



THIRTEEN WEEKS FOR A MEN'S CLASS

THE MAN THEY ACTUALLY LIVE WITH

STUDY GUIDE

A companion to The Man They Actually Live With. Thirteen weeks on the man your family lives with, and one small thing to do every week.

BY JACOB MCCLUSKEY
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JAKE MCCLUSKEY
STAND YOUR WATCH

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The only thing I ask is that you do not sell any of it.

BEFORE YOU START

I need to tell you what you are getting into, because this is not a normal men's study and you deserve to know that in week one.

This book is about the man your family actually lives with. Not the one at work, not the one at church, the one who walks through your own front door at six o'clock. For a lot of us those are two different men, and the second one is the real one.

That is uncomfortable, and it is supposed to be.

What this class is going to ask of you.

Not that you read more. That you look.

Every week the book hands you one small thing to do, and this guide holds you to it. Not five things. One. The men who get something out of these thirteen weeks are not the ones who take the best notes. They are the ones who go home and actually do the one thing.

What this class is not going to do.

It is not going to fix your marriage in thirteen weeks. It is not going to hand you a system. And nobody in this room, including whoever is leading it, is going to grade your house.

Some ground rules, so you know what kind of room this is.

Nothing said here leaves here, with one exception, and it is about safety. If a man says he is thinking about ending his life, or that somebody in his house is not safe, the leader is going to go get help. He would do that for any of us and we should do it for him. Your leader will say this out loud in week one. It is printed here so nobody finds out about it after he has already talked.

You will never be made to share. You will have one partner for all thirteen weeks, and you will talk to him, but the room only hears what you offer.

And you can be honest here about being the problem. That is the whole point of the room. Most of us have never had a place to say the true thing out loud without it costing us something.

One thing before we start.

If what is happening in your house right now is worse than a bad mood, if the people who live with you are not safe from you, then this study is not where you start. Talk to your pastor this week. If you need a number tonight, the last page of this guide has them, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Men call that number too. Getting help is the first act of protection you owe them, and it cannot wait thirteen weeks.

That is not a hypothetical paragraph. It is in the book too, and it is there for a reason.

Now let's begin.

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Every session has the same four parts.

Read. One or two chapters before class. That is the only homework.

One idea. A page in the guide that says the thing the chapter is actually about, so you are not guessing.

Two questions. Write your answers before class if you can. If you did not, write them in the room. Either is fine.

The work. One thing to do before you come back, taken straight out of the chapter you just read. There is a five-box strip to check the days you did it.

That is it. Thirteen weeks.

PART ONE: ALL MEN



The man underneath, because nothing else can be rebuilt while he stays untouched.

SESSION ONE

TWO MEN, SAME NAME



READ

the front letter, How to Read This Book, chapter 1, chapter 2

Most men reading this have two versions of themselves and have never said so out loud.

There is the one at work, or at church, or anywhere somebody might be watching. That man is careful. He chooses his tone. He spends real energy being decent.

Then he comes home and stops spending it.

Whatever is left when the effort stops is the man his family lives with, and if that man is worse than the one the job site gets, then his family is getting his leftovers and everybody else is getting his best.

Chapter two names the thing that runs underneath it in most houses, and it is not the blowups. It is the weather. A house where everybody is quietly reading one man's face before they decide whether to ask him something.

The book calls that the doorway math, and the people running it are usually the smallest people in the house.

Here is the sentence from chapter one I want you to sit with this week:

Nobody in my house was starving. They were just scared of me. But the scoreboard didn't have a column for that.

Most of us have a scoreboard. Bills paid, food in the kitchen, nobody hit. And most of our scoreboards are missing the column that matters.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. Which version of you got more effort yesterday: the one at work or the one at home? Be honest.

2. What is on your scoreboard? What are the things you point at to tell yourself you are doing fine?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter one. Before you walk in your own door one night this week, stop in the truck, engine off, and ask God one question: which man am I?

Then walk in and just listen to your house. Do not fix anything. Notice whether it sounds like people who feel safe or people reading your face.

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SESSION TWO

WHAT YOU REACH FOR



READ

chapter 3

Nobody gets taken by something that does not work.

That is the honest thing about whatever a man reaches for at the end of a hard day, and the book says it out loud. It works. The drink helped him sleep. The screen shut the voice up. The garage was quiet. If it did not work, nobody would have a problem with it.

So every night a man makes a trade. A few hours of quiet for something, and the trade always goes through, right up until the thing owns him.

Chapter three gives it a name out of Jeremiah: a broken cistern. A tank a man digs for himself to hold water he controls. And the tell on a broken cistern is not that it fails. It is that it never once holds. You have to go back tomorrow.

Your version may not be a bottle. It might glow in your hand at midnight. It might live in a browser tab, or in the garage, or at the office, or inside a rage that feels better than the sadness underneath it.

The shape does not matter. The tell is the same. It works for a few hours, it is empty by morning, and the people you love are paying for your quiet with theirs.

I wasn't drinking because I was thirsty for bourbon. I was thirsty for peace, for quiet, for somebody to tell me I was going to be okay, and I kept lowering my bucket into a tank I'd dug myself.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What do you reach for? Name it plainly. Nobody reads this but you.

2. What is it actually giving you? Not what it costs. What it delivers, honestly.

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter three, both halves.

Name your pour to God, out loud, with the door shut. One sentence:
“Lord, this is where I go instead of You.”

Then once this week, when your hand starts moving toward it, point it somewhere else on purpose.

If your pour is daily and heavy, talk to a doctor before you stop. Coming off some things alone can hurt you. That is not a smaller step of faith. That is God using a professional.

Next week is chapters four and five. Chapter four is about the night the author tried to end his life. He tells it in one line and does not paint the scene. If that is close to home for you right now, call your leader before you read it. The last page of this guide has the numbers.

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SESSION THREE

THE BOTTOM, AND WHAT CAME AFTER

READ

chapter 4, chapter 5

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9, NASB 1995).

This is the heaviest week in the study and I want to say so up front.

Chapter four is the night Jake tried to end his life and did not. He tells it in one line and does not paint the scene, on purpose, and the chapter is not really about that night at all. It is about what happened next: a weight lifting that his circumstances had not earned, and a first prayer that was two sentences and tears.

Then chapter five does the most useful work in the whole book, and if you take one thing out of thirteen weeks, take this.

There are two ledgers in your house and they do not work the same way.

You cannot earn God’s forgiveness. Not an inch of it. It is a gift, it cost Him a cross, and trying to pay for it is its own kind of insult.

You do have to earn your family’s trust. All of it. Slowly.

Both are true at once, and mixing them up wrecks men. A man who thinks God’s ledger works like his family’s will spend his whole faith trying to out-perform his past and quit, because that race has no finish line. A man who thinks his family’s ledger works like God’s will stand in his kitchen a month in, offended that they do not trust him yet, demanding grace instead of earning trust.

Grace is free. Trust is earned. God gives the first so you have the strength to do the second.

One thing the family ledger does not include, and it matters. **Trust is earned. Forgiveness is not on that ledger at all.** Scripture tells your wife to forgive you the way she has been forgiven, “bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you” (Colossians 3:13). That is between her and God and it is not yours to collect.

So do not read this page two wrong ways. **Her forgiving you does not mean she has to trust you yet**, and a man who demands the second because he was given the first is back to standing in the kitchen offended. And **her not trusting you yet does not mean she is unforgiving**. Those are two different things on two different clocks, and you only control your side of one of them.

And if there is nobody left at your table, the second ledger still runs. God sees a man becoming trustworthy when there is no one left to audit it. Not one inch of that is wasted.

You have to have grace before you can grow. Not the other way around, never the other way around.

If tonight is darker than a page can reach, call or text 988, any hour. Veterans, dial 988 then press 1, or text 838255. Then tell one person who knows your face. The last page of this guide has all of it.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. Which ledger have you been getting wrong? Have you been trying to earn God’s forgiveness, or demanding your family’s grace?

2. What is the thing you have never said out loud to anybody? You do not have to write it here. Write “I know what it is” if that is all you can do today.

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter five, both ledgers.

Once, when the guilt comes for you, say it out loud: “It is paid. I am in Christ. I am accepted, so now I can change.”

One honest question before you say that sentence, because it is the sentence this whole study is built on. Are you in Christ? Not have you been around church, not are you trying. Has there been a point where you stopped and turned and put your trust in what Jesus did instead of in what you can fix?

If the answer is no, or you genuinely do not know, that is not a disqualification from this room and it is not something to be embarrassed about. It is the most important thing on this page. **You do not have to clean up first.** Say so to God plainly, in your own words, and then tell the man leading this class or any Christian you trust that you want to talk about it. Everything else in these thirteen weeks runs on that one being settled first.

Then pick one small thing on the family ledger and do it without announcing it. Be home when you said. Stay soft in the moment that usually turns you.

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SESSION FOUR

ON YOUR KNEES, AND NOT ALONE



READ

chapter 6, chapter 7

Two chapters, one point: a man was never built to carry this by himself, and he has two places to set it down.

The first is God, and chapter six is blunt about how little that took. A prayer in a truck before work counts. Two sentences at a red light counts. The book's line is worth memorizing: God does not care how you pray, He cares that you open your heart and are honest. And He hears you because of Jesus, not because you found the right words.

Most of us think prayer is a meeting we did not prepare for. So we do not knock.

The second place is one other man, and chapter seven is the one that tends to sting. A man can be surrounded his whole life and known by nobody. Business partners, a church full of handshakes, a phone full of contacts, and not one person who knows the weight.

We call that strength. It is a hiding place.

| I was known of by a hundred men and known by none.

The fix is not a small group, a program, or a men's breakfast. It is one man. One who knows your name, who you will see again, who will ask you about it next month.

For most men in this class, that man is sitting across from you in the pairs.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. Who actually knows the weight you are carrying? Not who knows you. Who knows the weight.

2. What is your honest reason for not telling anybody?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter six: claim one door. Before you walk into your house, sit where you used to gather yourself and hand God the day instead. One sentence: “Lord, take what I’m carrying. Let me walk in empty-handed.”

From chapter seven: tell one man one true thing. Not everything. One sentence to one man.

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SESSION FIVE

THE YEARS YOU DON'T GET BACK

READ

chapter 8, and the Part One prayer

“For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death” (2 Corinthians 7:10, NASB 1995).

There are photographs of some of us at things we cannot remember.

Birthdays. Ordinary Saturdays. A story gets told about a day you were standing right there for, and you have nothing.

That is the grief chapter, and the book does not soften it. Some things cannot be fixed. Your kids were little exactly once. There is no version of the rebuilt life where God hands back a bedtime from a year you spent somewhere else.

So the question the chapter asks is the one every rebuilt man eventually has to answer: what do you do with grief over something that cannot be undone?

There are two ways to carry it and one of them almost killed him.

One sorrow turns a man toward God and walks him into change. The other turns him inward and grinds him down, and it is the one that reaches for a drink. Paul names both.

Here is the part worth practicing. In the moment, most men cannot tell which sorrow they are feeling. So do not sort it first. When the wave comes, pray immediately, before you have diagnosed anything. If it is godly sorrow, God turns it into fuel. If it is shame, it dies on His doorstep, because shame cannot stand in front of the God who already answered for the thing it keeps bringing up.

And here is what God does with the years themselves, which is not the same question.

He doesn't rewind them. He repurposes them.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What is the thing you grieve most from the years you would run again if you could?

2. When the wave hits you, what do you currently do with it?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter eight. When the wave comes this week, and it will, do not sort it and do not pour anything on it. Pray immediately, five words: "Lord, take this. Use it."

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PART TWO: HUSBANDS



The gap between the man she married and the man who came home.

SESSION SIX

SHE MARRIED THE MAN YOU WERE GOING TO BE



READ

chapter 9

“Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant” (Malachi 2:14, NASB 1995).

That is a hard verse and it is here for one reason: the word **witness**. Malachi is speaking to men of Judah who were putting away their wives, so it is an indictment, and if you have a divorce behind you it will land on you before you have finished reading it. Read the next sentence before you carry that around. **This verse is on this page to say that God was in the room the whole time, not to hand you a sentence.** He saw what she married and He saw what came home, and that is exactly the God who forgives it. Nothing in this chapter is asking you to relitigate a marriage that has already ended.

If you are not married, Part Two is not four weeks off. Pray through it for a marriage in this church that is under strain, and pay attention, because most of what is in here is about a man's character before it is about his marriage.

Every married man made promises once. Best friend. Protector. Safe place. And he meant every word of it at the time.

Then, slowly, somebody else started coming home.

Chapter nine is about that gap, and the honest part is how it opens. Nothing happens. There is no crisis and no decision. A church seat sits empty, one reasonable excuse at a time, and as it empties something

else fills, and every “more” is small enough to explain. A man drifts from God first and everything else follows like a trailer follows a truck.

Then there is the sentence that took him years to be able to say.

I became what she needed protecting from.

Not with fists. With weather. With a voice and a mood that turned the safest place he ever promised her into the place she had to manage most carefully.

This chapter also handles something most men’s books will not touch: what it means when a wife draws a line. The book’s position is plain. A boundary is not a betrayal of her vows. It is love with a spine in it, and a man’s job is not to argue the door. It is to become the man it was worth opening for.

Four things the chapter says about that door, and men skip all four. Do not lawyer it, do not negotiate it down, do not punish her for it. How long it stays open was never yours to schedule. If it is already closed and locked, that is a boundary too, hers to set, and it is still not God’s verdict that you were beyond saving. And if your wife never drew a line at all, if she just quietly carried it year after year, do not grade her for that. Her carrying was love too, paid in a harder currency.

And it ends where you need it to end. No gap is too wide for God. But the gap He promises to close is the one in you, and what happens in the marriage after that is His business and her choice.

Some men get the marriage back. Some men get rebuilt for a road that looks different. The rebuilding is real either way, and nothing in this book hands you her heart. Her heart is hers.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What did you promise her, spoken or implied, back when you were winning her? Write the list.

2. Which promise have you drifted furthest from?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter nine. Take the promise you just named and do one small thing this week that the man at the altar would have done.

Do not announce it. Do not ask for credit. She owes you no thaw for it.

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SESSION SEVEN

YOU SET THE WEATHER, AND THE APOLOGY THAT STOPPED LANDING



READ

chapter 10, chapter 11

Two chapters that go together, because one causes the other.

Chapter ten: the mood in your house is not something that happens to you. It is coming out of you. A man leads whether he means to or not, and the first thing he leads with is his emotional tone. Your mood walks in the door before your keys hit the counter.

The book kills the two speeches most of us have given. “I can’t help how I feel,” which is half true and the half matters, because weather is not the feeling arriving, it is what you do with it in front of people who cannot leave. And “at least my moods are honest,” which the book answers flatly: your moods are not honest, they are lies.

Now the part this chapter is not about, and read it before you read anything else on this page. None of this is aimed at the sadness a man cannot pray away in a day, or at the wiring a war left in him. **That is real, it is medical, and getting help for it is faith, not failure.** If you are carrying depression, or PTSD, or an anxiety that does not lift when you decide it should, do not read the next paragraphs as a verdict on your character. Your illness is not a lie you are telling your family. Go see somebody, and count that as obedience.

Then the move that actually works, and notice it is upstream of the door. Do not manage the weather when you get home. Hand it to God while it is still gathering, in traffic, at work, in the truck at 4:45.

Chapter eleven is what happens after years of weather. The apology stops working. Not because she is bitter. Because she was paying attention.

An apology is a check, and every time I wrote one, I wrote it on an empty account.

The fix is not a better apology. Only fruit funds an account. And that is the week's real lesson: stop trying to get this week's apology accepted and start funding.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What does your family do in the first sixty seconds after you walk in? What does that tell you?

2. How many times have you apologized for the same thing? What changed after?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter ten: catch one front while it is still forming, on the drive, and pray right there. "Lord, take this before I'm home."

Then claim the first sixty seconds. Before the mail, before your phone, before one word about your day, touch your people.

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SESSION EIGHT

THE DEAD ZONE, AND STRENGTH THAT MAKES HER SAFE



READ

chapter 12, chapter 13

Chapter twelve is the stretch nobody warns a man about, and it is where most men quit.

You start doing the work. Really doing it. And nothing happens. She is polite. Not cold, careful, and careful is worse because you cannot argue with it. You are making deposits every day into an account showing the same balance every night.

Here is what has to get straight in your head or the dead zone will eat you.

Her guard is not the obstacle to your rebuild. It's the evidence of why the rebuild is necessary.

You taught her that caution. Every wall you are staring at was built out of materials you supplied. That is not a reason to despair. It is a reason to stop waiting for credit.

Chapter thirteen is the other half: what strength is actually for.

Most of us never noticed how loud we got, how big we looked, how angry our face was before we said a word. Your voice and your frame are amplifiers and in your own house they are turned all the way up. What feels like fifty percent to you lands at a hundred on people smaller than you.

And then the sentence the chapter exists for: gentleness is the greatest strength. Not the absence of power. Power that has sworn itself to protect instead of win.

Ask what your loud strength was actually winning.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What do you look like, right now, to somebody smaller than you, mid-disagreement? Voice, posture, face.

2. Where are you keeping score on her, waiting for credit?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter twelve: keep one small thing faithfully through a week of nothing. You are not proving anything to her. You are learning to farm.

From chapter thirteen: if the heat comes, use the words. “I need a break. I’ll be back.” Then take it to God, not to the garage to rehearse your case, and come back.

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PART THREE: FATHERS



What they are learning while you are not teaching them.

Before these four weeks, read this once.

Everything in Part Three is written as though your kids are young and under your roof, because that is the version that is easiest to write. Plenty of men reading it are somewhere else. Your kids are grown. They are at their mother's most of the month. One of them does not answer the phone.

Do not sit these weeks out, and do not read them as a scoreboard you already lost. Where an assignment says this week with your kids, do the nearest true thing. If you get every other weekend, do it then and do not let the gap talk you out of the days you have. If they are grown, the work becomes the phone call, the letter, and the apology that names one specific thing without asking for anything back. If a door is shut, you can still be the man who would walk through it, and you can be that for years without a reply.

You are also going to hit a sentence in session ten that says you still have time. **Read it as it is meant, which is that the man you are from here is not fixed by the man you were.** It is not a promise that a particular child comes back. Some do. Some do not, and Scripture does not hand a father a guarantee on that. What it hands him is what to do today. Do that.

SESSION NINE

THE TRAFFIC PATTERN, AND THE KIDS WHO LEARNED TO TIPTOE

READ

chapter 14, chapter 15, and the Part Two prayer

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart” (Colossians 3:21, NASB 1995).

Every house has traffic patterns. Watch one long enough and you can map where the questions go, where the skinned knees go, where the bad grades get carried.

In a lot of houses, every road runs around one man.

Chapter fourteen says the thing that stings: kids do not take their problems to the biggest person in the house, or the smartest. They take them to the safest one. The traffic pattern is not a scheduling accident. It is a map of who feels safe, drawn by the most honest cartographers alive.

Chapter fifteen is the harder one. People ask for the moment a man saw his kids shrink around him. There usually is not one, because tiptoeing is not a moment, it is the floor. And a thing that happens every day stops looking like anything at all.

Then the sentence a lot of us have said in some version:

If the kids were quiet, I wouldn't be irritated.

They were being happy kids. That was the whole crime.

This is also the chapter with the bluntest paragraph in the book, and you should read it slowly. Their careful feet are your report card, not theirs. And right behind it comes the guard: if part of it is not yours, if

there is anxiety in her wiring or something that happened where you were not, you will not sort that out by arguing over who caused what. Get steady, stay steady, **and get her the help she needs.** All three, not just the first two. A kid who needs a clinician needs a clinician, and a steady father is how she gets to one, not a substitute for one.

And then read the rest of that paragraph, because it is the half men skip. Christ took the guilt of it to the cross, and He did not leave a balance for you to pay off with better fathering. You are not rebuilding to earn your way back. You are rebuilding because you have already been forgiven.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. In your house, where does the traffic go? Be specific about who gets the questions.

2. What sound in your house irritates you that should not?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter fourteen: become interruptible. When one of your kids comes at you this week, whatever you are holding goes down. Phone, wrench, remote, down. Face them.

From chapter fifteen: the next time kid noise irritates you, pray one sentence right there. “Lord, thank You that they feel alive in this house.” Then let them be loud.

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SESSION TEN

THE FIRST PICTURE OF GOD THEY GET



READ

chapter 16, chapter 17

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!” (Matthew 7:11, NASB 1995).

This is the week that tends to level men, so brace for it.

You are the first picture of God your kids ever get. Not because you are supposed to be God, but because Jesus taught men to pray “Our Father,” and that word arrives in a kid’s head already carrying whatever it learned in your house.

Nobody has to teach a child bad doctrine out loud. Every slammed door is a sermon.

And then the mercy, which is the real point of the chapter. Jesus broke the equation Himself. He looked at a crowd of ordinary flawed fathers, granted that even they hand their kids bread instead of rocks, and swung the whole thing upward. How much more.

God is not your dad scaled up. He is how-much-more, in a category no earthly father touches, and that phrase is the crowbar that pries a kid’s real picture of God loose from a bad father’s face.

And here is the line the guilty man needs, so read it twice. God is not trapped behind your face. He never was. A bad father muddies the picture. He does not get to veto the painter. If he did, no child of a broken home would ever find God, and heaven is full of them.

I was never the painting. I was the frame. And the frame had been lying about the painting for years.

Chapter seventeen is the line you inherited. Every man walks into fatherhood carrying a pattern that got handed to him before he was old enough to inspect it. Some men inherit steadiness. Some inherit weather.

The chapter's claim is that the line is not stronger than God.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. If your kids described God based only on living with you, what would they say?

2. What did you inherit that you do not want to hand down?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter sixteen. Ask your kids, sized to their age: "When you think about God, what do you think He's like?"

Then close your mouth and listen. Do not defend and do not correct mid-answer. You are not grading them. You are reading your own report card.

Then hear the rest before you close this page. You did not ruin your kids. You still have time to be a different man than the one they got, and that is true at every age, including with a grown child who is not speaking to you. It is not a promise about what he does with it. And if

your child carries anxiety, the kind a diagnosis names, that is not your report card either. Steady is your job. Blame arithmetic is not.

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SESSION ELEVEN

THE APOLOGY A FATHER OWES, AND BEING IN THE ROOM



READ

chapter 18, chapter 19

Chapter eighteen is the hardest meeting a house ever holds, and it is not the one you think.

Apologizing to your kids. Sitting them down and telling them the truth about what has been going on with dad, in words they can hold.

The book says it is harder than apologizing to a wife, and explains why. It makes it real. As long as the bad years live in adult conversation, a man can keep them abstract and negotiable. Sitting in front of a face that young kills that.

| Your children's faces are where denial goes to die.

Two guards on that meeting and both matter. You hand them the truth and none of the weight. Whose fault it was gets said out loud, and it is yours, never theirs. And honest does not mean the whole archive. "That part isn't mine to give you yet" is a true answer.

Then the fear that stops most fathers: that apologizing costs you their respect. The chapter's answer is that they will respect you more, because what they are seeing is not a king losing his crown. It is a man under authority.

Chapter nineteen is simpler and just as costly. You can be marked present every night and miss almost everything. Every checked-out father has his exits: the glass, the screen, the office, the garage door that is always half down. The house counts you present. The family knows better.



TWO QUESTIONS

1. What do you owe your kids an honest conversation about?

2. Name your exit. The glass, the screen, the office, the garage. Which one is yours?

They're not going to remember what you made. They're going to remember that you were there.

Read that with the guard on it, because some of you are working two jobs. **A man who feeds his family is doing a real and holy thing and nobody here is shaming necessary work.** The floor is not the house. This is not about the hours you have to work. It is about the man you are in the hours you have.

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter nineteen, and do this one before the meeting in chapter eighteen. Seal one exit. Name it, then close it for the hours between dinner and bedtime, every night this week. Phone in the drawer. Laptop shut.

Before you hold the meeting from chapter eighteen, an adult hears it first. Your wife, your pastor, your leader. That meeting is for a man telling his kids about weather that is passing, not for handing them a storm that is still running.

M T W T F

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SESSION TWELVE

RAISING THEM TOWARD THE FATHER WHO NEVER FAILS



READ

chapter 20, chapter 21, and the Part Three prayer

The strangest goal in the book, and it takes the whole rebuild to see it: the aim of Christian fathering is to become unnecessary in exactly one place.

Not at the dinner table. Not at the hard conversation at midnight. You stay in the room, that was last week.

Unnecessary between your kids and God.

There was never supposed to be a man standing in that gap. Christ already holds that job and He holds it alone. A father is the frame, not the painting, and this is what it looks like when a kid's faith finally stops running through him.

Chapter twenty-one is the close, and it is the most boring scene in the book on purpose. A calm man in a chair with a book, in a house that is not bracing for anything.

After twenty chapters, that is the trophy.

Peace, in a house that used to forecast, is the loudest miracle in the room.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. What are you deliberately teaching your kids before they leave your house? Name three things.

2. What would your kids see if they walked past you on an ordinary evening when you did not know they were looking?

THE WORK THIS WEEK

From chapter twenty. One ride this week, radio off, one question about God, and then mostly listen. Do not force a destination.

M T W T F

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SESSION THIRTEEN

THE MAN THEY ACTUALLY LIVE WITH



READ

the Final Prayer, and back through anything you marked

Thirteen weeks ago you read a chapter about a man sitting in a truck in his own driveway, and some of you recognized him immediately.

So here is the last question, and it is the first one.

Which man walks through your door now?

Go back through this guide and read your own answers from week one. Most men have not looked. The point of the last session is not new material. It is seeing what moved.

And hear the thing the book says at the end and keeps saying the whole way through: you are not the man you were, you are not yet the man God is building, and the middle is exactly where the battle turns.

Nothing in these thirteen weeks fixed anybody. That was never on offer. What it did, if it worked, is get you honest, get you praying, get you into one honest friendship, and get you doing one small thing at a time in front of the people who live with you.

That is not a small result. That is the whole method.

TWO QUESTIONS

1. Read your week one answers. What is different?

2. What is the one thing from these thirteen weeks you are going to keep doing?

THE LAST THING

Two things before you leave this room.

Say one thing out loud to the men here. One sentence about what changed or what has not. You have been reading to your partner for thirteen weeks. This is the room.

Then keep your partner. Set the next time you are going to talk before you walk out of here. Put it in your phone now, in front of him.

Most of what men learn in a class like this dies in the third week of being alone with it.

FROM HERE

Keep doing the one thing. Keep praying badly. Keep one man close.

And go be the man they actually live with.

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THIS



If you have questions, you can reach me through jakemccluskey.com.

And if you ran this with a room of men, I want to hear how it went. What worked, what didn't, what you had to change to make it fit your church. If something in here was wrong, tell me that too. I would rather know.

If there is anything I can do to help your men, ask.

Jake

IF TONIGHT IS DARKER THAN A PAGE CAN REACH



Some weeks a man comes to a class like this carrying more than a study guide can hold. If that is you, or the man next to you, here is where to go.

Call or text **988**, any hour, or chat at **chat.988lifeline.org**. It is the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and a real person answers.

Veterans: **dial 988 then press 1**, text **838255**, or chat at **VeteransCrisisLine.net**. You do not have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to use it.

Then tell one person who knows your face.

If somebody in your house is not safe, from you or from anybody else, that is not a study guide problem. Talk to your pastor this week. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is **1-800-799-7233**, or text **START** to **88788**, any hour. Men call that number too.

Using any of those numbers is not weakness. It is the first fight you will win.