

MEN OF GOD

*becoming the
man God wants
you to be*



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PREFACE

This book was first conceived as a response to misplaced thinking about how churches should encourage Christian men and help them to grow in their faith.

Facing a widespread loss of identity for men, we have been encouraged to “find our inner Tarzan” by primal screaming round a camp fire, or to delve deeply within our souls (or our DNA) to rediscover what we should truly be. This book is not primarily concerned with gender issues. Our guiding principle was to ask the question: *what does it mean for modern men to know Christ?* We are concerned to help clarify how God would have his sons live for him in our modern age.

To do this, our instinct as Christians should be to encourage each other to apply the Scriptures to the particular challenges, opportunities, relationships and responsibilities we face. This book is our humble offering to this end, and it is published in the hope that it will stimulate fresh thinking among Christian men and in those concerned for men’s ministry in the local church.

The authors are all experienced Christians, but all contributions are offered by men who, above all else, know themselves to be weak, but forgiven, sinners.

The first chapter seeks to re-establish our confidence in the gospel as the driving force in the life of Christian men: to clarify the content of the gospel according to Scripture and then to explore its impact on how men should understand their identity

in Christ. It is vital to understand that, without the gospel, what we do week by week in our churches, in our homes, in our leisure and in our working lives will inevitably become *man-centred* rather than *Christ-centred*. This is why we must always return again and again to the gospel as it is revealed to us in the Scriptures. Only when our lives are centred on the gospel of Christ will we be able to live for Christ.

Part Two provides briefer chapters exploring the Bible's teaching on many aspects of life that Christian men struggle with. We are convinced that "all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God [primarily the leader, but including us all] may be competent, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3 v 16-17).

The Bible therefore tells us everything we need to know from God for living as men in God's world! So each chapter begins with some biblical research before proceeding to explain principles of application, and then finally to the nuts and bolts: identifying good practical examples and case studies for the day-to-day realities we face.

There are Bible-study and discussion questions provided at the end of each of these chapters, in the hope that this section could provide the basis for study or discussion by men as they meet in twos or threes, or in a more formal men's group in a church.

Trevor Archer and Tim Thornborough
Editors

Contributors

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Phillip Jensen was chaplain at the University of New South Wales for many years and is now dean of St. Andrews Cathedral, Sydney. He is a well-known speaker at conferences in Australia, England and the USA.

John Benton taught mathematics in a state school before becoming pastor of Chertsey Street Baptist Church, Guildford, UK where he has been for the last 20 years. John has published a number of books and commentaries and edits the newspaper *Evangelicals Now*. He is married to Anne and has four children.

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David Jackman is a well-known Bible teacher and preacher. Formerly senior minister of Above Bar Church, Southampton, he is now president of the Proclamation Trust. He has been married to Heather for 30 years. They have a grown-up son and daughter.

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Trevor Archer has been married to Valerie for 30 years and they have a grown-up daughter and three sons. Trevor worked in the building industry for 20 years, before becoming the pastor of Chessington Evangelical Church. He is now Director of Training for the Federation of independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC) in the UK.

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John Tindall worked in a bank before training as a Methodist minister. He is now associate pastor at Monyhull church in the UK. He is married to Pauline and has three children and seven grandchildren at the last count. In his leisure time he watches old films and plays with his grandchildren.



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