

WEEK 1: WOMEN ARE TO BE HONOURED

Lots of things shape the way we view and relate to women. The media, our peers & our male role models all have an impact.

In this week's guide we will look at how Jesus related to women and explore how we can be godly men who help bring out God-given potential in women by honouring them like Jesus did.

CONNECT

- What film would you love there to be a sequel of?
- Who is one woman you admire? Share what you admire about them.
- Which male do you look up to most?

DISCUSS

- What words do your male peers generally use to describe your female peers?
- Do you think the average male in Australian society has a healthy attitude towards women? Why?
- How do you think women were viewed in Jesus' time, especially in relation to men?

Leaders: Explain that Jesus lived in a time where women were considered inferior to men; their primary function was to raise their children and run the house. Men did not generally interact directly with women in public.

Despite being a religious teacher, Jesus went against the cultural norm.

Ask a volunteer to read John 4:1-26.

- This woman had a reputation for sleeping around, making it even more culturally inappropriate for Jesus to speak with her. What do Jesus' actions here suggest about how he viewed women?
- Can you think of any other examples in the bible of Jesus interacting with women? How would you describe his treatment of them? (See leaders notes for ideas)
- What environments are you involved in (school, work, family, university, parties, nightclubs, church) where women are not always treated with respect? How is this expressed (i.e. jokes, derogatory comments, roles)? Do you ever take part? How do you contribute to this?



5 MANLY THINGS YOU WON'T
LEARN FROM MOVIES



WEEK 1: WOMEN ARE TO BE HONOURED

- Be really honest - if Jesus walked in your shoes for a week, are there any women he would treat differently than the way you treat them? Share an example.

ESTABLISHED CHRISTIANS

In addition to the above questions...

- How do you think the media contributes towards our society's attitude towards women?
- In many places the bible highlights the value and importance of women but in other verses it seems to show an unbalanced approach to male/female equality. Do you think these differences are based on the culture of the day or spiritual truths? How can we tell the difference?
- What do you think it means to treat men and women equally?
- Are women always treated equally within your church? What are some examples that reflect this?

INVOLVE

Think of a woman in your life that you have not always shown respect to.

It could be your mum, a teacher or a female peer.

Write, text or type an apology note to this person, letting them know how you feel about your previous attitudes/actions/comments.

Share with the group why you chose that person and how you think they will respond to your apology.

APPLY

One of the challenges in changing our attitudes or behaviours towards women is that it can often be so ingrained that we don't even notice when we're being disrespectful towards women.

Accountability with the guys in your life group is a great way to pull each other up on any inappropriate words or actions (intentional or accidental).

As a group come up with a word or phrase you could use when someone drops the ball on this stuff, i.e. Respect for the Ladies, or R.E.S.P.E.C.T





WEEK 1: WOMEN ARE TO BE HONOURED

LEADER'S NOTES

Here are two key verses that are relevant and often misused on this subject.

- Ephesians 5:22-24 "Wives submit to your husbands" is a verse that has been used to justify mistreatment of women and gender inequality. But when read in context, wives are required to submit to husbands who love them as Christ loves the church. Jesus never took advantage of or mistreated people. He regularly put the needs of others above his own - to the point that he died for us. Men, if you want women to follow your lead then begin by treating them as Jesus treats his people.
- 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 "Women should be silent in the church." These verses have been used to prevent women from taking on leadership roles within the church. The word used for 'women' in these verses would be better translated as 'wives'. The context of this verse is about establishing orderly worship - spaces where everyone should be able to learn and be heard. Some of the women within this particular church at this particular time were causing distractions by interrupting the communal worship time to ask questions. The advice was 'wait until you get home and talk it over with your husbands.' Culturally this was good advice as it was the men who received the more extensive education.

Some other examples of Jesus' interaction with women

- The healing of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:38-43).
- The women healed of bleeding (Matthew 9:20-22).
- Mary and Martha (Luke 10:38-42).
- The risen Jesus appearing to the women at his grave (John 20:1-18).
- The woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11).
- The healing of Simon Peter's mother (Mark 1:29-31).



WEEK 2: INNER STRENGTH IS THE BEST KIND

Ever heard a man lash out violently and claim: “It’s not my fault! I couldn’t help it!”?

Godly men exercise self-control. In this guide, we’ll look at how you can develop this quality in your own life.

CONNECT

- How would you score your week out of 10? Why did you give it that score?
- Which food/drink do you find it hardest to resist?
- What is one thing you have been praying about lately?

DISCUSS

- How would you define self-control?
- Do you disagree or agree with the following statement: “Self-control is what stops you doing things you want to do but that won’t be in your best interest”

Ask a volunteer to read Proverbs 25:28.

- What do you think this verse means? Do you agree with it?
- What is one area you find it easy to be self-controlled in? (*Leaders, if your group gets stuck you could give some examples: chocolate eating, money spending, having a quiet time with God, staying sexually pure, etc).*

Read Matthew 4:1-11

- Ask one person in the group to summarise what is happening in this passage.
- Why do you think this story has been put in the Bible?
- Does it surprise you that God allowed Jesus to be tempted by the devil? Why?
- Is temptation a sin? Why?
- As men, do you think we are tempted more than women? Can you think of an example of this?
- What consequence(s) could a lack of self-control lead to in your life?



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WEEK 2: INNER STRENGTH IS THE BEST KIND

- Be honest: What is the number one trial or temptation you are facing at the moment?
- Have you identified anything that helps keep you strong during temptation? What practical things can you put in place? (E.g. If your temptation is chocolate, don't have it in the house)
- How do you think that spiritual disciplines like fasting, memorising Scripture & prayer would help us resist temptation?
- Galatians 5:22-23 says that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit.
(*Leaders: Fruit of the Spirit are qualities that become evident in our lives when the Spirit of God influences us.*)
What does that suggest to you about how you can develop it?

INVOLVE

One difference between you and Jesus is that Jesus faced this temptation in isolation, whereas you have a group around you to encourage and draw strength from.

Stand in a circle and take turns being in the centre.

Have the person in the centre of the circle share one thing this group could do to support you in avoiding temptation.

Have all other group members pray for courage and strength for that group member.

Make sure each member knows they are not alone in their journey.

APPLY

Find and memorise a passage of Scripture that will help strengthen you when you feel tempted.

Next week, share your verse with the group.

E.g. 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me' (Philippians 4:13);
'God is faithful, he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear' (1 Corinthians 10:13); 'When you are tempted, he will also provide a way so that you can stand up under it (1 Corinthians 10:13);

OR

Pick one person who you trust (inside or outside of the group).

Tell them the number one area you are lacking self-control and ask them to keep you accountable for this area.





WEEK 2: INNER STRENGTH IS THE BEST KIND

LEADER'S NOTES

- Are certain voices dominating? Be careful to ensure that different voices/opinions get heard.
- Don't shy away from 'awkward' conversations. Often topics like sex, pornography and masturbation have been 'taboo' in church circles. Be open but be prepared to say 'I'm not sure, I'll come back to you' when you're out of your depth.
- Trust is a two way dynamic. Sharing your own journey could help young people open up about their own.
- Make sure that grace is the central theme when people are opening up about temptations. Remember, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).
- Are you developing leaders in your group? See the leaders handbook at salvos.org.au/more/life for some tips to get you started.



WEEK 3: VIOLENCE IS FOR WIMPS

CONNECT

Have your group participate in a wrestling (or arm wrestling) competition.

AND/OR

Ask your choice of the following questions:

- What is your favourite fighting movie?
- What are your thoughts on WWE wrestling?
- What's the most intense fight you've seen in real life?
- Have you ever been in a physical fight yourself? How did it start/end?
- Do most of your friends find fist violence stupid or do most of them find it impressive?

DISCUSS

- What do you think of sports that are based around violence (e.g. MMA, Boxing). Do you think it is harmful/helpful for Christians to be involved?
- What do you think of computer games that simulate fighting? Helpful, harmful or neither?
- What about play fighting?

Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 5:39 and Romans 12:21

- What do you think these verses mean?
- What do you think Jesus meant by 'turn the other cheek'?
(*Leaders: He was addressing the idea of revenge.*)
- How would the world be different if every person applied this teaching?
- Can anyone think of a time when they applied this teaching in their life? What happened?

Ask a volunteer to read Luke 22:36 & 38

- This conversation takes place just before Jesus is crucified. If Jesus was anti-revenge, why do you think Jesus wanted the disciples to have swords? (Self-defense) What did he mean by 'enough' swords?
(*Leaders: Not more than needed to protect themselves.*)



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WEEK 3: VIOLENCE IS FOR WIMPS

- Do you think Christians should defend themselves if someone physically attacks them? Why/why not? What's the difference between self defense and revenge?

INVOLVE

Give each group member an opportunity to share how they would respond to a hypothetical scenario:

1. You are walking home at night and a guy threatens to beat you up if you don't give him your iPhone.
2. You see an adult beating up a small child. There is no one else around to intervene.
3. Your friend invites you to join his cage fighting club.
4. An argument with a schoolmate turns physical.
5. Your Christian friend challenges you about your possession of violent computer games .

APPLY

What is one thing you feel compelled to change/stand for based on what we've talked about?



WEEK 4: NO-ONE LIKES A SHOW-OFF

CONNECT

- Who is your favourite sports hero? What do you like about them? Would you say they are humble? Why or why not?
- How would you define the word 'humble'?
(Leader: Humility is defined as "not arrogant or prideful" or "the posture of lowering oneself in relation to others").
- Do you agree or disagree with the following quotes on humility? Why?
"True humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."
"Humility is nothing else but a right judgment of ourselves."
"True humility is contentment."
"True humility is not a personality trait but a choice."

INVOLVE

Give each member a piece of paper and a pen.

Ask them who the most humble person they know is.

Get them to write on the piece of paper the characteristics and behaviour that makes this person humble. Invite each person to share these characteristic(s) with the group.

DISCUSS

Ask a volunteer to read Philippians 2:1-11

- Do you think it is easy to be humble? Why?
- What does humility look like in our everyday lives? What sorts of things does a truly humble person do/think/say?
- How would the world be different if everyone "considered others better than themselves"?
- What are some practical ways you can change your attitude to become like that of Jesus Christ?
- James 4:10 says "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up". Explain what you think it means by "he will lift you up"? What does that look like?



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WEEK 4: NO-ONE LIKES A SHOW-OFF

- How do you think we can remain humble in the world of social media where everything is about self-promotion (making yourself look good, likes, comments, shares etc)?
- As men, why do you think God has called us to be humble?
- What is one area of your life where you need to practice humility?

APPLY

Choose one person who you have treated as less important than yourself. (E.g. a parent, teacher, schoolmate or sibling).

Decide on one thing you will do to serve them. (E.g. cook dinner for them, buy them a coffee/drink, help them with a project, put their rubbish in the bin for them)



WEEK 5: EMOTIONS ARE RAD...IN CONTEXT

“Real men don’t cry”. Or so goes popular opinion in Australia.

In this week’s guide we’ll look at what Scripture tells us about how to express our emotions.

CONNECT

- What was the best thing you ate today?
- Who is your favourite male character in the Old Testament? Why?
- What do you think would be the best/worst thing about being a girl?
- Use 3 words to describe the kind of man you want to be. (E.g. Courageous, handsome)

DISCUSS

- Do you agree or disagree with this statement: “Guys experience the same emotions as girls, they just express them differently”.
- In wider society, what stereotypes exist around guys and emotion?
- In regards to showing emotions, what was modeled to you by the men in your family when you were growing up?
- Hypothetically:
 - * How would your mates react if you were to cry at school because you’ve been bullied?
 - * How would your mates react if you were too scared to jump off a high ledge into a river?
 - * How would your mates react if you got angry because your brother/sister was being picked on?

Because Jesus was fully human he experienced emotions just like all of us. As we read about Jesus we can learn from him where and how it can be healthy to express our emotions.

Explain to the group that we are going to look at 3 stories from Jesus’ life. Ask each of them to take a pen and write down every emotion Jesus might have experienced in the stories (e.g. anger, hurt, sadness, frustration, fear).

Read for them: Mark 14:32-42, Mark 11:15-19 & John 11:32-38



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Life.



WEEK 5: EMOTIONS ARE RAD...IN CONTEXT

Ask group members to read out all of the words they recorded.

- Share an instance when you experienced one of these emotions and handled it healthily.
- Share an instance when you experienced one of these emotions and didn't handle it very well.
- In Mark 14, at the point where Jesus was most fearful of what lay ahead, he put some things in place to help him. Read the passage again and come up with 3 helpful things that Jesus did when he felt fearful. (e.g. Jesus prays, he trusts God, he spends time with good friends, he gets his friends to pray for him).
- In Mark 11:11 we learn that Jesus actually came and saw what was happening in the temple the day before, but that he went home to sleep on it before coming back the next day. What does this teach us about how to respond to anger?
(Leaders: Taking time out to 'sleep on it' gives us time to weigh up whether our anger is justified and also to think about our response).

INVOLVE

Guys often struggle to express their emotions in a healthy context. Use the next 5-10 minutes to create a space where guys can openly share with each other in a safe way.

Brainstorm a whole list of emotions and write each one of them on a Post-It note and stick in on the wall so everyone can see them.

Then get each person to write their name on Post-It notes and stick it next to the emotions that they experience on a semi-regular basis.

One by one, go around the group and have everyone share about one particular emotion that they've identified with and how they are feeling challenged to express this emotion differently in the future.

Leaders: Some guys in your group may be uncomfortable sharing, so it may be helpful for you to share first. Be sure to encourage each guy as they share.

APPLY

What is one thing you are going to do differently this week because of what we have talked about tonight?





WEEK 5: EMOTIONS ARE RAD...IN CONTEXT

LEADER'S NOTES

- Don't forget to set aside some time to ENJOY (See the leader's handbook at <https://my.salvos.org.au/toolkit/resource/life-leadership-handbook/30/>)
- How is the atmosphere? What can you do to make it relaxed and inviting?
- Is anyone missing from the group? Ask for a volunteer to follow them up.

