
New Adam | Small Group Discussion Guide

Chapter 1: Men Without a Map

Main Points

1. Men crave a publicly recognized path to manhood.

Across cultures and centuries, boys have risked everything to prove themselves as men. Whether through tribal rituals or fraternity hazing, the longing underneath is the same: masculine recognition. Without a clear and healthy path, boys will create one—or accept a distorted one.

2. When masculinity is erased or caricatured, men suffer—and so do women, families, and society. Toxic masculinity is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Modern culture has largely replaced a noble vision of manhood with either machismo or myth. In condemning masculinity as toxic, society has left boys without guidance, contributing to confusion, fatherlessness, despair, and dysfunction. If our highest cultural institutions do not give boys a map, then those boys will look to the internet and the streets. To frame masculinity itself as toxic is to perpetuate a toxic version of masculinity.

3. Masculinity is real, good, and worth redeeming.

Christianity does not discard masculinity; it affirms it as part of God's creation. Yet masculinity must be understood through the full arc of creation, fall, and redemption. Authentic manhood is neither aggressive caricature nor erased identity—it is a divine gift worthy of our reverence and respect. Next to erasing masculinity altogether, the greatest danger is reducing manhood to a rigid, oversimplified, counterfeit.

4. The crisis of masculinity is an opportunity for renewal.

Cultural collapse creates space for clarity. Rather than panicking, Christians can see this moment as an opportunity to paint a clearer picture of true male flourishing—a picture broad enough to include many temperaments and vocations.

Discussion & Application Questions

1. What “picture” of masculinity did you absorb growing up? Who shaped it—your father, peers, media, church, coaches? How has that picture helped or hindered you?
2. What role did your father (or absence of father) play in forming your understanding of manhood? What did he model well? What was missing?
3. Where have you sought masculine recognition? In what arenas (career, athletics, relationships, sexuality, achievement, humor, dominance) have you tried to “prove” yourself manly?
4. Have you ever felt the fragility of masculinity? When have you felt your “manhood” challenged, questioned, or insecure? How did you respond?
5. Which cultural option have you been tempted toward: machismo or myth? Have you leaned toward exaggerated dominance and bravado—or toward minimizing meaningful masculinity altogether?
6. How has the broader crisis of masculinity concretely affected your life? Consider fatherhood, friendships, dating, church life, or workplace culture. Where do you see the fallout?
7. Where have you experienced disappointment in the modern script of masculinity? Did sexual freedom, entertainment, achievement, or autonomy deliver what they promised?
8. How does the idea that masculinity is created, fallen, and redeemed reshape your understanding of yourself? Where do you see goodness? Where do you see distortion? Where do you need redemption?
9. If masculinity is not toxic by nature but wounded by sin, what would it mean to cultivate its gifts rather than suppress them? What strengths need refining—not erasing—in your life?
10. In ten years, what kind of man do you want to be—not simply what kind of person, but what kind of man? How do you hope to grow specifically in your masculinity—in strength, responsibility, leadership, self-gift, fatherhood (biological or spiritual), courage, or discipline? Can you clearly describe the picture you are aiming toward? If not, what remains undefined or blurry?
11. What concrete step can you take this month to pursue a clearer, healthier vision of masculinity?

Optional Prayer Exercise

Take ten minutes in silence and write a short paragraph beginning with this sentence:

“A redeemed picture of masculinity in my life would look like...” In the context of this exercise, ask God what masculinity can look like in you, not in anyone else. Write this image down, then carry it with you as you traverse through the remainder of the book. Allow each chapter to refine the picture.

Share the picture (if appropriate), and end in prayer asking God to clarify and strengthen that picture.
