



TEN WEEKS FOR A MEN'S CLASS

WHEN MEN STAND FIRM

LEADER GUIDE

Everything a volunteer needs to teach it. Timed sessions, what to say, what not to say, and the guard that goes with every hard sentence.

BY JACOB MCCLUSKEY
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JAKE MCCLUSKEY
STAND YOUR WATCH

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BEFORE YOU TEACH A SINGLE WEEK

Read this part. It is short, and it will save you the mistakes that sink a men's class.

WHAT THIS CLASS ACTUALLY IS

It is not a book study. You are not going to discuss chapters.

It is ten weeks of men naming specific things out loud and then doing something about them. By the end, every man in your room should be able to point at something he did, not something he learned.

That is the deliverable. Not understanding. Ground taken.

If a man leaves your class with a better vocabulary for spiritual warfare and the same phone habits he came in with, the class failed, no matter how good the discussion was.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE A BIBLE TEACHER

I want to be clear about this because it stops good men from volunteering.

You need to be a man willing to say a true thing about himself in front of other men. That is the whole qualification.

Nothing in this guide asks you to explain a difficult passage or settle a theological argument. Where a hard question comes up, this guide tells you what to say, including how to say “I do not know, let me ask

our pastor and bring it back next week.” That is always an acceptable answer and men respect it more than a guess.

THE BOOK IS OPTIONAL AND THE GUIDE IS NOT

The participant guide carries the teaching. Every session in it stands on its own. If your church got the books, tell men which part to read and it will go deeper. If you could not get the books, run it exactly the same way and do not apologize for it.

SOME MEN IN YOUR ROOM HAVE NEVER TRUSTED CHRIST

Assume it. Most of this material lands very differently on a man who is trying to earn something than on a man who already belongs.

Session five and session six both give you a natural place to say it plainly: none of this buys you anything. Christ already paid. What we are doing here is a son doing what his Father said, not a man building a case.

Say that out loud at least twice in ten weeks. Somebody in that room needs it and will not ask.

Here are the words, so you are not inventing them on the spot. Read this off the page if you want to. Nobody will think less of you.

“that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, NASB 1995). “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). Nothing we are doing in this class buys any of that. It is already paid for. What we are doing is what a son does, not what a debtor does. And if you have never trusted Him, you can tonight. Tell Him so, and then tell me afterward.

Then stop. Do not preach it and do not make anybody raise a hand.

THE FOUR MISTAKES

Teaching the hard sentence and dropping the guard. This is the one that does damage. This book makes a hard claim to a man and then immediately protects him from misreading it, and the protection is what gets cut when you run short on time. Every session below marks the guard in bold. If you have to cut something, cut the illustration, never the guard.

Letting it become a discussion about other people. Men will start diagnosing their wives, their bosses, the culture. Every one of these chapters is a mirror. Turn it back.

Doing all the talking. Twenty minutes of teaching is the ceiling, not the target.

Skiping the assignment check. Open every week by asking who did last week's. Not to shame anybody. Because a class that never checks becomes a class that never does.

THE SHAPE OF EVERY WEEK

Sixty minutes.

- Opening question, 5 min
- Read aloud, 5 min
- Teach, 20 min
- Write, 10 min
- Pairs, 10 min
- Close, 10 min

If you have ninety, give it to pairs and close. Do not extend the teaching.

ABOUT THE PAIRS

Assign partners in week one and keep them the whole ten weeks. Same two men every time.

Trading answers with the same man ten weeks running is where the actual work of this class happens. Rotating partners feels friendlier and accomplishes nothing.

ABOUT THE READ-ALoud

Ask a man beforehand. Never cold-call for reading. Some men in that room do not read well out loud and will not come back if you expose that.

DO NOT MAKE MEN SHARE

Pairs are required. The room is voluntary.

Say it in week one and mean it: nothing you write gets read to the whole room unless you offer it.

IF A MAN DISCLOSES SOMETHING SERIOUS

It will happen. Ten weeks with a room of men will surface a marriage in trouble, a drinking problem, a man who has been thinking about ending his life.

You are not the counselor and you should not try to be.

Do three things. Take it seriously in the moment and do not rush past it. Get him connected to your pastor or a counselor this week, not eventually. And follow up personally within a few days, because most men never make the call on their own.

If it is a safety issue, the crisis numbers are on the last page of the participant guide. 988, any hour, by call or text. Veterans dial 988 then press 1, or text 838255. Do not hand a man a number and move on. Sit with him while he makes the call if that is what it takes.

If he is in danger tonight, meaning he tells you he has a plan, or the means, or that he does not intend to be here tomorrow, do not send him home and do not wait for the week. Stay with him. Call 988 together. Call 911 if he will not stay and will not call. Then call your pastor that night, not Monday.

Tell your pastor either way. “Get him connected” does not mean handing over a phone number and hoping. You make a call too.

One more thing, about the confidentiality rule. Tell the room in week one that nothing said in here leaves this room. Say the exception in the same breath, every time: the one exception is if somebody is in danger, and then I am going to go get help, and I would do exactly the same for any of you. Men trust that more than a blanket promise, and it keeps you from being trapped by your own word on the night it matters.

TWO SUBJECTS THAT NEED A PLAN BEFORE WEEK ONE

Abuse. Sessions three and eight both touch it. Decide now, before the class starts, who you call. Get the name and number of a counselor your church actually uses and put it in your phone. If a man describes his own behavior toward his wife in a way that alarms you, that is not a teaching moment in the room. That is a conversation in the parking lot and a call to your pastor that night.

Substances. Session four tells men to remove the provision. For a man dependent on alcohol, stopping suddenly without medical guidance can be dangerous. Say that out loud when you teach session four. Do not let a man in your room white-knuckle a detox because your class inspired him.

SESSION ONE

YOU ARE IN A FIGHT



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

get every man in that room to say one specific true thing out loud, and get him to believe he is not the only one.

Nobody removes anything in week one. Week one is about lowering the bar far enough that men come back.

5 MIN **OPENING QUESTION**

“What is one thing that has quietly gotten worse in the last two years?”

Around the room, one sentence each. Not the deepest thing. The first honest thing.

You answer first, with a real answer, including a part that is not flattering. The room will match whatever you model, so model low.

5 MIN **READ ALOUD**

Ask a man beforehand to read the opening pages of Chapter One, or the first three paragraphs of Session One in the participant guide.

20 MIN **TEACH**

The one idea: **most men do not collapse in one decision. They drift one inch at a time, and drift only works on a man who stopped paying attention.**

Cover, in this order:

- Following Jesus does not remove you from a fight. It puts you in one. Resistance is not evidence you did something wrong.

- **And the guard, immediately:** not everything is spiritual warfare. Some of what is falling apart is harvest, and the man did the planting. That is Galatians 6:7-8, and read it out loud so it lands as Scripture and not as your opinion about his life. Both halves, every time. A man who blames everything on the enemy never changes, and a man who blames everything on himself eventually quits.
- The drift. One inch at a time, on ordinary days.
- Naming where you are weak is not defeat. It is the first honest thing.
- You cannot break what you keep defending.

Say plainly: “Some of you are here because something has been eating at you for a while and you have never said it to another man. In ten weeks you will have, and it will be fine.”

Do not open with a testimony about how you got the victory. Wrong week. It widens the gap you are trying to close.

Watch the shame vector. Chapter Four and Chapter Five both fire off a run of hard questions. Read flat, in a group, they hit like an inventory of everybody’s failures. Slow down and say the author’s own line out loud: I am not asking these questions to shame you.

10 MIN WRITE

The two questions in the guide, then the “Name it” line. The Name it line is the one that matters. Give it the time and let the room be quiet.

10 MIN PAIRS

Assign partners now, for the whole ten weeks. Have them trade what they wrote on the Name it line.

10 MIN CLOSE

Take the assignment in front of them. Say one true sentence about yourself, out loud, right now, and then ask one man in the room to bring it up next week.

Then hold up the last page of the participant guide and say what it is in one sentence, with no speech. “There are two phone numbers on the back page. I hope none of you ever need them. They are there anyway.” Then move on. Some man in that room just heard something he needed and you will never know which one.

If nobody talks: answer the opening question yourself a second time, with something worse. A room follows what you model, not what you ask for.

SESSION TWO

THE LIE YOU AGREED WITH



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

get each man to write down, word for word, the sentence he says to himself about the kind of man he is.

5 MIN OPENING QUESTION

“Who is somebody who believed something about you that turned out to be wrong?”

Easy question, everybody has one, and it opens the category without anybody having to confess anything.

5 MIN READ ALOUD

Chapter Seven, the opening. Or the Scripture and the paragraph after it in the participant guide.

20 MIN TEACH

The one idea: **most of what takes a man down is not a lie he was told. It is a lie he agreed with.**

Cover, in this order:

- A lie believed long enough stops feeling like a belief. It feels like reality.
- The three or four sentences most men are running. Too far gone. You always do this. Nobody would stay if they knew.
- Feelings are real, not always right. Feel what you feel, do not hand them the wheel.

- **The guard here is non-negotiable:** this applies to a man's own reactions. It is not a tool for telling his wife her feelings do not count. Say that sentence out loud, in those words. Men will misuse this chapter within a week if you do not.
- Conviction is specific. Condemnation is a cloud. One names a thing and points at a door.
- Your worst day does not get to name you. You are not denying it. You are refusing to worship it.

One more guard. Chapter Ten separates a man's sin from what was done to him. Another person's evil does not make a man dirty in God's eyes. Say it. There is a man in your room who needs that sentence and will never raise his hand to ask for it.

10 MIN WRITE

Both questions. Push on question one: the sentence, written exactly as it sounds in his head, not cleaned up.

10 MIN PAIRS

Trade question one. Partners read each other's sentence out loud, back to the man who wrote it. That is uncomfortable and it is the point.

10 MIN CLOSE

Ask three men to say the true sentence they wrote in "Test it." Not the lie. The true one.

Then send them home with it.

If a man says his lie is "everybody would be better off without me," that is not a discussion item. Stop the class on time, keep him after, and follow the crisis section at the front of this guide.

SESSION THREE

THE THOUGHT THAT RUNS YOUR DAY



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

get every man to identify which of the five is actually driving him, and cut one input.

5 MIN OPENING QUESTION

“What is the argument you keep having in your head with somebody who is not in the room?”

Men laugh at this one. Then they answer it honestly, because everybody has one.

5 MIN READ ALOUD

Chapter Fourteen or Chapter Nineteen. The dumpster line lands.

20 MIN TEACH

The one idea: **a man does not master fear, anger, bitterness, comparison, or what he consumes by trying harder. He catches the thought early and tests it before it becomes a command.**

Cover, in this order:

- Preparation looks at reality. Fear invents realities and makes you live in all of them.
- Your body does not know the difference between the emergency in front of you and the one you are rehearsing.
- Anger is a guard dog standing in front of every emotion a man will not name.

- Bitterness. You can carry something long enough that the weight feels normal.
- Comparison loves the questions you cannot answer.
- Input. Two hours of people screaming, then he talks to his family.

Three guards this week, all of them required.

On anger: do not let this room turn into “she made him angry.” Nobody controls a man’s obedience but the man. If a man describes himself screaming six inches from his wife’s face, or worse, that is a parking lot conversation and a call to your pastor, not a group topic.

On bitterness and forgiveness: say the whole thing, not half. Forgiveness does not mean it was okay. It does not mean trust is restored. It does not mean boundaries come down or that children go back around somebody unsafe. There will be a man in that room who was abused and he is listening for whether you know the difference.

Romans 12:18 is the guard in four words: “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.” If possible. So far as it depends on you.

On taking thoughts captive: the passage is 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and Paul is tearing down arguments raised against the knowledge of God. Say that you are applying it to the arguments running in a man’s own head, not defining it. And this is not a command to have a quiet brain, and it is not permission to shame a man whose mind will not go quiet. Read the author’s own line: if thoughts are uncontrollable, disturbing, or dangerous, get professional help. Have the numbers ready before you open your mouth on this chapter.

One more, on comparison. A man in real hardship, out of work or sick, can hear this chapter as “your lack of blessing is your fault.” The book does not say that. Say so.

10 MIN WRITE

Both questions and the Test it line.

10 MIN

PAIRS

Trade question two: which of the five has you.

10 MIN

CLOSE

Go around and have each man name the one input he is cutting. Out loud, specific. The app, the account, the show, the group chat.

Naming it in the room is most of why it will actually happen.

SESSION FOUR

THE NEGOTIATION



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

every man removes one specific provision, and tells one man he did it.

This is the most practical week in the class. Do not let it drift into theory.

5 MIN **OPENING QUESTION**

“What is something you used to have in your house that you got rid of on purpose?”

Anything. A TV, a truck, a cabinet full of something. It warms up the category of removal without making anybody confess yet.

5 MIN **READ ALOUD**

Chapter Twenty-One, on temptation not being defeat. Start there, not with the hard material. Chapter Twenty-Two is the hard material, so do not open with it.

20 MIN **TEACH**

The one idea: **temptation is not sin. Negotiating with it is where men lose.**

Cover, in this order:

- He “has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Keep the “as we are.” Without it you are claiming He faced every specific temptation you face, which the verse does not say. If temptation made a man guilty it would have made Him guilty. **Start**

here every time. Half your room believes the pull itself condemns them.

- We do not say no. We hold a committee meeting. And while the meeting runs, temptation is still in the room.
- **If a man raises James 1:14-15**, “when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin,” the answer is in the line above. James is describing the negotiation, not the first pull. The committee meeting is where it turns. **Do not push that further than you need to.** Whether the very first motion of a wrong desire is already sin is a question serious Christians have argued for centuries, and you are not going to settle it on a Tuesday. What this room needs is the pastoral half, and it is solid: a man who is fighting is not a man who has already lost.
- Provision. “Make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Romans 13:14). The app, the account, the route, the bottle in the cabinet for guests.
- Your life is voting against your prayer.
- When you fall, get up. **With the guard attached:** not pretending it did not happen, not skipping confession or consequences. Call it what it is, then get up. Do not build a bed in the dirt.

The guard that must not be dropped. Chapter Twenty-Four deals with a man’s lust and his marriage. The book says plainly that a wife’s failures do not give a man permission to sin. Men will hear the first half of that and stop listening. Read the whole thing: if there are real intimacy problems in a marriage, talk about them, get counseling, tell the truth. The chapter is not a permission slip and it is not a complaint department.

The medical guard. Say this out loud, in these words: if what has hold of you is alcohol or another substance, do not stop cold on your own. Stopping suddenly without medical guidance can be dangerous. Call a doctor first. That is the wise version of the same obedience, not a loophole.

The disclosure guard. This is the week a man discloses something big. Addiction, an affair, money he took. Do not process it in the room. Thank him, keep the class moving, and get him after.

10 MIN **WRITE**

Both questions and the “Take the ground” line. Push for one specific object or account with a day next to it.

10 MIN **PAIRS**

Trade the Take the ground line. Partners agree to text each other when it is done.

10 MIN **CLOSE**

Ask each man to say only the day. Not the thing. “Thursday.” That gets commitment without forcing confession.

Then pray for the room out loud, short, and let them go.

SESSION FIVE

THE BEST EXCUSE YOU HAVE



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

every man does the thing he has been delaying, before the next meeting.

5 MIN **OPENING QUESTION**

“What is a job around your house you have been putting off, and how long has it been?”

Laugh about it. Then say, we are going to do the same thing with something that matters more.

5 MIN **READ ALOUD**

John 5:1-9, the account of Jesus at the pool. Or Chapter Thirty in the book.

One thing to know before Sunday. The NASB 1995 brackets verse 4 and footnotes that the earliest manuscripts do not have it. A man reading from a KJV will read a verse your NASB reader does not have. Say “the older copies do not have that line, it does not change anything here,” and move on.

20 MIN **TEACH**

The one idea: **the best excuses contain enough truth to protect the lie.**

Cover, in this order:

- Nine parts true, one part exit ramp. That is why yours still works on you.
- **Say this out loud when you get to John 5:** the man’s answer about having nobody to put him in the pool is a statement of fact, not an

excuse, and this is an application rather than John's point. Then give them a better place to see it. Luke 14:18-20, where every excuse in the parable is factually true. That parable is about men refusing an invitation to the kingdom, so do not tell the room it is a lesson on excuse-making either. It illustrates it. That is enough. "I have bought a piece of land and I need to go out and look at it; please consider me excused."

- Do you wish to get well. It is a question that treats a man lying there thirty-eight years like a man with a say in his own life.
- The past. **Both halves, in one breath:** you are not at fault for every wound you carry, and you are responsible for what you do with it now. The men who hurt you do not deserve control over who you become.
- Nobody is coming to make you obey. Motivation is a terrible boss.
- The apology that is not one. "I'm sorry you feel that way" is a sentence built to survive an argument.
- Two people can be wrong in the same room, and your part is still yours.

The guard you cannot skip. This is the session where a man hears works-righteousness if you are careless. Say it in plain words: none of this earns anything. You are saved by grace through faith. Obedience is a response, not a purchase. Say it twice this week.

Read Ephesians 2:8-10 rather than stopping at 8-9. Verse 10 is the second half of the guard: "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." The works are the point of the rescue, not the price of it.

The trauma guard. The book names PTSD, depression, and addiction as real and as needing real care, not just resolve. A volunteer can easily preach this chapter as willpower. Do not. Keep the referral attached.

The safety guard. The apology chapter tells men to go make it right. Add the caveat out loud: if contacting somebody could put them in danger, or if there are legal consequences, talk to your pastor or a counselor before you act. That is wisdom, not avoidance.

Both questions and the Take the ground line, which needs a day attached.

10 MIN PAIRS

Trade question two, the ten percent that is actually true about his own part. That is the hardest thing on the page.

10 MIN CLOSE

Go around the room. Each man says only the day he is doing it.

Then tell them you will ask next week, and then actually ask.

SESSION SIX

ARMED ON AN ORDINARY TUESDAY



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

move the armor out of Sunday-school language and into a Tuesday.

5 MIN **OPENING QUESTION**

“What is a tool you own that you almost never use?”

Then: that is what most of us do with everything God gave us.

5 MIN **READ ALOUD**

Ephesians 6:10-18, the whole passage, read straight through by one man. This is the one week to read the Bible passage itself rather than the book.

20 MIN **TEACH**

The one idea: **there is a difference between owning a thing and using it, and God has not left you defenseless.**

Cover, in this order:

- A man at 11:47 at night deciding the screen does not own him. Start with the Tuesday version, not the metaphor. Then work backward to the armor.
- The belt goes on first. Not because truth is most important, because nothing else stays on without it. A lie keeps the conversation short. Truth lets people in.
- The breastplate is Christ’s righteousness, credited. **Guard this hard:** if a man is guarding his heart with his own performance, he is wearing a costume, and that is exactly why he is exhausted.

- Peace is footing, not mood.
- The shield. Faith is not pretending the arrow missed. It hit the shield.
- The helmet guards the place where a man argues himself into quitting.
- The Word is the piece you swing.
- Prayer is verse 18, not verse 17. It is not a seventh piece of armor and it is not the closing formality. It is how the whole thing stays on.

Three guards.

On the breastplate. If a man with a study Bible points out that 1 Thessalonians 5:8 assigns the breastplate to faith and love, he is right. Your backup for the credited reading is 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Philippians 3:9, and do not tell him the arrangement is the same, because it is not. In 1 Thessalonians 5:8 the breastplate is faith and love and the helmet is the hope of salvation. Say instead that Paul is drawing on Isaiah 59:17, where the armour is God's own, and that he fits the pieces to whatever he is arguing at the time. The credited reading of Ephesians 6:14 is a good one and it is not the only one, and you do not have to win that.

On grace and obedience. Chapter Thirty-Eight raises the question of why not sin if it is all credited anyway. The book's answer is identity, not fear. Teach it that way. Do not turn it into a threat about losing grace.

On truth-telling. This chapter is not a mandate for public confession. It is about what a man tells God and the people who need to know. Do not turn your class into a confession exercise, especially if abuse or addiction surfaces.

On the shield and grief. Chapter Forty references funerals and diagnoses. If a man in your room is in fresh grief, do not let the shield metaphor sound like faith should have stopped the loss. It did not, and the book does not claim it does.

10 MIN

WRITE

Both questions and the Take the ground line, which is the unedited answer to "how are you."

10 MIN PAIRS

Trade the unedited version. This is the whole assignment, rehearsed.

10 MIN CLOSE

Pray it out loud yourself, in front of them, using one true thing about your own week. Two sentences. Nothing polished.

SESSION SEVEN

WHEN GOD IS QUIET



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

make it safe for a man to say he is angry at God, and keep him from concluding he has to leave.

This is the pastoral week. Slow down.

5 MIN OPENING QUESTION

“What is a prayer you prayed that did not get the answer you wanted?”

Let it be quiet after you ask. Somebody will go.

5 MIN READ ALOUD

Habakkuk 3:17-18, both verses, so the room hears the whole shape.

20 MIN TEACH

The one idea: **standing firm through silence, a no, a wait, or a loss does not require you to understand it.**

Cover, in this order:

- This week is not about your sin. Say that at the top. Six weeks of self-examination have some men primed to hear every hardship as a verdict.
- The six shapes: silence, a no, a wait, a loss, no money, a hurting child.
- You are allowed to grieve it. You are allowed to say out loud, Father, I wanted something different. The Psalms are full of it and God printed them. Name Psalm 88, because it ends in the dark and never resolves, which is exactly what you are about to do at close.

- One answer you did not like does not get to rewrite everything you know about Christ.
- Sometimes standing firm is one sentence through clenched teeth. God, I am still here.
- When the door closes, stop breaking windows.
- Faith sometimes says, I do not understand You, and I am not leaving.

The guards.

On the no. Do not let this become a private explanation for why somebody's prayer failed. The book says it plainly: every no is not because a man's faith was too weak.

On money. Chapter Forty-Eight tells a man to open the statements and tell his wife the truth. Hold both halves. Some of it he caused. Some of it he did not. A man who feels only exposed will not tell anybody anything.

On a hurting child. This chapter has the most dangerous material in the book if handled flatly. If a man's kid has said he does not want to be alive, the instruction is immediate professional help, today, not a weekly assignment. Have 988 in your hand before you teach this. Say it out loud, with the veterans line, and do not move on quickly.

Also hold the balance the book holds: do not assume every struggle a child has is the father's fault, and do not assume none of it is.

10 MIN WRITE

Both questions and the Name it line.

10 MIN PAIRS

Trade the Name it line. Partners do not respond with advice. They say one sentence back: I am glad you said it.

Tell them that rule before you start pairs, or half your room will get counseled by an amateur.

10 MIN **CLOSE**

Read Habakkuk again and close in prayer. Do not resolve it. Some things in that room are not going to be resolved this year and a leader who pretends otherwise loses the men who most need to stay.

SESSION EIGHT

THE MAN YOUR HOUSE GETS



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

every married man says one true sentence to his wife about what he is carrying, instead of dumping it or hiding it.

5 MIN **OPENING QUESTION**

“How could you tell, growing up, what kind of day your dad had?”

Every man has an answer. Almost nobody has said it out loud. Then land it: your kids have that same answer about you.

5 MIN **READ ALOUD**

Chapter Fifty-Two, the opening. Or Psalm 101:2 with the paragraph after it in the participant guide.

20 MIN **TEACH**

The one idea: **you can fool a crowd for an hour. You cannot fool a family forever.**

Cover, in this order:

- Home should not get the version of you with no restraint because strangers already took all your patience.
- The sigh at the homework question said something, whether or not he meant it.
- **Both halves at once:** do not dump it on them, and do not fake it either. She should know when he is carrying something heavy. She should not get the bill for it.

- Five minutes in the driveway, breathing and praying. Not forty-five minutes on the phone.
- She is not the enemy. You can win every argument and lose your wife. Ephesians 6:12 is only two sessions back and says it outright: our struggle is not against flesh and blood.
- Guard the door. Psalm 101:3 is the verse right after the one they already read: “I will set no worthless thing before my eyes.” What comes into that house is a decision somebody is making, and if it is not him, it is a device.

The guard that is not optional, and read it word for word every time you teach this session: if there is physical violence, threats, coercive control, or abuse in a home, safety comes first. Get qualified help and protect whoever is in danger.

Say it even if you are certain nobody in your room needs it. You are not certain.

Two more. Chapter Fifty-Two and Fifty-Three both build toward “own your part.” The book is explicit that it is not blaming every marriage problem on the husband. Say that, or the man whose wife is genuinely the harder problem will check out and never come back.

And Chapter Fifty-Four, on children watching, can crush a man already carrying guilt about his kids. The book’s own answer is two words: do not panic, get honest. Say both.

10 MIN WRITE

Both questions and the Take the ground line, which is the sentence he will actually say to her.

10 MIN PAIRS

Have partners read each other the sentence they are going to say. If it is vague, the partner’s job is to say so.

10 MIN CLOSE

Pray for the homes in that room by name if you can do it without singling anybody out. Then send them to their driveways.

SESSION NINE

HEAVY HANDS



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

every man asks one specific man to breakfast, this week, and says one specific sentence to him.

This is the hardest assignment in the class. Treat it that way.

5 MIN OPENING QUESTION

“Who is the last man who told you something you did not want to hear?”

If the room goes quiet, that is your teaching illustration and you should say so.

5 MIN READ ALOUD

Exodus 17:8-13. The whole scene, so they hear that Israel was losing whenever the hands came down.

20 MIN TEACH

The one idea: **isolation is not strength. It is a trained habit, and your hands are going to get heavy.**

Cover, in this order:

- Moses' hands got tired. Arms do. Two men held them up until sundown.
- **One precision note, because a man who knows the chapter will raise it.** Verse 9 has Moses going up with the staff of God in his hand, and verse 15 has him building an altar called The LORD is My Banner. The raised

hand is first about depending on God, not about muscle. Aaron and Hur are still exactly what a man needs when he cannot hold his own arms up. Say both halves.

- Isolation does not feel like isolation. It feels like competence. You have friends. You talk about trucks and ball games for hours and never touch what hurts.
- Nobody can betray the man who never lets anybody close. Nobody can help him either.
- The translation. “Struggling with my eyes.” “Money is a little tight.” The translation keeps the shame manageable and the help useless.
- Sometimes refusing help is pride. Sometimes it is fear. Either way the bill is already being paid, it is just hidden.
- Find men who will call you out. Correction without love is cruelty. Love without truth is permission.
- When another man falls, go get him.

The guards.

On restoration. Forgiven is not the same as reinstated. A man who has harmed people does not go back near them because he apologized. And consequence is not abandonment. Both halves.

You will get asked “so we do not forgive him?” Have these ready. Proverbs 28:13, confesses and forsakes, so compassion is real and repentance still has a shape. Galatians 6:1, restore him in a spirit of gentleness while watching yourself. 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, where Paul says the punishment is enough and tells them to forgive, comfort, and reaffirm their love so the man is not overwhelmed. And 1 Timothy 3:2 and 3:7, where fitness for a role is a separate question from forgiveness.

And say this plainly: whether a man returns to a role is your pastor and your elders' decision. It is not this class's and it is not yours.

On accountability. The call to correct each other can be misused by a controlling man. The book says accountability should not become ownership. Say that out loud. Do not assume the room absorbed it silently.

On crisis language. Chapter Fifty-Nine names the flares directly: I keep thinking about dying. I am not safe alone tonight. The book names them and does not print numbers. You print them. Say 988 out loud, and the veterans line, before you finish this session. Do not let the class end without saying them.

10 MIN WRITE

Both questions. Question one asks for names, and “nobody” is an acceptable and important answer.

10 MIN PAIRS

Trade the name of the man each is asking to breakfast. If a man cannot think of one, his partner becomes the answer. Say that.

10 MIN CLOSE

Have each man say the name out loud and the day. Then tell them the sentence again and have the room say it together once, which sounds strange and works: “I do not have many close friends, and I need that to change.”

If a man says he has nobody, stay with him afterward. That is not a small thing and it is the exact man this session was written for.

SESSION TEN

TIRED IS NOT FINISHED



YOUR ONE JOB THIS WEEK

every man leaves with a named line, a named protection, and a standing appointment with one man from this room.

10 MIN OPEN DIFFERENTLY

No opening question this week. Go around the room and have every man answer one thing: what did you actually do in the last ten weeks that you can point at?

Not what he learned. What he did. Let it take the whole ten minutes.

Say this before you start, and do not skip it. Some of you had ten weeks where the bottom fell out and there is nothing to point at. Say that. It counts as an answer and nobody follows up on it. **Then mean it, and move to the next man without a pause.**

Some men in that circle relapsed in week four, or lost a marriage, or have been in a depression since November. This is the last night and there is no week eleven to catch a man in. **A man who says he has nothing is the man you go stand next to afterward**, not the man you draw out in front of eleven others. And when you say earlier in this guide that a man leaving with nothing changed means the class failed, that is a sentence about you and your preparation. **Never let it land on him.**

TEACH (15 MIN, SHORTER ON PURPOSE)

The one idea: **faithfulness is the same ordinary line of obedience today that you held yesterday, whatever today costs.**

Cover, in this order:

- A foundation is not impressive while it is being poured.
- Feelings can follow obedience. Sometimes they do, sometimes they do not, and the obedience was never contingent.
- Would you still do it if your name were removed?
- **The guard:** if a man has gone bitter because nobody notices, do not use this to silence him. Tell her. Do not collect it.
- Delay is not patience. March would have cost him a five minute conversation. June cost him a relationship.
- **The guard on cost:** if a man is rude, dishonest, lazy, or reckless and it costs him something, that is not persecution. Say that plainly so nobody spiritualizes a self-inflicted wound.
- Tired is not finished.

The last guard, and it is the most important one in this guide. If a man's feelings have gone persistently dark, or he has started thinking the people around him would be better off without him, that is not a faithfulness problem and it will not be fixed by pushing through. Tell him to say it to somebody today. Say the numbers again. This is the last week you have him in a chair.

25 MIN THE LAST THING

Two moves.

First, the lines. Every man writes the specific line he cannot keep crossing, and next to it, the concrete thing that protects it. Not "be careful." A locked device. A changed route. One brother who has permission to ask.

Second, the appointment. Every man pairs with one man from this room and they set an actual date on an actual calendar before anybody leaves the building. Not soon. A day and a time. Watch them do it.

If you skip this and just encourage them to stay in touch, most of the room will not, and you will have run a very good class that ends on the last night.

10 MIN **CLOSE**

Read Hebrews 10:35-36 out loud.

Know the neighborhood before you read it. Verses 26 to 31 are the hardest warning in Hebrews, and verse 38 says “if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him.” A man who goes home on the last night and reads the whole chapter hits that with no leader in the room. If he asks, this is the one place in ten weeks to say “good question, let me get our pastor on that.” The short version you can give and then stop: 35 and 36 are about reward and endurance, not about buying salvation, and verse 39 tells these same men they are “of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul.” Do not extemporize past that.

The last guard, and say it before you close. None of this earned him anything and none of it keeps him. He did not endure his way in and he cannot fall out of what Christ paid for. Ten weeks of work is what a son does, not what a debtor does.

Then say one honest thing about your own ten weeks, including a part that did not go well, and pray for them by name if you can.

Then let them go stand somewhere.

APPENDIX A



CATCHING A MAN UP

Men will join in week three or week five. Do not send them back to the beginning.

Give them the participant guide and tell them to read the front matter and the Four Moves page before the next meeting. That is all they need. Every session stands alone.

Then assign him a partner immediately. A man who joins late and has no partner will attend twice and disappear.

APPENDIX B



WHEN NOBODY TALKS

It will happen, usually in week two or week seven.

Do not fill the silence. Count to ten in your head. Men need longer than you think, and a leader who rescues the room teaches the room that somebody else will always go first.

If ten seconds passes, answer your own question again with something more costly than what you said the first time. Not a story about a victory. Something you are still in the middle of.

If the room is still frozen, drop straight to pairs. Two men will talk when twelve will not. Come back to the room afterward and ask what came up, without names.

And check the chairs. A circle talks. Rows do not.

APPENDIX C



THE SIX-WEEK VERSION

If ten weeks does not fit your calendar, run it this way. Do not try to cover everything faster.

1. Sessions One and Two together, Wake Up and Believe the Truth 2. Session Three, Fight for Your Mind 3. Session Four, Stop Playing With Sin 4. Sessions Five and Six, Kill the Excuses and Put On the Armor 5. Sessions Seven and Eight, Stand When Life Hits You and Stand for Your Home 6. Sessions Nine and Ten, Stop Standing Alone and Refuse to Quit

Two rules if you compress. Keep every guard, and keep session nine's assignment intact.

And read this before you run the six week version. Session nine's assignment is that every man asks one specific man to breakfast and says one specific sentence to him. In the six week track it lands on the last night, with no week to do it in and no meeting where anybody asks whether it happened, and this guide says elsewhere that a class that never checks becomes a class that never does. **So move that assignment forward.** Give it in week five, at the end of Stand for Your Home, and check it in week six. If you cannot do that, tell the room plainly on the last night that you are going to text each of them in ten days and ask, and then actually do it.

APPENDIX D



A NOTE TO THE MAN LEADING THIS

You are going to run ten weeks of this and, somewhere around week six, wonder whether it is doing anything.

It is. You just cannot see it, because the work is happening in driveways and kitchens on Tuesday nights, in places you are not.

A few things nobody will tell you.

You are going to be tempted to teach past your own life. Do not. Every session in here asks men to say a true thing, and a leader who never does is running a class about honesty dishonestly. They can tell. They always can.

One man is going to quit around week four and you will decide the whole thing is failing. It is not. Call him anyway, once, without a speech.

You do not have to be further along than the room. You have to be honest at the same speed you are asking them to be.

And if this class surfaces something in you, which it will, take your own assignment. Tell one man.

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THIS



Thank you for teaching it.

I wrote this book because I have watched too many good men lose ground they did not have to lose, one inch at a time, with nobody close enough to say anything. If ten weeks of a class in your church puts two men in each other's lives, permanently, that is worth more than the book was.

If you have questions, or you want to tell me how it went, or you need something I can help with, reach me through the website at jakemccluskey.com. I would genuinely like to hear it.

Now go stand somewhere.

Jacob McCluskey