THE MEN'S TABLE · JESUS & MANHOOD

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

A place to listen, reflect, and take your next faithful step.

Fourteen guided sessions alongside Jesus & Manhood. Use this workbook with another man, with a small group, or to prepare for a mentoring conversation.

Follow Jesus. Grow together.
Help another man do the same.

Free to use individually, one-to-one, or in a small group.
mssnl.org/table/men · MSSNL Inc.

Begin with a person, not a program.

You do not have to have everything figured out to start following Jesus together.

How to begin

1. Invite a trusted man or gather a small group. Agree on a regular time and a place where you can talk without interruption.
2. Get the free Jesus & Manhood book or audiobook at mssnl.org/jesus-and-manhood. Read or listen to the assigned section before each meeting.
3. Bring a Bible, this workbook, and an honest willingness to listen and act. The teaching here supports the book; it does not replace it.
4. Start with the Introduction and follow the chapter order. Move at a steady pace without rushing difficult conversations.

Make a simple agreement

My first name or initials

Who will I meet with?

When and where?

What do I hope Jesus will form in me?

A table where men can be honest.

Keep the conversation safe

Each man chooses what to share. Listen without shaming, pressuring, or trying to fix everything. Do not record another man's private story in your workbook without his permission.

Respect privacy, but do not promise secrecy about abuse, threats, or danger. If someone may be unsafe, seek appropriate local emergency or safeguarding help. Follow applicable reporting duties. Mentoring is not professional mental-health, medical, or legal care.

Our meeting rhythm

1. **Check in · 10 minutes.** Ask how life has been and revisit the last action. Listen before offering advice.
2. **Open Scripture · 10 minutes.** Read the suggested passage in your Bible. Notice the context and what it shows about God.
3. **Talk honestly · 20 minutes.** Use the session questions. Let each man pass; do not force disclosure.
4. **Choose one action · 10 minutes.** Make it specific, small enough to do, and connected to the teaching.
5. **Pray and arrange follow-up · 10 minutes.** Ask how you can pray. Agree when you will meet again.

A suggested 60-minute rhythm, not a rule. Choose a pace that serves your people. A chapter may take more than one meeting.

Introduction: Return to the Center

Before you meet: Read the Introduction, Return to the Center. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man is being formed by the people who raised him, the work he has done, the responsibilities he carries, and the disappointments and successes along the way. Most men can name their responsibilities more easily than the formation going on inside them. A man can be highly capable and still uncertain about his worth, provide faithfully and still struggle to be present, or earn respect while privately fearing he has not done enough. The Introduction asks about the center of his life: whether he looks to work for identity, accomplishments for security, or other people's approval for worth. The book answers by going back to Genesis. Man did not appear by accident or invent his own purpose; he was formed and given life by God. Genesis also shows how that order was disordered, so men need reconciliation with God, which the gospel provides through Jesus. The invitation Jesus gave the first disciples still reaches men today: follow me. This table exists to help men answer that call honestly, together.

Open your Bible

Genesis 2:7 says God formed the man from the ground and breathed life into him, so everything a man later receives and is asked to do begins with God's generosity. Mark 1:17 records Jesus calling working men with the words, follow me, and promising to make them fishers of men. John 15:5 has Jesus teaching that apart from him his followers can do nothing, which puts dependence at the center. Luke 9:23 describes the daily surrender that following involves.

Bring these questions to the table

1. What has been closest to the center of your life lately: work, achievement, other people's approval, or Jesus? What shows you that?
2. Where do you carry responsibility well but give little attention to the person you are becoming?
3. What do you hope for from this table, and what makes you hesitant about meeting like this?

Put it into practice.

Introduction: Return to the Center

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. What has been closest to the center of your life lately: work, achievement, other people's approval, or Jesus? What shows you that?

2. Where do you carry responsibility well but give little attention to the person you are becoming?

3. What do you hope for from this table, and what makes you hesitant about meeting like this?

> **A suggested practice**
>
> Before the next meeting, set aside twenty quiet minutes. Read Mark 1:17 and Luke 9:23. Write a few lines on what it would mean to follow Jesus at work and at home this month. Bring only what you are willing to share.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord Jesus, you formed me and you call me. Show me what sits at the center of my life and bring me back to you. Make this table a place of honesty and care. Amen.

Chapter 1: The Story Beneath the Story

Before you meet: Read Chapter One, The Story Beneath the Story. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man carries a story, and under the facts of that story sit the meanings he has attached to them. A man may remember losing a job, while the deeper story concerns what that loss taught him about his worth. The chapter traces the pattern to Genesis, where the serpent attacks trust in God's word and God's intentions, and where Adam and Eve hide and shift blame when confronted. Men still manage what others see, become defensive, or withdraw from conversations that require honesty. Disappointment can lead a man to read God's character through his pain; the Psalms show that bringing grief and hard questions to God is different from concluding he is untrustworthy. Peter's denial and restoration show that failure can reveal limits we did not know, and that Jesus meets a failed man personally and entrusts him with responsibility again. The chapter distinguishes between sin a man must confess and harm done to him that is not his fault, and notes that some experiences call for pastors or qualified professionals. It also asks for gratitude for what has been good. The aim is to bring each belief under the truth of Scripture.

Open your Bible

Proverbs 4:23 tells us to guard the heart because life flows from it. Genesis 3:1 records the serpent's opening question, did God actually say, which casts doubt on God's word and goodness. Genesis 3:9 has God asking Adam, where are you, which does not mean God lost track of him but draws him out of hiding into honest conversation. John 21 shows the risen Jesus restoring Peter on the shore after Peter's three denials. 1 John 1:7 describes walking in the light and the fellowship that comes with it.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Which experiences have most shaped how you understand God, yourself and other people? What did they teach you to expect?
2. When have you managed what others saw, by becoming defensive, withdrawing, or staying busy, instead of being honest?
3. What is good in your story that you are thankful for, and what do you still need to grieve or repent of?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 1: The Story Beneath the Story

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Which experiences have most shaped how you understand God, yourself and other people? What did they teach you to expect?

2. When have you managed what others saw, by becoming defensive, withdrawing, or staying busy, instead of being honest?

3. What is good in your story that you are thankful for, and what do you still need to grieve or repent of?

A suggested practice

Write one sentence in the form: when ___ happened I came to believe ___. Test it against what Scripture says about God and about you, using Genesis 3:9 and John 21 as starting points. Keep what you wrote private unless you choose to share it.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Father, you know my whole story and you ask, where are you. I come out of hiding. Correct what is false in what I believe, strengthen what is true, and help me give thanks for what you have given. Amen.

SESSION 3 OF 14 · READ AND REFLECT

Chapter 2: The Two Paths

Before you meet: Read Chapter Two, The Two Paths. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man is becoming someone, and small choices repeated become patterns. The chapter describes two directions of formation, with the caution that these are tools for reflection and not biblical stages, a diagnosis for someone else, or a fixed sequence. One direction is shaped by fear, self-protection and self-reliance: the Wounded Seeker who struggles to trust, the Demanding Believer who expects others to make him feel secure, the Conflicted Disciple who believes but still acts from self-reliance, the Angry Leader whose strength others find hard to approach, and the Arrogant Sage who has stopped learning. The other direction grows through trust, obedience and dependence on Christ: the Trusting Seeker, the Loving Believer, the Confident Disciple whose security rests in belonging to Christ, the Servant Leader, and the Humble Sage. Most men see themselves in several of these, and may be humble at work but controlling at home. The gospel does not offer better emotional management. It calls sinners to repent and believe, gives forgiveness, and the Spirit forms them into Christ's likeness. The honest question is where you are leaning today.

Open your Bible

Proverbs 14:12 warns that there is a way that seems right to a man but ends in death. James 1:8 describes the double-minded man as unstable, in the context of asking God for wisdom in faith. Proverbs 16:18 says pride goes before destruction. Psalm 34 was written after David's deliverance and invites us to take refuge in the Lord. 1 John 4 teaches that we love because God first loved us. Matthew 20:26 has Jesus telling his disciples that whoever would be great must be a servant. Proverbs 9:10 gives the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Which of the first five descriptions do you recognize in yourself at times, and in which setting: work, home, church, or friendship?
2. Which of the second five descriptions would you most like to grow toward, and what is one sign that it is happening?
3. Where does a way that seems right to you need to be tested against God's word or a trusted friend?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 2: The Two Paths

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Which of the first five descriptions do you recognize in yourself at times, and in which setting: work, home, church, or friendship?

2. Which of the second five descriptions would you most like to grow toward, and what is one sign that it is happening?

3. Where does a way that seems right to you need to be tested against God's word or a trusted friend?

A suggested practice

This week, notice one moment where your reaction came from self-protection, such as defending, controlling, or withdrawing. Write down what you felt, what you did, and what a trusting or serving response would have looked like. Try it once on purpose.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord, you are the way. Keep me from trusting a way that only seems right. Teach me to trust you, love freely, receive correction, and serve the people you have given me. Amen.

Chapter 3: Sonship Before Strength

Before you meet: Read Chapter Three, Sonship Before Strength. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Many men build strength to prove something. The chapter begins where the Father speaks over Jesus at his baptism, naming him Son before any miracle or sermon. For believers, belonging comes through Christ, not achievement. A man's place with the Father does not rest on being more confident, disciplined or steady, so sonship must not become another standard to meet. The Spirit gives assurance, though assurance is not the absence of every doubt or struggle. After his baptism Jesus faced temptations about hunger, trust, authority and worship, and refused to prove himself on the tempter's terms. Men face their own pressure to prove themselves: exaggerating results, insisting on the last word, pushing children toward accomplishments that reflect well on the father. Jesus says his sheep know his voice, which the chapter ties to Scripture and not to every inward impression. The habits a man welcomes, such as what he watches, reads and talks about, affect what he hears. Receiving help does not weaken sonship, and strength may look like honest confession, patient listening, or endurance unnoticed. The chapter also notes that a man cannot use grace to avoid responsibility, nor decide that a failure destroyed his worth.

Open your Bible

Matthew 3:17 records the Father saying of Jesus at his baptism, this is my beloved Son, before Jesus began his public work. John 1:12 says those who receive Jesus are given the right to become children of God. Romans 8:15-16 says believers receive the Spirit of adoption, who bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children. Matthew 4 shows Jesus answering the tempter by returning to what God had spoken, where Adam had fallen. John 10:27 says Christ's sheep hear his voice and follow him. Psalm 1 pictures the man rooted in God's instruction like a tree by water. Hebrews 12 describes God's fatherly discipline as care.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Where has responsibility become tied to the need to prove yourself, and how do you respond when your judgment is questioned or your work overlooked?
2. What daily habits, such as what you read, watch or listen to, help you attend to God's word, and which make it easier to ignore?
3. What would change if you believed you belong to the Father through Christ before you do anything?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 3: Sonship Before Strength

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Where has responsibility become tied to the need to prove yourself, and how do you respond when your judgment is questioned or your work overlooked?

2. What daily habits, such as what you read, watch or listen to, help you attend to God's word, and which make it easier to ignore?

3. What would change if you believed you belong to the Father through Christ before you do anything?

A suggested practice

For the next week begin each morning with five minutes in Scripture and prayer before checking news, messages or social media. Read Matthew 3:13-17 once. Note when the need to prove yourself shows up during the day.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Father, you name your children before they have done anything. Thank you for receiving me in Christ. Let your Spirit assure me, free me from proving myself, and help me carry my responsibilities as your son. Amen.

Chapter 4: The Fear of the Lord

Before you meet: Read Chapter Four, The Fear of the Lord. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

A man can be strong, capable and respected while lacking wisdom. Scripture places wisdom on a different foundation: recognizing who God is and living in response to his holiness, goodness and authority. The chapter distinguishes reverence from terror. God is both holy and merciful. Isaiah's order matters: he sees God's holiness, acknowledges sin, receives cleansing, and then responds to the call. Reverence reaches into the hidden parts of life, where a man may speak carefully in public while resentment grows privately or bend the truth where discovery seems unlikely. It is held together with sonship, as Peter does, since the Father who redeemed his people is worthy of obedience. The chapter warns that God's fatherhood must never be used to excuse harsh or abusive treatment. Fear of people changes decisions: avoiding a necessary conversation, agreeing to what one believes wrong, protecting a position. A business owner may need to change a misleading practice, a father to stop using his children as proof of his worth, a husband to treat his wife without contempt or intimidation. Reverence yields confidence and makes correction easier to receive, and we remain unfinished disciples who need continued repentance.

Open your Bible

Proverbs 9:10 says the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Isaiah 6 shows Isaiah seeing God's holiness, saying he is lost, being cleansed, and then answering the call to be sent; the chapter treats this as a particular prophetic calling, not a pattern every believer must repeat. Proverbs 16 links reverence with turning from evil. 1 Peter 1 calls believers who call God Father to live in reverence, grounded in redemption by Christ. Luke 22:42 records Jesus praying, not my will but yours, in Gethsemane. Proverbs 29:25 warns that fear of man is a snare. Proverbs 14:26 says that in the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence. Isaiah 66 shows God looking to the humble and contrite.

Bring these questions to the table

1. In which decisions do you notice the approval of others governing your obedience more than God does?
2. What does your hidden life, including your words in private and your choices when no one will know, say about your reverence for God?
3. Where have you become comfortable with compromise, or less teachable because of success?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 4: The Fear of the Lord

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. In which decisions do you notice the approval of others governing your obedience more than God does?

2. What does your hidden life, including your words in private and your choices when no one will know, say about your reverence for God?

3. Where have you become comfortable with compromise, or less teachable because of success?

A suggested practice

Read Isaiah 6:1-8 slowly, then Proverbs 29:25. Name one conversation or decision you have been avoiding because of what people might think, and take one honest, wise step toward it before the next meeting.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Holy Lord, you are the Creator and Redeemer and worthy of my obedience. Free me from the fear of people. Give me the humility to confess what is wrong and the courage to live truthfully. Amen.

Chapter 5: The Wound and the Mask

Before you meet: Read Chapter Five, The Wound and the Mask. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Most men learn to protect themselves long before they understand why. The chapter first reads Genesis on its own terms: Adam and Eve hid after sinning, and Adam began shifting blame. It then notes that not all emotional self-protection is the same as Adam's hiding, since sometimes openness is unsafe. Wounds may be things that happened or things a man needed and did not receive. A wound does not decide his future, but it can shape strategies. The book calls a habitual version of himself that a man presents when he fears being known a mask. It names several forms: control, performance, anger, withdrawal, pleasing others, and perfectionism. They can overlap, may even be praised, and are not permanent labels. Jesus' encounter with the rich man shows truth and love together, though the man left sorrowful and we are not told what followed. Confession means agreeing with God about what is true, but harm done to a man is not his to confess. The chapter says a man should never be pressured to return to an abusive relationship in the name of honesty, forgiveness or trust. Growth is small and patient. Healing is not guaranteed by finding the right explanation. Abuse, trauma and deeply rooted patterns may call for professional care.

Open your Bible

Genesis 2 ends with the man and woman naked and unashamed, and Genesis 3:8 shows them hiding from the Lord among the trees after they disobeyed. Mark 10:21 says Jesus looked at the rich man and loved him, then told him what stood between them. 1 John 1:7 says that if we walk in the light we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus cleanses us. 1 John 1:9 promises that if we confess our sins God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse us.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Which forms of self-protection do you recognize in yourself: control, performance, anger, withdrawal, pleasing others, or perfectionism? What did it protect you from?
2. Where is the response proportionate to the situation, and where has it become a familiar protection?
3. Whom could you trust with an honest conversation, and what do you need so that it is safe?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 5: The Wound and the Mask

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Which forms of self-protection do you recognize in yourself: control, performance, anger, withdrawal, pleasing others, or perfectionism? What did it protect you from?

2. Where is the response proportionate to the situation, and where has it become a familiar protection?

3. Whom could you trust with an honest conversation, and what do you need so that it is safe?

A suggested practice

Pay attention this week to what you do when you feel criticized, overlooked or threatened. Write what you did and what you may have been protecting. Then, if it is wise, tell one trusted friend or pastor one true thing you usually do not say.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord, you called out to Adam in hiding and you looked at the rich man with love. Look at me the same way. Heal what has hurt me, show me where fear has shaped me, and teach me to walk in the light. Amen.

Chapter 6: Integrity in the Hidden Life

Before you meet: Read Chapter Six, Integrity in the Hidden Life. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man has a public life and a hidden one: the thoughts he entertains, the desires he nurtures, the choices he makes unseen, and the responsibilities he carries without recognition. A man may speak of generosity while privately consumed with possessions. Jesus says the heart shapes speech, so repeated patterns reveal what has become familiar. Integrity is not perfection but the same truth governing private choices and public responsibilities. David's story is a sobering example. He used his authority to take what was not his, then concealed it, and real people, Bathsheba and Uriah, suffered. Psalm 51 shows repentance that does not defend itself, though the biblical account does not erase consequences. Secrecy places a continuing burden on the person keeping it, while the gospel gives reason to move toward truth. The chapter distinguishes privacy from concealment, and notes that confession needs wisdom, since sensitive matters may require pastoral care or professional help. Confession and repentance are not identical: repentance turns from sin and often shows up as action, like Zacchaeus restoring what he took. A friend cannot become another man's conscience. Private habits, including what he watches and pursues, shape desire. Integrity also includes the good done when no one sees.

Open your Bible

Matthew 12:34 says the mouth speaks out of the abundance of the heart. 2 Samuel 11 and 12 tell of David's sin with Bathsheba, the death of Uriah, and Nathan's confrontation. Psalm 51:10 is the prayer for a clean heart that followed. 1 John 1:7 links walking in the light to fellowship and cleansing. James 5:16 calls believers to confess to one another and pray. Matthew 4:17 records Jesus beginning his ministry with a call to repent. Luke 19 tells of Zacchaeus, who gave and restored money after Jesus came to his house.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Where is there a gap between what you say you value and what you do when no one is watching?
2. Is there something concealed that you need to bring to God and to a trusted brother or pastor? What has kept you from doing it?
3. What would repentance look like in action for you right now, beyond regret?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 6: Integrity in the Hidden Life

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Where is there a gap between what you say you value and what you do when no one is watching?

2. Is there something concealed that you need to bring to God and to a trusted brother or pastor? What has kept you from doing it?

3. What would repentance look like in action for you right now, beyond regret?

A suggested practice

Choose one hidden area, such as screens, money, speech or time. Set one concrete boundary or correction. If appropriate, tell a trustworthy person what it is and ask him to check in. Read Psalm 51 as your own prayer.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

God, you see what no one else sees. Create in me a clean heart. Give me courage to walk in the light, to confess, and to turn, and give me brothers who will help without shaming me. Amen.

Chapter 7: Formation Before Leadership

Before you meet: Read Chapter Seven, Formation Before Leadership. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Many men want to make a difference and assume meaningful service begins when an opportunity arrives. The chapter says to value what is already in front of you. Moses was called to a task he felt unfit for, and God's answer was his presence, not Moses' ability; his later story includes failure and consequences. David was a shepherd when God chose him, then spent years in danger from Saul, and refused to seize the throne his own way. His later sins show that preparation does not make anyone immune to pride. Jesus is different, since he did not need correction, yet Luke 2:52 shows ordinary years have significance before God. The book warns against inventing detail about hidden years, against making suffering good in itself, and against treating a delay as proof of a coming promotion. Ambition is not always wrong, and Paul speaks well of aspiring to oversight, but the qualifications are mostly about character: self-control, hospitality, gentleness, household, reputation. A man cannot judge his own readiness alone and needs truthful counsel. Caring for family, honest work and quiet service are not waiting rooms. The deeper purpose of formation is becoming like Jesus, not rising in status.

Open your Bible

Exodus 3:12 has God answering Moses' objections with, I will be with you. 1 Samuel 16:7 says the Lord looks on the heart and not outward appearance, as Samuel is sent to anoint David the shepherd. Luke 2:52 says Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man during his ordinary years. James 1:4 says to let steadfastness have its full effect. 1 Timothy 3 describes overseers mostly in terms of character and relationships. 2 Corinthians 3:18 says believers are being transformed into the Lord's image by beholding his glory.

Bring these questions to the table

1. What are your current responsibilities revealing about you, such as impatience, pride, or a need for recognition?
2. How do you respond when work is overlooked, a decision is questioned, or someone else receives the opportunity you wanted?
3. Who is willing to tell you the truth about whether you are patient, fair and dependable, and have you asked?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 7: Formation Before Leadership

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. What are your current responsibilities revealing about you, such as impatience, pride, or a need for recognition?

2. How do you respond when work is overlooked, a decision is questioned, or someone else receives the opportunity you wanted?

3. Who is willing to tell you the truth about whether you are patient, fair and dependable, and have you asked?

A suggested practice

Ask one person who knows you well, such as your wife, a coworker or a friend, whether they experience you as patient and fair, and whether you follow through and own mistakes. Listen without defending, then thank them and note one thing to change.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord Jesus, form me through ordinary days. Keep me from treating people as steps to a position. Make me patient in what is overlooked, teachable under correction, and more like you. Amen.

Chapter 8: Discipline and Desire

Before you meet: Read Chapter Eight, Discipline and Desire. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man develops habits that shape what gets his time, attention and desire. For men who measure progress by achievement, discipline can become another measure of worth. The chapter gives a fuller picture: discipline includes correction, training and perseverance, and God forms his people in holiness, with prayer, Scripture, worship, rest and restraint as responses of someone who already has grace, not ways to earn love. Hebrews 12 reads hardship as a Father's care, though the chapter warns against reading every hardship as a sign of failure. Jesus withdrew to pray, so activity, even good service, should not crowd out communion with the Father. Scripture is the lamp that examines desires and exposes pride or resentment, and the Spirit works through it. Rest matters because many men link constant activity with faithfulness; Genesis shows God resting, Christians differ on how Sabbath applies, and Jesus offers deeper rest for the weary. Desire itself is not sinful, but it can become a master. Paul's discipline in 1 Corinthians 9 and the fasting Scripture records are voluntary restraint, to be practiced with wisdom since some people cannot safely fast from food. Self-control is the Spirit's fruit, so effort and dependence go together. Repentance and perseverance are the response to failure, and spiritual habits can become a source of pride.

Open your Bible

Hebrews 12:11 says discipline seems painful at the moment but later yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Luke 5:16 says Jesus would withdraw to desolate places and pray, even as crowds grew. Psalm 119:105 calls God's word a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. Matthew 11:28 invites the weary and heavy laden to come to Jesus for rest. 1 Corinthians 9:27 has Paul describing how he disciplines his body so he is not disqualified. Galatians 5 lists self-control among the fruit of the Spirit and describes the conflict between flesh and Spirit. Luke 16:10 says faithfulness in little shows faithfulness in much.

Bring these questions to the table

1. What most regularly receives your attention, and what is it cultivating in you?
2. Does your schedule leave real room for prayer, Scripture, rest and relationships? What is crowding them out?
3. Which desire most influences your choices, and what restraint or help does it need?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 8: Discipline and Desire

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. What most regularly receives your attention, and what is it cultivating in you?

2. Does your schedule leave real room for prayer, Scripture, rest and relationships? What is crowding them out?

3. Which desire most influences your choices, and what restraint or help does it need?

A suggested practice

Choose one small habit for two weeks, such as ten minutes of Scripture and prayer at a set time, a night with no work messages, or a weekly rest period. Write when and where you will do it, and tell a brother. Read Luke 5:16 and Matthew 11:28 first.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Father, thank you for your fatherly care. Draw me to pray as Jesus prayed. Order my desires, give me the Spirit's self-control, and let rest remind me that I depend on you. Amen.

Chapter 9: Brotherhood and the Light

Before you meet: Read Chapter Nine, Brotherhood and the Light. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

A man can spend years surrounded by people and still feel few really know him. Work, children, and schedules crowd out friendships, and some men keep struggles private because they fear burdening others or losing respect. Appropriate privacy is fine, but a man can grow so used to handling things alone that he does not notice what it costs him. Scripture says God calls individuals but does not leave believers disconnected. Ecclesiastes recognizes the practical help of companions, and Hebrews calls for daily encouragement that includes honest words, since sin distorts self-understanding. Proverbs 27:17 does not license harshness or constant criticism, and being known is different from being continually examined. Jesus lived with the disciples, who argued about greatness and misunderstood him, though his relationship with them was unique. Confession must be wise: a friend should not promise absolute secrecy about abuse or serious threats, and some struggles such as severe depression, addiction or trauma need professional care. Healthy accountability is specific, mutual, and does not make one man another's supervisor. Bearing burdens often means practical help. Brotherhood needs consistency, may require taking the first step, and does not replace the church, which includes women and men of all ages. No friendship can take the place that belongs to Jesus.

Open your Bible

Genesis 2 records God saying it is not good that the man be alone. Ecclesiastes 4:9 says two are better than one because they have a good reward for their toil. Hebrews 3:13 urges believers to exhort one another every day so none is hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Proverbs 27:17 says iron sharpens iron and one man sharpens another. James 5:16 calls us to confess our sins to one another and pray. Galatians 6:2 says to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. The chapter also points to Jesus' new commandment to love one another.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Which men know you beyond your responsibilities, and which would feel free to speak honestly if your choices were hurting you?
2. What has made it hard for you to ask for help or receive correction?
3. Whose burden could you carry this week, with practical action or a conversation?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 9: Brotherhood and the Light

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Which men know you beyond your responsibilities, and which would feel free to speak honestly if your choices were hurting you?

2. What has made it hard for you to ask for help or receive correction?

3. Whose burden could you carry this week, with practical action or a conversation?

A suggested practice

Reach out to one man this week with a specific invitation, such as breakfast or a walk, and ask a thoughtful question. Agree with one brother on one area you will check on regularly, for instance your marriage, work or a temptation. Read Galatians 6:1-2 first.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord, you did not make us to live alone. Give me brothers who speak the truth in love, and make me a faithful one. Keep my trust in you above any friend. Amen.

Chapter 10: Obedience Over Comfort

Before you meet: Read Chapter Ten, Obedience Over Comfort. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Comfort is not wrong; Scripture invites us to receive good gifts with gratitude. The difficulty begins when staying comfortable matters more than following Jesus. A man may delay correcting a decision to protect his reputation, avoid an honest talk with his wife because he expects disagreement, or let work push his children aside. Jesus spoke openly about cost, but the chapter says self-denial does not mean despising your life, ignoring needs, or refusing rest, boundaries and protection, which can be faithful too. Abraham's obedience grew from God's promises, and the chapter warns that risk is not automatically faith, for obedience may mean waiting or declining. Daniel's friends trusted God without a guarantee, and the apostles' answer came from a direct conflict between God's command and human demands, which is not permission to ignore every authority. Ordinary obedience is quieter: refusing a dishonest financial practice, making time for children, apologizing instead of defending. Delay makes it easier to explain the delay. Jesus' Gethsemane prayer belongs to his unique mission, but it shows a man may bring his fear honestly. Obedience should not dismiss the concerns of others or be carried alone. Paul's finish shows faithfulness has value before the Lord even when results are unimpressive. Obedience grows from love, and failures call for repentance, not excuses.

Open your Bible

Luke 9:23 has Jesus saying that anyone who would come after him must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow. Hebrews 11 describes Abraham going out without knowing where he was going. Daniel 3 tells of three men who refused to worship the image without knowing whether God would rescue them. Acts 5:29 records the apostles saying we must obey God rather than men. Luke 22:42 is Jesus praying in Gethsemane, not my will but yours. 2 Timothy 4:7 is Paul's statement near the end of his life that he has finished the race and kept the faith. Matthew 7:24 compares the one who hears and does Jesus' words to a wise builder on rock. John 14:15 says if you love me you will keep my commandments.

Bring these questions to the table

1. What have you delayed, such as a conversation, a responsibility, or a change of habit, because it will cost you comfort?
2. Where might you be treating risk, or refusal, as faith when the real question is what Jesus has said?
3. When has obedience cost you something? What did you learn about trusting God with the outcome?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 10: Obedience Over Comfort

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. What have you delayed, such as a conversation, a responsibility, or a change of habit, because it will cost you comfort?

2. Where might you be treating risk, or refusal, as faith when the real question is what Jesus has said?

3. When has obedience cost you something? What did you learn about trusting God with the outcome?

A suggested practice

Name one act of obedience you know you have been avoiding and set a date. Talk it over with someone wise if the decision is complicated. Do it before the next meeting, then report what happened, not only whether you did it. Read Matthew 7:24-27 first.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Jesus, you obeyed the Father when it cost you everything. Show me where comfort has taken your place, and give me courage to take the next faithful step. Forgive me where I have delayed, and keep me close to you. Amen.

Chapter 11: Work Under Christ

Before you meet: Read Chapter Eleven, Work Under Christ. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Work takes a large share of most men's lives and often becomes tied to identity. The chapter says work begins to carry too much weight when accomplishment becomes the measure of worth. Genesis shows work belongs to God's design before the fall, as responsibility within a relationship with the Creator, with limits. After the fall labor involves frustration, which explains why work can be both satisfying and exhausting. Fear often grows when a man believes everything depends on him. Trusting God does not remove the need to act wisely, and Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6 calls disciples to trust the Father's care without becoming careless, and is not a promise that every faithful plan will prosper. Calling reaches beyond occupation: Jesus first calls people to himself, and then to faithfulness in the relationships and responsibilities they have received. No circumstance of employment, illness or disability determines a man's worth. Colossians calls for honest, diligent work for the Lord, and the chapter notes the ancient context of slavery should not be used to excuse exploitation. Work includes treating employees, coworkers and customers with dignity. Stewardship asks how work affects marriage and children, and it may require saying no. The rich fool is a warning about security in possessions, not about planning. Rest reminds a man of his limits, and Jesus offers a deeper rest than a lighter schedule.

Open your Bible

Genesis 2:15 says the Lord God put the man in the garden to work it and keep it, so work is part of God's good design before sin. Genesis 3 describes how the fall brought toil and frustration to labor. Psalm 127:1 reminds us that unless the Lord builds the house the builders labor in vain. Matthew 6:33 tells disciples to seek first the kingdom of God, in the context of anxiety about necessities. Colossians 3:23 says to work heartily as for the Lord. Psalm 24 declares that the earth is the Lord's, which grounds stewardship. Luke 12 tells of the rich fool who stored up goods and neglected what matters to God. Matthew 11:28 offers rest to the weary who come to Jesus.

Bring these questions to the table

1. How much of your sense of worth depends on how work is going, and what happens inside you when it is threatened?
2. Is any part of your work, such as a practice, a shortcut or a schedule, in need of correction before the Lord?
3. How is your work affecting your marriage, children or church, and what might you adjust?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 11: Work Under Christ

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. How much of your sense of worth depends on how work is going, and what happens inside you when it is threatened?

2. Is any part of your work, such as a practice, a shortcut or a schedule, in need of correction before the Lord?

3. How is your work affecting your marriage, children or church, and what might you adjust?

A suggested practice

Choose one practical change in how you work: correct an unfair or dishonest practice, set a firm stopping time, ask for help, or serve a coworker without recognition. Plan a regular rest and tell someone. Read Colossians 3:22-24 first.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord, everything I have is yours. Teach me to work honestly and well, to treat the people I work with as bearing your image, and to rest in you. Free me from fear and from making my work my worth. Amen.

Chapter 12: Legacy Through Faithfulness

Before you meet: Read Chapter Twelve, Legacy Through Faithfulness. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every man leaves something behind through how he lives. Men often think of legacy as what they will build or accumulate, but businesses close, possessions change hands and achievements fade. The people affected by his life may remember more. The parable of the talents frames life as stewardship and faithfulness before the Master, whether a man has little or much. Faithfulness changes how he thinks about success, since outcomes remain uncertain. The chapter cautions against reading Old Testament promises about generations as a guarantee of children or outcomes. Fathers influence children through words, service, correction and how they respond when honesty costs. Deuteronomy 6 first calls people to receive God's word themselves. Even faithful parents may grieve their children's choices, and men without children have real opportunities to mentor, teach and encourage. Jesus' commission gives legacy a purpose beyond preserving our own accomplishments, and Paul's instruction to Timothy shows investment in others takes time and patience, often without a formal program. Healthy influence requires humility: John the Baptist directed attention to Jesus. The desire to be remembered can quietly shape service, and a good legacy lets others flourish. Failures matter too, and repentance can be part of it. The legacy a man hoped for may look different than he imagined, and God does not value him by results. Finishing well begins long before the final season.

Open your Bible

Matthew 25:21 has the master telling a servant, well done, good and faithful servant, in the parable of the talents. Deuteronomy 6:6 says God's words are to be on your heart, before being taught to children. Matthew 28:19 records Jesus sending his disciples to make disciples of all nations. 2 Timothy 2:2 tells Timothy to entrust what he has heard to faithful men who will teach others. John 3:30 has John the Baptist saying he must decrease and Jesus must increase. 2 Timothy 4:7 is Paul's statement that he fought the good fight, finished the race and kept the faith.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Who is affected by your life today, and what do they encounter in how you respond to pressure, disappointment and people who cannot repay you?
2. How have recognition, possessions or accomplishments competed with the people God has entrusted to you?
3. Who could you invest in, a younger believer, a relative, or a neighbor, and what is one step?

Put it into practice.

Chapter 12: Legacy Through Faithfulness

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Who is affected by your life today, and what do they encounter in how you respond to pressure, disappointment and people who cannot repay you?

2. How have recognition, possessions or accomplishments competed with the people God has entrusted to you?

3. Who could you invest in, a younger believer, a relative, or a neighbor, and what is one step?

A suggested practice

Choose one person you influence and have a conversation or write a note: tell them one thing you value in them, and one thing you are learning about following Jesus. If you have not repented to someone for harm you did, consider whether this is the time to begin that conversation.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Lord, make me a faithful steward of every person and gift you have given me. Let my life point to Christ, not to myself. Keep me faithful in small things, and help me finish well. Amen.

Conclusion: Follow Me

Before you meet: Read the Conclusion, Follow Me. Listen to the matching audiobook chapter if that helps.

Understand the teaching

Every life is moving in a direction, and much formation happens in ordinary moments. The Conclusion returns to the center: Jesus stands at the center of Christian manhood because he is Savior and Lord, and nothing else, whether abilities, responsibilities or relationships, can take his place. The call to the first disciples continues through the gospel: repent, believe, receive forgiveness through his death and resurrection, and learn obedience as his disciple. The book warns that manhood can become a project of self-improvement. Maturity grows out of the Father's welcome, not as the price of it. Following Jesus changes how a man understands strength: he can carry responsibility without controlling everything, admit uncertainty, and ask for help. Dependence reaches hidden parts of life, and some growth involves taking responsibility for harm, seeking help, or accepting consequences, while some suffering was never chosen. Taking up the cross daily is shown in ordinary things like listening, admitting a mistake, or choosing honesty. Ordinary faithfulness may not produce impressive results. A man needs other believers and the church. Philippians 1:6 gives confidence in God's faithfulness. There will be seasons of visible growth and seasons where it is hard to see. The abundant life of John 10:10 is not wealth or comfort but life with the Shepherd. The book's last word is simple: follow Jesus.

Open your Bible

Matthew 4:19 records Jesus calling Simon Peter and Andrew by the Sea of Galilee: follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Luke 9:23 repeats the call to deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow. Philippians 1:6 gives Paul's confidence that the one who began a good work will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. John 10:10 has Jesus saying he came that his sheep may have life abundantly, spoken as the Good Shepherd.

Bring these questions to the table

1. Looking back over these sessions, what has God brought to your attention, and where might faithful obedience be needed today?
2. Where have you seen growth, and where does progress feel hard to recognize? What does Philippians 1:6 say to each?
3. What is the one step you will take next, whether a conversation, a habit, a confession or an act of service, and who will you tell?

Put it into practice.

Conclusion: Follow Me

Looking back: what happened with my last action?

My honest reflections

1. Looking back over these sessions, what has God brought to your attention, and where might faithful obedience be needed today?

2. Where have you seen growth, and where does progress feel hard to recognize? What does Philippians 1:6 say to each?

3. What is the one step you will take next, whether a conversation, a habit, a confession or an act of service, and who will you tell?

A suggested practice

Write a short plan for the next season: one habit with Scripture and prayer, one brother you will keep meeting, one act of obedience you have been delaying, and one person you will invest in. Share it with your mentor and set a date to review it.

The one action I will take before we meet again:

When will I do it?

Our next meeting date:

Pray together

Jesus, you call me again today: follow me. Thank you for forgiving me, for the Father's welcome and your Spirit. Complete the work you began. Keep me following you in my home, my work, my church and my community. Amen.

Keep following. Bring another man along.

Completion is not the goal. A life of following Jesus is.

Look back over your actions and prayers. Give thanks for specific signs of growth. Be honest about where you still need help, and keep a regular relationship rather than ending it when the pages run out.

What has changed in how I follow Jesus?

Where do I still need support?

Who could I invite to follow Jesus with me?

No man graduates from needing Jesus. Return to Scripture, stay connected, and take the next faithful step.