
LIONHEART DAD · MAN OF WAR CHURCH · LEXINGTON, KY

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Intentional *Fathers*

Facilitator Curriculum Guide

BASED ON *THE INTENTIONAL FATHER* BY JON TYSON
SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 26, 2026 · 7-WEEK SMALL GROUP
MAN OF WAR CHURCH · LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY

“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

JOSHUA 24:15

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

How to Use This Guide

A practical framework for facilitating 7 weeks of honest, accountable brotherhood around biblical fatherhood.

Session Format (60–90 minutes)

1. **Opening prayer** — 2 min
2. **Check-in:** “What step did you commit to last week? How did it go?” — 10–15 min
3. **Teach / Discussion** — Walk through the week’s content and questions — 30–40 min
4. **Book discussion** — Key passages, pushback, application — 15–20 min
5. **Commitment** — Each man states one concrete step for the coming week — 10 min
6. **Prayer partners** — Pair up, pray for each other — 5 min

Ground Rules (Establish Week 1)

- What’s said here stays here
- No preaching — share your own struggles
- No fixing — listen first, advise only when asked
- Come prepared: reading done, honest with yourself

The Need for Fathers

Malachi 4:6 · Ephesians 6:4

KEY CONTENT

- The crisis of fatherhood — why young men are struggling to become men
- **5 Kinds of Fathers:** Absent, Ignorant, Passive, Reactive, Intentional
- A father's presence and emotional health give children a tremendous advantage
- Cultural data: what research says about father involvement and child outcomes
- Key quote: self-initiation is killing our young men — without mentors, boys walk alone into confusion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which kind of father are you right now? Be honest — not which one you want to be.
- 2 Which kind of father did you grow up with? How has that shaped how you parent?
- 3 What's one area where you know you've been coasting?
- 4 Tyson opens with his own anxiety about having a son. When have you felt that kind of fear about fatherhood?

Commitment Prompts

- "This week, I will initiate a 1-on-1 conversation with my son."
- "I will put the phone down during dinner every night this week."
- "I will pray specifically for one child by name each morning."

A Preview of the Possible / Honoring Your Father

Joshua 24:15 · Exodus 20:12

KEY CONTENT

- What intentional fatherhood looks like in practice
- The father as the architect of home culture
- Moving from passive to proactive fathering
- Even broken fathers deserve honor — the commandment has no exception clause
- Breaking free from bitterness — giving your sons what you didn't receive
- *Note: Ch. 4 is often the hardest. Don't rush it.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What does intentional fatherhood look like in your home this week — concretely?
- 2 If you wrote a one-paragraph vision for your household, what would it say?
- 3 Have you made peace with your own father — even if he failed you?
- 4 What are you repeating from your father that you don't want to repeat?

Commitment Prompts

- “I will write down 3 values I want to define my home by.”
- “I will have a conversation about my father with a mentor or trusted friend.”

Ceremony, Home & Values

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 · Proverbs 22:6

KEY CONTENT

- The power of “marking moments” — rites of passage matter
- Liminal space: the transitional phase between boyhood and manhood
- Your home is the primary discipleship environment
- Establishing rituals, rhythms, and routines that shape identity
- Defining your family’s non-negotiable values
- The difference between rules and values

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What “marking moments” do your kids remember? What did you intentionally create?
- 2 What are the non-negotiable values of your household? Can your kids articulate them?
- 3 If your home had a “culture,” how would you describe it right now?
- 4 What’s one ceremony or tradition you could start this month?

Commitment Prompts

- “I will plan and execute one intentional marking moment with my child this week.”
- “I will define 5 family values and share them with my wife and kids.”

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The Five Shifts

2 Timothy 2:2 · Philippians 4:8–9

THE FIVE SHIFTS

- 1 **Unhealthy → Healthy Identity** — knowing who you are in Christ first
- 2 **Comfort → Courage** — choosing the hard right over the easy wrong
- 3 **Isolated → Connected** — you cannot raise sons alone
- 4 **Reactive → Proactive** — initiating rather than responding
- 5 **Self-focused → Others-focused** — your family, church, community

— *This is the hinge week. The real work begins here.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which of the five shifts is the hardest for you right now? Why?
- 2 Where have you seen yourself move from reactive to proactive this month?
- 3 Who are the men holding you accountable? If no one — what does that tell you?
- 4 What's one comfortable thing you need to step away from to be a better father?

Commitment Prompts

- *"I will initiate one conversation this week that I've been avoiding."*
- *"I will ask another man in this group to hold me accountable on one specific thing."*

Preparing for Moments / Being Good at Being a Man

Matthew 7:11 · 1 Corinthians 16:13

KEY CONTENT

- Don't let the defining moments of your son's life happen by accident
- Anticipating key conversations: sex, faith, identity, failure, calling
- Preparing your heart before you prepare your words
- What biblical masculinity actually looks like vs. cultural confusion
- Strength, courage, tenderness, leadership — all biblical
- *This is where the group gets real. Expect vulnerability.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which conversation with your son are you most afraid of having?
- 2 How do you define "being a man" biblically? How is that different from culture?
- 3 Where have you seen your son struggle with identity or confusion?
- 4 What's the most important uninitiated conversation you need to have in the next 6 months?

Commitment Prompts

- "I will initiate a key conversation with my son this week that I've been putting off."
- "I will pray specifically for my son's future identity and calling."

Roles, Identity & the Arc of Life

James 1:2–4 · Ecclesiastes 3:1–8

KEY CONTENT

- The roles a father plays: provider, protector, teacher, priest, friend
- Recognizing which roles come naturally — and which need growth
- Helping your son discover who God made him to be
- The father as a mirror: reflecting truth about your child's identity
- Understanding the seasons of fatherhood — adapting as children grow
- *Men who've done the work 5 weeks are starting to see changes.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which roles come naturally to you? Which ones feel like a stretch?
- 2 Where are you in the arc of life with your oldest son? Has your approach adapted?
- 3 Have you helped your son discover his unique gifting — or projected yours onto him?
- 4 What does your son need from you today that's different from a year ago?

Commitment Prompts

- "I will take my son on a 1-on-1 outing and ask him 3 questions about who he thinks he is."
- "I will identify the role I'm weakest in and ask one man in this group how he handles it."

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Recognition & Legacy

Joshua 24:15 · Psalm 78:1–7

KEY CONTENT

- The gap year: a season of exploration and growth for your son
- Providing structure and freedom simultaneously
- The power of a father's spoken blessing over his son
- Planning your own "welcome ceremony" — words have power
- This isn't a program — it's a way of life
- Committing to the men at your side: the brotherhood that remains

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 What's the one thing from these 7 weeks that changed how you lead your home?
- 2 Have you ever spoken a blessing over your son? What would that look like?
- 3 What's your biggest takeaway — and what are you committed to keeping going?
- 4 Who in this group are you going to stay connected with? How?

Closing the Group

- Go around the room: each man shares one commitment for the next 30 days
- Pair up — pray over each other's families
- Plan the next gathering (monthly lunch, text thread, etc.)
- "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." — Joshua 24:15

Handling Hard Moments

Every group has friction. Here's how to navigate it with grace and intention.

Common Pushbacks

"I didn't have a father — I don't know what to do."

That's exactly why you're here. You're breaking the cycle. Tyson addresses this in Ch. 4.

"My kids are grown. Is it too late?"

No. You can still speak blessing, still be intentional. Ch. 13 addresses this directly.

"My wife does most of the parenting."

Your role is not optional. That's why Tyson wrote this book for fathers.

"This is too intense / emotional / weird."

Good. Comfort isn't the goal — formation is. Self-initiation is killing young men. This is the antidote.

Group Dynamics to Watch

The Fixer

Gives advice constantly. Redirect: "Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet."

The Silent Guy

Draw out privately, not publicly. Trust takes time. Follow up 1-on-1.

The Over-sharer

Dominates with his story. Gently redirect to the question at hand.

The Critic

Pushes back on everything. Acknowledge his point, move on, follow up privately.

Schedule at a Glance

WK 1

WK 2

WK 3

WK 4

WK 5

WK 6

WK 7

