

Manhood Realities

First, let's look at the definition of Manhood in the dictionary: "the state of being a man rather than a child."

Alright, simple definition. Be a man, not a boy. But how do you be man? When do you become one? Take a moment and speak openly as a group your take on when boys become men.

- Is it at a certain age such as 16,18, or 21?
- Is it when a guy reaches certain milestones in his life such as high school or college graduation, getting a nice job, marriage, etc?
- What do we base our own definition of manhood on, if we even have one to begin with?
- Think about the different regions guys grow up in around the United States and then around the world. Can you come up with examples of our own region compared with others?

As a group you probably rattled off a list of achievements and behaviors to hit around the mark of what it means to be a man. And, if each of you were to speak individually to give his best definition, every one of them would be different.

You see, the journey from boyhood to manhood has become increasingly and incredibly murky and it's rooted in the definition itself. Want to be a man? Don't be a boy. Great, thanks. Clear as a mud. **Since we lack a definitive explanation of what a man is, we lack clarity.**

Through the coming weeks as a group we will look through what the definition of manhood is, what it is based on, and how to implement the principles of manhood in our lives.

Men were made by a creator that designed the heavens, the earth, and all things on the earth – that includes men. This means **God designed us. He created us to live a certain way and to fulfill certain purposes.** That is in its basic form what biblical masculinity is. Guys living the way we were made to.

Current state of manhood in America:

- Confused: Most men lack confidence about their masculinity because **they don't truly know what it means to be a man and strive to find that in the world** – ultimately and always finding that the answer is just ever so out of reach.
- Disappointed: because most men turn to the world to find their value and confidence, they find they always come back to an **empty and hopeless state disappointed with their life.**
- In Pain: All men that have ever lived (aside from Jesus) have been wounded one way or another **We carry these wounds** throughout our life letting them shape who we are without even realizing it.
- Lonely: **Most men know everybody but nobody really knows them.** Men create islands of themselves, not wanting others to see they don't really have it all together and are struggling **because of the above three effects of not understanding what it means to be a man.**
- Drifting: They lack purpose and have no true vision for their life. Most are either searching desperately to find or have given up and become numb to finding their true purpose. All hoping to feel like they are living in the way they were made to.
- Find Escapes: eventually they turn to escapes in the world that lead further into the darkness they so desperately want to get out of. Sports, work, women, etc. **They look for something in the world to fill the void that never will.**

- Destructive: Confused and isolated guys with unresolved pain are destructive forces. Lonely and drifting men cause major problems. These guys inflict damage on themselves and to the others they come in contact with.
- They Settle: Men settle in life because they can't find the way they were meant to live. **We are wired by our creator to make a difference – to lead, to cultivate, to initiate, and to add value.**

I know this picture that's painted of society's man is pretty dark – but we have to see it for what it is before we can be different. **Good news is there is hope and His name is Jesus. He is God Himself who came down not only to save you and I from our destructive nature but to also show us the men we were called to be from the beginning of the world!**

Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created them." In this passage God clarifies that **He intended man to be like Him. We know what that looks like because Jesus modeled that for us. To be like Him means we will be men that lead.**

As we go through this study we will look at Jesus as the model for manhood. It first starts with Him being not only our Savior but also LORD – the one we follow and who leads us!