

FINISHING WELL

A Men's Bible Study for the Second Half of Life

10-Week Series • Leader's Guide

How to Use This Guide

This series is built for men 55 and older who are navigating retirement, aging, legacy, and what it means to finish life well rather than coast through it. Each week stands on its own, but the ten weeks build in a loose arc: calling, finishing well, legacy, marriage, regret, mortality, generosity, brotherhood, prayer, and a closing commissioning session.

You don't need to have all the answers. Your job is to ask good questions, keep the room safe, and let men be honest — often for the first time in a long time.

Suggested Session Format (75-90 min)

- Welcome & Icebreaker — 10 min
- Read the Key Passages aloud — 5 min
- Discussion Questions — 40-50 min
- Take-Home Challenge — 5-10 min
- Closing Prayer — 10 min

Six Tips for Leading Men 55+

- Lead with story before abstraction. Ask "when have you experienced this" before "what do you think about this."
- Don't rush silence. This generation often needs a beat before opening up — let it sit.
- Humor is a doorway, not a distraction. Let it breathe before steering back.
- Several men are quietly carrying loss — spouses, siblings, friends, health. Hold space without forcing disclosure.
- Give a concrete take-home challenge every week. Action resonates more than sentiment at this stage of life.
- Watch for the "provider" identity. Many men still measure their worth by usefulness — affirm value beyond output.

Series Overview

Week 1: Called for This Season

Week 2: Finishing Well vs. Coasting

Week 3: Legacy & Mentorship

Week 4: Marriage in the Later Years

Week 5: Reckoning with Regret

Week 6: Facing Mortality with Hope

Week 7: Stewardship & Generosity in Retirement

Week 8: Brotherhood, Not Isolation

Week 9: Prayer as a Way of Life

Week 10: Sent Out: Caleb's Charge

Week 1: Called for This Season

God isn't finished using you — this season carries its own assignment, not a demotion.

KEY PASSAGES

- Psalm 71:17-18 — an aging man still asking God to use him
- Joshua 1:1-9 — a new assignment, and courage commanded three times
- Isaiah 46:4 — "I will sustain you... even to your old age"
- Romans 11:29 — God's gifts and calling are irrevocable

OPENING ICEBREAKER

What did you picture retirement, or "life after 55," looking like when you were 30? How's that compared to reality?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Joshua 1, God tells Joshua to be strong and courageous three times right as he's stepping into a huge new responsibility. What does it tell you that courage had to be commanded, not just felt?
2. Psalm 71 is written by someone clearly past midlife, still asking God to use him. What's your honest reaction to that prayer — hope, resistance, something else?
3. Where in your life right now do you feel more "sidelined" than "sent"?
4. What would it look like to ask God for a fresh assignment instead of just waiting things out?
5. What's one thing you're uniquely positioned to do now that you couldn't have done at 30?

LEADER TIP

Some men will hear "new assignment" as pressure to keep performing. Clarify up front: this is about purpose, not productivity.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to show each man what "strong and courageous" looks like in his specific season.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Write down one thing you sense God nudging you toward this season — bring it back next week.

Week 2: Finishing Well vs. Coasting

Paul's "I have finished the race" wasn't a passive fade — it was fought for, to the very end.

KEY PASSAGES

- Philippians 3:12-14 — pressing on, not "already arrived"
- 2 Timothy 4:6-8 — "I have fought the good fight... I have finished the race"
- Hebrews 12:1-2 — running with endurance, fixing our eyes on Jesus
- Galatians 6:9 — "let us not grow weary of doing good"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

Who's someone you've watched finish life well — and what made it look that way?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul says he presses on even though he hasn't "already arrived." What's the danger in thinking you've already arrived?
2. What's the difference between resting (good) and coasting (a quiet danger) in this season of life?
3. What are you tempted to stop pursuing simply because you feel you've "done enough"?
4. Paul talks about forgetting what's behind — what's something from your past, success or failure, you need to loosen your grip on?
5. What would "finishing well" concretely look like for you over the next 5-10 years?

LEADER TIP

Some men may hear "coasting" as a judgment on rest itself. Reassure the group that rest and finishing well aren't opposites — the target is drift, not slowing down.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray for endurance and fresh vision for the race still ahead.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Identify one area you've quietly let go slack — spiritually, relationally, or physically — and take one concrete step this week.

Week 3: Legacy & Mentorship

What you've learned was never meant to end with you.

KEY PASSAGES

- 2 Timothy 2:2 — entrusting what you know to reliable people, four generations deep
- Titus 2:1-8 — older men teaching what is good
- Psalm 78:4-7 — telling the next generation, even those not yet born
- Deuteronomy 6:6-7 — teaching these things diligently to your children
- Proverbs 13:22 — "a good man leaves an inheritance"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

Who poured into you as a young man — and did you ever tell them what that meant?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul tells Timothy to pass on what he's learned to people "qualified to teach others also." Why do you think he specifies it going four generations deep?
2. What's something — a skill, a hard-won lesson, a piece of wisdom — you're sitting on that someone younger needs?
3. Be honest: what holds you back from mentoring — busyness, self-doubt, never being asked, something else?
4. Psalm 78 says we're to tell the next generation "even the children yet to be born." What's one story from your life you want your kids or grandkids to actually know?
5. Who is one specific younger man you could reach out to this month?

LEADER TIP

Some men will insist they have "nothing to offer." Push back gently — presence and honesty matter more than credentials or having it all figured out.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Ask God to bring specific names to mind of who each man is meant to invest in.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Reach out to one younger man this week — a text, a coffee invite, anything concrete.

Week 4: Marriage in the Later Years

Long marriages and close relationships need reinvestment, not autopilot.

KEY PASSAGES

- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 — two are better than one
- 1 Peter 3:7 — living with understanding
- Genesis 2:18, 24 — "it is not good for man to be alone"
- Ephesians 5:25, 28 — husbands loving their wives as themselves

OPENING ICEBREAKER

What's changed the most about your marriage, or your closest relationship, since you turned 50?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Ecclesiastes 4 says "two are better than one." What has your spouse, or a close companion, carried for you that you couldn't have carried alone?
2. Peter tells husbands to live with their wives "in an understanding way." What does your spouse most need to be understood about right now, at this stage of life?
3. Where has your marriage, or a key relationship, drifted into routine rather than intention?
4. What's one habit from earlier in the relationship you miss, and could bring back?
5. If your spouse were in this room, what would she say she needs more of from you these days?

LEADER TIP

Widowers and divorced men will very likely be in the room. Frame questions broadly enough to include "closest relationship," and never force participation — honor their experience without singling anyone out.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray specifically for marriages in the group, and for those grieving lost spouses.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Do one small, specific thing this week that reinvests in your marriage or closest relationship.

Week 5: Reckoning with Regret

God doesn't just forgive wasted years — He redeems them.

KEY PASSAGES

- Psalm 90:12 — teach us to number our days
- Genesis 45:4-8 — Joseph: "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good"
- Joel 2:25 — "I will restore the years the locusts have eaten"
- 1 John 1:9 — faithful and just to forgive, and cleanse from all unrighteousness
- Isaiah 43:18-19 — "forget the former things... I am doing a new thing"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

Without going deep yet — is there a decade of your life you'd call your best, and one you'd call your hardest?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Joseph tells his brothers, "you meant evil, but God meant it for good." What's something in your past you've never been able to see through that lens?
2. Psalm 90:12 asks God to "teach us to number our days" — why does the psalmist connect awareness of mortality with wisdom, rather than despair?
3. What regret do you still carry that you haven't fully brought into the light, even with God?
4. Is there a place where you're still punishing yourself for something God has already forgiven?
5. What would it look like to let this regret become part of your testimony instead of your secret?

LEADER TIP

This is likely the heaviest week emotionally. Don't require anyone to share specifics — give the option to share only in general terms, or just listen. Have a pastor's or counselor's contact ready in case something surfaces that needs follow-up care.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

An extended moment of silence, followed by a prayer of confession and release that you lead aloud.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Write down one regret and one truth from Scripture that speaks directly to it. Bring it next week — you don't have to share it.

Week 6: Facing Mortality with Hope

The body wastes away — the "inner self" doesn't have to.

KEY PASSAGES

- 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 — outwardly wasting away, inwardly renewed
- Psalm 23:4 — "even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death"
- 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 — "death is swallowed up in victory"
- Philippians 1:21 — "to live is Christ, and to die is gain"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

What's changed physically in the last 10 years that's made you think differently about time?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Paul says our "outer self is wasting away" while the "inner self is being renewed day by day." What does that renewal actually look like, practically, at your age?
2. He calls present troubles "light and momentary" compared to eternal glory. Does that language feel true right now, or hard to swallow? Why?
3. What's your honest relationship with the idea of your own mortality — avoidance, fear, peace, something else?
4. Paul says he's "always confident" even facing death, because of what's ahead. What would it take for that confidence to feel more real to you?
5. How would an eternal perspective actually change how you spend the years you have left?

LEADER TIP

Health scares and losses are common at this age. Be ready for someone to share something raw and unplanned — let it breathe rather than rushing to fix or move past it.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray for eternal perspective and peace over any fears named tonight.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Have one honest conversation this week — with God, or with a loved one — about mortality that you've been avoiding.

Week 7: Stewardship & Generosity in Retirement

What does generosity look like once the paycheck stops?

KEY PASSAGES

- Luke 12:16-21 — the rich fool and his barns
- 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 — God loves a cheerful giver
- Matthew 6:19-21 — storing up treasures in heaven
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19 — rich in good deeds, generous, willing to share

OPENING ICEBREAKER

Growing up, what did your family teach you — explicitly or by example — about money?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The rich fool's plan was to build bigger barns and "take life easy." What made his plan foolish, according to Jesus? (Hint: it wasn't the wealth itself.)
2. Paul says God loves a "cheerful" giver. Is your current giving cheerful, obligatory, or something in between?
3. How has your relationship with money shifted now that income has moved, or is moving, from earned to fixed?
4. What's one thing — money, time, a skill — you're holding onto tightly that you could loosen your grip on?
5. What would "sowing generously" specifically look like for you in this next decade?

LEADER TIP

Financial anxiety runs deep and often silent in retirement-age men. Keep the tone pointed toward freedom and trust, not guilt or comparison.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray for contentment and courage to be generous regardless of season or fixed income.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Give away something specific this week — money, time, or a possession — as a concrete act of trust.

Week 8: Brotherhood, Not Isolation

Men over 55 are one of the loneliest groups in America — and Scripture says that's not how it's meant to be.

KEY PASSAGES

- Proverbs 27:17 — iron sharpens iron
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 — pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up
- Hebrews 10:24-25 — spurring one another on, not giving up meeting together
- Galatians 6:2 — "carry each other's burdens"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

How many people could you call at 2am if something went wrong? Don't overthink it — just a number.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. "Iron sharpens iron" implies friction, not just fellowship. When has a friend genuinely sharpened you, even if it stung at the time?
2. What's made it harder to build or keep close friendships as you've gotten older?
3. Be honest — is this group, or one like it, currently functioning as real brotherhood for you, or just a meeting you attend?
4. Ecclesiastes 4:10 says "pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up." Who would show up for you if you fell — literally or figuratively?
5. What's one step you could take to move a relationship in this room from acquaintance to brother?

LEADER TIP

Don't let this stay theoretical. End with a concrete ask — exchange numbers, or have each man commit to one one-on-one meeting before next session.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray for the group itself, that it would become real brotherhood, not just a weekly meeting.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Call or meet one man from this group one-on-one before next session.

Week 9: Prayer as a Way of Life

Moving from prayer as a task on the list, to prayer as the rhythm of the day.

KEY PASSAGES

- Daniel 6:10 — praying three times a day under threat
- Psalm 55:16-17 — evening, morning, and noon
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 — "pray without ceasing"
- Philippians 4:6-7 — do not be anxious, but pray about everything

OPENING ICEBREAKER

What did prayer look like for you 20 years ago, versus today?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Daniel prayed three times a day even under threat of death. What does that level of consistency tell you about his relationship with God, not just his discipline?
2. Psalm 55 mentions praying "evening, morning, and noon." What would it take to build a rhythm like that into a less scheduled season of life?
3. What currently gets in the way of consistent prayer for you — busyness, distraction, doubt, something else?
4. Is your prayer life mostly requests, or does it also include listening, gratitude, and honesty about struggle?
5. What's one realistic prayer rhythm you could start this week — not an ideal, a realistic one?

LEADER TIP

Avoid letting this turn into a guilt session about "not praying enough." Keep the focus on one realistic next step, not an all-or-nothing standard.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Actually practice a shared moment of silence or listening prayer tonight, rather than only talking about prayer.

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Pick one specific time of day this week to pause and pray, even for two minutes.

Week 10: Sent Out: Caleb's Charge

Caleb was 85 and asking for a mountain, not a rocking chair.

KEY PASSAGES

- Joshua 14:6-15 — 85 years old, and still asking for the mountain
- Deuteronomy 31:6 — "be strong and courageous... the Lord goes with you"
- Psalm 92:12-14 — the righteous "still bear fruit in old age"

OPENING ICEBREAKER

Looking back over these ten weeks, what's one thing that's shifted in how you think about this season of life?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Caleb says he's "still as strong today" as he was 45 years earlier. What do you think fueled that kind of resilience?
2. He specifically asks for the hill country — the hardest ground, still occupied by giants. Why do you think he wanted the challenge instead of the easy inheritance?
3. What's your version of "the hill country" — the hard, meaningful thing you're being invited toward instead of the easy path?
4. Of everything covered these ten weeks — calling, legacy, marriage, regret, mortality, generosity, brotherhood, prayer — what's the one thread you most need to keep pulling on?
5. What does it look like for this group to keep going after tonight — same format, different format, or just staying connected?

LEADER TIP

This is a commissioning week, not just a wrap-up. Consider praying over each man by name as a closing act.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPT

Pray Joshua 1's "strong and courageous" charge over each man by name, commissioning him into his own "hill country."

TAKE-HOME CHALLENGE

Write down your own "hill country" — the challenge God is inviting you toward — and share it with one other man in the group.