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Introduction: Good Book Guides

Every Bible-study group is different—yours may take place in a church building, in a home, in a cafe, on a train, over a leisurely mid-morning coffee or squashed into a 30-minute lunch break. Your group may include new Christians, mature Christians, non-Christians, students, businessmen or teens. That's why we've designed these *Good Book Guides* to be flexible for use in many different situations.

Our aim in each session is to uncover the meaning of a passage, and see how it fits into the 'big picture' of the Bible. But that can never be the end. We also need to apply appropriately what we have discovered to our lives. Let's take a look at what is included:

- ↔ **Talkabout:** most groups need to 'break the ice' at the beginning of a session, and here's the question that will do that. It's designed to get people talking around a subject that will be covered in the course of the Bible study.
- ↓ **Investigate:** the Bible text for each session is broken up into manageable chunks, with questions that aim to help you understand what the passage is about. **The Leader's Guide** contains **guidance on questions**, and sometimes ☑ additional 'follow-up' questions.
- ⋮ **Explore more (optional):** these questions will help you connect what you have learned to other parts of the Bible, so you can begin to understand how the Bible relates together as a whole.
- **Apply:** As you go through a Bible study, you'll keep coming across **apply** sections. The first part has questions to get the group discussing what the Bible teaching means in practice for you and your church. The second part, 🗨 **getting personal**, is an opportunity for you to think, plan and pray about the changes that you personally may need to make as a result of what you have discovered.
- ↑ **Pray:** We want to encourage prayer that is rooted in God's Word—in line with His concerns, purposes and promises. So each session ends with an opportunity to review the truths and challenges highlighted by the Bible study, and turn them into prayers of request and thanksgiving.

The **Leader's Guide** and introduction provide historical background information, explanations of the Bible texts for each session, ideas for **optional extra** activities, and guidance on how best to help people uncover the truths of God's Word.

Why study Man of God?

There is a crisis of identity for modern men. Changes in the traditional roles of men and women have left many men wondering: *what makes a real man?* There is no shortage of role models on offer: the dedicated Dad or the hard-drinking lad; the thrusting businessman or the sensitive husband; the competitive sportsman or the contemplative bookworm; the wild adventurer or the stay-at-home gardener.

This set of Bible studies aims to unpack the answers the Bible gives to the question of identity that men face today. We will learn about our God-given role in creation, and how that has been ruined by the Fall. We will discover how we can be restored through the man above all men—Jesus Christ. And we will start to see how this pattern of creation and redemption applies in some of the key roles that men must fulfil today: as husbands, fathers and leaders.

Some things that emerge will be controversial in our culture, even in some of our churches. This course doesn't set out to be politically correct but, rather, faithful to God's counter-cultural Word.

The course can be used in a variety of ways:

- for your own individual use
- for group use (sessions could last about 1–1½ hours)
- for individual use but meeting up with one or two others also using the course to discuss and pray it through.
- for group use, but taking parts of each session as 'homework' for individual use (thus shortening the sessions).

The heartfelt aim of the authors is that 21st century men will be set free from the slavery of human expectations, and enabled to live purposefully and confidently for Christ as true *Men of God*.



'Male and female he created them'

MEN AND GOD'S DESIGN



talkabout

1. In what ways are men and women fundamentally the same?

2. Think of some of the ways men and women are different (eg: social, psychological, spiritual). Do you think we are born with these differences, or do we learn them from the world around us?



investigate

▶ Read Genesis 1 v 24-31

3. How is humanity different from the rest of creation (v 24-27)?

4. What do you think it means to be 'made in the image of God' (v 27)?



5. What two tasks does God give to humanity (28-31)?

➤ Read Genesis 2 v 4-7 and v 15-25

6. What does the man spend his time doing before Eve is made?

7. How does he relate to the rest of creation?

By naming the creatures in v 19-20, Adam shows his authority over them. Throughout the Bible, the person who names another takes responsibility for looking after the one being named.

8. Why is Eve created?

9. How is Eve the perfect match?
How does Adam's response show this?

10. How is Adam and Eve's equality shown in this passage?

11. How and when is Eve created? How is this different from Adam?

12. How do they relate? What is the significance of Adam naming Eve?



explore more

▶ Read 1 Corinthians 11 v 3

- How does Paul help us to understand the equality and difference between men and women in creation?
- How does Gen 2 v 24-25 show the *goodness* of this relationship?

In Genesis 1-2 we see the following order established in creation:

GOD
↓
Man
Woman
↓
Creatures



➔ apply

13. How is our world's view of men and women challenged by the teaching of Genesis on:

- equality?

- difference?

14. How does it challenge our view of what it means to be a man?



getting personal

Adam was made to take the initiative and the responsibility. He was called to exercise this leadership in his relationships. Think through the relationships you have—as a friend, husband, father, colleague, etc

- *How do you think you need to exercise your God-given initiative in each of these relationships?*
- *How seriously are you taking the call to care for those with whom you are in relationship?*



pray

- **Thank God** that you are wonderfully created, and have a purpose to fulfil in this world.
- **Ask God** to help you to help you understand more about what it means to be a real *Man of God* during this course.