Tim Lundy: Welcome to Better Man. What a thrill to see such a great turnout today. And I've to got to tell you, what we're doing here is really very rare. There's not a lot of groups that are focused specifically on what it means to be a man. In fact, I would say the term "manhood" is one of the most used, but least understood, terms in our culture today. That's why I'm thrilled that you're here.

We're going to go on an 11 week journey together, and as we do this, here's my commitment to you. Over the next 11 weeks, you're going to have a crystal clear picture of what it means to be a man. We're going to define it together and give you the kind of equipping and encouragement you need as a man to be able to live this out.

Now, before we begin this journey, though, there's a couple of groups I need to thank. The first is the Better Man logistics team. There's a group of men who, for weeks, they've been working and preparing. They've done the administrative work. They were here early. They set up, provided refreshments. They did all the behind the scenes work to make this possible, and so I really appreciate all the guys who are a part of it.

Secondly, I want to thank the Better Man table leaders. Again, these are guys who began weeks ago partnering with me. They were trained in the material. They began recruiting many of you. Many of you are here today because of their invitation. So, guys, you need to know... these table leaders, they're your go-to guys. They're here not only to lead the discussion, but also to serve you, to do anything that you need while you're on this journey. And so, can I thank our table leaders? Thank you! Because of your investment, that's what makes Better Man really a special experience.

With that said, are you guys ready to launch? Well if you are, let's turn to Session 1 in our workbooks, and let's look at some starting line perspectives.

Right here at the beginning, we want to declare as men, we have a lot in common. There's things that we share as men that a lot of times we forget. One of things that I love about doing this journey together, is it just reminds me and it reminds all of us, we're in this together. As men, we have a propensity to think that we're in this alone... and to just realize there's other guys dealing with the same issues, and that we share this in common.

I think one of the key things we share in common you see there, we all want to be better men. I've not met a guy who has declared, "I don't want to get better." And we all have that sense, we feel it in us, and today... we're coming here, different perspectives... if you look in your notes there, some of us are coming in and you probably feel pretty good about where you are. You've seen markers on your journey that you go, I'm feeling good where I am as a man, but you know you never arrive! That's the great thing about men who get it; they know there's still more. There's still further parts of this journey.

Now, some of us are here today, and we're asking some questions, and these are really strategic questions, guys, if you look at that. What do I need to know that I don't know? That is something that a better man always does. He's always asking himself, "Okay, what am I missing here?" What do I need to know?

Secondly, what should be top priorities now? How do I make my life strategic? Not just my work strategic, not just other goals, but my personal life is strategic. How do I live without regrets? How do I live a way that when I get to the end of life, I don't look up and the things that mattered most... I'm looking at family, I'm looking at friends, I'm looking at key markers that I go, "Oh, I wanted to do that in life," and I have regret. See, that requires intentionality.

Now, some here today, frankly, are struggling and need new direction. And if that's you, hear me again, you're not alone. We have all been there or we will be there. It just hits men at different stages in life, and you don't know when it's going to come. And that's the importance, again, of doing this together, that you don't have to be alone. And your struggles, and even your failures, don't have to define you. We're on a journey together.

To do that, though, we need to step back and get a real clear picture of where men are today, because if there was ever a time period where there's confusion around this, it's now. I mean, you look at commercials, you look at movies, you look at how men are presented in the world today... the big issue of the day is toxic masculinity. And yes, there's abuse of masculinity out there, but there's a wide swath of people that will declare right now, the idea of being masculine is toxic. And I look at it and go, "Well, what does that mean for us as guys?"

And so, in this session particularly, I want to walk you through... and you'll see in the notes... just a clear picture, where are we today? How are we doing today? You see the first part there... some men have found a manhood that works, and a manhood that works is truly life-giving. In every family, in every business, in every social group... as you start thinking about those circles in your life right now... there are different guys, in particular, in it... they're either life-giving or life-sucking.

I mean, think about the people you work with right now. And when you gather... you're around that table, you're meeting as a team... and there's certain people, they walk in the room, and when they walk in, you feel the energy. You know it's going to be better. You know they're going to actually ask about you. You know they're going to contribute to what's going on, whether it's their responsibility or not. And then there's other guys... when they walk in, you can almost feel it. They're just sucking life.

And part of what we want to do is, how do you get that kind of life-giving energy in every context of your life? How do you become one of those guys? Because when you're that, look what happens, and you'll see this every time; guys that are life-giving, people are encouraged by! You feel it at work. Women and wives feel safe and valued. And that's one of the key things; one of the reasons we're paying the price as men in our culture today so much, is because women have been so threatened in the past and they don't feel safe.

And so, as men, as we step forward, it doesn't mean that we need to pull back in strength; we use our strength in a way that's life-giving, that's protecting.

The third thing you see: families thrive in it, particularly, sons are drawn to it. And I said I have four sons, I have two son-in-laws, and I have one grandson. And when I step forward as the man I'm called to be, it is amazing how I can feel all of them drawn to me, wanting to do life with me. And I think all of us long for that for our sons, if you have sons.

Our daughters feel protected and they delight in it. It just gives them a sense of security in it. The workplace and the community benefits from it. And I want you to notice in that box, because I think is so true... life-giving is the word that the Bible used to describe Jesus. When I read Jesus' life, I look at how He treated people, I look at how people felt around Him... there was a safety and a strength. There was a strength of who he was, but there was a safety that people felt around that.

Now, I always look at my life; I'm like, "Am I bringing that to my home, that when I walk in the door, man, they feel the strength of who I am, but man, they feel safe in it?" I want that in a work setting! If I have a place of authority, if I'm speaking into life, I want them to feel the strength! I'm a man! God's called me to lead! God's called me to step into it! But do I combine that strength with a safe environment that they go, "Okay, this guy's for me. This guy's using that strength on my behalf."

Men have found that. I've seen that. One of the greatest privileges of my life is the material we're working through. I've had that opportunity over the last 18 years or so to go through it and to teach it, and I've seen the life-giving power it gives men. That's why I'm so passionate about this.

As you look at it, as well, though, we need to recognize that some men live today, and manhood for them is a fog. It's a fog, and I would say it's getting foggier. And when you're in a fog, you don't get to see very far. The times have changed and left men conflicted and confused. You look at historically how this has happened in our country. If you go back years ago, men either farmed or they had a shop that was at home, or the town was small enough... it was interesting, if you looked through the generations of that time period, boys, in particular, worked with their father, or they saw their father at work. They got to see Dad at his best.

And then the Industrial Revolution came, and suddenly now Dad went off to work, and a boy's world changed dramatically with that, especially when the schooling system, in particular, was led by women. And so, a boy went from a world where he was near Dad, he saw Dad, he saw Dad doing what Dad was meant to do... to now a world where he was educated, for the most part, by women.

And then you add on in the 20th century, a list of wars, from World War I to World War II, to the Vietnam and Korea, and then the Gulf Wars. You had a generation of fathers, in particular, who went off and then they came home emotionally stunted. They're struggling with PTSD. Some of you guys had that dad. Their emotions were shut off with it.

And then you add the social movement of the last 20th century, where feminism moved forward... and made great strides, by the way. I want you to hear everything I'm teaching in this; I don't want to take anything away from women! I'm glad for the things that were redressed. What grieves me, though, is what was done at the expense of men. Guys, it doesn't have to be an either/or! And unfortunately, in that movement that came, you suddenly had guys that... they didn't really know what to do. They didn't have a picture of life anymore. They walk on eggshells a little bit of even talking about what it means to be a man. There's not many contexts like that. That's one of the reasons this Better Man movement wants to launch across the country, because we've got to talk about it again as men! We've got to get a map and get some answers around this.

As you look in your notes there... so, what does it mean to be a man today? In turning away from the answers of the past, we have yet to clearly define manhood for the present. It's one thing to criticize the past; it's another thing to get a picture of the present. And men in a manhood fog struggle. You do life in the fog, you will struggle every time. If you do not have a picture, if it's not clear, they settle for less in life but they don't know it's less. They just settle into the routine and they think of what life is supposed to be, and yet there's this gnawing sense, is this really what life is about?

Years ago, and this was actually back in the 1950s, there was a psychologist, Rollo May, and he wrote this about the men that he saw. He said, "The clearest picture of an empty life is the suburban man who gets up at the same hour every weekday morning; takes the same train to work in the city; performs the same task at the office; lunches at the same places; leaves the same tip for the waitress; comes home on the same train each night; spends a two week vacation at the Shore each summer, which he does not enjoy; goes to church, but does not know why he goes; moves through a routine, mechanical existence year after year after year; until he retires at age 65; and very soon after, he dies of heart failure, possibly brought on by the repressed anger, although I have always had the suspicion that he died of boredom."

Now, he's describing a treadmill of life, and treadmill's a little bit different today in the 21st century, but it's still a treadmill. Guy after guy that, today, they don't stay at the same job as much, but you watch guys... they keep doing a new job, and a new job, and this one's going to fulfill... or the new startup, and if I just sell my soul for the next year for this startup, man, it's really going to cash in... or the new challenge, or the new vacation, or the new toy, or the new video game that I'll literally spend hours of my life on at a time... or the new experience, or the newest sexual exploit.

And it's different treadmills, but still just getting on the treadmill. And you look at guys, and they get to a point in life that they look up and they go, "Is this it" That we've settled?" And sometimes we settle as respectable men; we do the respectable thing, but we've still settled in life.

With the settling, there's even a greater issue. Men in a fog create problems. They create lots of them! The greatest societal ills... it falls at the feet of men. I mean, you should look at some of the stats. Most of the major issues, 90 percent of all crimes... committed by men. 95 percent of all burglaries... committed by men. Almost 100 percent of rapes. 91 percent of offenses against the family or children... committed by men. 94 percent of drunk drivers are men.

You look at it, and I love that quote... it's always struck me, that quote, when you see it in the box there, by Margaret Mead. She's an anthropologist, she's studied cultures throughout history. She's not talking about any one time frame. But as she studied cultures, look at her line: "The chief responsibility of every society is to find healthy roles for its men." Why? Because if men don't have a vision of a noble and a good life, they don't just settle, they dumb down to problematic behavior.

And if you don't have a vision... point three, you can see there... they guess at their masculinity and they hope it works. They guess. Because you're in a fog, you don't have a picture of it, nobody's talking about it, and you just guess at it. I tell you, I feel this in my life so much. My dad died when I was six years old. I'll tell you more about that story and how it shaped me over the course of our time together.

But as a boy growing up in that, it was so much about manhood that I just guessed at. I had two older brothers, and as we grew up... it's interesting, of the three of us, the one I thought who had figured it out the most was my brother, Todd. He's a couple years older than me, and in that, I watched Todd... I watched his career path, I watched how successful he was; he got in the tech industry. I mean, right in college, it was just a rocket ship up. He went with Novell, and then worked with Cisco Systems, then worked with Dell, and he's just making more and more money, and he was so on top of life!

There was a little bit about it that intimidated me. He was so funny; one time I was interviewing to work at a church, and Todd called me on the phone. He said, "Hey, you want me to fly in and help you negotiate the contract?" I was like, "Todd, I don't think that's going to work that great." He goes, "All right, all right, just do this, though. Promise me you'll do this. When you're sitting at the table and they make you the offer, you look at it, laugh, tear it up, get up from the table, and as you walk out the room, say, 'Hey, when you guys are serious, come back with a real offer,' and walk out of the room!" I said, "Todd, it really doesn't work like that in the church world! Doesn't real play well that way!"

I watched him, and what I didn't know is while he was doing a journey up, he was also doing a journey down to the bottom of a bottle... that he was drinking every day to make it work. And I remember standing over his hospital bed at the age of 42... 42-year-old, that I'm looking at him... and if you walked in the room and you didn't know his story, you would have thought he was 72 at the time, as his body had given out... and he died.

I hate his choices, but I understand his confusion. And I've seen his confusion play out... maybe not as dramatically; some guys are not on the fast course of killing themselves at 42, but they're still in the fog. Maybe you feel you're there. That's why we have to face it. That's why we have to step into it. That's why we have to look at the challenges. What are the key challenges we face today? Today!

Four key challenges I want us to address. One: what we were just talking about. The reason we're in a fog is the loss of a common manhood vision... that loss of that picture of, okay, that's what manhood looks like. That's what I want to be! That's the guy I'm called to be! We don't have the language around it. We don't have a picture of it. And without that picture, without vision, we just live in no-man's-land, where everybody kind of comes up with their own picture of it. There's nothing common that's noble, that's calling us forward.

We're like... it's that feeling. You ever been a huge, massive mall, and you just want to find the one store, but you can't find a mall map? If I could just find some setting that would say, "Okay, you're here, and I need to go there." Or, have you ever started a movie, especially a mystery, about 20 minutes late, and you keep seeing characters in it and you're like, "Okay, I think I know what's going on?" That's how we are as men today! We're constantly kind of feeling like, "Okay, do I know the lay of the land? Do I know the character? Do I know where I'm going/ Where's the mall map? Will somebody just give me a map and say, 'Okay, you're here, and this is how you get here.' Would somebody give me a vision of what a man looks like?"

It's interesting, years ago, when the Transformer movies all came out... kind of dumb movies based on this comic that would come on... really, the whole comic series was toys they were trying to sell. And the whole Transformer thing was a little bit behind me, so I wasn't into it, but I remember reading in Wired Magazine, as they started to make the movie, all these guys kept calling the studio, and they were panicked that they weren't going to really be true to the story... so much so that the director, Michael Bay, was surprised at it. He's like, "Where is this coming from?"

And here's what they identified... the one character that they were scared to death they were going to mess up was the leader of the Transformers, Optimus Prime. And the reason... this was this noble character from these guys' childhood. Listed as one 30-year-old National Guardsman... he said these words. He said, "I latched onto Optimus Prime as a kid. My dad passed away, and I didn't really have anyone around, and he was there for me every day."

In fact, the writer of the article, as he dove into it, he said, "Optimus Prime practically parented the latchkey kids of the mid-'80s. He was our all-father when flesh and blood models weren't around." You hear that? That's a generation of guys going, "I just want a vision. I don't care if it's a toy robot." Why do you think these superhero movies capture the imagination today? We are longing for noble characters. We're longing for people that we can look at and go, "Ah, man, it gives me a vision."

Without vision, we're left to make up manhood for ourselves. We kind of have to figure it out on our own. And in that, nobody really defines... when do you know you even became a man? Think about your own story. Who told you you were finally a man? When did you ever feel like you were really a man? The writer Donald Miller talks about in his own life... he grew up without a dad and he always struggles that with that, and he wasn't an athlete and he didn't feel like he was a man's man.

And finally, on his own... here's his definition. He says, "How do you know if you're a man?" He says, "A real man is a person with a penis." He goes, "I'm in! I'm in the club. You're in the club." Now he wrote this over a decade ago; that definition is changing in our world today! It really is!

But there's part of it, and I agree with him... I go, "Okay, Donald, I would want all guys... there's not this one man's man." When you hear me talk about this and this definition, I'm not talking about you've got to be this superstar athlete, or you've got to be the guy that steps forward stronger than anybody else. Some of the strongest men I've ever known were not physically strong.

But there's got to be more than just outdoor plumbing that defines you as a man... got to be more to that. It's interesting, having a house full of boys, especially when they were little and bath time and that... my wife would always ask me, she says, "What is it with guys and penis? You guys name it everything in the world." I mean, the boys were always coming... it's a wee-wee, or it's a pee-pee; I mean, they had all different names. She says, "What is it with names and penises?" And I said, "Well, babe, I don't know. It's right there in front of us. We kind of feel an ownership that we can kind of name the thing. It's just part of it." She goes, "I'm not getting that completely."

One time after bath time, she had all of them... they're real close in age... she had all of them in a bath, and I don't know what they were doing, but she just walked out. She walked to our room, she goes, "I'm done. I'm done. I'm done with penises." And I kind of laughed until I went, "Wait! Wait a second! Does that include me? Because this is bad!"

Now, I hear what Donald is saying, but guys, if we've reduced being a man to just our penis... there's a part of a culture, their vision really doesn't extend beyond that, and we're paying the effects of it right now. We're seeing a movement where women are tired of that. We've got to have something broader.

I love how Proverbs puts it. "Where there is no vision, the people run wild." Man, if you don't have the vision for more, if you don't have a definition... and I just would change it and I'd say, "Where there is no vision, men run wild. Men reduce." That's why it's the job of every culture to define what is the role of men.

Second thing we feel today: the rise of a weightless manhood, a weightless... I like that term in it. A weightless manhood is created by the emotional and/or physically absent dad. When Dad's not there... either physically, he just wasn't in the home... or emotionally; maybe he came home, but not all of him came home. Maybe by the time he walked in the door, he had nothing left for anybody else, and emotionally pulled inside of himself.

When that happens, there's two significant things that are lost in that, and look at this in your notes. Here's the two things, the weight that Dad puts in, especially, a son's life. Dad's presence gives a son emotional stability... emotional stability, that love and affirmation. Mom naturally does that, for the most part... not always, and some of you have some real wounds from that, but usually Mom's maternal instinct will deposit that emotional love. But when Dad does it, there's a weight and a strength that comes from it that so fulfills, especially, a son.

The second thing is that, is Dad's instruction gives son directional stability, and this is the moral convictions and practical skills of life. You have emotional stability and directional stability that comes; those two things combined together create a weight. That's why scripture says the glory of sons is their father. It gives them ballast. It gives them strength. See, weightless manhood unleashes all the problems that we were talking about in society. If you don't have that weight deposited in you... a great picture of that... back in 1992, there was a gentleman named Michael Plant. He would sail, and he had planned this one trip. He had a boat built, a $650,000 craft; built it, it was sleek, it was designed to go as fast as any sailing craft; and he had planned to sail 24,000 miles... was going to do a sailing journey around the world.

October of '92, he took off from New York; he was headed first over to France. Few days in, they lost contact with him. One day a couple days later, they heard a signal from him. He said, "I'm okay, having trouble with my power." Last words he said is, "Tell my fiancee I'll be okay." After 32 days after he'd left, a Greek tanker found The Coyote, his craft, and it was upside down. The 85-foot mast, the sails, were still completely up. The hull of the ship was fine. But they noticed where the keel at the bottom... where there should have been this keel bulb, this 8,400-pound bulb that was the weight at the bottom of the ship... it had been sheared off. We don't know if it was a whale, or garbage, or just a bad design.

But that 8,400 pounds that was designed to give this sailing craft the strength and the weight it needed in the cross-currents and the winds and the waves... it was gone, and as soon as it's gone, man, The Coyote was so vulnerable and it capsized.

That is such a great picture of what I think is happening in so many guys' life today. I mean, you see the stories. You see the pro athlete and you go, "Man, he's got everything! Why would he bottom out like that?" You see the CEO, and he seems on top of the world, and you go, "Why would he make that choice?" You see pastors who bottom their life out. You know friends that you go, "Man, they had everything," and I think part of it is we are sending guys out, and we have sleek design, and we're telling them how to succeed in life in all these different ways, but there's no weight! There's no ballast there! There's no strength in them. And when the cross-currents come and the waves come, man, they're set up to fail, and when they do, all of society feels it, because we are living in the time of more cross-currents than ever before when it comes to this issue.

Look in your notes there. Look at what's happening, because you've got an epidemic in American where only... in 1950, five percent of boys in America were fatherless; now, it's 41 percent and it's growing. And in these radically changing social landscape... look at the social landscape, the cross-currents that's coming with that. In the last 50 years, what's happened is socially breathtaking. And because we live in it, we're like the frog and the kettle, that if you heat it up slowly, then realize it's boiling... I think because we are living in it, we don't realize how radical the change has been, how strong those cross-currents are.

In the last 50 years, men and women's roles have merged. They've become the same. The definition of marriage was changed for the first time in 4,000 years. In 4,000 years, the definition of a structure of society was changed.

44 percent of millennials consider marriage obsolete. Co-habitation has exploded. Majority of children, 61 percent of children now, who are born to mothers under the age of 30, are born outside of marriage. Multiple gender categories... sexual standards have changed. Look at this, of how it's changed... I'm so thankful for the gains of women, but I think so much of it has been at the expense of really setting guys up to win.

Women outnumber men in college by over 30 percent now. They earn more advanced degrees. If you go the graduate schools, more women are earning advanced degrees than men today. There are seven million working-aged men in the U.S. who don't work. More women are managers in the workplace than men. Single women buy homes today at twice the rate of single men. Depression rates are tenfold among men since 1960.

In a church setting, in a spiritual setting, women shoulder most of the responsibility for the health and vitality of the Christian faith in the United States. You feel that? I mean, I just ran through those. We're living in those. And part of it, even as I look at them here on the page, it's changing by the minute.

Again, as a dad of three daughters, I am so thankful... I am so thankful... because I feel like my daughters have more opportunity today to use their gifting, to use the strengths, to contribute in ways. But I look at it, and then I turn over... I've got four sons. And I look at the picture that's being painted for them, and I look at what's being said about them, that you almost have to apologize for being a man... that in our efforts, we've created a whole movement of Take Your Daughter to Work. I am thankful that we did. But your son needs to go to work, too. He needs a vision.

And if we don't step forward, especially as the church, as men... if we don't step forward and we don't talk about it, and we don't paint it, where are they going to get it?

As you look, with that, there's the lies that men believe about themselves, and this is what compounds it the most, I think. Look at these lies that we tell ourselves, and maybe you're telling yourself today. First one: I should know what to do. I should just know what to do. I naturally should know that. There's something about being a man... we feel stupid if we come to a place that we don't know what to do. And yet, instead of just saying, "Oh, man, I don't know that," part of us is like, "Oh, I should know that."

I remember when I was about 13, 14 years old, I had a paper route, and I would have to buy the newspaper... this story is getting so dated; some of you are like, "What is this thing called a newspaper?"... some of the younger guys. I'll tell you how dated this was! There was a morning paper, and then an afternoon paper. I had an afternoon paper route. And I would go and get my collection of newspapers, and throw them in the afternoon on my bike, and to get the papers, I had to buy them from the company, and I had to get a checking account, and I remember I had a checkbook; and the first time I went to buy my papers... and I'm sitting there with the checkbook, and I realize I didn't know how to write a check! I didn't know whose name went where, and the number that goes in the box, and then you have to write out the number, and then sign it.

And so, I'm sitting there and I try the first one; the guy looks at it and goes, "That's not a valid check." And then, "Oh, okay," and then I try again. And finally, in disgust, the guy goes, "Just give it to me!" And he wrote it out and he goes, "Sign it there!" And I just remember as a kid, just that feeling of just feeling stupid, and telling myself, "Why didn't you know that?," and telling myself, "I don't ever want to feel this way again."

And everything in me wished I could go grab that kid, and go, "It's okay. Of course you didn't know!" It's okay to not know stuff! And for some of you... maybe all of us, in different ways... I wish I could just grab you and go, "Man, there's part of this we'll cover, parts of this maybe you don't know, parts of this maybe you've blown. It's okay." It's why we do this together. None of us knows it all.

With that, though, look at the second lie. We tell ourselves, I'm the only one who struggles with this. I'm the only one really blowing it like this. See, you put those two things... I should have known, and I'm the only one struggling... and then, the third lie we say, it's too late to do anything about it. It's too late. It's too late; I'm set in my career. It's too late; this relationship is over. It's too late; I'll never have a good relationship with my kids. It's too late; I'm too far. It's too late; I'll never be on top of my finances. We just tell ourselves it's too late.

Now, one of the things I love about doing this, and it happens every year I teach this material... there's somebody in this room right now who stops believing that lie, because I get the emails from you, or the letter later... where somewhere along the way in this journey you tell yourself, "You know what? It's not too late. I am going to have a relationship with my kids. It's not late; I am going to repair this. It's not too late; I am going to make a career change." And it's one of the most rewarding things when you see guys step out with courage.

Maybe you're that guy this year. Maybe you're the guy that, up until this time in your life, you have convinced yourself it's too late... don't you believe it. Don't believe the fourth lie, I can do this and no one will ever know. I can kind of have this outlet in my life. I can get involved in a little bit of porn. I can have a relationship over here. I can drink a little bit. I can do these things and no one's ever going to find out. It's a lie. Don't believe it.

And then the fifth lie, if I tell you the truth about myself, you'll reject me. If I was really honest with other guys, they would totally reject me. This one is so funny, because you know what happens when we actually get honest with other guys? We like the other guy more.

I mean, it never fails. When you finally have a guy... he lets down his guard and tells you about what's really going on in his life, there's not this, "Oh, man, get away from me." Invariably, it's this, "Oh, I can relate to this guy. Man, I can be real with this guy." We long for it, but we lie to ourselves about it.

In fact, I want you to take a moment. Just look down that list of the five, and I want you, in an act of courage... circle one of them that you've been telling yourself. Circle at least one of them; you go, "Yeah, that's one I struggle with."

So as we finish out, here's a couple things that we've got to ask. Here's the question: can we define a manhood that will work for us in the modern world? Can we define it? We've been talking about the problems of it. We've been talking about the struggles of it, talking about the fog of it, and I hope you hear me... this is not a journey where every week, all we talk about is problems and we don't look at solutions. I'm going to tell you, we can define it. We have to define it. It's too critical we don't.

And so, let me close out with just five promises I'm going to make to you on our Better Man journey... five promises here.

One, you will increase your manhood understanding and make some significant personal discoveries. Every time I go through this, every time I teach it, every time I study it on my own... I have yet to go through this where I go through the whole thing and I go, "Oh, that was really good. Eh, nothing really there for me." Every time I do, I go, "Oh, man, that fits me right now. That's what I'm dealing with."

Sometimes it's a reminder. Sometimes it's just like, "Oh, how did that you do that again?" Sometimes it's just an awakening, where it's things I've heard about, but the connection between, "Oh, this is my life." Sometimes it's just the shared discovery together that unlocks it. I promise you, you're going to have some discoveries in our time together.

Secondly, you will receive helpful insight and support from your table leaders. The key of Better Man and what we're doing here together... I love our time, I love teaching, I love sharing this information... this is not the most important thing we'll do today. The most important thing you will do today here will be at the table, and there are guys who've committed that they want to help you on the journey.

Now, in just a few minutes, even as this breaks up, you're going to have to make a choice of courage: am I going to really engage this table or not? As men, remember those lies we kind of told ourselves? I can figure this out on my own, and we want to go try to figure out on our own? It won't work.

And so, you've got guys. Now, as you hear that, if you've never been a part of this, if you look in your workbook, you can see the questions every week. There's nothing hidden there. The table time is not group therapy. You're not going to get together and we're going to all cry and do a big group hug together, okay? We're men, and so, we treat you as men in that. But as men, your table leaders are committed... okay, how do we facilitate this journey together?

Third thing you're going to see out of it, you're going to make new friends. You'll make new friends in it, and you need them more than you realize, because as men, we're lonelier than we like to admit.

Fourth, you'll have the opportunity to upgrade your manhood by using the weekly Better Man question. You'll see that in your notes; the first one starts next week. You'll see that Better Man question, and you'll use those questions all throughout our time to build a Better Man plan that matches you. There's no one-size-fits-all. There's no plan that works for all. And so, part of this, you're going to build your own plan. You get the plan, then you work the plan, and you experience what it's like as a better man. That's how it works in that.

Final thing I'd say: you will receive a clear definition of manhood that will work for you in this modern world. We're going to give you the map. We're going to give you the picture. And I think this thing, as much as anything, is the key to making this work, that if you can just give guys that picture or give them the map... because the danger of operating life with false information, with no map, or worse than that, the wrong map.

There's a great book by Hampton Sides; it tells the story of the USS Jeannette in the book, In the Kingdom of Ice, and Lieutenant George Washington DeLong led a group trying to get to the North Pole, but not the North Pole as we understand it. This was the 1800s. There was a theory in the 1800s that the North Pole was actually an open sea. And if you could ever get past the ice that you came across, once you got through that, you would get to open waters and you could sail to the pole.

And a lot of people believed this. The chief proponent was a guy named August Petermann, who literally drew maps, and on his maps, he's said, "There's a geometric thermal gateway, that if you can find it, you're going to be able to sail through it and get to the North Pole and the open seas." And so, George DeLong took a group, the USS Jeannette; they got the ship, and they started sailing. The problem is, that's not reality. There is no gateway. And they just kept running into more ice, and more ice.

Sides has a great line in the book, that they finally hit the point, and DeLong realized, "we have to let go of the delusions of what we thought it was." And there was a reckoning of how the Arctic really is. They had to abandon the boat. The crew got split up. Some of them made it to Siberia and lived. George Washington DeLong died; he starved to death in 1881. They found his body buried in the snow, except for his arm. As he died, he had an arm just reaching up. It's almost like this silent cry of a man who had given his life on a faulty map.

There's a lot of men who are on that journey today. Maybe not as dramatic, maybe it's a little slower, but it has the same consequence and the same ending. Guys, the reason I am passionate about what we're doing here... men need a map. They need a map of manhood. There has to be a reckoning of what life is really like. And we can't build our maps on the theories and the falsehoods and the fog that's out there! We need a clear map based on truth! And I have had the privilege... a few things that I am more thrilled about in my life... is I have had the privilege of working through this material, of seeing it, of laying it out, and I know it's a map that works. It's a map based on truth. It's a map that leads somewhere that you want to go.

It gives a picture of manhood... the kind of men we want to be. Go with me. Let's do this journey together. Let's be better men. It really is that simple. Let's make a choice today to be better men.