



RECEIVE

The Way of Jesus for Men

FIELD GUIDE

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What's it really mean to be a man?

We urgently need a crystal-clear answer to that question, and, thankfully, God has given us one. You can live well as a man if you let Him provide the way and the power. But that only happens when you understand the identity that He has given you and embrace His essential vision of manhood.

Your identity is received, not achieved. Father God invites you to live as His son, so you don't have to earn your identity or prove your manhood. In fact, your manhood is really a journey of receiving from God, teaming up with friends, transforming for good, and lifting others. That's also what this study guide offers.

Over the next seven weeks, you'll be able to digest and benefit from the message in RECEIVE. Three daily readings will spur you on to dig deep into your relationship with God. They will invite you to listen as a son for what your Father God is saying to you personally. And they will challenge you to recalibrate your view of yourself and of God.

My friend Dr. Gary Oliver has four decades of coaching and counseling men. He introduced me to these formulas that explain why some men stay stuck and why others grow:

- **Information + Inspiration = Frustration**
- **Information + Inspiration + Experience = Transformation**


I aim to provide information and inspiration. I want to share with you vital insights about how to nurture a stronger relationship with your heavenly Father. And I want to inspire you to start living like a true son, depending on Father God to answer your questions and provide every need. But my goal is for you to grow, but the truth is, if you settle for only information and inspiration, you're going to be frustrated.

The goal is to change and thrive – to transform. That's why I'll encourage you to take it step further by experiencing these resources weekly with a couple like-minded friends. You might experience it in a small group (maybe as a short-term discipleship tool with guys from church). Whatever path you choose, I want you to connect with guys so you can talk through and apply the truth you'll be discovering. Trust me, experience as a team is the secret ingredient that really will transform how you think, feel and act.

It's a game changer!

After all, manhood is a team sport. Talking about these ideas and what they mean to your life with trusted friends elevates it from information to experience—and only experience leads to change. Sharing with Level 5 friends or guys in a small group encourages trust, transparency, and support for one other.

So, I'm urging you to set a time each week to "huddle" with your friends to discuss the message and your life. We've included questions specifically designed for conversations between you and one or two other guys. We've also suggested questions that will work for a small group.

You will find all these questions under the highlighted by a  symbol.

A key to accomplishing any goal is to start with the end in mind. You wouldn't make a trip without mapping out the best route to your destination. Unfortunately, that's how too many men approach their lives and their journey to know and live with God. I'd like your approach to RECEIVE to be different. I want you to start with these basic goals in mind:

- Experience Father God in new and powerful ways.
- Nurture and enjoy deep friendships that are consistent, deep, beneficial.
- Let God transform you into the man you're meant to be. Learn to live with God-confidence - humility, connection, and purpose.
- Receive and shape a better way to live. Ask God to help set new goals, develop healthier habits, reject old patterns, and build stronger relationships.

I believe that as you personally connect with Father God and huddle up with friends around this content, you'll be clarifying who you are and why you're alive. You'll discover your purpose—maybe for the first time. Most important, you'll see that God longs for you to receive your identity and strength from Him alone. That'll trigger improvement in how you live. It's also a spark that could start a spiritual wildfire.

And it starts now.

HOW TO USE THIS FIELD GUIDE

The RECEIVE Field Guide is designed to make a difference in your life as you learn how to truly come to Father God as a son and receive what He has for you. Since every man is different, I've tried to offer several options for making the most of the content in the RECEIVE book and this corresponding field guide.

► **Option One | Self-Study**

Self-study. The RECEIVE Field Guide is divided into seven weeks with three days of personal study each week. Each day's content is tied to information from the RECEIVE book. So, you can work through the book and the daily readings at your own pace.

► **Option Two | Huddling with one or two other men.**

Huddling with one or two other men. In the introduction, I shared two formulas I learned from Dr. Gary Oliver. They boil down to this: action flowing from experiences with other men spell the difference between frustration and transformation. With that in mind, I'm encouraging you to meet weekly with one or two like-minded men. Together, you can talk about the book. You can pray for each other. I've even provided some discussion questions to facilitate those meetings. Huddling with one or two others will make a huge difference in how you experience the truths of RECEIVE

► **Option Three | Huddling with one or two other men from church.**

If you're a leader or an active member of a men's ministry at church, you may see value in bringing a small group of guys together for a seven-week small group focused on discipleship. Like huddling with others, a small group can help men experience the content, allowing them to avoid frustration and move toward transformation. While lacking the same depth of transparency and vulnerability of huddling with one or two others, small group meetings still encourage men to nurture deeper connections that can lead to LEVEL 5 friendships.

Regardless of how you do it, I urge you to dig into the importance of coming to God with open hands, an open mind, an open heart, and an open life. Each section of the field guide is designed to draw you into a deeper relationship with Father God. But, beyond that, it can set your pattern for moving forward. For seven weeks, you'll be learning and practicing a pattern of hearing from the Father and connecting with other men that you can continue for the rest of your life.

Journal Page



Week One

Receive Part 1
Chapters 1-3



Sometimes performance, and the success that it will hopefully bring, seems like the only path available to us to define ourselves. When that possibility is shut down, we're left to stumble and tumble, hoping to find something else that we're good at.”
(pp. 3-4)



Week One : Day 1

Blitz on Men

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Use your own words to paraphrase what it says to you. Pray the verse and your thoughts about it to God.

“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name.”

—John 1:12

Read and review chapter 1 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 1, “**Blitz on Men.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

“True masculinity—responsibility and strength inclined to help and protect others—is good.” (p. 4). Reflect on the following hallmarks of true masculinity. Define what each term means to you and write down any thoughts or insights that God and your gut are saying to you about each one:

- Responsibility
- Strength
- Helping others
- Protecting others

Where do you see our culture trying to torpedo true masculinity?

On page 4, I listed these five essentials for a real and good masculine identity:

1. It comes from being made in God’s image.
2. It is developed by following the example of Jesus.
3. It is received, not achieved.
4. It focuses on benefitting others.
5. It operates best within a team.

Underline or circle a keyword in each statement.

What do those words connect with you so deeply?

Grade how well you understand and apply each of the five statements (A, B, C, D, F).

Circle whether you mostly agree or mostly disagree with this statement: “Blitzes can trigger transformation” (p. 5).

Agree

Disagree

How can you support your answer with an example from your own life?

Remember that the two keys to transformation are facing reality and becoming humble. Ask God to reveal opportunities where you can grow in each of these areas this week.

Quote to Note

“Whether we had an affirming dad, a neglectful, absent or even abusive dad, every one of us has access to a perfect Dad. He designed you. He proved His love for you and invited you to be His adopted son when you receive His beloved Son Jesus who He offered as the ultimate and complete solution.” (p. 5)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

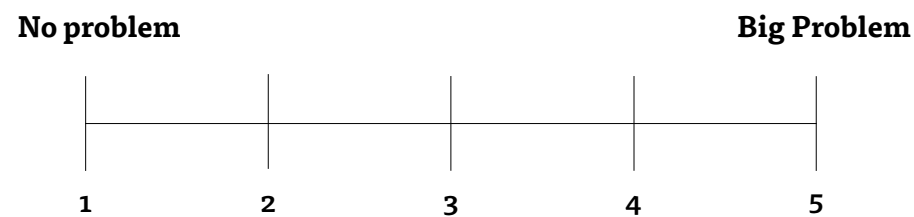
Ask God to help you consider and answer these questions:

1. Where are you feeling “blitzed” right now? As you look back, what’s the origin story of that disconnect?

2. “The Father’s epic invitation changes lives and destinies when we accept it” (p. 5). What are some fears and spiritual roadblocks that are holding you back from fully embracing God’s invitation for you? Who can you talk with about those hindrances?



3. Use the following scale to describe your struggle with pride:



What role has pride played in creating “counterfeit scripts” for your life? What steps are you willing to take to identify the truth and to allow it to be your compass moving forward?

Open Life: Acting on What’s Next for You

Spend time this week examining the “false scripts” in your life. Where you have fabricated narratives in your life? Why?

TIP: Ask Father God to reveal the false scripts in your life. In addition, ask your spouse or another family member who knows you well to share the false scripts they see in your life.

The following Scriptures reveal God’s truth about you. Search these Scriptures to highlight at least one verse that counters the lies you are tempted to believe about yourself. You are . . .

- Adopted - Ephesians 1:5*
- God's child - John 1:12*
- Named and commissioned - Judges 6:12*
- Christ's friend - John 15:15*
- United with the Lord - 1 Corinthians 6:17*
- Purchased at high price and God's possession - 1 Corinthians 12:27*
- A saint - Ephesians 1:1*
- In direct connection with God - Ephesians 2:18*
- Redeemed and forgiven of all sin - Colossians 1:14*
- Complete in Christ - Colossians 2:10*
- Free from any condemnation - Romans 8:1-2*
- Inseparable from God and His love - Romans 8:35-39*
- Assured that God will complete His work in you - Philippians 1:6*
- A citizen of heaven - Philippians 3:20*
- Given a spirit of power, love, and sound mind - 2 Timothy 1:7*
- Born of God, so the evil one can't touch you - 1 John 5:18*
- Able to handle every situation through Christ - Philippians 4:13*
- God's workmanship, his masterpiece - Ephesians 2:10*
- An ambassador for Christ in this world- 2 Corinthians 5:20*

Add to this list as God shows you verses that remind you what He thinks of you!

Talk with one guy man-to-man about what God is saying to you through chapter 1 this week.

Journal Page

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

Post a note to yourself to see each day (on your phone or a sticky note on your mirror or laptop). Write one word, a phrase or acronym to keep this important takeaway front of mind and to spur you to make it reality in your life.



Week One : Day 2

Identity Theft

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

- Thank Him for being your perfect Father.
- Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).
- Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Write it out by hand two or three times in your journal and in the margin of this field guide. Pay attention to the verbs in the verse. Compare the actions performed by God with the actions of His children. Talk to Him about the temptation to do things as a way to earn His love.

“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name.”

—John 1:12

Read and review chapter 2 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 2, “**Identity Theft.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

On page 10, I admitted that insecurity caused me to adopt a performance-based identity. List four or five ways you try to find purpose and identity through performance, things you do:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5.

“Identity is who we are deep inside, but image is the way we ‘sell ourselves’ to others” (p. 10). As I pointed out, image had a big impact on my life because I had defined my legacy—which only fueled my performance-based mentality.

Reflect on your own life. Identify and jot down some areas from your past that have shaped your image more than your identity.

Ask your heavenly Father to reveal how those areas have had a negative impact on your life and what He wants you to do to resolve those issues.

“Comparison has always been a driver of human insecurity.” Use the acrostic below to list ways comparison has driven your insecurity:

- C—
- O—
- M—
- P—
- A—
- R—
- I—
- S—
- O—
- N—

TIP: One of the deceptive and damaging places where comparisons can take root is on social media. Prayerfully evaluate the image you are trying to cultivate on social media and how that detracts from your true identity. You may need to shut down some accounts or unfollow some people as a way to renew your mind (see Romans 12:1-2).

Quote to note:

“Image is unreliable. Nobody is perfect and therefore every image we concoct is compromised from the start. . . .Confusing image for identity is at the root of many guys’ struggles and many men’s downfalls.” (p. 14)

Read the quote below and circle the words that resonate most with you. In the margin below or in your journal, record why those words stick out to you.

“Shaping our lives through image doesn’t work well. Here’s why: We were never meant to be image-makers. We are image-bearers...Receiving our identity from this God who created us—and loves us—is the truth that transcends everything else about us. It has far greater implications than our background, position, popularity, or performance. More than our looks, talents, ethnicity, or marital status. It can securely anchor the way we see ourselves and how we relate to others. Being an image-bearer of God is the core of our identity, the essence of who we are and who we can become.” (p. 14-15).

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. Read through the story of Andre Agassi (and my story, as well) again in chapter 2. In what ways do you relate to the things he went through? In what ways are you still struggling with these issues?

2. If you had to create a metaphor for the power of insecurity on your life, what would it be? Why does that image so clearly illustrate your struggles in this area?

3. In what ways have you let image take the wheel at the expense of identity? What was behind those choices?

4. Agree or Disagree: *“Being an image-bearer of God is the core of our identity.”* Why?

How would you describe the role God plays in your life? What impact does that have on your ability to be an image-bearer rather than an image-maker?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Spend some time this week thinking about your "image script." List of three or four things that you feel are non-negotiable for you to feel like a success or OK, rather than a failure.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Ask your heavenly Father to reveal how those issues are affecting you physically, emotionally, spiritually, and socially. Write what He shows you below:

In the three columns below, list things that created fear or insecurity for you during each season of your life. Use a colored highlighter to mark the items that have stayed consistent across your life. Be prepared to talk about this with your friends or guys in your huddle.

High School	College	Adulthood

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

Write a letter to the younger version of yourself, warning him about the dangers of trying to be an image creator instead of an image bearer. Remind him about the dangers of comparison and challenge him to embrace his identity as a son of the heavenly Father. Place this letter in an envelope and write your name on it. Keep it in a place where you will see it often and remember the advice. If you feel like you are struggling with image and identity, read the letter as a reminder of God's purpose for you.



Week One : Day 3

A Man's Journey

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Read the verse in at least three different translations. Write down words that might be different but express the same ideas. In your journal or in the margin of this field guide, draw an illustration or create a slogan that summarizes what this verse means to you. As you meet with other men this week, share what God has taught you through this verse.

“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name.”

—John 1:12

Read and review chapter 3 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 3, **“A Man's Journey.”** In the margins, make notes about what God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

“As the ‘audience’ changes, we adapt our behavior to fit or impress” (p. 18). In the space below, briefly recount a time when you felt the pressure to change because you wanted to fit in or impress someone.

How did that work out for you?

On page 21, I confessed to taking “character shortcuts” when I was younger. Look at the list below and record what shortcuts tempt you most in each area of your life:

Career:

Friends:

Relationships (if single) Marriage (if married):

Fatherhood:

Church:

TIP: Remember that character also involves what you do when no one else is around. Ask your heavenly Father to make you aware of ways you let yourself slip when no one else is watching. Confess those pitfalls to Him and ask Him to give you the strength to be consistent whether your eyes are on your own or not.

I believe that Jesus is our Model, that He is the quintessential man who provides our example for every corner of our lives. Read through the list below (taken from page 24). Beside each statement, write “thumbs up” for areas where you feel you follow Jesus's example well and “thumbs down” for areas where you need to lean into Him more deeply:

1. Jesus respected his parents but always gravitated toward His Father in heaven.
2. Jesus stepped out of boyhood into being responsible for Himself. He stuck close to the Father, awaiting the timing and steps of His mission.
3. Jesus built friendships, invested in relationships, developed a team, and trained leaders who served.
4. Jesus faced life head-on, especially rejection, suffering, and even death. He paid the price for eventual triumph and transcending victory.

5. Jesus was real—honest, authentic, approachable, vulnerable. He noticed and showed emotion. He was truthful. He lived true.

6. Jesus had pure motives and was dependably loyal. He lived faithfully.

7. Jesus was all love. He was all truth. He was all love and all truth, at the same time, all the time.

Quote to note:

“The journey of manhood is a quest to receive your identity and live from it rather than for it. It’s a journey to find your purpose, to become secure in who you are and able to live in a responsible way that makes a positive impact and difference. It’s figuring out how to be faithful and true, loyal and honest, trustworthy and authentic” (pp. 22-23).

Russell Wilson shared how the truth of 1 Corinthians 13 shaped his own journey of “going from a child to a man . . . getting rid of childish things” (p. 24). In the space below, list some “childish” things you need to eliminate in the first column. Write down some “mature” actions and attitudes that you can adopt to fill that void.

Childish Things	Manhood Alternatives

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. On page 18, I noted that, “We’re so many different personas that we aren’t sure who we really are.” Where have you seen this “audience-driven schizophrenia” at work in your life? What are some practical steps you can take to settle on your true identity?

2. Think back on your parents’ backstory, especially your father’s early life. From what you know of their lives, how did the things they experienced shape the people they became? What impact has that had on the man you have become?

3. Using the guide to spiritual seasons of life described by Robert Lewis, circle the season you’re in right now (see pp. 20-21). Write down why you believe this is true for your life.

Struggle (Winter)

Surrender (Spring)

Significance (Summer)

Satisfaction/Sharing (Fall)

4. Who are the role models you are learning from these days? What makes them positive examples for how to live?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Ruthlessly, evaluate your life for potential “character shortcuts” (see p. 21). Talk with a spouse and a friend who knows you well so you can get a 360-degree view of your weaknesses and how to deal with them. Spend time in prayer, asking God to help you create an “action plan” to eliminate these character gaps.

“It might sound counter-intuitive, but your journey of manhood is becoming a son again” (p. 19). Write down a few things that being a son involves. For each quality, add a note about how that applies to your relationship and walk with Jesus.

Remember: Your identity is received, not achieved. Learn to accept what God has for you as a good gift.

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

Invest time this week reflecting on where you started and how far you've come. In a journal or on a blank page in this field guide, make a list of specific times and places you have seen God at work in your life. Pray through those situations and thank God for leaving His fingerprints on your past, your present, and your future.

Huddling Up: Week One

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.

Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: John 1:12

“But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name.”

—John 1:12

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Have each man share one or two things that resonated with him from chapters 1-3 this week.

Questions for group discussion: Remember, you can find extra questions for your group wherever you find this symbol (🗨️) in the “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What are you hoping to gain over the next seven weeks? Why is that important to you as a man?
2. How would you describe the pull of achievement in your life? What impact does it have on the following areas of your life:

Career | Personal Health | Relationships | Marriage | Fatherhood | Church
3. How has the rise of social media intensified the dangers of comparison for men? What other things tempt us to compare ourselves to others?
4. Describe your expectations for yourself. What are those expectations grounded in? What role does your perception of others play in your definition of success?
5. How does it feel to know that God is always working to draw you to Himself?

Finish with prayer and ask God to reveal any insecurities or character flaws that are holding you men back from receiving your identity from their heavenly Father.



Week Two

Receive Part 2
Chapters 4-6



Focusing on Jesus can give us the ultimate picture and essential game plan for authentic manhood. He is the one who knows the most about being a man, so we can make progress in our own journeys as men by considering Him.
(p. 28)



Week Two : Day 1

The Ultimate Man

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Use your own words to paraphrase what it says to you. Pray the verse and your thoughts about it to God.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

—Ephesians 2:10

Read and review chapter 4 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 4, “**The Ultimate Man.**” In the margins, make notes about what God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

“A quintessential man has walked the earth. His name is Jesus. . . . Focusing on Jesus can give us the ultimate picture and essential game plan for authentic manhood.” (pp. 27,28)

Using the chart below, list some things the world promotes as authentic manhood. Then, in the other column, identify ways Jesus demonstrated authentic manhood.

The World’s Ideas

Jesus’s Example

Which model tends to direct your life right now? Why?

On pages 28-29, I emphasize the negative role in of shame in our lives, especially when it comes to comparing ourselves to Jesus. Review the negative messages below. Circle the one the enemy uses the most to tear you down:

1. I can never be like Jesus, so why even try?
2. I’m an imposter, and I’m going to be found out eventually.
3. I’m worthless. Jesus doesn’t want someone like me.
4. I’ve gone too far in the wrong direction. I’ll never be able to change.
5. I’ve never measured up to anything else in life. Jesus is no different.

Remember that shame is one of the devil’s big weapons. He uses it to keep you under his thumb and to prevent you from experiencing the genuine love and acceptance your heavenly Father longs to share with you.

How does the language of conviction differ from the language of shame? Why is it important to understand that distinction?

Starting on page 29, we start a deep dive into the story of Jesus feeding the multitude. Aside from the resurrection, this is the only miracle that appears in all four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Read each of the accounts listed below. In a journal or in the space provided in your field guide, note some similarities and differences in each version of the story.

Matthew 14:13-21

Mark 6:31-44

Luke 9:12-17

John 6:1-14

TIP: Review what you've just recorded. List your main takeaways from the accounts of the miracle. Then, write a summary statement that you can put into practice this week. Be prepared to discuss this with your friend, huddle or small group.

Quote to note:

"We're not striving for 'Junior Jesus Perfection' status in hopes that we can impress God into giving us a break or a bonus. As men, we are already loved by our Father God who has offered us both a Savior and a brother in Jesus." (p. 29)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Spend some time reviewing the characteristics of Jesus on pages 31-33. Which quality do you believe you reflect best in your life? Which one presents the biggest struggle for you? How can you grow in your strengths and improve your weaker points?

Talk with your spouse or a close family member about what they see in your life—and how it compares to what you listed.

2. Consider these practical steps for rejecting the guilt language of Satan. Besides each point, coach yourself on how to integrate these activities into the regular rhythm of your life:

- Reading the Bible
- Prayer
- Fellowship at a local church
- Accountability with other men

3. When you think about the story of Jesus feeding the multitude, do you relate more to the disciples' skepticism or the Messiah's enthusiasm? Why?

Invest time praying each day this week, asking God to help you recognize opportunities instead of focusing on limitations. Ask His help to see things from His perspective each day.

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

This week, identify areas where you can be tempted to “fake it” as a man. List ways God has demonstrated love for you just as you are. Go to that list whenever you're tempted to be less than yourself.

TIP: Many men struggle with what's known as the “imposter syndrome.” It's a powerful lie that the enemy uses to convince you that you will never be good enough. It also leads you to believe you somehow need to do more or be more to earn God's love. When you meet with your friends to huddle or with your small group at church, talk openly about the impact of the imposter syndrome on your lives and how to help each other break it.

On page 27, I shared how Jesus is the center of my world. To fully understand how He is the perfect example and power for genuine manhood, you need to embrace Him at the center of your life. If you don't yet have a personal relationship with Jesus, now is the time. Tell Him. Talk with a trusted Christian friend and/or a pastor about what it means to become a follower of Jesus.

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

Begin reading through the Gospel of Mark. As you do, make a list of times Jesus demonstrated genuine manhood. Review the list on pages 32-33 to refresh your memory and give you a solid starting point. Each day, pray that God will teach you how you can become more like Him.



Week Two : Day 2

Identity Found—The Gideon Principle

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Write it out by hand two or three times in your journal or in the margin of this field guide. Pay attention to the verbs in the verse. Compare the actions performed by God with the actions of His children. Talk to Him about the temptation to do things as a way to earn His love.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

—Ephesians 2:10

Read and review chapter 5 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 5, “**Identity Found—The Gideon Principle.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

On pages 35-37, I shared some of my experiences as a quarterback in the NFL and how I wished I’d learned to ask better questions sooner. Consider and answer each question below:

1. Who am I?

2. Who made me?

How have you found that focusing on God and His view of you changes everything in your life? What things can you do to keep your focus on Him, instead of letting your thoughts revolve around you?

Look at the illustration below. Underneath it, list some things you know to be true about God. Then write how that should affect the way you see yourself.

How I view God → How I live my life

Remember, God doesn’t define you by your flaws or addictions. Wins and losses mean nothing to Him or His plan for your life. What’s important is that He sees you as His son and longs to have a solid, growing father-son relationship with you—a relationship that will last for eternity.

Below, paraphrase the Gideon Principle in your own words.

What are some “fronts” that you put on to disguise the real you? How can knowing that God sees you and loves you just as you transform the way you think about yourself (and others)?

TIP: Never forget that you really are beyond self-improvement. There is nothing you can accomplish in your own strength that has even the slightest chance of drawing you closer to God. You cannot “fix” yourself, and it’s foolish to try. You are a God’s work of art, a masterpiece in the making (see Ephesians 2:10). Let go and allow Him to do His transforming work in your life.

Quote to note:

God sees the good in you that He created. He already sees the ways you will transform when you hand control of your life over to Him. He sees the version of you that He intended all along. (p. 42)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. I mentioned that dads are foundational when it comes to developing both our ideas about ourselves and our ideas about God. In a journal or here in your field guide, record some memories of your father and how he has shaped the man you have become.

If you are a father yourself, do a ruthless evaluation of your words and actions toward your children. What are you saying to them about them? What are you saying to them about yourself? What are you saying to them about their heavenly Father?

2. Read the statements below and circle “True” or “False” for each one:

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| • I tend to shrink back or hide from responsibilities. | True | False |
| • I see myself as a man of courage. | True | False |
| • I believe that I am a leader people will follow | True | False |
| • I allow my past to define my future | True | False |
| • I am aiming to become the man God created me to be. | True | False |

Read through the story of Gideon again in Judges 6–7, as well as the content related to the Gideon Principle on pages 40-43. Ask God to help you see yourself as He sees you.

3. Who are the men speaking God’s truth into your life? Who are some men you can encourage with Gideon Principle’s vision and language this week?

4. Gideon was hiding out in fear before he stepped out in faith. Reflect on the examples of his hesitancy below. What are some personal examples of the same fears in your life?

- Threshing wheat in a winepress:

- Tearing down false gods at night:

- Putting out a fleece—not once, but twice:

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

“God sees the future and He names Gideon according to what he will become rather than what he is.”
(p. 41) In a journal or in your field guide, write down three or four challenges God wants you to accept because you are a “Gideon” in His eyes.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Which challenge will you and God tackle first? How will you go about accomplishing that task?

Based on what you've learned from this chapter, who is the “real” you, the one God has created and longs to use for His glory? Find a trusted friend or family member and share what you believe God says about you. Share the Gideon Principle with them as well.

Journal Page

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

Draw or download pictures of a torch, a clay jar, and a trumpet on a sheet of paper. Title the page, "Gideon—Judges 7:15-23" and arrange the three pictures. Even if it's janky like mine, tape it up or hang it in a frame where you'll see it. Let it remind you that God sees more in you than you see in yourself. Every time you see a torch, clay jar, or trumpet, thank Him for defining and shaping you into the man He has designed you to become..



Week Two : Day 3

Be Re-Fathered

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract your hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Use a highlighter to mark two or three keywords in the verse. In the margin of the field guide, write those words, along with an explanation of why they stand out to you. Use a concordance to find other places those words are used in Scripture.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

—Ephesians 2:10

Read Chapter 6 of Receive. In a notebook or journal, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with your small group at church or with the huddle of men you’re meeting with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 6, “**Be Re-Fathered.**” In the margins, make notes about what God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

What does being a “father” mean to you? Read the passages below and list what each one says about the various roles a father plays:

- Deuteronomy 6:20-25.
- Proverbs 22:6.
- Ephesians 6:4
- 1 Timothy 5:8.

Why is it important to remember that no human father can be perfect?

Reflect on these questions on pages 49-50 that Ed asked God. Honestly answer them for yourself.

Why do I feel like a “less than”?

How do You feel about me?

Can You change me?

What am I holding onto that prevents me from experiencing You?

What lies have I believed about myself and about You?

What do You plan for me after I die?

How do I come to you?

What do you want to say to me?

How can I hear from you?

Can you help me better love my wife and kids?

How do you think God feels about you asking these questions? What might hold you back from asking these questions—or believing God’s answers?

TIP: The process of being re-fathered emphasizes two primary truths. First, you have to believe that God can change you. He has the power to transform your life and make you a new creature (1 Corinthians 5:17). Second, you have to believe that God wants to change you. He actually longs for you to become the man He designed you to be—and has done everything necessary for that to happen.

- Review Marvin’s story on pages 52-53. In what ways have you been validated as a man? Write a brief summary in the space below:

What are the dangers of living without such validation? What are some cheap substitutes men rely on when they haven't experienced validation?

Quote to note:

"No matter what our culture and tweaked versions of Christianity imply, God offers so much more than a crisis hotline or lifeline to avoid Hell. God is a loving Father in every situation. Your journey can change. Your story can transform. Your identity can become clear. You can live with purpose, mission and calling." (p. 50).

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. On page 47, I mentioned that God is "not like the pictures painted in our culture" or "who 'religion' has often portrayed Him to be." Use the chart below to summarize what the culture or religion says about Jesus in one column. On the other, summarize who you truly believe God to be in your life.

God according to culture/religion	Who God is to me

How do your ideas about God align with what you've read in this chapter and seen in Scripture? What steps can you take to bridge the gap and be re-fathered by Him?

2. Read through the story of the prodigal sons (yes, I used the plural "sons" because both of the brothers had strayed from the father's love) in Luke 15:11-32. For each son, list a few things that drove a wedge between them and their father. Circle which son you relate to the most. Write a brief prayer, asking God to help you return to Him.

Older Brother	Younger Brother

My Prayer:

3. Dig into Romans 8, especially verses 31-39. What are some words you would use to describe God's love based on these verses?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Consider what being "re-fathered" would look like in your life. List things you can do to learn how to trust your heavenly Father more and to allow Him to accomplish His transforming work in your life. Share your thoughts—and your concerns—about being re-fathered with an older man you trust.

Acknowledge to God (and forgive) the imperfections of your own father. Ask God to help you move past any lingering hurts so you can embrace Him as your perfect Father. If you're a father, confess your own faults and weakness. Ask God to help you forgive yourself so you can move forward in being re-fathered.

Remember: The perfect Father proved His perfection through His perfect love. (p. 47) That means He loves you perfectly, and He will never stop loving you—no matter what you've done in the past.

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

On page 46, I mention how men need to find the answers to certain key questions in their lives. Under the best-case scenario, they find those answers through their relationship with their earthly father—but the best-case scenario is too rare. This week, make a list of some questions you believe you still need to have answered, then go to Scripture to find some answers. You can consult a concordance, pastor, web-search, and ask God to lead you to a trustworthy mentor who can walk with you through this process.

Huddling Up: Week Two

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.

Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:


Review the Bible verse for this week: Ephesians 2:10

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.”

—Ephesians 2:10

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 4-6 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking for this symbol  “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. What is so powerful about messages of guilt and shame? How do they differ from God’s conviction in your life? What can you do to discern the difference?
3. Where have you seen the Gideon Principle at work in your life? How do you feel knowing that God sees you as a warrior and a leader?
4. What are some curses and blessings men receive from their fathers? Would you describe your relationship with your father as positive, negative, or neutral? Explain.
5. On a scale of 1-5, with 1 being “thinking about it” and 5 being “completely bought in,” where would you rate your attitude toward being re-fathered? What are some of the things that might hold you back?

Close your time in prayer: Ask God to make Himself known to each man in a special way as He reminds them of His inescapable and never-ending love. Pray that each man will give Him the freedom to re-father him as needed in the coming days.



Week Three

Receive Part 3
Chapters 7-9



God is the Perfect Father who gives perfect gifts, including our identity as His sons. We learn how to live out this identity by knowing Jesus and imitating the manhood He revealed in God's Word.

-Jeff Kemp



Week Three : Day 1

The Receive Principle

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. In a journal or in the margins of the field guide, write the words “friends” and “children.” Record what you believe it means to be God’s friend and God’s child. Ask God to help you reflect on what it means to “be like him” right now and what it will be like to “see him as he is” in the future.

Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is.

—1 John 3:2

Read Chapter 7 of Receive. In a notebook or journal, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with your small group at church or with the huddle of men you’re meeting with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 7, “**The Receive Principle.**” In the margins, make notes about what God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

A great receiver eyes the ball in with intense focus. He snags the ball and immediately tucks it into his body with a safe grip, smothering its tips with his hand and armpit. Receiving is done with focus, intensity and the sustained priority of possessing the ball.” (p. 57)

What are some things you have received in your life? What kind of intentionality, focus, or passion did you have to demonstrate to gain possession of those prizes?

What did Jesus receive from His heavenly Father? What does that teach us about our role as “receivers” in our relationship with Him?

In your own words, define the “Receive Principle.” Write a sentence or two about how you have experienced this connection with your heavenly Father in the past.

If you have not entered a “receiving” relationship with God, you can start by receiving the gift of salvation He offers through His Son, Jesus. Reach out to a pastor at your local church or a trusted friend and talk with them about what it means to become a son of God.

On page 58, I talk about the importance of faith in experiencing the Receive Principle in our lives: “Faith is the basis for how we relate to God. It’s our confidence that God will do everything He has promised to do and give everything He has promised to give.” (p. 58) What makes faith so important in your relationship with God? What makes it so difficult to live out every day?

TIP: Remember, faith isn't something magical that you can stumble into. It takes practice. It takes time, and most guys aren't very good at it starting out. But, like a lot of things in life, the more you demonstrate it, the stronger you get. Here are three things that can help you grow stronger in your faith:

1. **Read the Bible regularly.** Daily is great; but if you miss a day, know that God isn't keeping score. Develop the habit of reading what your heavenly Father has to say to you, His son, through His Word.

2. **Prayer.** Sometimes, it's tempting to think of prayer as a one-way monologue where we tell God what's on our wish list. Truth is, effective prayer is a two-way conversation where you share and where you listen to His response. It's also about affirming God's nature and character in private worship.

3. **Accountability.** Proverbs 27:17 says that "iron sharpens iron." In other words, guys make their peers better by holding them accountable to live as they intend. Find a man (or two to three men) you trust and ask them to hold you accountable. Pray for each other regularly and be transparent in a safe space.

Quote to note:

Receiving is not passive or optional. Society convinces us that life is performing, achieving, and earning. In reality, life itself is received from the Creator. All good originates from God, so absolutely anything of value and goodness starts with Him, not us. (p. 58)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Review and think about the four gifts drawn from Dave Patty's book *Father God: Daring to Draw Near* on page 61.

- Identity gives value.
- Love brings security.
- Pleasure and Approval give energy and motivation.
- Place brings honor.

Which of these gifts and blessings seem to be lacking in your life? What practical steps can you take to nurture them going forward? Be prepared to share this with the men in your small group at church or with the guys you are huddling with this week.



2. On pages 61-62, I affirm that God is a Giver and provide a list of several things He gives, including the following:

- An accurate, unspoiled view of Himself
- A true understanding of how He sees you and feels about you
- The blueprint of His perfect Father-Son relationship with Jesus that he desires for you
- Freedom from sin's control and shame from your past
- Experiencing how prayer works
- Understanding, appreciation, and enthusiasm for what the Bible teaches
- Feeling His unconditional pleasure, approval, and delight in you, particularly when you trust Him and express the abilities He's given you
- The courage to face your fears, failures, secrets, risks, doubts and worries
- Healing from the wounds you've received
- Forgiveness for the wounds you've caused
- Revitalization of your true purpose, passions, and motivations
- Embracing His desires for you—knowing they're better than your own can be
- Release from living with lies, false narratives and unhealthy habits
- Release from pointless and exhausting efforts to prop up a false identity
- The desire to trust Him with everything and all outcomes
- Constant awareness of your secured eternity in His perfect kingdom
- Exhilaration and confidence of God living in and guiding you with peace and wisdom to handle any situation.

Circle the one you most need from God right now. In the margin, write a sentence or two confessing that need to God and asking Him to fill this gap.

3. Read through the list on pages 62-63 of ways you can receive "re-Fathering" from God. Commit to practicing at least four of these ideas during the week. Be prepared to tell the men in your small group at church or the guys you are huddling with what you attempted and how it helped you draw closer to God.

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Remember this principle from page 59-60: *“Re-Fathering is much more than a momentary experience. . . . It is a whole new way of living as God’s son. God doesn’t drop in, give us a new name and identity, and then leave. He sticks around. He stays with us...forever. We don’t graduate to a man on our own.”*

TIP: Go back and read the bulleted practices listed at the beginning of “Open Hands” (p. XX of the field guide). You’ll find those at the start of each day’s study because they are actions I encourage to make a part of your regular time with God each day. I hope you’ll replicate them—not just on the days you use your field guide, but on the other days as well. Ultimately, I hope they’ll be habits of yours long after you’ve read RECEIVE and completed the final page of this field guide.

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.

On page 65, I admit that I’m an imperfect man—shocking, I know. We’re all wounded and broken guys, so we need to stay connected to the only Perfect Man, lean into His example, and depend on His power. Find ways you can protect your connection with Jesus and follow the pattern He established for genuine manhood.



Week Three : Day 2

The Essence of Manhood

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. In a journal or in the margins of the field guide, write a short summary of ways Jesus has revealed Himself to you as you've learned to walk with Him. Talk with the Father and Jesus about how you would like for Him to reveal Himself more deeply in the days to come. Write a short prayer, thanking Him for the way He will ultimately reveal Himself when He returns.

Dear friends, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is.

—1 John 3:2

Read and review chapter 8 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 8, **"The Essence of Manhood."** In the margins, make notes about what God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

Reflect on this quote from page 70: *"By knowing Jesus and living like Him, we live a masculinity that is real and good. By good, I don't mean flawless, fixed-up or morally perfect. Only Jesus was that. Good means positive, unselfish and beneficial toward others."*

Who would you say Jesus is? How have you seen him defined in our culture? How can you make sure your definition of Jesus is an accurate definition of Jesus?

Review the following questions from pages 70-71. Use a highlighter to pick out two or three that really resonate with you. Really focus on the ones you think are most important to answer:

- What is Truth?
- What does a Perfect Father look like?
- Is God real? Where is He? Why don't I sense or feel Him?
- Is Jesus a man or God? How can He be both?
- Is it true Jesus fulfilled every prophecy about Him that prophets and He made?
- Is it true that hundreds of people saw Him alive again, before He returned to His Father in Heaven forty days after rising?
- Why do some high-profile "Christian" figures and some people who label themselves "Christians" live so differently than Jesus?
- Why so much hypocrisy and ugliness in "Christians" and "Christianity"?
- Why is oppression, prejudice, racism, injustice, evil, denial and defensiveness so pervasive?
- Why is power blind or uncaring of the way it marginalizes people without power or those who challenge the status quo?
- Where's justice?
- What should I feel because Jesus was crucified? Shame, guilt, forgiveness, gratitude?
- Was Jesus a victim of death by crucifixion? Or did He choose to have it happen?
- Is eternity real? What is it like? Will I need forgiveness to enter heaven? How?
- How do I find satisfaction, peace and real joy—something that will last?
- If God has a plan for me, when and how will I know it? Why am I flopping around?
- Is this "Christian faith" viable? Does it work? Or is it strict, boring and impractical? Or am I missing the true essence of faith?
- What is the key to actually thriving and overcoming life's mess?
- How good is what God wants for me? Can I depend on that? Why don't I?

What question(s) would you add to this list?

If you had to answer those two or three questions today, how would you respond? Why?

Talk about those questions and your responses with the men in your small group at church or with the men you will be huddling with this week.

TIP: Even the best, most godly human beings are flawed, so any definition of Jesus we create is bound to be flawed as well. It's like a trying to get an accurate view of your face by looking through a shattered mirror—or one of those funhouse mirrors you might see at a carnival. Some angles might be closer to the truth than others, but they're all going to miss the mark in one way or another. That's why you need to go straight to the Source. If you want an accurate picture of who Jesus is and why He came, spend time in His Word. Even if you talk with other men, make sure they are grounding their takes in the truth of Scripture. I would even challenge you to compare everything you read in Receive against God's Word. Don't take anything for granted!

On pages 75 and following, I talk about leaning into your “audience of One.” What are a few things that make it harder for you to avoid inaccuracies and distractions so you can focus completely on God's opinion of you?

By naming and calling out those issues, you can now ask your heavenly Father to help you overcome those challenges. Remember, He loves you more than you can ever imagine, and He longs to walk with you through every circumstance you face.

Review the different ways Jesus demonstrated manhood (pp. 77-80). What are some practical ways you can translate these activities into your daily routine? What would it look like for you to ...

1. *Face the blitz fearlessly:*
2. *Pull for the underdog:*
3. *Show up for friends:*
4. *Restore the dignity of others—including women:*
5. *Intentionally serve others—even the ones who might betray you:*

Quote to note:

“Losses and wins don't define me. My Father does. Failure and success don't define you. Your Father does. Suffering or comfort don't need to control us. Jesus does. He can handle anything. He can help us handle anything.” (p. 76)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. Review the story of Jesus feeding the multitude on pages 73-74. Then read through at least one version of the story in your Bible. (Remember its importance, as the only miracle besides the resurrection told in all four Gospels!)

What are some things that stick out to you from this story?

How would you apply those truths to a situation in which you are struggling or have questions today?



2. What are blitzes that you have faced recently? How did you deal with those situations? How did they play out for you? Have you seen any value yet?

Review the steps for facing the blitz below. Number them in order of importance—with 1 being the step you need to start doing first.

- ___ Deal with your own offenses, faults, and sins.
- ___ Apologize to someone you've hurt or forgive someone who has hurt you.
- ___ Focus on the long-term instead of getting swamped by the urgent or pain of the moment.
- ___ Intentionally look for ways to be a blessing to someone else.

This week, dialogue with God about how you can focus on the activity you labeled "1." In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, record things God says to you about that. Next week, focus on the one labeled "2." In the following weeks, focus on # "3" and "4."

3. In Luke 2:52, we get a picture of Jesus as a young teenager relying on His heavenly Father. It was a pattern that occurs time and again in Scripture. He always connected to the Father and operated in the wisdom and power of the Holy Spirit. How can you reflect on the sonship you have received from the Father in each of these areas of your life:

- Wisdom:
- Stature:
- Favor with God:
- Favor with others:

Commit to putting those into practice this week every opportunity you get!

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

On pages 79-80, I highlight how Jesus related to the women in His life, especially the woman caught in adultery (see John 8). Think about the women you interact with each day. How can you show them respect? How can you protect them from others who might want to "throw stones" at them?

Wife:

Daughter:

Mother:

Sister:

Friend:

Co-worker:

"You are valuable in God's eyes. You are also flawed beyond your own ability to repair or overcome. You know things need improving—more than a tune-up or new paint. You need transformation. All men need transformation. Transformation is a change of heart and mindset that comes from God. It was modeled and made possible by Jesus." (p. 72)

Obviously, there is no way any of us can fix ourselves. We need Jesus! If you had to describe your current relationship with Jesus (and Father God), which of these would you choose. Check the option that's closest to your experience:

___ Not yet a son of the Father

___ A son not actively receiving from the Father

___ A son starting on a journey of receiving from the Father

___ A son fully rejoicing in what he receives from the Father

Journal Page

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. In the space below, write one way you will apply that principle this week.



Week Three : Day 3

Essential Manhood - How to Live It—The Way of Jesus

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Read the verse out loud four times, putting emphasis on a different phrase each time. On the first read, emphasize “We are God’s children now.” On the second read, emphasize “what we will be has not yet been revealed.” On the third read, emphasize “we will be like him.” On the final read, emphasize “We will see him as he is.” In a journal or in the margins of your field guide, try to write the verse by memory. Also, record any thoughts or truths God shares with you from the verse.

Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is.

—1 John 3:2

Read and review chapter 9 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 9, “**Essential Manhood: How to Live It—The Way of Jesus.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

Review the kite illustration on pages 83-84: “We grow up and we still approach life like the kid with no breeze. We dream about the kind of man we want to be—in our element, true to our design, soaring. We run and run and run. Sooner or later, we wear out, give up, or crash. This is the flight pattern for performance-based manhood. But there’s a better way.”

In what ways do you try to run fast enough to get your kite off the ground? What happens when your efforts leave you frustrated or you crash?

Reflect on John 15:4-5 and record a summary of what it says about connecting with the Father.

On pages 84-85, I draw a distinction between simply being God’s child and trying to perform enough to earn His acceptance: “Being God’s son is what allows us to perform as authentic and beneficial men. It’s the relationship that brings the wind, the power to live as the man, husband, father, leader, and friend you want to be.” (p. 85)

In what areas are you most likely to depend on your heavenly Father (being)?

In what areas are you most likely to rely on your own efforts (doing)?

Focus this week on praying about how you can transform your “doing” into “being” with God’s help and guidance. Discuss it with a trusted friend or mentor. Share your struggle and ask him to help you stay on track with being God’s son.

TIP: “Without vision, men become aggressive about self-centered things and passive in others-centered things like relationships—particularly with God and a wife.” (p. 86) Always be on the lookout for this confusion in the areas of aggressiveness and passivity. When those elements are out of wack, it’s a sure sign that you are struggling—whether you realize it or not. If you find yourself out of balance, get help!

Review a man's life-giving responsibilities as Robert Lewis sequenced them (page 87).

Circle or underline what you believe are the keywords in each point:

1. Follow God's Word
2. Protect God's women
3. Excel at God's work
4. Better God's world

We can't transform ourselves solo, but we can ask God to help us. You can seek renewed life and purpose in Him, which will help you become a life-giver for others. For each day this week, pray about one of these responsibilities. Write down what God tells you about each one and be prepared to share with your friend, small group at church or the men you huddle with this week.

Quote to note:

"Losses and wins don't define me. My Father does. Failure and success don't define you. Your Father does. Suffering or comfort don't need to control us. Jesus does. He can handle anything. He can help us handle anything." (p. 76)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

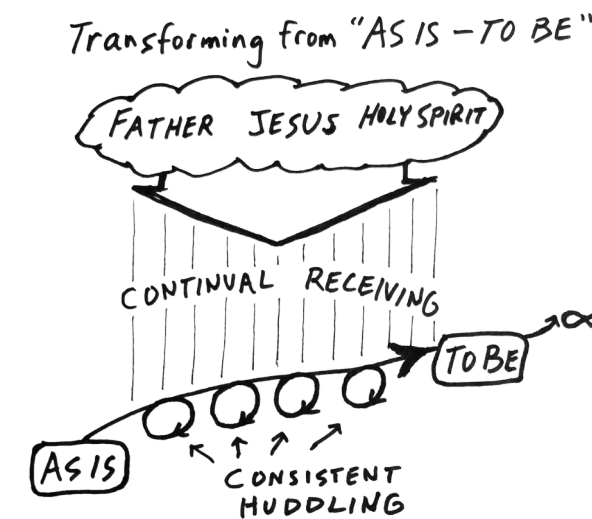


1. The first step in the way of Jesus is to Receive—to become a son of the Father. As I noted on page 89, "If being precedes doing, then receiving is the first phase of being." Where do you see evidence of "receiving" in your life?

- How would you rate your time in God's Word: Low Medium High
- How would you rate your prayer life: Low Medium High

The second aspect of the way of Jesus is consistent Transformation: "Jesus' life was not static, and neither is ours. We need to change, improve, and be transformed. . . .It's worth repeating that when it comes to you and me, we cannot transform ourselves; God must do it. He determines the transformation that's needed. He's the power. He gets the credit." (p.90)

Examine the "As is . . . to Be" diagram below. In the margins, record your thoughts about where you are and where you believe God wants you to go. Prayerfully talk with Him about His "best practices" for you to be transformed each day so you can become more like Him as a man and as a Christ follower.





3. The third aspect of the way of Jesus is Huddling with other men (see pp. 90-92). Hopefully, this is already becoming a habit in your life through your small group at church or through your weekly meetings with men you trust.

What is the hardest part of being transparent with other men, even those you think you trust?

Where have you seen yourself get stronger because you've been huddling with a group of other guys?

Where are you still holding back? What will you do to become more open and transparent with them?

4. The fourth aspect of the way of Jesus is Lifting others. We all need encouragement and support. With God's help, you can be the one who helps people become the best versions of themselves. What's more you can follow Jesus's example: "Jesus improved situations and people." (p. 92)

Turn back to Chapter 5 and review the "Gideon Principle." Who could benefit from you sharing the good you see in them?

What can you do to become more effective as lifting others instead of ignoring or knocking them down?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Go fly a kite! Whether it's with your kids, with some friends, or just by yourself, get outside and let the wind do its work. As you fly your kite, talk with God about the areas where you need to hand over control to Him.

Coach Yourself: Identify your key takeaway from this chapter. Write down one way you will apply that principle this week.

Use the continuum below to mark where you are in the journey of walking the way of Jesus. Where are you when it comes to reflecting the kind of genuine manhood He modeled?



On pages 86-87, I wrote, "Men were not made to just avoid mistakes. We were made for a mission."

What mission is Jesus calling you to accept right now?

What excites you about that opportunity? What scares you about it?

This week, write out an action plan for getting started on the work Jesus has for you!

Huddling Up: Week Three

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.


Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: 1 John 3:2

Dear friends, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that when he appears, we will be like him because we will see him as he is.

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 7-9 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking for this symbol  “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. How do you feel about being “re-fathered” by God? In what ways is that encouraging? In what ways is that uncomfortable?
3. How can you be sure you are valuable in God’s sight? Why is it important to keep that in proper perspective?
4. Do you lean more toward “being” or “doing” in your sonship with the Father? Explain your answer.
5. What counterfeits try to distract us from seeing Jesus as He really is? How can we overcome those obstacles and get a clearer view of Him?

Close your time in prayer: Ask God to make Himself known to each man in a special way as He performs His transforming work in their lives. Thank Him for doing a work in us that we could never do for ourselves. Remind the group of Philippians 1:6: “He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”



Week Four

Transform
Chapters 10-13



As we receive and embrace our identity in Christ, we are transformed. What happens on the inside begins to have an impact on our thoughts and actions. When we receive our identity from the Father, we learn to forgive others, demonstrate humility, embrace His security through honesty, and reject fear.

-Jeff Kemp



Week Four : Day 1

Freedom in Forgiving

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. This week’s key verse emphasizes the transformation we experience “in Christ.” His work in our lives is the ultimate game-changer! But it’s also just the start of something amazing. Use a concordance or another Bible study tool to locate other verses about what our lives are like “in Christ.” In a journal or in the margins of the field guide, record what God shows you about living “in Christ.” Pray that God will help you understand this idea better and walk in His ways each day.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

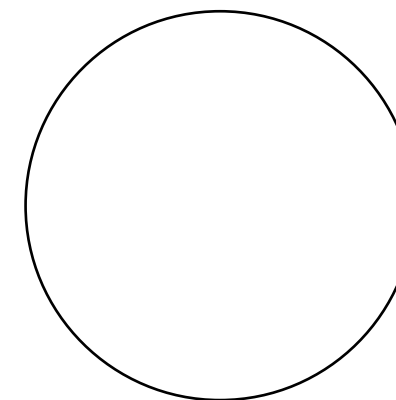
—2 Corinthians 5:17

Read and review chapter 10 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 10, “**Freedom in Forgiving.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

This chapter starts out with a word about forgiving and blaming: “It’s important to figure out because one sets you free and the other poisons you.” (p. 97) Fill in the circle below with one color to highlight your percentage of time you spend forgiving others in your life. With another color, highlight your percentage of time blaming others.



What does your circle say about your willingness to forgive others?

How have you felt the “poison” of blame?

“Names humanize us. They pull our villains off the pedestal of unrealistic expectations and remind us that they were once a child. They still have their own wounds, insecurities and fears.” (p. 99) In the space below, write the first name of any “villains” in your life:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Invest a minute talking to your Father about each of these people and the pain that they caused in your life. If you can, pray for each of them. If that is still a little too raw, ask God to help you learn to forgive so you can release the heavy weight of bitterness.

TIP: Remember that you’re dealing with other humans. They are broken and imperfect, just like you. While that doesn’t excuse the pain they caused or diminish their responsibilities, it can help you understand them better—and, hopefully, allow you to move forward in forgiveness.

“There is nothing weak about forgiving. . . . You don’t walk away from the hurt. You walk through it.”
(p. 103) Circle or underline the words below that best define how you feel about the villains in your life.

Bitter	Resentful	Wounded
Forgiving	Victim	Avoiding
Confused	Alienated	Hopeful
Abused	Rejected	Vengeful

What will it take for you to walk through the feelings so you can get to the other side?

TIP: You cannot forgive on your own. First and foremost, you need Jesus empowering you to release the negative feelings and trust Him with the results. You may also need the support of a trusted friend or mentor who will walk with you and pray for you. In some cases, you also may need to meet with a professional counselor about your pain. Counseling is not a stigma. Embrace needed help as a good gift from the Father to help you heal.

Quote to note:

“The people who offend and hurt us are imperfect, like us. They have a backstory. They need forgiveness, just like we do, for all we have done. The only man who ever lived perfectly, Jesus, bought that forgiveness when He chose to die for us, and then rose from the dead. He forgave us more than we will ever have to forgive others.” (p. 104)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Review the story of Steve Largent on pages 99-104. What elements in Steve’s story of forgiveness and an apology can you translate into your own life? List a few below. Which will you put into action this week.

Why is starting out with an apology so powerful?

Steve surrounded himself with a core group of “teammates” who supported him. Who are the men you are trusting? (If you don’t have a small team of friends, start praying about who to reach out to.)



2. On page 101, I note that forgiveness is “one of the manliest things you will ever do.” What’s God telling you to do with forgiveness today? How will you respond? Write it down.

3. Invest time this week reading through the crucifixion stories of Jesus. Jot down what stands out to you in each writer’s account of how Jesus gave up his life and died on the cross:

• *Matthew 27:27-44*

• *Mark 15:16-32*

• *Luke 23:26-43*

• *John 19:16-27*

How did Jesus demonstrate strength? How did He demonstrate forgiveness?

How has He forgiven you? What impact will that have on the way you forgive others?

Open Life: Acting on What’s Next for You

Review the “fundamental attribution error” in the “My Actions” step on page 105. As you move forward this week, ask God to help you identify the areas where you might be assuming the worst about people’s character and judging them more harshly than yourself.

Coach Yourself: In the chart below, list the characteristics of God’s forgiveness in one column and the characteristics of human forgiveness in the other. (I primed the pump a bit for you!)

God’s Forgiveness	Human Forgiveness
<i>Based in God’s perfect character</i>	<i>Often based in how people feel or how they can benefit</i>

Reflect on what makes God’s forgiveness so superior to human forgiveness. Ask God to help you see forgiveness through His eyes and act the way He would act—even when you’re dealing with someone you’ve seen as a “villain” in your life.



Week Four : Day 2

Strong Is Humble

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. In a journal or in the margins of the field guide, draw two columns: “Old” and “New.” Under the first column, make a list of all the things that you gave up when you chose to follow Christ. In the second column, make a list of things you have started doing since you chose to follow Christ. (Tip: You can also include things that God can help you give up, but you haven’t yet . . . and things He can empower you to start doing, but you haven’t yet.) Review your lists and thank God for the transforming work He is accomplishing in your life.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

Read and review chapter 11 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Share what you learned with a friend and the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 11, “**Strong Is Humble.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you:

On page 107, I coach: “Don’t assess your strength as a man as how you compete with other men or compare to them. . . . That kind of strength is both elusive and, at the end of the day, false.” Going beyond athletics, what are some ways guys tend to “compete” against each other? What makes those competitions so dangerous to us as men?

Jesus modeled true strength to be there for others and benefit them. From what you know of the Bible, where do you see that in Jesus? How can you imitate it? Record your thoughts below:

Jesus Model	My Life



Which is more difficult, becoming humble or staying humble? Explain your response in the space below:

What can you do to become more humble? How can you maintain that humility each day?

The story of Don Wallis's experience as a Navy pilot carries some serious applications for us as men. As I noted, pride is a subtle killer: *"We hardly know it's taking over, causing us to lose awareness of those around us and the consequences of our actions."* (p. 113)

When have you felt the devastating impact of pride in your life?

Who are the men in your life who can get your attention and help you "regain consciousness" before you crash?

Quote to note:

Everyone thinks, deep down, I am special. And special people get a pass, we think, even if it's for behavior we find despicable in others. Pride traps us in this self-centered bubble of entitlement. Maybe we think our position or personality makes us immune to the consequences of our actions. . . . Pride blinds. Pride divides. Pride damages. Pride destroys. Pride is a killer. (p. 111)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. Answer the following questions I raised on page 110-111:

Why was President Clinton willing to risk political standing with his adolescent behavior?

Why did Tiger Woods inflict so much damage on his family, reputation and career?

What drove Bernie Madoff to steal and deceive in ways that were sure to be discovered?

What caused the downfalls of Christian leaders like Bill Hybels, Mark Driscoll, and Ravi Zacharias?

Now, answer these questions from page 111: What drives me to defend myself and criticize others? What makes me so slow to apologize?

As you think about the weights that drag you down in life, identify areas where pride has been in control and ask God to help you learn humility rooted in Him.



2. Read and reflect on Jordan's story (pp. 108-110). For Jordan, counting himself as dead was a visceral experience for his tours in the Middle East. He was also able to translate that into a fully committed life of service (and healing) after the fact. For us, dying to self is more metaphorical, but still vital to our healing, growth and service as men. What are some things you have already died to in your relationship with Jesus? What are some areas where you still need to reckon yourself dead for the service of Christ?

TIP: Dying to yourself means choosing to yield to God's bigger and better way each and every day. It's not some mountain peak you reach and scratch off your "been there, done that" list. It's a daily surrender to Someone who is far more wise and kind than you are. The way you make those hard but better decisions is by knowing what Jesus would do and following His example. To do that, you've got to know Him by spending time in His Word. If you're not in the habit of reading the Bible each day, start with the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Those tell you about what Jesus did and said. Follow those up with the book of Acts, which talks about how Jesus's followers began living out their faith together, as the early church. Write down things you learn and things you can apply. Be ready to share them with a mentor or with the group of guys you're meeting with.



3. How would you define the Pride-Humility Paradox to a friend or family member?

What some practical steps you can take each day to overcome pride and follow Jesus's example of humility?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Write the following quote often attributed to C.S. Lewis on an index card: "Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less." Place the card where you will see it on a regular basis. Each time you see it, pray that God will help you know the difference between thinking less of yourself (which denies your sonship) and thinking of yourself less often (which embraces your sonship).

Philippians 2 coaches us to have the same attitude as Jesus in our approach and relationship with others. Read Philippians 2:3-5 in several versions of the New Testament. (Try ESV, NIV, AMP, NLT) Write your own paraphrase of Father God is saying to you in that passage:

Coach Yourself: Joy has often been summarized with the acrostic of "Jesus, Others, You." That's what it means to be "third" (see page 116). Using the acrostic words below, identify one healthy and godly way you can serve Jesus, one for others, and, yes, one for yourself this week. Then, commit to following through with each of those opportunities:

Jesus

Others

You

This isn't a "one and done" assignment. This is something you can repeat each week of your life moving forward. The actions you take each week will change, but the attitude behind those acts of service should remain solid. That's what humility is all about. It's how Jesus operated, and it's the way for us to operate as well!



Week Four : Day 3

Insecurity—What Are They Thinking About Me?/ Kill the Fear and Pretending

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Write out the verse in at least three other translations. Spend time reading through each translation, noting the similarities and differences between each one. In a journal or in the margin of the field guide, write your own paraphrase of the verse, along with one idea for putting it into practice today.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

— 2 Corinthians 5:17

Read and review chapters 12-13 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 12, **"Insecurity—What Are They Thinking About Me,"** and chapter 13, **"Kill the Fear and Pretending."** In the margins, make notes about what each God is saying to you about what you are reading and learning in each of the chapters:

I open chapter 12 with a pretty bold statement: Worrying about what others say about us is "a pretty common affliction. . . and a total waste of time." (p. 119). You might agree with the first part of that sentence and cringe at the second part. Where has the insecurity that comes with worrying about other people's opinions created paralysis in your life?

Some forms of pride refuse to ask others for help, even when you really need it. Other forms of pride won't let you drop your guard and be vulnerable to others. The first is driven by arrogance, while the second is more driven by fear. But they are both devastating. On the scale below, mark where your pride (and accompanying insecurity) is rooted:



This principle sprung from my interview with David Robbins: "Be ready to learn when God pulls you into places of obscurity or forces you to the sidelines." (See page 127.) When has God placed you on the sidelines of life? What important lessons have you learned there that you could have never anywhere else?

TIP: Even Jesus spent time out of the limelight. For example, we don't know things about His formative years between the ages of 12-30. He went into the wilderness to face Satan's temptations (Mark 1:12-13), but He frequently pulled Himself away from people to be alone with His Father (Mark 1:35). God speaks in the quiet moments as much (if not more) as in the thunder. Embrace your time in obscurity. God is likely preparing you for your next life chapter and assignment from Him.

Part of our pride and insecurity shows up in our need to pretend. Fear pushes us into giving off impressions and playing roles we were never meant to play—and whether we’re a good actor or not, it doesn’t turn out well! Remember that Real is not Perfect. As I wrote on page 132, “God isn’t looking for flawless character or spotless bios.” We focused on King David’s failures on page 132, but think about these other men from the Bible. From what you know of their stories, how did they fumble the ball in life? Record your thoughts:

Adam:

Noah:

Moses:

Elijah:

Peter:

Paul:

How does it feel knowing that God doesn’t expect you to get everything right all the time?

Quote to note:

Please grasp this: your wounds, your past, your failings, and your flaws don’t define or disqualify you ... unless you hide behind them. Unless you ignore, deny, pretend, pose, and wall off because of them. (p. 133)

“No matter how long you’ve been holding back the truth, whatever that truth is, there is freedom and momentum in coming clean. The price seems high at the moment, but pays off over time. You can become the real you.” (p. 134)

How do you discern what is true and what is not true in your life?

What do you need to confess to yourself, to God, and to others?

Remember, anything less than full honesty and transparency is just an act. It’s not the real, so nothing related to it is fully genuine either!

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Read through the story of the Prodigal Son(s) in Luke 15. Using the chart below, list ways you relate to the younger son and ways you relate to the older son. (Remember, they were both prodigal (separating) in their own way!) What will it take for you to “come clean” like the younger son?

Younger Son	
Older Son	

What are some practical steps you need to take to avoid becoming bitter like the older brother?

2. Go back and re-read the story of my misadventure at the swimming pool (pp. 122-123).

While overcoming fear is a big part of that story, don't miss the truth that a lack of honesty (and integrity) drives a wedge in relationships: “When I'm not being honest with Stacy, I'm not relating to her as the total and real me. I'm holding something back. I'm not being real.” (p. 124) Even if you're single, you've still got people who are important to you. In the space below, think about the people listed and what you might need to “come clean” about. Spend time each day this week praying that God will let you be honest with yourself and with God—all so you can be honest with them!

Wife:

Co-worker:

Other family member:

Friend:

Leader



3. My friend Jim Daly provided a wealth of great manhood information, which I included on pages 134. The chart below summarizes the contrast between pretending and being real:

Pretending Produces	Being Real Produces
Insecurity and pressure Anxiety Fear of failure Exaggerated sense of shame Brittle ego and unhealthy pride Relationship numbness Putting on a front	Power Freedom Humble responsibility Healthy vulnerability

Using a highlighter, mark the characteristics in each column that have defined your life over time. Talk with God and with a significant mentor in your life about your responses. Determine a plan of action for moving closer to the right column and away from the devastating impact of the left column.

4. Do you really believe that God can handle you being real? (See pp. 135-136) Why does it make sense to get real with God—even if you’re not quite ready to get real with other people yet? How does getting real with God help you move closer to becoming the real you?

TIP: Remember, the real you is the person God created you to be. If you’re not OK with Him, there’s no way you can be OK with yourself or anyone else! Also, I mentioned the role of your conscience on page 137. Pay attention to that voice. It’s not a nag or a killjoy. It’s an amazing gift from a loving Father who knows you better than you know yourself and wants better for you than you could want for yourself, or could ever imagine!

Open Life: Acting on What’s Next for You

Insecurity is not a comfortable topic; but, like so much we’ve discussed already, it’s absolutely necessary for you to receive sonship the way God intends. Reflect on and respond to these questions this week:

What is the root of your insecurities? (perhaps it relates to a fear, a wound, a label, a lie, a deep need)

How could finding a few reliable men give you the confidence and courage you need to be honest?

Hopefully, you’re developing a meaningful and transparent relationship with a friend with whom you’ve been talking with about RECEIVE and with the guys in your small group at church or those you’ve been huddling with each week. If not, pray that God will strengthen those relationships—and take some steps to initiate connecting.

Coach Yourself: This week’s chapters have been about transformation. Receiving your sonship from the Father is wonderful, but it’s also a game changer. It’s designed to be comprehensive and to leave a mark in your life.

Read the story of Jacob wrestling with God in Genesis 32:24-32. Notice that God transformed Jacob in three ways:

- Jacob received a new name (v. 28).
- Jacob developed a new limp (vv. 31).
- Jacob experienced a new day (vv. 31).

In a journal or in the margins of the field guide, record why these three “gifts” might have been important to Jacob as he entered the next stage of His adventure with God. In addition, write down how each one might relate to your life. In what ways do you need a new name, a new limp, and a new day. (Note – a limp marked an impactful experience with God. It also marks an injury or weakness. “Leading with a limp” implies being authentic about your weakness and building a commonality with others who have weaknesses.)

Huddling Up: Week Four

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.

Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 10-13 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking Remember, you can find extra questions for your group wherever you find this symbol “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. Do you rarely or often remember that we are to forgive others since Jesus forgave us and He tied our experiencing forgiveness to how generously we forgive others?
3. Who is the humblest person you know? How do you see humility in that person’s life? What are some things you can imitate?
4. Why are guys so afraid of failing—or even looking like failures? What is something fake, unwise or hurtful you’ve done to avoid looking like a failure?
5. What comfort zones might God be pulling you from? Why are you so attached to those parts of your life?
6. What are some of the masks men wear to pretend things are OK? How does knowing God doesn’t expect perfection relieve that pressure?

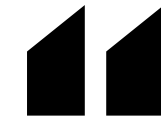
Close your time in prayer: Thank God that He never leaves us as we are and that He’s always shaping us into His image. Encourage the guys in your group to read through and write out bullet points from Romans 5:1-5 this week. Note the justification and acceptance we receive as sons of the Father, but also highlight the ongoing process of being transformed by God’s Spirit. Thank God that the hope He provides never lets us down!



Week Five

Huddle

Chapters 14-16



**A significant friendship doesn't just make us feel good about ourselves, overlooking our errors and affirming our biases. A significant friendship is valuable because it validates us, gives us confidence that we can grow, and refuses to leave us unchanged. Being our true self with a true friend helps us see ourselves more accurately, who we really are and who we can become. It makes us more self-aware, which is crucial to tackling life wisely.
(P. 145-146)**



Week Five : Day 1

Freedom in Forgiving

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Find an online video of a blacksmith creating something out of iron. Notice two elements: heat and force. Consider how those two ideas relate to becoming a better man through relationships with other men. Write a couple sentences or a series of bullet points to summarize how uncomfortable circumstances and honest feedback can help men “sharpen” one another.

Iron sharpens iron,
and one person sharpens another.

—Proverbs 27:17

Read and review chapter 14 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 14, “**Friends and Mentors.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

Review the story of Sandy and Arthur on page 143-145. What words would you use to describe their friendship?

Sandy and Arthur were “2 a.m. friends” - guys you can call at any hour under any circumstances—even at 2 a.m. Who are those men in your life? What makes your connection with them so strong?

On page 145-146, I define the characteristics of a significant friendship. Read the list below and circle the three that mean the most to you:

- Doesn’t simply focus on feeling good about ourselves
- Doesn’t ignore our errors
- Doesn’t affirm our biases.
- Validates who we are as an individual
- Give us confidence so we can grow
- Refuses to leave us as we are
- Allows us to be more self-aware

How can investing in those kinds of relationships help you identify the “real you?” What impact can that have on your Father-son relationship with God and your relationships with others?

TIP: Truly evaluate who and how you are with your closest friends. If you aren’t a better man for being around them, you probably need to look for some friends who are different. You might be able to pick up on this yourself, an objective eye will help. If you’re married, discuss with your wife (make it safe for her to be honest) the impact your friends have you—good or bad. Be grateful for her thoughts and take her observations seriously. If you’re single, talk with a sibling or someone else who knows you well. Strive to get a 360-degree perspective on this subject.

Figuring out manhood can be confusing unless manhood is developed among other mature men. I strongly encourage you to add another layer to your friendships by seeking a mentor.”
(p. 148)

Who have been your mentors in the past?

Who are your mentors right now?

If you don't have a mentor, what is holding you back? (Be honest!)

Quote to note:

“There are all kinds of mentorship. I just want you to see it as a natural, elemental aspect to manhood. You know about mentorship for career building and skill development, but I want you to know it as a central part of the teamwork of manhood, faith, marriage and being a dad.”
(p. 149)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. From Charlie, I learned about the power of doing things together, sharing common interests, From Tom, I learned about the power of intentionality - consistent connections, trust, and transparency.

What are some experiences you can share with the men you trust the most? How will that help you to bond and grow as Christ followers and sons of God?

What are some ways you can invest in consistent connections with men you trust? How can you move beyond simply meeting or conversing to actually being open and honest with one another?

2. As Howard Hendricks noted (p. 150), the dynamic between Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy is a compelling biblical example of friendship and mentoring. We all need a Paul, an older man who can help us navigate our journey and struggles. We all need a Barnabas, a peer who will be honest with us, speaking the truth in love. And we all need a Timothy, a young man into whose life we can invest. In the space below, identify at least one man who can fit into each category for your life:

- Paul (mentor like Chuck was for me):
- Barnabas (buddy/friend/brother like Charlie and Tom):
- Timothy (a younger mentee):

Reflect on 2 Timothy 2:2. In a journal or in the space below, record any thoughts God reveals to you about the connections we have with other men as we mature as a man in our sonship.

3. On page 149, I challenge you to “get off the sidelines—if that’s where you’re hanging out right now. Get connected with God’s men. Go ask a good man, a man who knows God, to mentor you.” Review the four questions below:

- What stories and lessons can you share from your life?
- Can you show me how you process crucial or difficult stuff going on in your life?
- Where have you found great wisdom in God’s Word?
- Can you help me process some of the stuff that’s going on in my life?

Shape answers to each question from your own life, so you can be prepared to share with a “Timothy” – a younger guy God may bring along your path.

Journal Page

TIP: Remember that a “mentor can be with you for a long season of life, or he can meet with you just a few times over coffee.” Before you approach anyone about being a mentor, be clear with yourself about your own expectations for this relationship. Pray about who you should ask. Begin by working him to shape a clear purpose for the mentoring relationship with some basic communication principles and boundaries. If a guy asks you to help or mentor him, make sure you both understand what the other expects—and honor that.

Open Life: Acting on What’s Next for You

You can shape a physical picture and reminder to pray for a mentor and a mentee. Buy three small carabiners, one representing a key mentor in your life (actual or future), one is you and one is a mentee (actual or future). Connect the carabiners and set them on your desk. Use them as prayer reminders each day when you see them.

Coach Yourself: “You could keep waiting for a friend to show up and step into your life. Or, you could step into theirs as a friend.” (p. 147) As you pray and open yourself to the Bible this week, ask Father God to reveal men around you who need a friend—at work, in the neighborhood, at church, within your family. Write their names and begin praying for each. Then, identify ways to demonstrate friendship to them. Shape your ideas and plan below:

Friends	Ways I can reach out	Result and Responses

Write a thank you card to a man who has had a mentor impact on you. A better next step is to call him. Make sure he knows how much you appreciate his investment in your life. Don’t put it off . . . you don’t want to delay saying something positive or leave it unsaid until it’s too late!



Week Five : Day 2

Level 5 Friends Huddle

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. In your journal or field guide's margin, write "SHARPEN" vertically as an acrostic. Use each letter to pick one action you can take to be sharpened or to help sharpen another guy. Talk with God about steps you can take to strengthen your own walk with Him and to be a mentor/sharpener for the guys with whom you huddle.

Iron sharpens iron,
and one person sharpens another.

—Proverbs 27:17

Read and review chapter 15 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

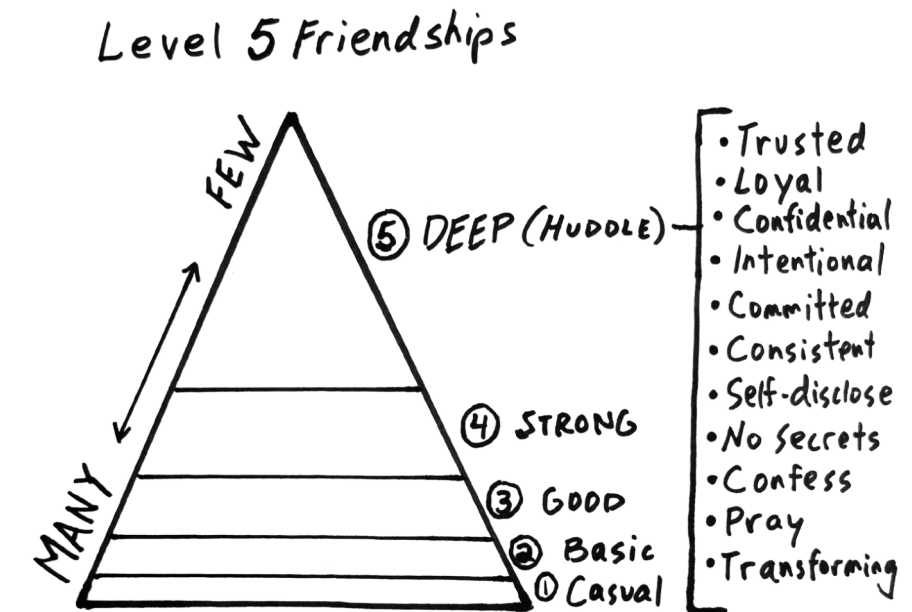
Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 15, "**Level 5 Friends Huddle.**" In the margins, make notes about what it's saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

Read the story of my friend, Mike Woodruff, on pages 151-152. What does "full, but thin" look like in your life? How do you know when you've reached that point?

TIP: Mike leaned into the wisdom of his wife, Sheri, on this. Since guys are so good at fooling themselves or justifying their behavior, we often need a third-party who loves us and who can see our blind spots. God has wired wives to play that role in the lives of married guys (like Mike). Other family members or trusted friends can fill the awareness gap in the lives of single guys.

Examine the "Level 5 Friendships" diagram below. List a couple guys at each level. If you have trouble identifying someone for Levels 4 and 5, assess what might be holding you back from developing those relationships. In your journal or in the margins of the field guide, write a brief prayer, asking God to help you work through those issues so you can make stronger connections with friends. This is good stuff to discuss in your small group at church or the guys you're huddling with each week.

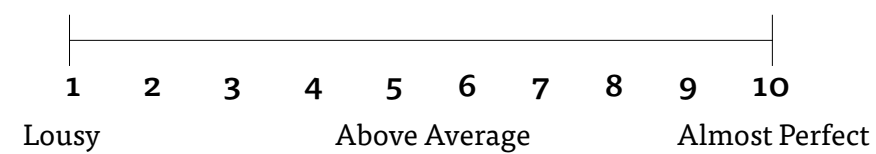


In the Day 2 study, we mentioned the "2 a.m. friend." As described on page 153, that's at least a Level 4 friend. He's a super valuable friend, a guy you can count on in the tough spots and worst times. You've done some life together, with scars to prove it. But he's not quite a Level 5 friend.

Based on what you read on page 153-154, what are the key differences that set men apart as Level 5 friends? Put your thoughts below:

Look at the Level 5 Friendship diagram. On a scale of 1-10 (1 is "lousy" and 10 is "almost perfect") rank yourself with a circle on having Level 4 and Level 5 friends? Why?

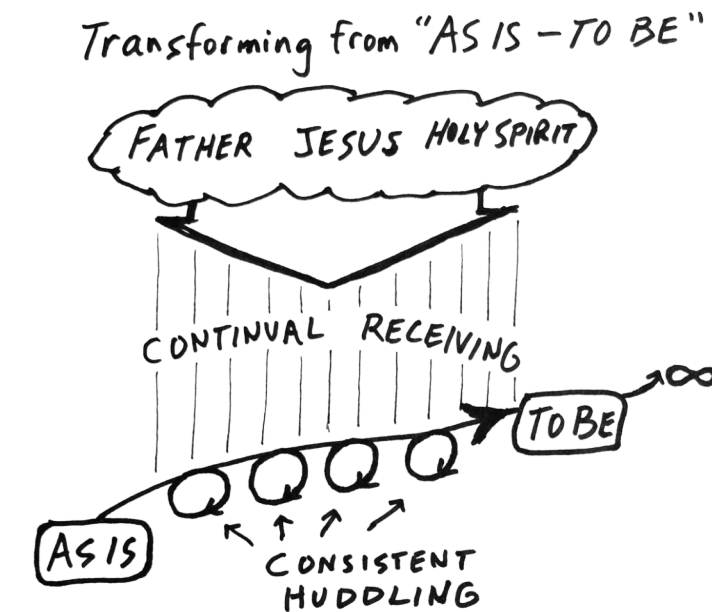
Now rank yourself with a triangle on being a Level 4 and Level 5 friend. Why?



Quote to note:

"Intentionality is the main characteristic that sets Level 5 Friendship at the Stop. We're not talking about the guy you'd consider a buddy, or even a close friend. We're talking about two or three friends that literally schedule time together for great purpose and depth. That's huddling. This consistent gathering is the action of Level 5 Friendship. It's a verb." (p. 154)

Think through the "As Is—To Be" diagram below from page 91. Read the section on "Your Huddle" (pp. 155-156). Based on what God has shown you, answer the following questions:



What impact does receiving sonship (identity as a beloved son) have on developing stronger and deeper friendships with other guys?

What impact does huddling with Level 5 friends have on moving you from where you are to where you and God want you to be?

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



What makes trust so hard for guys? What are some major obstacles to the kind of trust and transparency it takes to establish Level 5 friendship?



1. On pages 156-158, I dig into the levels of friendship Jesus had when He was on the earth. Why do you think He chose Peter, James, and John for His deepest friendships?

From what you know of their stories, how did this intimate relationship with the Messiah affect their lives after He went back to heaven?

TIP: To learn more about these three friends of Jesus, read the first 12 chapters of Acts. Peter and John were leaders in the early church. In fact, Peter did a lot to encourage and establish the church in Jerusalem, as well as Judea and Samaria. John was often right at his side. James was the first of the apostles to die for his faith. They weren't perfect men by any stretch of the imagination, but their experiences and bond with Jesus set them up to courageously follow His plan for their lives—no matter what!

2. "A men's huddle is a tight group of three or four friends who meet regularly to help each other. Each man is accepted and supported as he processes life in the company of brothers who care as much for him as they do for themselves. Ideally, it's a brotherhood that chooses to live in the light with one another and to become more like Jesus." (p. 155)

Consider the characteristics of an effective huddle below. Prayerfully, reflect on how well you live out each of these qualities daily. (Remember, huddles are shaped by individuals, so you need God's help to become the best man and friend you can be in these areas!)

- **Consistent:** You make dependability a priority to meet or connect regularly.
- **Defined Purpose:** You understand each other's expectations for the huddle and agree to help each other honestly process life and work together to grow in Christlike character.
- **Trusting/Loyal/Confidential:** You make the huddle a safe space for everyone to be open and honest to discuss their life in a way that erases hiding and secrets. You personally initiate transparency about your struggles and weaknesses.
- **Transformative:** You practice self-disclosure, gain objective self-awareness, and support each other's spiritual growth. Wisdom gained prevents errors and mutual confession heals, strengthening faith and character.
- **Fun:** You enjoy deep camaraderie and acceptance that make laughter and empathy natural as you share life together.

What are some practical steps you can take to nurture your friendships and commitments? Use the chart below to list things that you need to change and things you need to add.

What to Change	What to Add

3. Reflect on these verses from pages 161-162. Ask your Father to speak to you through these verses. In a journal or in space provided, record what He says to you through each verse. Be prepared to share this with your small group or with the guys you've been huddling with.

- Proverbs 27:17
- Hebrews 10:24-25
- Galatians 6:2
- 1 John 1:7

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

The Self X-Ray mentioned on page 158 rates our relationship and health with God, self, spouse, kids, work, temptations/risk areas and impact for God. Pull it up from the Level 5 Friendship Playbook. Here are the 3 core questions we use in our weekly huddle. Answer them now and discuss with your friend or group.

1. What's the most important thing you need to talk about?
2. What's most important for me to pray for you?
3. What's Father God saying to you (as you read His Word and talk to Him)?

These three questions are the consistent framework and can-opener to the heart for your weekly huddle and deep friendships. Addressing them weekly with a friend or huddle will be one of the most positive habits you'll ever practice. Starting with your next huddle, make sure each guy has a chance to share what's on his heart.

Coach Yourself: If you want to learn more about connecting/huddling and actively develop Level 5 friendships, download my gift, "The Level 5 Friendship Playbook" at www.MenHuddle.com.

Share the brief "Playbook" with two or three friends who might be interested in going deeper on this journey with you. It can be guys in your small group at church or another setting. It could be a new friend or friend in another city that God puts on your heart.



Week Five : Day 3

Live in the Game Plan

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. To help internalize the verse this week, write it on 7 sticky notes and place them in places you'll see it. Say it out loud each time you write it and each time you see it this week. Be careful, you'll accidentally memorize that way!

Iron sharpens iron,
and one person sharpens another.

—Proverbs 27:17

Read and review chapter 16 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 16, **"Live in the Game Plan."** In the margins, make notes about what it's saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

"God has communicated His plan through the way Jesus lived and through God's Word, the Bible. This game plan is the same for every person He created. What's unique to us as individuals is the specific pathway He takes us on through our relationship with Christ and the life-shaping power of Scripture." (p. 163)

How have you seen God work in unique ways throughout your life? How do you feel knowing that God has a plan just for you? Record your responses in your journal or in the margins of your field guide.

"Think about the Scriptures as the game plan for your life—spiritually alive and dynamic, to transform and guide you. Read the Bible as a son who expects to hear his Father speak." (p. 164)



What makes the Bible a reliable playbook for life?

On a scale of 1 ("Pretty Clueless") to 7 ("Ph.D."), how would you rate your familiarity with the Bible? Write a sentence to explain why. Write another sentence about why and how it should increase.



Why:

Why & How to Increase:

On a scale of 1 ("Skim It") to 7 ("Live It!"), how would you rate your daily application of what you learn from the Bible? Write a sentence to explain why. Write another sentence about why and how it should increase.



Why:

Why & How to Increase:

“A man is most like Jesus when he joins God’s mission and lives out his calling each day like Jesus did.” (166)

What mission do you think God is moving you toward today?

What excites you about that mission?

What scares you about that mission?

Quote to note:

“The key to living an overcoming life as a man is receiving Father God’s game plan for your life and letting Him live it out through you—something you could never do in your own strength.” (p. 165)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. On page 166, I mention three essentials that you might forget if you don’t consistently connect with your Father and hear what He has to say to you. Circle the one you are most likely to forget and underline the key word in each so you can quickly remember that essential truth.

- You are His son.
- His love for you is based on grace, which means His forgiveness, acceptance, and approval come.
- The best of life can only come by trusting God since He alone is perfect and in control.

Ask Father God for practical steps to make intentional habits of connecting to God in His Word. Write them below. Make a plan to put these steps into action this week!

TIP: You don’t have to spend hours reading God’s Word every day. In fact, many times, it’s better just to focus on a few verses or one story or parable of Jesus’ at a time. That will let you focus on a small bite of Scripture and squeeze as much as you can out of it.

Other great ways to make the most of your time in the Bible each day are to journal and use a daily devotional guide. A small journal or spiral notebook lets you write prayers and questions to God. You can paraphrase or bullet point a verse, story or theme. Options for devotions and Bible reading plans are numerous. Find several linked at MenHuddle.com/Resources

2. As you dig into God’s Word more deeply, practice with a single verse of Scripture. Use the chart below to study and meditate on John 15:5. Spend four days this week reflecting on this verse using the prompts below.

Day 1: Read John 15:5 aloud at least twice. Write it in your journal or field guide margin. Circle or underline the key words, especially the verbs. Ask God why those are significant in your life.

Day 2: Read through John 15:5 several times. Each time, put emphasis on a different word or phrase in the verse. Ask God how each highlighted part helps you better understand Him and better understand you and your relationship with Him.

Day 3: Read John 15:5 in the Amplified version. Then copy your favorite translation into your journal or the margins. Ask God to apply it specifically to you and your life. Write your own paraphrase of what Jesus is saying to you through John 15:5.

Day 4: Using John 15:5 as your guide, write a short prayer. Ask Father, Son and Spirit to help you abide in Jesus so that you can bear fruit for His glory. Clarify and amplify the meaning of “abide”, “bear fruit”, and “for His glory”.

Once you’ve connected with God to thoroughly digest this single verse, you can connect with Father God and digest other key verses, perhaps from the passages listed in the “My Actions” ideas on page 172. Follow the same process—and even add other steps that make your Bible study more meaningful and transformational.

TIP: As you experience and study the Bible more effectively, you come to hear God’s voice clearly, which matures your sonship. You’ll be connecting with your Father and Jesus, the Way and the game plan God has given you for life. No one understands you or intends better for you than your heavenly Father.

3. Below are actions I use to connect with God most days (see page 167). Any man can do these on a regular basis. Try one or two as a part of your daily routine. As you make it your own habit, consider adding another action or shape your own to best connect early and consistently with God and His Word. Talk with other guys about what works best for each of you to connect with God and His Word.

- I start the day with Him instead of my phone, which immediately distracts me. I try to remain quiet for two minutes. I often say, "Father God, take control of me and my day for Your purposes. Remind me to live as Your son and receive from You everything I feel, think, pray, speak and do today."
- Sometimes I take a walk just to talk with the Father. I thank Him for who He is, for His presence and blessings, and then I tell Him what's troubling me. I also pray for others.
- When I'm reading or studying the Bible, or using a devotion book, I ask the Father what He wants to say to me. I highlight words and phrases that speak to me, and put bullet points in the margins for messages, principles, or prayers He gives me.
- I use a journal to ask God questions and I wait for His response. I often draw a box around each question and prayer I'm waiting for an answer to.

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

On Day 3, you've been encouraged to get into God's Word in various ways. You can use this chart to help you form a habit of reading the Bible regularly and hearing your Father. (A few guys, with more consistent discipline than me, may adapt and even use this chart weekly for life)

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

On Day 3, you've been encouraged to get into God's Word in various ways. You can use this chart to help you form a habit of reading the Bible regularly and hearing your Father. (A few guys, with more consistent discipline than me, may adapt and even use this chart weekly for life)

Day/Date	I read my Bible Yes/No	Passage(s) I read	Main Thought	Other Thoughts
Sunday: _____	Yes No			
Monday: _____	Yes No			
Tuesday: _____	Yes No			
Wednesday: _____	Yes No			
Thursday: _____	Yes No			
Friday: _____	Yes No			
Saturday: _____	Yes No			

Coach Yourself: As I mentioned on page 172, you can download the You Version Bible app and listen to Scripture in the car or jump into the Bible at various times of the day. This is super helpful because I can read or listen to a verse, passage, story or devotion. I can also copy verses that impact me and text them to myself and a friend. If you want to dig deep, find a Bible commentary that explains things like historical context, the meaning of words in the original languages, and how the message applied to the original audience.

Write the prayer on page 171 on an index card. Use it as a bookmark for your Bible reading each day. When you open your Bible to start reading, Offer the prayer on the card to God before you start. Then, using a journal or notebook, write down what God says to you each day. Make this a habit moving forward.

Huddling Up: Week Five

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.


Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: Proverbs 27:17

Iron sharpens iron,
and one person sharpens another.

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 14-16 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking for this symbol  “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. As you think about the levels of friendship in your life, what are some things that stick out to you? What areas need some improvement? Which areas are pretty solid?
3. In what ways do you feel unqualified to serve as a mentor for someone else? What can you do to overcome those fears or concerns?
4. Review your Self X-Ray. Allow each man a chance to share what God revealed to them as they assessed their relationships and life.
5. What Bible passages have you studied this week? What did you learn about God from those verses? What did you learn about yourself?
6. What are some benefits you’ve gotten from meeting with men on a regular basis over the past month or so? How is the experience changing you?

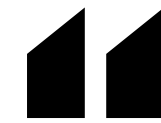
Close your time in prayer: Encourage each man to thank God for His work in their lives and for the impact another man or mentor has had on him. Remind the guys of the encouragement to reach out to a mentor this week and to verbally express that appreciation to them. Invite the guys silently ask God to use His Word to make them more like Him each day.



Week Six

Lift #1

Chapters 17-19



**Consumers expect a lot from others and little from themselves. They look only for personal advantage. They spend and lose valuable capital trying to fulfill their every imagined need. They're short-term. Investors are long-term. They don't spend on themselves. They bring value to others.
(pp. 177)**



Week Six : Day 1

Live in the Game Plan

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Read the verses in several different translations. In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, record words and ideas that are similar across the translations. Write your own paraphrase of the verses based on what God reveals to you.

Do nothing out of selfishness or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

—Philippians 2:3-5

Read and review chapter 17 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 17, **“Kill the Consumer. Be an Investor.”** In the margins, note what it's saying to you:

Read through the football analogy I shared on pages 175-177, then answer these questions:

In what ways has the culture appealed to you by focusing on what makes you happy?

When have you heard voices tell you that “you're special” and “you deserve it”? How has that implied that “you're entitled to more” than someone else?

How has focusing on yourself led to deeper levels of dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment?

Map out the contrast between the consumer mindset and the investor mindset revealed in our society. Record some examples of a consumer mindset that tempts you to focus on self and examples an investor mindset that encourages you to help or add value to others:

Evidence of Consumer Mindset	Examples of Investor Mindset

On a scale of 1-5 (1 = “consumer”) and (5 = “investor”), how would you rate your basic attitude and approach in life?



What does that explain about your life? What adjustments do you want to make?

TIP: As human beings, our natural inclinations lean toward the consumer mindset. Thanks to sin, it's just normal for us to think primarily of ourselves—looking out for No. 1. If you're going to embrace an investor mindset, you're going to have to dig deep into some uncomfortable places in your life. But since Jesus is the perfect example of an investor mindset, He can guide you in the right direction. He can also give you His supernatural power and wisdom to overcome the fallen natural desires of our hearts and minds.

"We're trained to be discontent, yet to think that the next purchase, acquisition, or entertainment experience will deliver those elusive feelings of satisfaction. . . . More importantly, we remain consumers in our relationships, which have far more impact on the quality of our life than finances." (p. 178)



In what ways have you felt yourself being trained toward discontentment?

What are some of the key sources of your discontent?

What are the dangers of letting consumerism carry over into our relationships?

List some ads you've seen or heard in the past day or two. How did each appeal to your sense of discontent or try to convince you that their product would bring you satisfaction?

Quote to note:

"Consumers expect a lot from others and little from themselves. They look only for personal advantage. They spend and lose valuable capital trying to fulfill their every imagined need. They're short-term. Investors are long-term. They don't spend on themselves. They bring value to others." (p. 177)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Which of these attitudes have you been tempted to embrace lately?

___ The customer is always right.

___ You need an upgrade.

___ Something else will make you happy/feel better.

___ You deserve better.

How do these attitudes bleed over from material possessions to relationships?

What damage can each do in your connection to God, family, and friends?

How can you find release and healing from such negative mindsets?



2. On page 181, I share a principle that radically changes the way we see relationships with others: "Always aim to out-bless other people."

- What does it mean to genuinely "out-bless" someone else?

- What could that look like in your life?

• List three people you can strive to out-bless this week. Beside their names, write a short plan for making it happen.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

3. Like so many things we've studied so far in Receive, Jesus is the ultimate example of a relationship investor. From what you know about Him, identify ways He demonstrated an investor mentality during His time on earth. Record your thoughts in the space below:

One of the greatest Scripture passages on Jesus's investor mentality is Philippians 2:5-11. It's a first-century Christian hymn that describes Jesus's humility and His exaltation. Meditate on these verses. Identify ways Jesus invested in others. Spend time in prayer, asking God to show you how you can imitate Him each day. Record what He reveals to you in the space below:

TIP: On page 182, I touch on how the consumer mentality can have a devastating impact on our relationships with others. Think of it this way, the consumer mentality is all about transactions. We want to know what kind of "value" or "bargain" we can get from a relationship. Like trying to find the best price for breakfast cereal at a local grocery. As a result, the people we are called to love and support become "items" that only serve our own needs. In contrast, the investor mentality is about making deposits, but not in our own bank account. We're pouring into the lives of others. It's like setting aside money from your paycheck each month to pay for your kid's education or to support a co-worker going through a tough time. None of us want to be demeaned or diminished, but that's where the consumer mentality leads – all while the investor mentality lifts people up!

4. You can find the so-called "Golden Rule" in Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31. Read and reflect on these verses. In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, write a short explanation of how the Golden Rule relates to this discussion about consumer mentalities and investor mentalities.

What are practical steps you can take to live out the Golden Rule each day?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

On pages 183-184, I describe several ways Jesus invested in the lives of others. These are also great illustrations for how we can invest in others and lift them up. Below, each bullet point is based on one of ways Jesus invested in others. Identify at least one way you can follow Jesus's example and who you can invest in.

(Remember, this all begins with the first bullet point: Jesus invested time in His relationship with His Father in knowing Scriptures and in getting alone for solitude and prayer.)

What Jesus Did	What I Can Do	Who I Can Invest In
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in damaged and hurting people • Invest in people who can't defend themselves • Invest in people who are experiencing personal storms • Invest in those who are grieving through empathy • Invest in training others to be the best versions of themselves • Invest in those who have fallen short or blown by forgiving them • Invest in special occasions that can great memories and strengthen bonds • Invest in God's plans and purposes by yielded yourself completely to Him 		

Coach Yourself: On pages 185-187, I'm pretty transparent about my "cornbread apology." That mess up really stung once I realized how dismissive and offensive I'd been to my son—all because I was wrapped up in what I wanted. I'd let the consumer mentality win out. Replacing that consumer mentality with an investor mentality requires hard work—including a much more self-awareness. What are you willing to do to become more self-aware, building on your strengths but also improving your weaknesses?

On a blank sheet of paper, draw picture of a telescope. (This is only for your benefit, so it doesn't have to be a masterpiece.) Write "Long-Term Vision" at the top of the sheet and "Relationship Investor" at the bottom. Keep the drawing in a spot you will see it often and be reminded that investing is based on the long game, not immediate gratification.



Week Six : Day 2

Relationship Investing

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Read the verses in several different translations. In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, record words and ideas that are similar across the translations. Write your own paraphrase of the verses based on what God reveals to you.

Do nothing out of selfishness or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

—Philippians 2:3-5

Read and review chapter 18 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Chapter 18 and today's session in the field guide are aimed at the ultimate relationship, marriage. This is also for you whether you're single or divorced, because valuing marriage and understanding how to husband a wife is crucial for everyone. Whether you marry or not in the future, you can tailor these principles to your closest relationship with a woman or to preparation and excellence in your future husbanding.

Single guys often have key roles in children's lives. Fathering or encouraging another father could be in your future, so calibrate the fathering messages and questions to your outlook and readiness to be a dad. You may become an uncle, teacher, coach, or good mentor to boys who will need you to fill the gap left by their missing dad.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 18, "**Relationship Investing.**" In the margins, make notes about what it's saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

On page 190, I mentioned that I "*graded myself on a curve*" when it came to the early years of my marriage. I compared myself to my Dad and assumed I came out on the favorable end of that comparison every time. In reality, I was just ignoring my flaws and my shortcomings—and it put a lot of stress on my marriage. I was approaching my relationship with Stacy using a consumer mindset.

What is the standard you've been using to excuse your consumer mentality in marriage?

What will it take for you to break that pattern, take responsibility, and start acting like an investor?

The book of Ephesians has some powerful wisdom in the area of relationships, including your marriage. On page 192, I pointed to Ephesians 4:2-3. Just as a reminder, here's what it says in the English Standard Version:

"Live together with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Living together (really doing life together—not just co-existing):



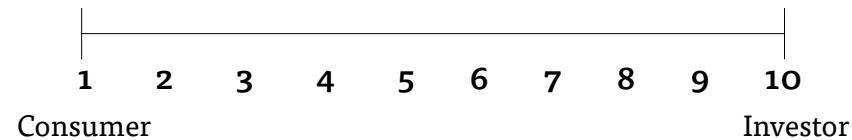
Showing humility toward your wife (not always having to be right):



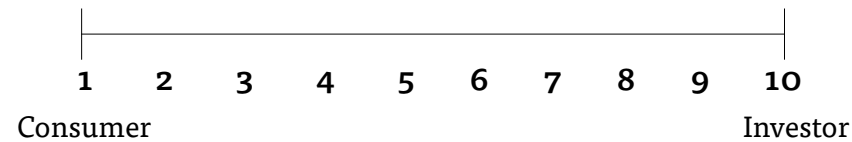
Showing gentleness toward your wife (being trustworthy, a security blanket for her):



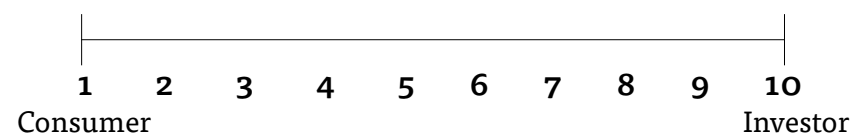
Showing patience toward your wife (putting her first and yourself second):



Bearing with her in love (even when she doesn't seem so lovable!):



Maintaining unity in the Spirit (getting closer to her by getting closer to God):



Experiencing genuine peace (pray, apologize, forgive):



Spend time praying about both your strengths and your weaknesses. Ask God to help you grow and mature in all these areas—not so you'll be the perfect husband, but so you can be the husband she needs (and the man God called you to become).

TIP: Common sense says you can never be perfect in anything, including your marriage. Of course, you should strive to be the best man possible for her sake and for God's glory. But even that's a stretch if you're not willing to fully receive the sonship God has offered you. That means spending time in His Word and in prayer, nurturing Level 5 Friendships with trustworthy men, and developing an investor mindset in your relationships.

"My friend Mike gives himself a daily reminder to invest in his wife. Each morning, he looks in his bathroom mirror and sees a sticky note he posted there that says, "Would I want to be married to me?" He's coaching himself to focus on his wife by delivering his love to her." (p. 195)



Single or married, how would you answer that question right now? Would you really want to be married to you?

If not, was there a time you think you would have been OK being married to you? What has changed?

How do you need to grow to get to a good place as a husband, or future husband, for her sake and for God's glory?

Quote to note:

"You won't understand how to be a dad on your own. The software is not pre-loaded. Like your identity, you receive it. Ask Father God to guide you and find seasoned dads or granddads as mentors. Fatherhood is a team effort." (p. 196)

On page 197, I mentioned "outsourcing" your responsibilities as a father. The two most common targets of that outsourcing are wives and churches, followed by schools and coaches.

To whom are you most likely to "outsource" your fatherhood? Why?

What steps can you take to be intentional with your kids and to make sure you stay engaged in their lives?

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Review, write down and simply define the Three Investor Husband Strategies from page 195-196. Discuss your answers (and perhaps what your wife said if you wisely asked her) to the ASK MYSELF questions on page 200.

- “What improvement and investment would my loved one value most: Loving, Leading, or Loyalty?”
- “Does she most need to be Understood, Valued, or Affirmed?”

2. Reflect again on how you rated yourself based on Ephesians 4:2-3. Which of the following actions steps are you willing to take to learn how to become an investor husband?

___ Ask your wife how you can pray for her—then do it on the spot with her!

___ Ask your wife a meaningful question and listen fully to her answer and her emotions.

___ Make plans to refresh your marriage at a retreat or conference with your wife.

___ Make an appointment with a marriage counselor to improve your husbanding and marriage. Invite your wife and be willing to go alone.

Share your response with your small group or with the men you’re huddling with. Ask them to help you follow through by holding you accountable and praying for you as you push forward.

3. In a journal or in the margin, plan at least one practical way to be an investor dad in the following areas. (Use the page numbers provided to review how these concepts play out in real life.)

Convince your kids they are loved and valuable (see p. 197).

Build a positive relationship (see p. 197).

Encourage their relationship with God (see p. 198).

Nurture a healthy vision for marriage that will shape their life (see p. 198).

Instill God’s blessing (see pp. 198-199).

Quote to Note

“Dads need to protect and equip their daughters to insist on excellent character in a boyfriend and husband. Dads train sons to honor and protect women and to choose excellent character in a girlfriend or a wife. Modeling, discussing and training in healthy relationships and the vision for marriage will shape their life. This crucial responsibility and opportunity is yours. Go get help and lean into it.” (p. 198)



4. On page 198, I shared that your relationship with your kids will shift over time. Use the chart below, to reflect on where you have been with your kids, where you are with your kids, and where you want to go with your kids (and how you want to get there).

Your Role	Past, Present, Future	Results/Goals
Protector/Provider		
Guide/Teacher/Coach		
Advisor/Consultant		
Encourager/Friend		

TIP: You and I can't be the perfect husband, nor the perfect father. (Trust me . . . both roles will humble us, big time!) But, when we embrace the lessons, we'll become men who are more like Jesus. So, when you mess up—be quick to own your mistakes and seek forgiveness. Show them what it means to take responsibility and initiative to repair relationships and make things right. Here's good news: Your kids don't expect you to be perfect. They just expect you to be there for them, to be honest and to show them how to repent and heal things with God, them and others.

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

Read and reflect on 1 Peter 3:7 (see p. 192). Based on your honest assessment, circle the number below that best describes your husbanding (or for singles, your approach to marriage).

Submit to the Father's will by sacrificing to love and nurture her

1 2 3 4 5

Honor, value, and prioritize her

1 2 3 4 5

Demonstrate interest, understanding, and gentleness toward her

1 2 3 4 5

Respect her as your equal in the unity of marriage

1 2 3 4 5

Talk with a mentor you trust about your results. Ask him to help you develop a strategy for making positive changes.

NOTE: If you are known and accountable to a mentor or quality friends, it may be objectively true that you are strong in these areas, but your spouse has huge gaps (and perhaps huge prior wounds) which are damaging the oneness and unity in your marriage. Devote yourself in prayer to asking Father God to show you what you need to know about yourself, your wife and your marriage. Ask a mentor, pastor and counselor for help opening up the dialogue with your wife and developing a plan to get spiritual, professional and mentoring help for your marriage. Don't coast in the swift current.

Coach Yourself: Review the story of my dad's blessing on page 199. It is my prayer that you received some kind of verbal affirmation from your father. Whether you did, or not, I pray that you will accept the blessing of your heavenly Father and walk in that truth Jesus achieved for you.

Whatever happened in your past, start planning a way to pass a blessing on to each of your children. Maybe plan an enjoyable activity including a meal and meaningful ceremony with a few significant men. Or simply plan an outing when you can get away with your son or daughter to affirm their personality, character, strengths and faith as you speak blessing into their lives. And remember, your children are never too old to be blessed by their father!

- **For Husbands:** This week, invite your wife to sit with you and look through your wedding photos. Spend time remembering that special day, along with some of the joys and pains the two of you have shared since that day. After that, write her a letter sharing how much she means to you. Affirm to her that she is precious to you and to God—and that you would marry her all over again. Finally, commit to yourself (and to a friend) to pray for her and with her each day—and do it.

- **Take Action by Asking:** Review the bullet points under MY ACTIONS on page 200. The first three actions are all questions you can ask of your significant other, your spouse, or your children. Each of the questions will lead you to greater understanding and prompt some positive actions and changes in you and the relationship. Discuss with your huddle friends and group what you did with those suggested actions/questions and what you plan to do going forward.

Our relationship history and the real-time struggles we face today can be powerful emotional currents with triggers that can quickly flip us into the swift and dangerous currents where God's enemy creates accusation and shame...then isolation and hopelessness. Every one of us have failures. Every one of us have faced aspects of these struggles – whether it's trauma, family breakup, brokenness, selfishness, promiscuity, pride, addiction, unfaithfulness, marriage conflict, divorce, singleness, remarriage, or blended families.

Reminder: You won't, and can't, take these actions, make these improvements, and gain needed healing on your own. Father God designed you to come to Him and let Him produce life transformation in you and positive action through you, within the context of a trusted team. We connect and depend on God. He performs. We receive.

Quote to note:

“Being a real and good man is not an issue of performance, but reception—receiving the guiding power from the Lord.” (p. 195)



Week Six : Day 3

Beating Life's Blitzes

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Read the verses in several different translations. In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, record words and ideas that are similar across the translations. Write your own paraphrase of the verses based on what God reveals to you.

Do nothing out of selfishness or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

—Philippians 2:3-5

Read and review chapter 19 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 19, "**Beating Life's Blitzes.**" In the margins, make notes about what it's saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

"Blitzes are both danger and opportunity combined in one intense situation. But they're nothing but bad ... if you're not prepared."

How would you define a "blitz" in life?

Use the columns below to jot down some thoughts about how blitzes can be a blessing or a curse:

Blitzes as Blessings	Blitzes as Curses

A Quote to Note

"A real and good man is made to face blitzes and to help others face their blitzes. We don't become like Jesus without facing blitzes." (p. 204)



Review the Three Strategies for Facing the Blitzes of life that include scripture truths and various tactics to draw upon (pages 208-210) Complete the Action for each one:

TIP: In the paragraphs with the truth Scriptures, you'll find various tactics and actions which you can bullet point or draw from in the Action sections below.

• **Keep The Long Term View.** Though hard and even evil things happen in this world, God will end this era. He will judge evil and reward good. He's drawing us to Him, shaping us, and even using things for good which the enemy schemed for evil. Aim for the eternal goal and keep the big picture in mind.

Action: Study and pray through Romans 8:28 and Jeremiah 29:11-14. What are some practical truths from these verses that you can weave into your life today?

• **Be Humble and Willing to Change.** Stop avoiding. Stop being deceived by lies and your false narrative. Stop denying, blaming or lying. Face the truth. Tell the truth. Love in a courageous way. Apologize and forgive. Trust God by getting out of His way instead of trying to control and fix things yourself.

Action: Study and pray through the verses listed on page 238: Romans 8:29; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9; and 2 Corinthians 12:1-2. What are some practical truths from these verses that you can weave into your life today?

• **Focus On Blessing Others.** You're not an orphan or victim. By admitting your spiritual poverty, you receive His spiritual and relational riches. He'll make you a relationship investor. Value people and invest in your relationships. When you are attacked and suffering, bless others. Take the Jesus approach.

Action: Study and pray through the verses listed on page 210: John 13:34; 1 Peter 3:9; Proverbs 11:25; and Luke 6:28. What are some practical truths from these verses that you can weave into your life today?

TIP: Blitzes come in hot and land hard. They are designed to catch you off guard and to put you in a compromising position. But, as strange as it seems, the more blitzes you experience, the better you can sense one is coming. It's key to prepare yourself ahead of time. Don't wait until the hurricane hits to fortify your home—or find an evacuation route. Determine your trusted team and best steps for handling the blitz before it's in your face. God can help you with that, and He will give you the wisdom to find and follow His best option - the "third way", instead of the default approaches of "fight" or "flight."

"The reality of God's love and plans for us are exponentially greater than we realize. Through His Son Jesus Christ, our Father gives us complete forgiveness, peace, and perfect standing with Him. We receive what we could never deserve—unconditional love and adoption into His family." (p. 207)



How has God's work in your life gone way past anything you ever could have expected?

What are some things you believe He might be moving you toward? What growth and callings? What blitzes could that include? How will you deal with them?

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Which of the three strategies for facing the blitz can you integrate this week? Be prepared to talk about this with the guys you huddle with or in your small group.

Pick at least one verse from each strategy to digest and internalize this week. Work on memorizing these verses. In a journal on in the margin of your field guide, record some truths you receive from God.

2. What blitzes have you faced recently or expect to face in the near future (circle all that are appropriate):

Disease	Addiction	Accident	Relationship Conflict
Financial	Work/Career	Natural disaster	Sin (yours or others)
Others:			

Write a prayer below, thanking Father God for being beyond good – for His redemption, power and control. Ask Him for help to trust, depend and receive His guidance and His strength in the days ahead.



3. On page 207, I mention the difference between an abundance mentality and a scarcity mentality. The key to embracing one and rejecting the other is making sure your hearts and minds are aligned with the heart and mind of our heavenly Father. That's part of what re-fathering and receiving are all about. On the scale below, mark where you believe you are on the spectrum between abundance and scarcity:



Look at which end you lean toward. What does that say about your view of God and your relationship with Him? What can you do to move closer to the abundance mentality?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

The key to beating life's blitzes is keeping the long-range view. We need to see objectively, based on full reality. We need to see things as God sees them.

What are some practical steps you can take to develop a long-range perspective in life?

Which one of these will you put into practice this week?

Coach Yourself: One of the greatest stories of a man facing a blitz in the Bible is when God commanded Abraham to offer his cherished son Isaac as a sacrifice in Genesis 22:1-19. Read this passage and focus on the characteristics of both Abraham's response to God and his responses to other people in the narrative. Consider the significance of the ram and of the mountain being renamed. Remember, from that time on, everyone who saw that mountain was reminded of God's provision. The blitzes in your life work the same way. They establish altars/landmarks that you can look back on. They remind you that since God was faithful in that situation, you can trust Him to be faithful again—whether it makes immediate sense or not.

Read Hebrews 11:17-19. How did Abraham take a long-range view of his circumstances? What difference did it make in his life?

This week, write a letter to yourself describing a time when God helped you grow stronger in your faith through a blitz. Don't spare any details about what you felt and endured. Describe what you learned and how it transformed you. Put the letter in an envelope and keep it in a safe place. The next time you experience a blitz, pull out the letter and read it. Let it guide your prayers as you trust God to replicate His faithfulness in your life, even in the middle of pain and confusion.

Huddling Up: Week Six

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.


Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: Philippians 2:3-5

Do nothing out of selfishness or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 17-19 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking for this symbol  “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. What are some of the forces in our culture that reinforce the consumer mindset? What symbols, messages or ads can you guys see, recall or notice on your phones fuel the consumer mindset?
3. How does a man develop self-awareness in his life? What role does God play in that process? Family members? What role do friends play and under what circumstances?
4. Review the Investor Husband Strategies (p. 195-196). How do they apply to single guys? What is a crucial way to apply each to your relationship with your wife?
5. Use the Self X-Ray tool in the LEVEL 5 FRIENDSHIP PLAYBOOK to rate the health of your relationship with your spouse, children or significant other. Each guy can share what’s most important going in his key relationships.
6. Chapter 19 on blitzes included a many Scriptures to reflect on. Which of those verses resonated most deeply with you this week? Why?

Close your time in prayer: Start with a minute for each man to silently confess selfishness and shortcomings in his key relationships, especially with wife and kids. Pray for clarity and conviction to replace consumer mindsets with commitment to LIFT others by being a relationship investor.



Week Seven

Lift #2

Chapters 20-22



We're fooling ourselves if we don't remind ourselves that God alone controls outcomes. His book of beginnings, Genesis, describes God creating all things, including mankind. He made Adam and Eve in His image and likeness. He gave them a noble purpose, to be productive and fruitful and to manage His creation on earth. They could have succeeded in this mission ... until they tried to do it their own way. (p. 222)



Week Seven : Day 1

Sex, Secrecy, and Dirty Bombs.

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Write it out by hand two or three times in your journal or in the margin of this field guide. Pay attention to the verbs in the verse. Contrast the thing that Jesus came to do with the thing He didn't come to do. Talk to Him about how you can develop a clear vision for ministering to others in your life.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

— Mark 10:45

Read and review chapter 20 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You've Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 19, "**Sex, Secrecy and Dirty Bombs.**" In the margins, make notes about what it's saying to you about what you are reading and learning:

"God has never been anti-pleasure. He invented it and put these hormones into our body's chemistry. Our sex drive has a good purpose when it's understood as a gift from God that is channeled by our allegiance to Him and our commitment to one woman." (p. 213)

When you think of God, do you think of Him as being "anti-pleasure" or pleasure positive (please pardon the alliteration)? Why do you feel that way?

Which of the dangers of pornography on page 213-214 hit closest to home for you? Have you ever honestly discussed your particular porn temptations and dangers with a friend or mentor? Who can you trust, or build trust with, to share your responses with?

What other possible addictions cause you problems? How do they counterfeit "the real thing" like pornography does, but eventually disappoint and damage?

On pages 214-215, I draw a distinction between guilt and shame. Review those definitions and reflect on how you can tell the difference between the two. In a journal or in the margins of your field guide, write a one- or two-sentence strategy for facing conviction/guilt and rejecting shame.

Overcoming shame and sexual temptation requires being real – transparent, honest, disclosing. Using the list below, evaluate if you're being real with those who matter most to you:

With yourself	Yes	No
With God	Yes	No
With Trustworthy Friends	Yes	No
With Your Wife	Yes	No

What do your responses say about your need to face down shame and let God defeat it?

TIP: Being real usually follows a pattern. First, you must be honest with yourself to face reality. You can't heal if you won't take responsibility. Next, you must be honest with God. He knows the situation anyway, so you can come to Him assured of His unconditional love. Third, you can be honest with a trusted friend, mentor or huddle. You need the network of supporters who will walk with you. Finally, you have to be honest with your wife. This is probably the hardest step, but it's crucial. Nothing holds you accountable as a husband and a man like knowing you've made a promise of exclusivity to your wife. Counseling and recovery groups may be an important route for obsessions and addictions. NEVER hesitate to get the help you need!



On page 219, I shared the healing path from Steve Arterburn who has over forty years of experience helping men and relationships heal. Read through the path toward healing addictions we face as men. Beside each one, give yourself a grade (A, B, C, D, F) based on how these practices fit into your life:

1. Surrender (Humility). Let God lead and stop faking.

A B C D F

2. See it (Acceptance). Face reality and root problems.

A B C D F

3. Say it (Confession). To others and to God.

A B C D F

4. Own it (Responsibility). Get treatment and support.

A B C D F

5. Release it (Forgiveness). Receive God's forgiveness and reject shame.

A B C D F

6. Reverse it (Transformation). With God as your priority and focus.

A B C D F

7. Preserve it (Connection). For discipleship and teamwork.

A B C D F

Ask God to make clear the way to overcome the addictions in your life—whether it's porn or some other devastating issue. Remember, God wants you to live in freedom (Galatians 5:1). Part of being re-fathered and receiving your sonship is finding forgiveness and healing from the things that weigh you down and damage your most important relationships.

Quote to note:

Go to Father God like David did—all the way. Let His forgiveness and acceptance give you the courage to disclose your struggles to your closest friends. Get professional help and battle-proven spiritual help. Stop being mad at yourself. Get mad at the source of the lies, the devil. Fill the desires in your heart with the only relationship that satisfies. Let God channel your passions and emotional needs into natural joy and healthy pleasure. (p. 219)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. Addictive behaviors are subject to the Law of Diminishing Returns. The principle is that after a while the addictive behavior you've been practicing no longer satisfies you. You need a "stronger dose" to get the same amount of temporary pleasure. It's part of how addictions rewire our brains in dangerous ways (see p. 213-214). So, for instance, while certain pornographic images may have been enough in the past, you might start watching pornographic movies to feel the same rush. It's a slippery slope that eventually leads to corruption, frustration, and destruction.

- In what ways do you feel the impact of diminishing returns in your life?
- What are the common times and emotional conditions where you feel its pull the strongest?
- What can you do to rewire your brain to get it back to God's default setting, His divine design?

-
- What can you do to replace, disarm and heal from vulnerable mindsets and compromising choices?



2. Computer programmers use the term GIGO for “garbage in, garbage out.” Basically, it means if you enter bad data, you’ll get bad output. In life, the same principle works with your heart and mind. If you aren’t careful about what goes in, you will end up with dangerous results. Read the verses below and record how each one could help you protect the “data” that enters your heart and mind as a Christian guy.

- Psalm 119:9-10
- Proverbs 4:23
- Romans 12:1-2
- 1 Corinthians 10:13
- Philippians 4:8

TIP: Here’s some good news: Just like putting garbage in means you’ll garbage out, the opposite is also true. If you will protect your heart and mind (see Proverbs 4:23 above) and be careful about what you allow in, you can renew your mind (see Romans 12;1-2). God can help you rewire your brain for the good. But you have to be intentional about cutting the cord on things that tear you down.

On pages 214-215, rewiring your brain and disarming the enemy of shame is compared to defusing a bomb. You’ve seen the scenes in action movies where the hero has to cut the right wires in the right sequence to save the world. He’s got to choose between the red one and the green one; and if he’s wrong, everyone’s doomed. Tackling a sex addiction, porn habit and other addictions may feel that scary, but it’s different because of the lies of shame are so dominant. not reality. Father God can handle reality. With a tight trusted team, you can face reality. You can take that step on the path of healing by honestly answering the questions below:

- What really controls me?
- What do I turn to when I’m bored, hungry, tired, stressed, discouraged, angry, or ashamed?
- Why do I hide secret parts of my life?

Quote to Note

A great sex life comes from exclusivity and nurturing a great marriage relationship. (p. 220)

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

In Genesis 38–39, God shared a tale of two brothers: Judah and Joseph. Both of them (and Judah's sons) faced temptation, challenges and complex circumstances related to sex, but they chose very different paths. Read the chapters and reflect on the contrast. In the chart below, record what sticks out to you about Judah's approach and what sticks out to you about Joseph's approach:

Judah (Genesis 38)	Joseph (Genesis 39)

If you're completely honest, which brother sounds more like you? What will you do in response to that reality?

Coach Yourself: You may feel like you've already blown it, like you've crossed a line and can never get back. Hear me clearly . . . that is a lie from the enemy of your soul. When you trust in Jesus, you are a son of the Father, and He always welcomes His kids back. As I wrote in wrapping up this chapter, "If you do get bombed, you don't have to be nuked." (p. 219) Turn to Father God, tell Him everything that's in your heart, receive His forgiveness as a done deal, and move on. Let Him confirm to your heart that He removes out sins as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:1-14).

If the screensaver on your computer has a text feature, make the phrase "Defuse the bomb" (or another significant quote from this chapter) your screensaver. Every time you see that screensaver, ask God to help you be the man He has called you to be. Ask Him to continue the process of rewiring your brain so that He is in control of your life, not some addiction.



Week Seven : Day 2

Mission Himpossible

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. In your journal or in the margin of your field guide, write a brief definition for “service.” Then, look it up in a couple of dictionaries and compare those definitions to what you wrote down. Based on what you discover, what did it mean for Jesus to refuse to be served while determining to be a servant? Record what God reveals to you about your own level of servanthood.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

— Mark 10:45

Read and review chapter 21 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 21, “**Mission Himpossible.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you:

‘Review and respond to the questions at the very start of the chapter (p. 221)...along with the phrase in parentheses.

Do you want your life to be meaningful? (in what way?)

Do you want a purpose that keeps you motivated, something that will outlive you? (like what?)

Do you want to be remembered as a man who made a positive impact? (on whom?)

TIP: Remember that purpose is rooted in your relationship with God. You cannot find purpose on your own. You must seek Him first (see Matthew 6:33). From there, you can follow His directions and lean into His wisdom. Trying to do things your own way and in your own power will only end in frustration.

“Our ultimate purpose is to steward life for our Creator. Since sin has damaged humanity and the world, God’s mission is to reconcile lost people and a broken world back to Him. He involves us, His sons and daughters, in His mission. We participate with Jesus in connecting people back to Him (vertically) and improving their lives on earth (horizontally).” (p. 223)

Stewardship simply means being responsible for an owner’s resources. The steward’s job is to manage the owner’s property in a way that brings the owner a profit. With that in mind, read and reflect on Psalm 24:1. Answer these questions about stewardship:

What does God own?

How are we call to steward those resources?

Why is it important to understand that God is the owner and we are His caretakers?

Read the story of my friend, Rich, on pages 225-227. Review these points from “MY ACTION” on page 227 and respond to them as directed. In a journal or on a blank page in the field guide, record what your Father God tells you about each principle. Thank Him for the purpose He’s provided and ask Him for help in living it out in a way that points others toward Him.

- Determine my single greatest strength, my driving passion, who I most want to help and the sweet spot when I’m working at my best and feeling the most joy and satisfaction. Bullet point those in strong language tailored to me.
- Draft a phrase for my life purpose and a sentence for my mission statement. Go to God to determine and empower it. Ask how it can link God’s glory, His reconciling mission and employing my greatest strengths and gifts to love others and improve lives?

Quote to Note:

“We don’t have to be perfect, but we do need to be honest. Real men are honest men who are being changed by the power of Christ and who are helping others know Christ like they do.”
(p. 225)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:



1. I’ve stated that humility is the key to receiving God’s purpose and confidence. Such humility is based on knowing that the best owner, Father God, is in control, trusting Him to work things out in His timing and for His glory. In what areas are you most likely to let pride get in the way of your dependence on God?

What makes humility so difficult for men to embrace? How can you grow humility in attitude and actions?

TIP: The truth is, we have nothing to brag about. We have no reason for conceit. We are broken and sinful men who are sons of the Father only through His mercy, kindness, and grace. When we remember that He is God and we are not, it becomes much easier to approach Him (and life, in general) with humility.

2. Read 1 Corinthians 5:17-21 in your favorite translations. In a journal or in the margin of your field guide, record three important words and phrases that God reveals to you.

Read the paraphrase of these verses on page 223-224. Add the insights Father God provides to your list. Then, write a brief prayer, thanking God for what He has done and for who and why He has chosen you. Ask Him for the strength and courage to put it into practice each day.

Prayer:

Quote to Note

“Separating from God messed up our mission to multiply and bring out the best in God’s world. It rendered the life of thriving in peace and innocence impossible. Eternally impossible. But then God sent the solution. Grace. Jesus stepped into our world and solved our problem of sin-induced separation. Peace was given and purpose regained through Christ. Our life only becomes what God designed it to be when we make it about Him and by Him.” (p. 222)



3. As an ambassador for Christ, you're never really off the clock. You never stop being His representative, not for a moment and not even if you're alone. You are always His hands and feet. In the space, describe some potential "opportunities" you have to be an ambassador.

- In your hobbies:

- In your profession:

- In your neighborhood:

- Other:

You can be Jesus's representative anywhere your life intersects with the lives of others. How can you use those intersections to be an ambassador?

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

The Westminster Shorter Catechism states that *"the chief end of man is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."*

How do you fulfill that purpose?

How does your life bring glory to God?

What does it look like to enjoy God in your life?

Coach Yourself: Reflect on the questions raised by the Westminster Catechism. Slow down long enough to really consider what it means to glorify God and to enjoy God. As you meet in your small group at church or with the men you've been huddling with recently, discuss what you can do as men to fulfill these purposes from God.

Prior to the meeting reflect on these verses and what they say about these twin callings. Record your thoughts in the chart below and be prepared to share in with the other men.

Chief End of Man	Verse	Thoughts
Glorify God	1 Corinthians 10:31	
Enjoy God	Psalms 16:5-11	

This week, ask Father God to share His purpose for your life if it has been unclear to you. If you know your purpose but have been running from God's plan, surrender to Him. Talk with a trusted mentor, friend or family member about your desire to fulfill God's purpose. Understand that you will never know true joy or satisfaction until you give Him complete control and pursue Him with complete obedience. But, if you do, your life will never be the same.



Week Seven : Day 3

The Best Owner

Open Hands: Receiving from the Father

Invest a few minutes sitting with God as His son.

Thank Him for being your perfect Father.

Thank Him for His nature & anything positive (write bullet points).

Ask Him to eliminate anything that can distract you from hearing Him.

Meditate on the verse for this week. Reflect on the word “ransom” this week. While we could never give our lives as a ransom like Jesus did, we can still make sacrifices for the sake of others. In a journal or in the margins of your field guide, write “RANSOM” as an acrostic. Using the letters in the word, make a list of things you could release or cut back on for the benefit of a family member or friend. Ask Father God to help you know the right way to offer these potential sacrifices to Him.

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

— Mark 10:45

Read and review chapter 22 of RECEIVE. In a notebook, a journal, or in the margins of this field guide, record any thoughts or quotes that resonate with you. Be prepared to share what you learned with a friend or with the men you huddle with this week.

Open Mind: Reviewing What You’ve Read

Use these bullet points to dig into the content for chapter 22, “**The Best Owner.**” In the margins, make notes about what it’s saying to you:

“Whenever I start generating ideas and future plans on my own—trying to own my future —remembering the title deed recalibrates my brain. It reminds me that God plans smarter and kinder than me. It helps me overcome the lie that I’m not enough and quenches my yearning for significance. Giving fears over to God takes them away as we ask God to show us the lies that cause them.” (p. 231-232)

Think about the title deed for your life. What items would it include?
List them in the space below:

What is holding you back from surrendering everything to a Father God who consistently proves Himself trustworthy?

“The problem with our self-designed operating systems is they’re powered by fear. Fear is a tyrant. It’s a fierce motivator, but a terrible master. Fear blinds us to what God wants to give us. It pivots us away from grace, away from love and truth from our Father. It blocks joy.” (p. 232)

What are some things that create fear in your life?

What are the sources of those fears?

TIP: Remember that receiving the transformation that God is working in you will not happen overnight. In fact, it will take a lifetime. Even then, you won’t fully receive all God has for you until heaven. But that shouldn’t discourage you from making incremental steps right now. Every truth you embrace/receive and every lie you reject makes you a little more like Him—and that adds purpose and meaning to this life (as well as eternity).

Read 1 John 4:18 and reflect on the relationship between love and fear. In the space below, identify how you can plug into genuine love:

“Turning ownership of our life over to God seems radical. It is, meaning it gets to the very root. It’s going all in with His plans and purposes as better than our own. A major step toward this will be letting go of the past.” (p. 233)

Invest some time contemplating this list from page 233. For each one, record a time when it caused confusion or chaos in your life. Then answer the questions below:

- *Lies about God, myself or life...lies driving my fears*
- *Shame over my failures and any disparaging self-talk I repeat to myself*
- *Ego-inflating recognition and false feelings of superiority because of my accomplishments—especially those that have formed the basis of my identity*
- *Disappointments and the offenses or sins others committed against me*
- *Bitter resentment, un-forgiveness, and contempt*

Which of these will be easiest for you to release to God? Why?

Which would be hardest? Why?

Talk about this with the men your friend, or guys in your huddle or men's group at church.

Quote to Note:

“There is only one type of life that truly wins and that is the one that places faith in the hands of the Savior. Until that is done, you are on an aimless course that goes nowhere.” — John Wooden (p. 236)

Open Heart: Being Honest with Yourself

Take a few minutes to prayerfully and carefully answer these questions:

1. On page 233, I explain that doubt is what holds us back from completely trusting God. While His plans and purposes for our lives produce meaning, our own ideas disappoint—or, worse, devastate! Use the chart below to contrast how doubt clouds our vision versus how God's view provides clarity.

My Doubts	God's Certainty

In your journal or in the margins of your field guide, write a prayer about your doubts. Disclose and confess them to God. Ask Him to help you trust Him more fully.

TIP: Earlier in the field guide, we talked about the difference between guilt and shame. Doubt is one of those areas of life where guilt can push you toward the Father, while shame can push you away. Remember, doubt is not a sin. Questions are natural, and God welcomes them. In fact, He wants you to bring them to Him so He can help you navigate your issues. But if you let shame drive a wedge between you and your Father, you will never be able to fully resolve the doubts in your life. As a son, lean into your Father. You may not understand some things right now. You may never understand them as well as you would like. But He is a good Father, so you can always trust Him to work for your good and His glory.

2. Assess how much of your life is truly committed to follow the leadership and lordship of Jesus. If you had to guess, what percent of your life is surrendered to Him? Use the scale below to record your answer:



Using the bullet points below, list at least one action you can take to surrender more of these areas to God's complete control. (For more, see page 234.)

- Your body and what you do with it:

- Your mouth and what you say:

- Your thoughts and where you let them take you:

Write a short prayer expressing your gratitude to Father God for His continuing work in your life and asking Him to take total control of each area of your life.

Quote to Note

“Quit your struggle. Scrap your inadequate operating system. Surrender full ownership to the perfect owner. Receive Jesus fully. Receive His forgiveness fully. Forgive yourself, your dad or anyone else you’ve allowed to harden your heart. End your victimhood and bondage to bitterness. Run to the Father. Live as His son. Ask Him to Re-Father you. He’ll guide you in every situation in all of life.” (p. 235)



3. Review the summary and action plan to live in the way of Jesus on page 234-235:

Remember, manhood is a team sport.

What I learned:

What I will do:

Live the Receive Principle.

What I learned:

What I will do:

Live to Transform.

What I learned:

What I will do:

Huddle Regularly.

What I learned:

What I will do:

Live to Lift.

What I learned:

What I will do:

In essence, these are the pillars of what it means to Receive your sonship from Father God, your identity, your manhood, your masculinity, your purpose. They're what the book is all about. Beside each point, write something related that you've learned ...and write one thing you are committing to do in response.

Open Life: Acting on What's Next for You

If you've been talking to Father God about it, and truly sense Him leading you to do so, create a "Deed to My Life." Include the areas you listed in the earlier activity (and any more God reveals to you through prayer, His Word, and conversations with trusted men). Include Bible verses that remind you that God is trustworthy—and absolutely worthy of all things. (Remember, He is the best owner, and you are the steward!)

Coach Yourself: Read Mark 8:34-35 from your favorite translation. (You can find it printed on page 235.) We don't like the idea of dying, even metaphorically. But that's exactly what Father God called His Perfect Son to do, for our benefit. And He has called us to do so as well, for our benefit. Look at the three elements of these verses. Write a short statement that describes what each of these could look like in your life:

- Deny yourself:

- Take up your cross:

- Follow Jesus:

This week, begin the process of reviewing your notes and activities in the field guide. In a journal or using the notes feature on your phone, identify two or three steps that have to be a priority in your life if you're going to live as a son of the Father. Take your time. Don't rush through the process. Next week, you can pick up where you left off. If the review takes several weeks, that's all right. Whatever it takes to move you closer to God and closer to the man He has designed you to become.

Huddling Up: Week Seven

These are the guys I huddled with this week:

This is where and when we huddled together:

Pray for each other in your meeting. Ask each other, “what’s the most important thing going on in your life I can pray for you?” Be sure each man is asked and prayed for. Close by asking God to speak and guide your conversations.

Use this Space to Write Down Prayer Requests:

Review the Bible verse for this week: Mark 10:45

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Encourage each man to share something God said to them through the verse this week. Allow guys to share how they are working to apply the verse to their lives each day.

Provide time for each man in the group to share one or two things that resonated with him as he read and reflected on chapters 20-22 this week.

Questions: Use these questions to facilitate a discussion during your group meeting. Remember, you can find extra questions for your group by looking Remember, you can find extra questions for your group wherever you find this symbol the “Open Heart” section of each daily reading.

1. What has God said to you this week about who He is and who He is calling you to be?
2. How would you describe your relationship with your wife right now? What responsibility and steps are you willing to take to improve the relationship by improving yourself?
3. In what areas could you fall into addiction if you aren’t careful? What makes that area such a red flag for you? How can a couple Level 5 Friends or the men in your group stand with you?
4. What would a meaningful life look like for you? How would you know that you had attained it? On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being “running on empty” and 10 being “full tank,” how meaningful is your life today?
5. Over what areas has God made you a steward? How can you grow stronger in managing the gifts and blessings He has given you in those areas?
6. Who is actually owning your life? What does your answer indicate about your relationship with the Father? (and the potential for it to grow?)

Close your time in prayer: Allow each man to identify one main thing he is going to start working on based on the study of this book. Ask God to help each man to continue growing in their sonship identity and to shape them as the men He created them to be. Remind the guys that the life with Christ is a team sport. Encourage them to find ways to deepen friendships and continue huddling with buddies, or groups of trustworthy men.



Epilogue to the Receive Field Guide

In this epilogue to the field guide I challenge you to re-read the epilogue to the book. Keep recording anything God says to you in the process. There's some key stuff in those last couple of pages, and I'll highlight two quotes for you to ponder:

- "Don't be shocked if your expectations rise but your confidence tanks as you start this journey over the next few weeks or months." (p. 237)
- "Tell yourself, 'Get out of God's way, so He can work in me way better than I can.'" (p. 238)

In other words, watch your expectations, be patient and stay open to God's direction. The message about the way of Jesus in RECEIVE is radical. It's transformational. But not by your strength or on your own. It's changed my life and can change yours as well. But you will hit bumps in the road. Be ready for them.

The enemy doesn't sit idly by as you become the man God created you to be. He's going to use his weapons to hold you back, to discourage you, to convince you to stop. Expect it!

When it happens, turn to God and let Him fight for you. It's what your heavenly Father loves to do for His sons.

Transformation comes with sustained action and experience. Thus, many of the actions and activities in this book and field guide are designed to be replicated as your own habits. For example, the "Open Hands" steps to start each day's study can become your habit to start every day with your Father for the rest of your life. Likewise, you can meditate on any verse using the activities we shared each day. And the Self X-Ray is a great tool to consistently evaluate what's going on in every area of our life.

And, of course, weekly huddling with a couple trustworthy friends is a habit that's vital and fun! Don't stop huddling.

Hey, brother, great effort by you to reach the end of the book and the field guide! But, you're just starting to accelerate on the Receive journey. I am praying that the God who began a good work in you will continue it until the day you see Him face to face (Phil. 1:6).

Always remember . . . your Father loves and likes you! You're never alone.

Keep receiving.

Keep huddling.

