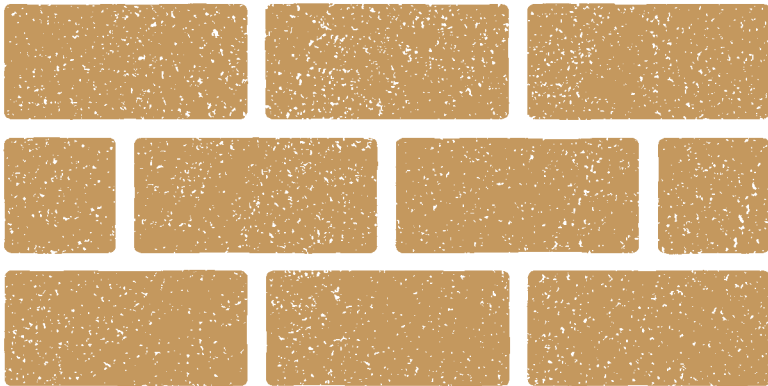


J. Josh Smith

THE TITUS TEN

**Bible
Study**

FOUNDATIONS *for* GODLY MANHOOD



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About the Author



J. JOSH SMITH is the pastor of Prince Avenue Baptist Church in Athens, Georgia. He is the author of *Preaching for a Verdict*, *The Titus Ten*, and co-author of *Psalm 1–50* in the Christ-Centered Exposition series. He and his wife, Andrea, have four daughters and one son.

How to Use This Study

This Bible study provides a guided process for individuals and small groups to embrace ten foundations for godly manhood. Ten weeks of study give a biblical framework and practical guidance for what it means to be a man. Through the study, we will see the kind of men that God has made us to be.

GROUP STUDY

Regardless of what day of the week your group meets, each session of content begins with the group session. Each group session uses the following format to facilitate simple yet meaningful interaction among group members and with God's Word.

START

The group session will begin with a few questions designed to help you introduce the session's topic of study and encourage everyone to engage with the study.

WATCH

This page helps you follow the video teaching session and provides space to take notes. Codes to access the teaching videos are included with your purchase of this book and can be found on the insert located at the back of this book.

DISCUSS

This section is the main component of the group session. The questions provided are designed to facilitate the group study of the session's topic. The goal is to better understand God's heart for men and helps you apply the biblical teaching to your life.

PERSONAL STUDY

The group and personal studies are complimentary. Five days of personal study are provided after each group session to help individual men think biblically about the session's topic. With biblical teaching and introspective questions, these lessons challenge individuals to grow in their understanding of God's Word and to respond in faith and obedience.

LEADER GUIDE

In the back of this resource, you will find a guide for potential ways to use this resource. Josh has taught this study over many years in several formats. See the leader guide for proven ways to lead this study and decide what works best for the group you are leading.

Week 1

Dominion

Group Study

START

Welcome to week 1 of The Titus Ten.

Use this page to get the conversation going.

Welcome to the first week of *The Titus Ten*. Each week we are going to discuss one foundational aspect of what it means to be a godly man.

What does it mean to be a man?

What is your definition based on?

To understand the kind of man God *wants* you to be, you must understand the kind of man God *created* you to be. That means the journey to manhood must begin with the creation of man. Almost everything you need to know about manhood has been clearly articulated in the first two chapters of the Bible.

In Genesis 2 we get a picture of God's original intentions for manhood. But we must look fast—the picture does not last long. Starting in Genesis 3, the rest of the Bible shows how God's original intentions have been distorted. And because we see the distortions on every other page of the Bible, and in every man around us, we tend to focus more on the distortions than the intentions. But our goal is not to tear men down; it is to build them up. We are trying to lay a foundation on which to become godly men, and we must begin with God's original intentions. That starts with dominion.

WATCH

Use this page to take notes as you watch video session 1.

To access the teaching sessions,
use the instructions in the back
of your Bible study book.



DISCUSS

Use this page to facilitate the group discussion.

Read Genesis 2:1-17 together.

What do you see about manhood from those verses?

Mankind was created to have a relationship with God, to live under God's authority, and to have authority over everything God created (Psalm 8). Adam found his true identity in his relationship with God, and he was to fulfill his God-given assignment by ruling over God's new creation on God's behalf. As he did, God's glory would spread to the ends of the earth (Genesis 2:10-17; Habakkuk 2:14).

The responsibility God gave to Adam and Eve was clear: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Genesis 1:28).

Dominion is not domineering. How do the two differ?

When God called Adam to work and care for the earth, what would have been some of his responsibilities?

How would the responsibilities God gave to Adam apply to us today?

Although deeply distorted by sin, the original mandate to take dominion is still a mandate. It is a part of God's original intention. Everything we are trying to do, by the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, is to get back to God's original intention for our lives. God has created men—under His authority, on His behalf, as His representatives manifesting His character—to take dominion.

In what ways do you see the distortion of manhood in the world around you?

In what ways can you contribute to helping our culture regain a biblical understanding of manhood?

There are two words in Genesis 2 that give clarity on the meaning of dominion: *work* and *keep* (Genesis 2:15). The primary role of every man in every area of his life is summarized in those two words. Every man is called to work and keep. That is godly dominion.

**What are some areas of life that God is calling you to take dominion?
How are you stewarding those responsibilities?**

End your time together by praying for one another. Remind the group to complete the five days of personal study prior to the next group meeting.

PERSONAL STUDY 1

Working & Keeping

Read Genesis 2:8-15.

There are two words in Genesis 2 that give clarity on the meaning of dominion: *work* and *keep* (Genesis 2:15). When you think about *work*, think about a plow. A plow is used to cultivate the earth, to turn up the soil and prepare the ground for seed. Although modern inventions have made plowing easier than ever, plowing is hard work; it's cultivating the earth so that what is planted will grow. That is a great picture of what it means for a man to work.

Plowing is a selfless and thankless task. It's not just hard work, it's sweaty work. Yet, plowing is the work every man should be devoted to—not to tend a garden, but to work hard for the sake of others—to sweat and toil, to cultivate and nurture everything and everyone God has put under his charge. As a man, you were created to work in that way.

Every man should wake up in the morning and imagine a plow in his hand, ready to work. This is God's calling. Under your leadership, things should grow and thrive.

When you think about *keeping*, think about a sword. To keep is to watch, guard, and protect. What God has put under your charge should not only grow and thrive; it should be cared for and protected. God has created every man to be a guardian, a protector, and a defender. He is called to stand in the watchtower and watch and to take up his sword and fight.

Working and keeping are at the very core of manhood. God models both for us in the garden. He creates us in His image so we might reflect His glory by doing the same. When you work and keep as a man living under the authority of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit, you bear the image of God and begin to lay a foundation for manhood.

Think about plowing a large field with a hand-held instrument. What would that kind of work demand and require?

In what ways do you need those same qualities in your life right now?

Plowing requires cultivating the ground so that something might grow. In what ways does manhood require you to do work that no one else sees but that will bear fruit much later?

Every man is called to keep—to be a protector and defender. In what specific areas of your life do you see the need for “keeping”?

What specific examples of working and keeping can you think of from the Bible or men you have known?

PERSONAL STUDY 2

The First Domain: Flesh

Read Titus 1:1-16.

The areas in which God calls a man to take dominion are called *domains*. You can't give a man dominion without giving him a domain. This is where the structure of the book of Titus helps us. The three chapters of Titus give us three domains of every man: his church, his family, and his work. But all three chapters of Titus show us another area in which every man must take dominion: his own flesh.

After Paul told Titus to find good men and put them in leadership, he told Titus what to look for. Listen to how he described the men the church needs:

If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

TITUS 1:6-9

Apart from the direct reference to a man having self-control, there are multiple references to things that demand self-control. A godly man must be able to control his pride, his temper, his drinking, and his flesh. A man cannot be a leader until he learns to take dominion over himself.

Taking dominion over your flesh is not just about fighting against sin. We will never gain any victory over sin unless we truly believe walking with Jesus is better than living in sin. We should long for the life, joy, peace, and blessing that come when we walk with Jesus. Our primary motive is always more of Jesus.

The qualifications for an elder in Titus 1 function as a list of what it means to be a godly man. As you read over that passage, where do you see the need for self-control?

In what specific areas of a man's life does he need to practice self-control?

How have you see the lack of self-control affect your life or the life of someone you know?

How can a lack of self-control over the flesh affect every other area of your life?

What are some practical areas in which you need to take dominion over your flesh?

PERSONAL STUDY 3

The Second Domain: Church

Read Ephesians 5:22-28.

Paul wrote Titus to help him fix a church that was in massive turmoil (Titus 1:5). The primary cause of turmoil was the presence of useless, ungodly, and rebellious men (1:10–16). And their actions were tearing apart entire families (1:11). The first thing Paul told Titus to do was find godly men—those who have cultivated self-control—and put them in leadership in the church. Even though the families were suffering, Paul did not say the first step was to fix the families but to fix the church. The first place he called godly men into action was the church.

The church is the body of Christ. The church is the bride of Christ. The church is the house of God. The church is the family of God. God uses those metaphors so that we might understand His love for the church and to stir up our love for the church. And “church” is not just a reference to all believers everywhere but to specific believers in local assemblies in which the body, bride, house, and family are manifested.

This Bible is clear, you cannot say you love Christ if you do not love His bride. You cannot say you are serving Christ if you are not an active part of His body. If you are not sacrificially attending, serving, and supporting a local church, you cannot become the man God wants you to be. God has set His church as the primary place where He works in and through men.

The local church is not only the primary place where a man learns to be a Christian, but it is also the primary place where a man learns to be a man. There, surrounded by generations of godly men, he learns about himself and his God. Find a church and make it a priority. Give it your greatest effort. Serve it, love it, and protect it. Work and keep it.

You cannot become the man God wants you to be without involvement in a local church. Why would this be true?

The church is called the “bride of Christ.” What does that tell us about how God feels about His church? How should we feel about His church?

What role does the local church play in your life? Are you treating your local church like Christ would want you to treat His bride? How could you better work and keep in your local church?

In what ways can the local church help you learn how to be a man?

How would the lack of church involvement negatively affect your life?
How would active engagement in a local church affect your life?

PERSONAL STUDY 4

The Third Domain: Family

Read Titus 2:1-15.

Your next domain is your family. If you are young and/or single, don't skip this section. This also includes you.

One of the reasons a young man must learn to take dominion over his flesh, as well as sacrificially lead in his church, is that both of those things prepare him to take dominion in the home. When a father allows his family to make other things more important than the church, the father undermines the primary training ground for his family. God has given us the local church as the means to train us in how to love those in our family—this is the point of Titus 2. And then, God calls us to go home to work and keep.

When a man comes home from work, he must continue to work. This can be challenging. The temptation is to come home from work and totally check out, especially if your job is demanding and you have worked hard all day. But God has called you to take dominion in the home. He has entrusted you with your family. Your family is not anyone else's responsibility—it is your responsibility, and it is your domain.

Taking dominion in the home demands the constant use of the plow and the sword. Serve your wife. Serve your children. Love, honor, and serve your parents. Be the hardest worker at home. Give yourself sacrificially every single day for the good of your family. And it's not just about working hard and providing. It's about doing the hard work of loving, leading, and serving at home. A woman will not despise the idea of godly dominion if she sees this manifested in the way the men in her life love, serve, and help at home.

Why do men often feel more equipped to lead at work than at home?

Why is the work at home so often more difficult?

In what ways do you feel insecure and insufficient to do the work God has called you to do at home?

In what practical ways can you better serve, love, and lead those in your home?

If you are single, how can you serve and love your family in order to become the man God has called you to be?

PERSONAL STUDY 5

The Fourth Domain: World

Read Titus 3:1-15.

Finally, every man must take dominion in the workplace. Titus transitions from life in the church (Titus 1) to life in the home (Titus 2), to life in the workplace (Titus 3). Titus 3 begins with these words to employees: “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people” (vv. 1-2). Notice that to be a godly man at work, you must learn through the ministry of the local church and the ministry in the home how to obey, work, deal with conflict, and be kind.

The workplace is where a man displays to a lost world self-sacrificing, loving, and godly dominion. It is where a man shows the world God’s original intention. Paul says, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men” (Colossians 3:23). No one should be a harder worker, a better employee, or a better boss than a man who follows Jesus. You should work harder, sacrifice more, and lead more honestly and graciously than anyone else. In doing so, you are not only seeking your good and the good of those under your charge, but you are also seeking to glorify God through your work ethic.

The only reason the world has a problem with the idea of manly dominion is that they have not seen dominion as God intended it. To use your plow and sword in your domains is to work hard, sweat, toil, and sacrifice for the good of those under your charge. It is about manifesting the very death of Christ for the good of others. Taking dominion is about displaying the gospel in the way you die to yourself and live for the good of others. It’s about seeing the way sin has distorted God’s original intention. It is about manifesting the glory of God. It is about having our manhood redeemed. And that is where we go next.

In what ways do our jobs teach us how to work and keep?

If you are a student or retired, what work has God still called you to do, and how can you take dominion in that?

How can working and keeping be a testimony to those at work?

How have you see the lack of a strong work ethic affect men?

Are there areas in your life where you need to be working harder?
If so, what are they and what changes do you need to make?

