



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

MEETING PREP CHECKLIST:

1. Watch the [Week 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 [Week 1 Group Video](#) (12 min).

BRING TO THE MEETING:

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

RECIPE OF THE WEEK: Dorito Salad. Men bond over food. Feed them!

Ingredients: 2 bags Nacho Doritos, 2 bags Cool Ranch Doritos. **Prep:** Pour into a large bowl. Toss. Serve.

Leader Tip of the Week:

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... ?

Week 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 week 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.

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

– 1 Corinthians 16:13-14



Week 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?
- **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?

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

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