.](#)

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”

– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14



Day 4: Identity & Integrity | Walk Worthy of Christ

MEETING PREP CHECKLIST:

1. Listen daily to the audio guides.
2. Check in daily on your discussion group.
3. Watch the [Day 4 Leader Video](#) (4 min).
4. Review this Leader Guide & prep the challenge.
5. Preview the [Day 4 Group Video](#) (12 min).

Day 4 Goals

1. **Identity:** Know who you are in Christ.
2. **Integrity:** Walk worthy of his calling.

BRING TO THE MEETING:

1. Bible, journal, pen, & this guide.
2. Video display with Day 4 Group Video cued up.
3. Giant paper/board with “Identity” and “Integrity” on either side and lots of room to write.
4. Paper, envelopes, & stamps for each man in the group (for “Letter to your future self” activity).

Leader Tip of the Day:

Follow up is key! Flukes are forgotten. Habits get hardwired. Use these keys to make it stick:

- **Assess what worked.** Review the experience, ask the guys, and repeat the good stuff.
- **Keep the Bible habit.** All your guys just kept a 22-day Bible habit. That's amazing! Challenge them to keep it going by starting another Bible book with Through the Word. We suggest “Journey #1 | Start” through Mark & Colossians, or great books for guys include Daniel, Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and James.
- **Review what you learned.** We just covered a *lot* of deep content. If your guys are interested, invite them to go back and dig into to each of the 18 daily audio guides.

DISCUSSION PREP: Men bond over words. Guide them!

This day we're reading Ephesians to find two things.

Identity: Ephesians 1-3 is all about who we are in Christ.

1: Chosen. God chose us as his sons before we deserved it.

2: Alive. We were dead & God raised us. Saved by grace!

3: Loved. Dig your roots into God's love & water the root.

Integrity: Ephesians 4-6 is about walking it out.

4: Walk worthy of his calling—in humility and unity.



5: Walk in light & love. Submit, lead and love like Jesus.

6: Stand your ground. Suit up & prepare for battle.

Our discussion will focus on how we form identity, how we find our identity in Christ, and what it means to live with integrity to the identity we claim.

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”

– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Group Meeting! Step by step guide to a great small group.

ICE BREAKER (8 mins): What essential habits help you grow as a man? Ask each man to share a habit that has helped them mature. Then discuss the habits you want to keep moving forward.

GROUP VIDEO (12 mins): [Identity & Integrity](#) (click to open).

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION (30 mins). Start with prayer and the Rules of Engagement: *Speak with Grace, Listen with Humility, & No Shaming*. Then open your journals to discuss the following:

Activity Part 1: Identity. Open the large paper/board with “Identity” and “Integrity” at the top. Under “Identity,” start with a few things they remember from “How God sees us” last day. Leave room. Now look over your journal entries from Days 1-3 this day. Pick out key phrases and write them under “Identity.” (e.g., saved by grace, not works, God’s workmanship, rooted in God’s love, etc.).

Discuss: How can those things transform the way we see ourselves as men? (Focus on grace. It’s

Take Home Truth

Identity comes before integrity.

First figure out who you are, then live it.

Water the root, not the fruit!

key!) **Activity Part 2: Integrity.** Look over your journal entries from Days 4-6 this day. Pick out key words for the “Integrity” side. These represent your walk (in light, in love, in unity, etc.). Write “walk worthy” at the bottom. **Discuss:** Work together to make connections between

the “Identity” list and the “Integrity” list. How do elements of your identity show up in your walk?

Thinker: What if we reversed it? What if you did the “Integrity” stuff to *earn* the “Identity” stuff?

Bonus: Use four colors to write the words: **faith**, **strength**, **courage**, & **love**. Work together to mark each word under “Integrity” with **F/S/C/L** for the virtues required to live out each element of your walk.

FOLLOW-UP (10 mins): Manhood Talks is done! Ask the guys for ideas to follow up. What lessons to remember? What habits to keep? How can you take responsibility for your own next steps? How can you keep each other accountable? (See leader tip for ideas).

Letter to Your(future)self

Hand out paper & envelopes. Write a letter to your future self about who you are and remind yourself of any lessons from this series you don't want to forget.

Address, stamp, and give back to your leader. Leader: Don't forget! Set a reminder (with location you stored them) to send them back in exactly one year!

“Be on your guard; stand firm in the **faith**; be **courageous**; be **strong**. Do everything in **love**.”

– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

Other Ideas for Filler Days

- Leaders share testimonies
- Depending on your boys, have one of them share their testimony
- Give them a time where they can just ask questions, about life, faith, family, anything. If you do this prepare them the day before so they can think about it.
- Come up with your own devo that you feel is relevant to your cabin.
- Expand on an idea talked about at campfire or in a previous devo that you fell could be flushed out more with your group.
- Spend time memorizing Scripture verses.
- Get each boy to find fighter verses (ask me what I mean by this if you are curious)