



INTRODUCTION TO CHRIST-CENTERED MANHOOD

Guidelines for Men

LEADER NOTES

As Steve Farrar declares in the title of his book, men are to be Tender Warriors. We are to exhibit the character and nature of Jesus Christ – firm, courageous and strong, yet compassionate and loving. In some ways, there might seem to be a paradox in this calling. But when properly modeled and taught, young men can embrace a vision of Christ-centered manhood that will bless their families, churches, communities and our nation. As you model Christ-likeness, 1 Corinthians 16:13 and 14 will be your road map for leading your young men through an intentional training plan for biblical manhood.

Theme Verse

1 Corinthians 16:13, 14: *Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, act like men; be strong. Do everything in love.*

STORY

Gary tossed his suitcase in the cargo compartment of the Greyhound bus then turned and gazed at his parents. His mom's face was splotchy red, her eyes were blood shot and filled with tears. Gary's dad stood staring off into the distance with his arms folded.

Gary walked up to his mom. She let the tears flow as she reached for a hug. As they embraced he thought of the tender care she always exhibited for him, even when he didn't deserve it. When he stepped back, she held each of his arms in her hands and said, "I know you'll do well, Gary."

Gary turned to his dad. They each offered a handshake then stood with the firm grip of their right hands. Gary thought this was apropos, since he couldn't ever remember getting a hug from his dad. His dad finally said, "Well Gary, be a man." Gary nodded his head and responding with, "Sure, Dad." He turned and climbed onto the bus.

As he sat down looking out the window at his parents he thought to himself, "What does he know about being a man?"

Guidelines for Men

Discussion: *OPEN IN PRAYER*

Introduce the memory verse by reciting it. Have the guys repeat it in short phrases.

2. Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, act like men; be strong. Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13, 14

How would Gary in the story know how to be a man?

How can we know how to be a man?

God has a plan. He spells it out in the Bible. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 offers some great topics by which we can define manhood.

2.1: Be on your guard: A Call to fight against temptations (**temptations from what?**) from Satan, from the world, and from our selves. It also helps guide us toward self-control. (**What's so important about self-control?**) Finally, we are called to be alert, always prepared for Jesus' second coming.

2.2: Stand firm in the faith: The center of what gives meaning and purpose to our lives through Jesus Christ. Ultimately, it is our faith in Christ as our Lord that assures our salvation and it is our identity in Christ that directs our heart, mind and soul to the nature and character of God.

2.3: Act like men (be men of courage): This is the central theme for our lessons and discussions. This proclamation implores us to pursue our divine roles as men. Biblically, we are to be disciples, servants, husbands, fathers and finally, patriarchs. Not all men will be called to fulfill every one of these roles. Some of these roles will be carried out during different seasons of life. To fulfill these roles, we are called to spiritual leadership and servant leadership. We are to be the provider and protector. In this directive from Paul, the original text refers to a masculine *courage*.

2.4: Be strong: (**Strong in what?**) strong in faith, strong in character, strong in perseverance, strong in body. This is in line with our roles as leader, provider and protector.

2.5: Do: Implies being proactive, not passive or reactive. (**What's the difference between proactive, passive and reactive?**) "Released from the law...we serve in newness of the Spirit," proving ourselves "doers of the word." As the Lord's Prayer says: "Thy will be done."

2.6: Everything in love: Sums up the law and implies a selfless, servant attitude.

What does the New Testament say about "the law" and love?

The commandments, ..., are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Romans 13:8-10)

CLOSE IN PRAYER