

SESSION ONE



MANHOOD TODAY



1 Starting Line Perspectives

A. As men, we have a lot in _____.

B. We all want to be _____ men.

- Some of us feel good about where we are right now, but also want to keep growing.
- Some of us have important manhood questions – “What do I need to know that I don’t?”; “What should be my top priorities?”; “How do I live without regrets?”
- Some of us need practical help – with our marriages, our kids, work, habits, friends, and spiritual life.
- Some of us are struggling and need a new direction.

2 So How Are Men Doing Today?

A. Some men have found a manhood that _____. And a manhood that truly works is _____.

- People are encouraged by it.
- Women and wives feel safe and valued around it.
- Families thrive with it.
- Sons are drawn to it.
- Daughters delight in it.
- The workplace and community benefit because of it.

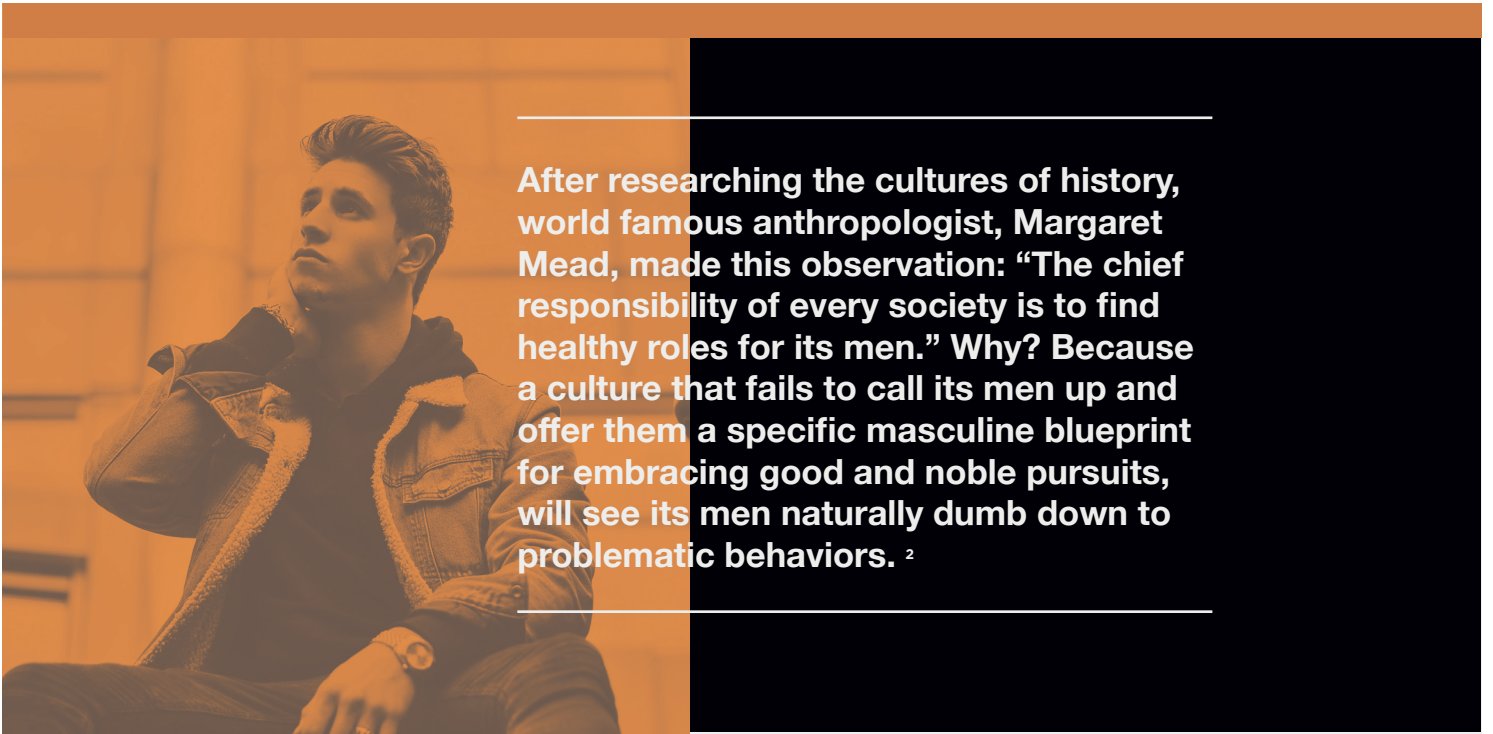
“Life-giving” is the word the Bible uses to describe the manhood of Jesus.¹

B. Some men live in a manhood “_____”.

- Times have changed and have left men conflicted and confused.
- So what does it mean to be a man today? In turning away from the answers of the past, we have yet to clearly define manhood for the present.

C. Men in a manhood fog _____.

- They settle for _____ in life, but don’t know it’s less.
- They create _____ ... lots of them!
- They _____ at their masculinity and hope it works.



After researching the cultures of history, world famous anthropologist, Margaret Mead, made this observation: “The chief responsibility of every society is to find healthy roles for its men.” Why? Because a culture that fails to call its men up and offer them a specific masculine blueprint for embracing good and noble pursuits, will see its men naturally dumb down to problematic behaviors. ²

3 The Four Challenges Men Face Going Forward

A. The loss of a common manhood _____.

- Without vision, we live in “no-man’s land”.
- Without vision, we are left to “make up” manhood for ourselves.

“ Where there is no vision, the people run wild.
Proverbs 29:18

B. The rise of a “_____” manhood.

- It is created by the emotionally and/or physically _____ dad. This loss of dad is significant on two important levels:
 - Dad’s presence gives a son emotional stability: love and affirmation.
 - Dad’s instruction gives a son directional stability: moral convictions and practical skills.

A stable loving home is the first and most important ingredient of human thriving.³

“ The glory of sons is their fathers.
Proverbs 17.6

- “Weightless” manhood unleashes a host of problems.
- It is an epidemic in America today.

In 1960, only 5% of boys in America were fatherless; today it's 41%.⁴

3

(Continued...)

C. A radically changed, rapidly changing _____ landscape.

- The last 50+ years have been socially breathtaking:
 - Men's and women's roles have increasingly merged.
 - The definition of marriage was changed for the first time in over 4,000 years.
 - Some 44% of millennials now consider marriage “obsolete”.
 - Cohabitation has exploded. For the first time in American history, there are more unmarried adults than married.
 - A majority of children (61%) born to mothers under 30, are born outside marriage.
 - There are now multiple gender categories, not just male and female.
 - Sexual standards have dramatically changed.
 - Women now outnumber men in college by over 30% and earn more advanced degrees.
 - Women now make up the majority of enrollees in law and medical schools.



**At Colleges, Women are Leaving Men
Behind in the Dust.⁵ *New York Times***

- There are now 7 million working age men in the United States who don't work.
 - More women are managers in the workplace than men.
 - Single women buy their own homes today at twice the rate of single men.
 - Depression rates have increased tenfold among men since 1960.
 - Women shoulder most of the responsibility for the health and vitality of the Christian faith in the United States.⁶
- Clearly women are _____ in today's modern world while men have _____.

3

(Continued...)

D. The _____ men believe about themselves.

As men, we often make the mistake of processing out our lives alone.

- I should know what to do.
- I'm the only one who struggles with this.
- It's too late to do anything about this.
- I can do this and no one will ever know.
- If I tell you the truth about myself, you will reject me.



4

The Question:

CAN WE DEFINE A MANHOOD THAT WILL WORK FOR US IN THE MODERN WORLD?

5

Five Promises in Our BetterMan Journey

- A. You will increase your manhood understanding and make some significant personal _____.
- B. You will receive helpful insight and support from your _____.
- C. You will make new _____.
- D. You will have the opportunity to _____ your manhood by using a weekly "BetterMan" Question.
- The first "BetterMan" Question will be next week in Session 2.
 - You'll use your weekly answers at the end of our BetterMan journey to create your own personal "BetterMan" plan.
- E. You will receive a clear _____ of manhood that will work for you in this modern world.
- This definition will be presented in Session 5.
 - This definition will be spelled out with practical specifics in Sessions 6-10.

Your Table Discussion Questions

1. How do you think men are doing today? What are your greatest concerns as a man in this modern world?
2. Which one of "The lies men believe about themselves" (3/D) has most impacted your life? In what ways? Explain.
3. Which one of the 5 promises made in this session (5/A-E) excites you in going forward with BetterMan? Why?