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Courageous Faith and Daily Integrity

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every man, God's man

Every Man's Guide to...

Courageous Faith and Daily Integrity

Stephen Arterburn
Kenny Luck with Mike Yorkey



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Details in some anecdotes and stories have been changed to protect the identities of the persons involved.

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foreword

Kenny Luck has been quietly helping men in our church going on fourteen years now, and Steve Arterburn has been a stand-in preacher and minister here for years. During this time both of these men have come alongside countless men and shared their lives and love for God's Word in small groups, at our retreats, and in teaching our men's morning Bible study. Their passion and gift for helping men are well known in our church—most famously among the wives.

But more special to me than Kenny and Steve's ability to get into a man's space and take him to the next level of Christian manhood is their ownership of their message. They have both fought and won tough battles, overcome setbacks, and diligently pursued a practical holiness that speaks powerfully to men of all ages.

If you'll read with a humble and open heart, *Every Man, God's Man* will make you uncomfortable, inspire you to positive change, and get you pumped about taking new risks in your faith. Most important, God will use the insights in this book to advance His kingdom in your heart and, by doing so, advance His purposes in the world. The book in your hands is not about the resolution of a man's problems; it's about a personal resurgence of purpose. *That* excites me.

—RICK WARREN, author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*
and senior pastor of Saddleback Church

acknowledgments

My sincere and deep appreciation to my pastor, Rick Warren, for training me to trust the purposes of God and risk giving my life to them.

God caused my path to cross Steve Arterburn's over a decade ago, and I have never been the same. I have worked with great men, but none surpass you in the category of spiritual vision in ministry. You are a dream catcher for Jesus. I am still pinching myself that you are my close friend and mentor after all these years.

I am in debt to Ben Evans, Hans Schroeder, Jeff Genoway, Paul Petit, and Todd Wendorff, all great men, without whom I would be truly poor in this life. Because of you, my God, my wife, my kids, my community, and my world all get a better man. Thank you for being my band of brothers for life.

My deep gratitude to the men of Thursday morning, who model for the world the power and promise of men's community in the local church. Thank you for rising at dawn to reach forward in your faith and reach out to one another. You are the ones who keep it real and keep me grounded.

Finally, being husband to Chrissy and dad to Cara, Ryan, and Jenna makes me the richest man in the world. Thank you for all your sacrifices. This book has life because you all are my life.

—KENNY LUCK

introduction

by Stephen Arterburn

Please forgive me for not starting off this book with a superstud football story or some other macho-inspired anecdote as men's books are supposed to do. In fact, I'm going to do a "Wrong-Way Riegels" and run in the opposite direction by sharing a shameful antfootball story that happened to me. (By the way, Wrong-Way Riegels was Roy Riegels, a defensive back who recovered a fumble in the 1929 Rose Bowl game and scampered sixty-five yards in the wrong direction before being tackled by a teammate!)

My story begins on a dusty, hardscrabble high-school football field in Bryan, Texas, where I hated almost every sweat-producing minute of every bone-crunching practice, none of which produced victories, because our sorry team lost nearly every game. I can still taste the dirt in my mouth from that grassless practice field. I can still feel my heaving breaths under thirty pounds of equipment, a flannel practice jersey, and humidity so thick that it cut the oxygen content by 50 percent.

Yes, you heard me right. I hated playing football, even if it was in Texas, where high-school football is a state religion and players have streets named after them.

There, I've said it. In other books, I have confessed to a promiscuous life and even to paying for an abortion, but that was easy compared to what I just did—admitting that I hated playing football. What a stupid sport!

Looking back, I wish I'd been a thespian on the high-school drama team. (That means I wanted to be an actor, for those of you who live in Rio

Linda.) I say this even though my football prowess once made headlines on the sports pages of the *Bryan Daily Eagle*. I even have a dog-eared article in my scrapbook that says I might have been the best running back ever to set foot in Bronco Stadium.

My inauspicious football career began late in my sophomore year at Stephen F. Austin High School, home of the Broncos, when my head coach had the brilliant idea during spring practice of moving me from center to fullback. I weighed 210 pounds, most of which was baby fat, but I was fast on my feet. I welcomed Coach's decision because the allure of bending over, hiking the ball to someone's hands between my legs, and then blocking an oversized nose guard who was fully committed to knocking me on my rear end had lost some of its luster, if you catch my drift.

At the end of spring practice, we played the annual Green-White Game, an intrasquad contest held every April when the weather was already too hot for walking a dog. We played for the sole reason that people in Texas could not wait until September to witness a real football game. Even the women were anxious to get back up in those stands and yell. It must have been the only safe place for some of them to do that.

My first Green-White football game was staged on a searing Friday night in Bronco Stadium. For most of the game, I lined up behind the quarterback as the fullback. When the ball was snapped, my job was to run into the line, faking that I had the ball. Throughout the first three quarters, I ducked my head and plowed into the line; instead of actually blocking someone, I would fall into a heap and hope I tripped somebody. I soon became an expert at this hunch-drop-and-roll kind of thing.

What a pitiful sight I must have been! Rather than making a crushing block and punching a hole for the halfback to run through, I pretty much performed a pratfall into the line. This made perfect sense, since I was a guy who avoided pain at all costs.

THEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENED

Then, late in the game, the unexpected happened. Instead of being cannon fodder as I had been for the previous forty plays, I would get to run the ball! The play called for me to take the handoff, burst through a roadblock filled with musclebound linemen, cut to the outside of the linebackers, and sprint for the goal line. At least that is how the plan was drawn up. More likely, I would be stuffed at the line of scrimmage and find myself at the bottom of a humongous dog pile, gasping for breath.

We were on our own thirty-yard line, which means we were seventy yards from the end zone. After hearing the quarterback announce the play, I envisioned myself running up to the line and falling over in a hunched-up fetal position while cradling the ball. I could just hear the announcer laughing over the public address system and saying something like, “Hand-off to Arterburn... Ooh, he didn’t get very far, did he?”

**I don’t remember much of what Coach said,
but I do remember his using the
word *pathetic* at least ten times.**

The ball was snapped. I shot out of my three-point stance behind the quarterback because the only thing faster than my legs was the beating of my heart. I opened up my folded arms. The quarterback slid the ball inside, and I headed toward the meat packers from the local processing plant, now posing as guards, tackles, nose guards, and linebackers. Then the strangest thing happened: A gap opened up in the wall. I shot through the hole, and once I was beyond the line of scrimmage, I nearly dropped the ball in disbelief.

I had some daylight. I cut to the outside, and now it was a footrace between me and cornerback Billy Davis—the fastest player on the team. There was no way I could outrun Billy. When he caught up with me, I

stiff-armed him like a junior Emmitt Smith and pushed him to the ground. I couldn't believe it. I ran for my life. *He's down to the thirty, the twenty, the ten... He's going to go all...the...way! Touchdown!*

I was delirious with joy until my teammates tackled me in the end zone. I struggled to regain my footing, and then they all slapped me on my helmet. That hurt! I heard the unrestrained cheers of the huge crowd, and the following day, the local sports scribe called me the “Bronco Bruiser Express,” a player destined to become the greatest running back to ever play on Bronco Field.

The hubbub continued right up to the start of the fall season. People in Bryan who depended on football—and I would have to say that included nearly every man, woman, and child—were depending on me, the running back who hated football and wanted to quit, quit, quit.

I think I felt that way because Coach never let an opportunity go by to call me the dumbest-looking excuse for a football player, someone who flopped into the line with no conviction and produced a fluke, once-in-a-lifetime seventy-yard run for a touchdown. When Coach reviewed the game film with me, I don't remember much of what he said, but I do remember his using the word *pathetic* at least ten times.

Then the season started. When you run with the football, it is only a matter of time before someone hits you hard very close to a vital organ. In our season opener, I was carrying the ball when I was nailed—and my left kidney felt as if it would split open. The trainer taped me up and pushed me back onto the field. A few plays later, I took a shot to the shoulder, which displaced some cartilage. The trainer taped me up and pushed me back onto the field. Soon I took a direct hit to the ribs, one that caused the womenfolk with the beehive hairdos in Section 18 to wince. I was the Bronco Bruiser, all right, except I was the one getting bruised.

That pretty much sums up my horrible junior year, which was matched by another injury-prone effort during my senior year. For more than two years, I devoted hours and hours to a game that I hated, develop-

ing skills I would never use again. One of the happiest days of my life was when the football season ended and I traded in my uniform for a letterman's jacket with a big *B* on it. The *B* didn't stand for "Bronc," but for "Bruised."

REFLECTIONS ON A PLAYING FIELD

Thank you for listening as I unburdened myself regarding high-school football. For a guy like me to endure that kind of daily struggle, there must have been a strong reason I was willing to do so. And there was. The reason I played is because in Texas, you either played football or you were gay. My manhood depended on it. (Well, if you didn't play football, it didn't actually mean you were gay, but everybody thought you were.) I wanted to be seen as a man, and I would not allow my manhood to be shortchanged by not playing on that team. So I stayed until the bitter end and proved to those fans in Bronco Stadium that I was a man.

I look back on those days with regret, however. I would have been a lot happier joining the Thespian Society and auditioning for a role in a school play. And they practiced in an air-conditioned hall! Football was such a waste of time.

Now that I have confessed this lunacy to you, I wonder if you have ever stopped to think about some of the stuff you've done in the past just to prove to yourself or others that you are a real man. Some pursue a certain career or sexual conquests or sex with themselves, and they hate themselves for it. With each surge of success or pleasure, however, it is an empty soul that proclaims, "I am a man."

We men have some weird ways of proving our manhood, but that's because we have some strange ideas of what it means to be a man. Many of us did not have fathers who took us by the hand, and later stood shoulder to shoulder, to show us the way of the world. Many of us never had a dad acknowledge our manhood, which means we have been locked in a desperate search for someone, or something, that would acknowledge it.

Therein lies the problem. We spend our lives doing stupid stuff to try to fit in, prove ourselves in the heat of battle, or show off our abilities. Our focus is on what other guys think, whoever they are. My contention is that we are playing to the wrong audience. God Almighty is the only audience we need, and He's not nearly as fickle as those football fans who filled Bronco Stadium three decades ago. When we play for God, we become God's man. It's His jersey, His team we're playing for.

And He has our number.

**We men have some weird ways
of proving our manhood.**

When you become God's man, the rest falls into place. You go from playing to that fickle audience in your head to an audience of one full-time, lifelong supporter, the Ultimate Fan who created the universe and you. God calls all of us to be His man, and because we mean so much to Him, He will bug us to keep suiting up because He loves us so much.

I suspect you picked up this book because down in your heart you really want to be God's man, although you're not too sure that you want to step back and honestly look at your life or the things you are involved in. Perhaps you question whether you have what it takes to be God's man.

Let me break away for a minute to tell you something that might apply to how you view yourself. In the last year, I have been working out with a trainer to get rid of middle-age flab and work toward those killer abs you see on late-night infomercials. As my trainer barks at me to do another set of crunches, I keep telling my sweat-stained self that I can't believe how much time and energy it takes to produce a six-pack stomach.

Let's put it this way. I doubt I'll ever have a rack of washboard abs, and if some television camera zoomed in on my stomach, all you'd see is my stomach—flat, I'm proud to say, but not ripped. But here is what I learned. If I died and you did an autopsy on me, you could cut away the flesh and

fat and find my abs underneath those layers. My abs are there; you just can't see them as you can in those ab-buster commercials.

The same probably applies to you. Underneath all of your horrible habits or terrible treatment of others, you will find muscles of character. That character has been covered up by things of this world. Unless you are the reincarnation of Ted Bundy (the serial killer you will learn more about in chapter 11), the power of God can build on your character and help you become God's man, no matter what you have done or have been through. If you doubt me, please read this reassuring verse from Scripture:

For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.
(Proverbs 24:16)

You may have fallen down so much that you feel like staying on the ground. I know. I once sought the sanctuary of the dirt as I hit the line on the football field. Later in college, I stumbled so many times that I didn't know what it was like to stand up for something again. But you don't have to do that any longer. You can begin to build on the residue of character within you and start developing it to resemble the character of God—today.

Discovering the character of a godly man is what *Every Man, God's Man* is all about. Isn't that what you really want? Don't you really want to do something that will grow you closer to God? As you read on, I want to give you a little guide that I call the Three Rs of God's man:

Read

God's man reads. He does not have to read much, but he has to be consistent so he doesn't forget everything. I hope you will read other books, including *Every Man's Personal Bible*. Try to read in a place that's away from a blaring television or a distracting computer screen. Reading in the living room will send a clear message to your family that you are not satisfied with

who you are today and that you are pressing forward to become God's man. A careful reader soaks up truth and lives it out in his life.

Recommit

I hope before you flip the last page of this book that you will recommit your life to God and to the life He intends you to lead. I hope you recommit to your wife and kids or, if you are single, make a recommitment to family and friends.

Recommitment means relinquishing some of our rights and leading by serving. Recommitment means removing the sins that burden us down. Rather than having a married life and a separate and secret sex life, we need to recommit to integrating all of who we are into all of who God intends us to be.

Relate

God's man relates to God, his immediate family, and to other men. God's man builds a connection rather than allows anything to stand in the way of relationship. He is always looking to grow deeper and more intimate in those relationships.

I don't think most of us men do that very well. I think we need to evaluate the width and depth of our relationships and go to work on strengthening them as God's men.

THE CALL TO SEXUAL INTEGRITY

This book is another important step in the Every Man book series. Our first book, *Every Man's Battle*, has been on the bestseller list for more than two years, and hundreds of thousands of men have responded to its call for sexual integrity. Its "kid brother" book—*Every Young Man's Battle*—has been a bestseller from the first month it was published, which has been a thrilling development for my coauthor, Fred Stoeker, and me.

Fred and I are equally pleased with the response to our third book, *Every Man's Marriage*, and how it has touched married couples. *Every Man's Marriage* is the story of how Fred dealt with the sin that was blocking intimacy with his wife, Brenda, and how he went to work at honoring her heart and reconnecting with her in the most intimate way possible. The biggest surprise has been hearing from couples who tell us that *Every Man's Marriage* has helped their sex lives in a huge way.

**You may have fallen down so much
that you feel like staying on the ground.**

Once those three books were completed and launched, it was time to expand our message to reach into the heart of men and help them grow in character. We wanted to help every man, no matter where he was on the maturity scale, to move closer to the Lord. With that as our goal, we sought out a partner who not only walks the talk but also works closely with men in a men's ministry—and that is where my good friend Kenny Luck came in.

Kenny, whom I've known for the better part of ten years, heads up the nationwide organization called Every Man Ministries, which evolved from his work with men at Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California. Kenny is a living example of a God's man. His admirable character and wonderful family are worth applauding, as are his efforts to connect with thousands of men each year across the nation as he prays with them and tries to guide them closer to God's light. Kenny was a natural choice to be the lead dog in writing this book. He and I worked closely together on the essential concepts we feel compelled to convey to you, but the voice you will hear throughout the book is Kenny's. I wholeheartedly commend him to you as a man after God's own heart, a man specially gifted to illustrate practical, biblical principles of success using true-life stories from his own life and from men with whom he works every day.

Of course, I don't know how you came by this book. If *Every Man, God's Man* is your first book in the Every Man series, then I hope you will check out the other titles I have mentioned. If this is not your first Every Man book, then you deserve some kind of frequent reader award! Either way, I pray that God will use *Every Man, God's Man* to help you take a place of honor and self-respect in all areas of your life.

bogged down in the red zone?

During the past several years, I (Kenny) have witnessed men commit to becoming God's man through Every Man Ministries. I've found that it's not about asking guys to *do* more; it's about asking them to *be* more. It's not about asking them to pursue a plan or respond to a cool idea or even to a dare. It's about convincing guys, deep down, that being God's man is worth the risk. Why is that?

Doing more puts a man in control.
Being more puts God in control.

Doing more is a safe style for men.
Being more is risky.

Doing more implies there's an end to it.
Being more is a process—fluid and unpredictable.

Doing more lets a man pick the changes he needs to make.
Being more allows God to reveal the changes a man needs
to make.

Doing more requires trying harder.
Being more relies on training humbly.

Doing more engenders spiritual pride.
Being more produces humility through surrender.

Doing more is about correcting behavior patterns.
Being more is about connecting with God's character.

Doing more attaches to the public persona.
Being more reaches the private self—the man God wants
to reach.

So here's the bottom line of this book: The men's movement of the last fifteen years has been challenging men to love more, say more, pray more, read the Bible more, discipline themselves more, love their wives more, and serve their kids more. Men have wanted all those things, but the majority of them are failing over the long haul. The men's movement has asked men to do what their hearts and characters cannot deliver. Author Dallas Willard got it right: What's needed is a renovation of the heart before a renovation of lifestyle.

I know there was a time when I needed an overhaul. It happened about ten years ago when I was a credit-card company's dream customer—young and stupid enough to believe that a piece of gold plastic "had its advantages" and would connect me with some special fraternity of the financial elite. My gold card fed my appetite for all sorts of "needs." Clothes, birthday and anniversary trips, and lavish dinners out were all benign events for which I supplied perfect justifications. Christmas gifts, home improvements, and repairs on my snazzy foreign sports car became part of my lifestyle. And just as reality should have slapped me in the face, additional lines of credit would mysteriously arrive.

My family's rise in discretionary spending came after we moved to Orange County, California, in the go-go 1990s. I started to earn more money, but I also started to believe my own rationalizations regarding my finances. I trusted our credit cards more than I trusted God. I certainly didn't have the faith to believe that if we gave our 10 percent, He would make the other 90 percent work for us.

**Ten years ago I was a credit-card
company's dream customer.**

So I gave less to the church and spent more on myself. I refused to deny my family any desire—including a nice home in an upscale neighborhood. After all, I had great credit. I ignored my wife, Chrissy's, urgings to tighten our financial belts, which only accelerated our insidious spiral into financial bondage. All of the turmoil caused tremendous amounts of anxiety that remained invisible to outsiders but was visibly and verbally incinerating our home and marriage at the end of every month.

SLAVE TO CREDITORS

One night, following a lively discussion with Chrissy about our messed-up finances, I happened to open my Bible. My eyes fell to these words: "The borrower is servant to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). Seven words, seven tons of impact. I was a slave—to my creditors. I had also enslaved my family because of my inability to say no to myself. Worse, my character deficiency had moved God away from the center of my life and replaced Him with financial anxiety. This, I felt, was a form of idolatry. That truth kindled my repentance and a desire to change, which I confessed to my wife.

I also sought help from friends. Not financial help, but prayer and counsel regarding our precarious financial situation. I can remember weeping in front of my close friends after I disclosed that we had rung up twenty

thousand dollars in credit-card debt. I was embarrassed in every way, but I was past caring. I was determined to do what it took to get honest with myself and with the mess I had created. The only way I knew to accomplish that was to humble myself before God, my wife, and my buddies and ask for their help. I never felt so humbled. I had been a Christian for thirteen years; during five of those years I was a missionary making a fraction of what I now earned in my California job. I should have been content and debt free, but I wasn't.

God's solution had been there all along. It was only a matter of my trusting in His proposition. All I had to do was live within my means and give the first 10 percent back to God. Oh, I had heard my pastor say over and over that we can't outgive God, and a part of me wanted to believe that. Like the rich young ruler of the Gospel accounts, however, I hedged my bets, preferring my own way over God's way. My arrogance was astonishing. I could not let go.

Finally unable to buy another thirty days, and with no magical miracle bonuses in sight, reality hit. I had to drive my wife's minivan to work, since that was the only car in working order, but that left her stranded. The stress on our marriage was enormous, and when I finally mustered the courage to get honest with myself, I gave it over to God. I remember saying, "Whatever it takes, Lord." Simply put, if that meant living with one car, so be it. If it meant giving to the church when it made no sense, I would give. If it meant submitting myself to an austere monthly budget for two years to get out of debt, that, too, was what I would do.

God's solution had been there all along . It was only a matter of my trusting in His proposition.

That day, the last major bastion of control fell into God's hands, and His victory was both humbling and liberating. Although I was awash in

debt, I became the richest of all men because, deep inside, I was committed to the course.

What bastions have you erected against God's goodness and blessing in your life? Most men can name them in a nanosecond. God has already been speaking to them, convicting them that their priorities are seriously out of line. God's message, and mine, is that those walls have to fall—for the sake of His kingdom. Or, to use a football analogy (remember Steve's story?): God isn't looking for a man's man to break up the Enemy's line. He is looking for a God's man to drive the ball home.

I wasn't being God's man. Under the blitz of financial pressure, my drive toward victory in Christ's kingdom stalled. At a time in my life when I should have been chewing up serious yards of turf in my service to Him, I bogged down in a financial quagmire and fumbled the ball.

But this book isn't about finances; it's about bogging down spiritually when our offense should be in full attack mode to score for Him. This imagery reminds me of another piece of turf I love so well—the green stretch of grass known as the “red zone” at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California.

IN THE RED ZONE BUT STUCK?

Every fall, like the swallows that return to the San Juan Capistrano Mission not far from our Southern California home, our family makes its annual return to the Rose Bowl, where the UCLA Bruins play their home football games. Unlike my writing partner, Steve Arterburn, I love football, but maybe that's because I wasn't crazy enough to suit up in high school. (Actually, Steve loves football—he just hated playing it.)

Anyway, Chrissy and I are huge UCLA boosters, but that's to be expected, since we both graduated from UCLA. Chrissy was one of those cute cheerleaders who wore white sweaters and pleated skirts and shook

Bruin pompoms back in the mideighties when both of us were enrolled on the Westwood campus.

These days we love taking our three children—Cara, Ryan, and Jenna—to several games each fall. From the opening kickoff, I always edge up in my bleacher seat when the Bruins reach the red zone, that patch of grass between the twenty-yard line and the goal line. Everyone knows UCLA has a great chance to score when they reach that zone. The offense is in full attack mode while the defense stiffens in a do-or-die effort to hold the Bruins to a field-goal attempt. As my father-in-law likes to say, “It’s *mano a mano* in the RZ,” and he’s right. The red zone is all about the heart and desire to drive the ball all the way in.

I’ve long felt that the red zone is an apt metaphor for our spiritual journeys. Early on, we think we’re moving the ball for God, but it’s really more like losing a few yards here and gaining a few there. As we spiritually mature, however, and reach the red zone—where we can score against Satan and for the kingdom—all too often we fail to take the ball all the way in. For one reason or another, we never completely reach full attack mode. For me, finances bogged the drive. But there are any number of reasons to explain why this happens: We lose focus, Satan gets us too busy, we fall into sin, or we lack the experience to make the right call in a hotly contested domain of our lives.

You don’t want to be in a hurry-up offense when you’re in the red zone. But all too often we live in a rush, rush, rush, shoving aside the time to read God’s Word or invest in relationships with other Christian men or volunteer for God’s work. For many men, this lack of time is a major source of disconnection. One guy in the church where I teach a men’s Bible study spoke for thousands of others when he told me, “I’m always running late! I wake up late, I leave the house late, and I arrive at work a little late—*really* late if the traffic is bad. I must not be prioritizing my time well.”

In football, a blitz is intended to distract and disrupt the opposing offense. In life, Satan has been calling in spiritual blitzes on each of us.

“Hurry the man” is one of his most effective drive-stuffers for men in the red zone. Or he may blitz our thought lives, leaving our offense spinning its wheels in muddy sensuality. Whatever it takes, he’ll blitz us with any behavior or distraction that limits us to no gain or the equivalent of spiritual field goals instead of touchdowns.

So what can be done about it?

Like a good football team, we must read the blitz and adjust. We’ll explore some adjustments in the coming pages. Look, I’ve been sacked more than once in the red zone. I know that my relationships with Chrissy and the kids have been shortchanged by a state of perpetual hurriedness. More important, I’ve fumbled away my intimacy with God by choosing my own way rather than adjusting according to the gifts and the training He’s given me.

Every Man, God’s Man will help you make better calls when you’re feeling blitzed from all sides. You’ll learn how to complete your drive toward spiritual maturity and lead a fulfilling, God-driven life. By the time you finish reading this book, you’ll be trained to handle any defensive scheme that Satan or others will throw at you. You’ll be able to complete the drive that God has been training you for—to possess a heart that is completely His.

**Far too many men do not give themselves
fully to being God’s man. It’s like going
three-and-out in a football game.**

I started Every Man Ministries in 1999 to help other men in their spiritual walks and in building better marriages and strong families. That quest has taken me to every part of the country, where I’ve spoken before thousands of men at various men’s conferences. When I’m home in Southern California, I sit down each week with one hundred men to study God’s Word, which often leads to numerous counseling sessions. The chance to be a listening ear, offer advice, and pray with these men has been an

awesome privilege. As a pastor friend once said: “If you reach a man, then you reach every relationship he has.”

All of this man-to-man experience has convinced me that far too many men do not give themselves fully to being God's man. It's like going three-and-out in a football game; they make three lackluster attempts to run or pass the ball, then they punt away their opportunity.

GET BACK IN ZONE MODE

I want you to get back into the game and advance the ball downfield, pierce the red zone and ram it home, and enjoy greater intimacy with God as you connect with His plan and purposes for your future. God's goal is to finish the work in you—to have you stride into the end zone, legs kicking high—“that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6).

So let me tell you where we are going with this book. You may be aware that *Every Man, God's Man* is part of the series that includes *Every Man's Battle*, *Every Young Man's Battle*, and *Every Man's Marriage*. Those three are what I call tactical books—filled with strategies, plans, and perspectives to help men overcome temptation, grow in sexual integrity, and become truly intimate with their wives. This book is different. We're going to come alongside you and talk about what we see along the way to becoming God's man.

This isn't as easy as it sounds. It's easy to be frank with a guy when you are talking about his penis or his wife. A man is attached to both. But for most men, God does not have this same kind of proximity. Men, in general, are not spiritually deep and don't possess the same connection to spiritual issues as they do to sexual and marital issues.

Automatic connections with spiritual truths are not as easy to come by. It usually takes someone you respect getting into your space and telling it like it is—no sugarcoating. Our goal in *Every Man, God's Man* is to iden-

tify what God is specifically saying to you in ways that will allow you to “get it” and get back into a red-zone mode that moves you forward with enthusiasm and joy in the Lord. In coming chapters, you’ll learn about:

- the personal benefits of having an undivided heart toward God
- how to stop resolving to change and instead experience a revolution inside
- how to move against fear and replace it with faith
- how there is no such thing as a “double agent” believer because one agent is always compromised
- how to deal with the “mole” within that bids you to indulge the dark side
- how winning or losing a spiritual foothold changes the tide of war
- how and why “80/20” thinking fails; that is, doing things 80 percent God’s way and 20 percent your way
- the importance of “marinating” your mind
- why having other men watch your back is nonnegotiable for God’s man
- how confession releases God’s power and bloodies the Enemy’s nose
- how to partner effectively and practically with the Guide—God’s Spirit
- the source of real spiritual power and how to tap it
- why perseverance is the mark of God’s man
- the purpose of building and staying within well-marked boundaries
- the need to jettison the baggage in your life
- mastering your spiritual motivation once and for all

So there’s a bare-bones description of the yardage ahead of you. Along the way, I will be telling stories about myself (except for his Texas football stories, Steve has nothing over me) and relating funny, interesting, poignant, and sad stories of men I’ve met and counseled in my years of ministry. (I’ve used pseudonyms to protect the guilty and the innocent.)

As you read about these fellow travelers, you will find yourself nodding your head, because we can all relate to their foibles and their fortunes. We've been there.

So, ready to get started?

Good, because I think the head referee just whistled for the opening kickoff.



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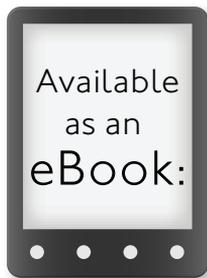
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