

2: JESUS, THE TRUE MAN

By John
In Character, Faith, Identity

5 Min Read



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Discipled by the World Series: Relearning Manhood in Christ.

OPENING THOUGHT

Ask ten men what it means to be a “real man,” and you’ll get ten different answers. Some will talk about toughness—being strong, independent, and never backing down. Others will point to leadership—providing, protecting, staying in control. Even in the church, we tend to adopt the same ideals with a spiritual spin: men are told to lead, serve, give, attend, and, for heaven’s sake, don’t screw up.

But here’s what’s **not being said well**: most of what we call “biblical manhood” still revolves around *performance*. We’ve masqueraded cultural expectations and pass them off as discipleship. We teach men to take charge but not to take up their cross. We push them

to be bold but rarely remind them that there's strength in gentleness. We celebrate leadership but forget that Jesus used His power to serve, not to dominate.

Jesus didn't fit the world's definition of a "man's man." He wept publicly. Served quietly. Walked away from fights He could've won. He embraced children, touched lepers, and loved people others avoided. And yet, He also confronted injustice, called out hypocrisy, and stared evil in the face without flinching. He carried both strength and softness, courage and compassion—truth wrapped in grace.

That's biblical manhood in its truest form. Jesus isn't just your Savior—He's your standard. The problem is, too many of us admire Him without imitating Him. We love His power but resist His posture. We quote His words but ignore His way. We want His victory but not His vulnerability.

If you really want to know what it means to be a man, stop looking at culture for cues—and stop comparing yourself to other men. Look at Jesus. He's not just the model of masculinity—He's the measure of it.

SCRIPTURE

"He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature..."

—Hebrews 1:3 (ESV)

This verse says more than we realize. Jesus isn't a copy of God—He *is* God revealed. Every word, every act, every emotion He displayed was the Father's character in flesh and bone. If you've ever wondered what God looks like in human form, you already know: He looks like Jesus.

That means true masculinity isn't found in toughness or titles; it's found in reflecting the nature of God. When you look at Jesus, you see courage without arrogance, authority without oppression, and compassion without compromise.

APPLICATION

Here's what's not being said enough: most men are trying to follow Jesus with the same mindset that built the man they used to be. We've been taught to lead like CEOs, push through like soldiers, and fix things like mechanics. Handle it. Own it. Figure it out. And then we wonder why men are exhausted.

We've been trained to fight, to fix, to prove we've got what it takes. But Jesus modeled something radically different—dependence.

He didn't operate out of ego or effort. He said, *"I only do what I see the Father doing."* That's not weakness; that's wisdom. He lived surrendered, not self-sufficient. Yet that side of Jesus rarely makes it into men's conversations. We tell men to take charge, but not to take up

their cross. We tell them to be strong for their families, but not how to be still before God. We admire His miracles but skip right past His silence. His solitude. His submission.

Becoming that kind of man doesn't happen through willpower or self-mastery. It occurs through surrender. Transformation starts when you stop posturing and start imitating. When you stop trying to prove you're capable and start admitting you're dependent. When you stop performing for God and start walking with Him.

We want Christ's results without living Christ's example. We crave His impact without sharing His intimacy. But if you want to become the man He designed you to be, you'll have to live the way He lived—dependent on the Father, guided by the Spirit, grounded in love.

TODAY'S CHALLENGE: FOCUS ON IMITATION, NOT INDEPENDENCE

Read one chapter from the Gospels today. Pick any moment—when Jesus faces pressure, power, people, or pain—and watch how He acts. Notice how He never panics, never postures, never manipulates. He simply obeys.

Ask yourself: How would Jesus handle what I'm facing right now?

Then pray this:

"Lord, help me see You clearly and follow You closely. Teach me to lead with truth and live with grace. Strip away everything false and form in me a heart that looks like Yours."

FINAL THOUGHT

The world keeps telling men to toughen up, and the church keeps telling them to shape up. But Jesus calls men to be whole.

He was bold enough to confront evil and humble enough to wash feet. He carried authority without pride and emotion without shame. He wasn't driven by ego or fear; He was anchored in identity.

That's the kind of man the world is desperate to see—and the kind of man God is shaping you to become. Jesus doesn't just save men; He remakes them. He's not asking for your performance—He's inviting your presence.

The closer you walk with Him, the more His reflection becomes your reality.

This week's step: Each morning this week, before the world defines what strength looks like, ask:

"Jesus, how would You handle this day if You were living it through me?"

Then go live the answer—quietly, faithfully, and courageously.

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Contact: John Leavy

Email: johndleavy@gmail.com

Website: 1Man2Another.com