
**Kenny
Luck**

Dangerous Good

**The Coming
Revolution of Men
Who Care**



Dangerous Good is a must-read that addresses the heart of worldwide injustices. By initiating change and exposing root issues affecting our global community, Kenny Luck is contributing to the solution. He's reaching the hearts of men and encouraging them to grow in godly character and conduct. He's reminding them that our identities are in Christ and Christ alone, and when we reflect him, we live like him—and living like him is what will change our world.

CHRISTINE CAINE, bestselling author and founder of A21 and Propel Women

I wish every Christian man—in particular every *young* man—would read and apply this book. If so, our families, churches, and relationships with nonbelievers would be transformed. Get this book, read it, and pass it off to every man you know.

SEAN MCDOWELL, PHD, Biola University professor, speaker, and author

Kenny Luck brings to light much-needed attention to a man's purpose in society. We as men must take a stand to preserve our identity in an environment that attempts to lower the bar. By giving the glory to God, Kenny shows us the path to true integrity, friendship, and the Lord's direction. The Lord has given us the directions, should we choose to follow them. By speaking to us as a man of Christ speaks to another man—as Christ spoke to his disciples—Kenny brings forth the Word of God and, in doing so, brings us closer to the Lord. Thank you, Kenny, for your leadership, dedication, and love of mankind.

MARK "OZ" GEIST, US Marine (retired), survivor of the Battle of Benghazi, as told in *13 Hours: The Secret Soldiers of Benghazi*

What I love about Kenny is that he writes in a way that gets to the heart of men. In *Dangerous Good*, he rips to the core of healthy masculinity and expresses what all men want to be true of ourselves while inviting us to use our strength for maximum impact. *Dangerous Good* is flammable, and the world wants this movement to catch fire because of the blessings it will bring to women, children, and families.

DOUG FIELDS, author and executive director, HomeWord,
Azusa Pacific University

Dangerous Good is a wake-up call to all men. In this book, Kenny Luck challenges men to put down the remote control and wade into the problems in our society. Most of these problems began when good men failed to live up to the noble purpose for which God created them.

JEFF STRUECKER, author of *Bullet Proof Faith*

In *Dangerous Good*, Kenny Luck activates the hearts of men by awakening the deepest desires within them. Luck shows how easily our identities get hijacked by impostors and guides us to the dangerous-yet-good identity God desires us to find. If you want to grow in bravery or vulnerability, *Dangerous Good* will be a valuable resource for your journey.

JAY STRINGER, author of *Unwanted*

As our world grapples with what it means to be a man amidst our crumbling moral culture, Kenny Luck directs us back to the only rock-solid example—Jesus Christ. In *Dangerous Good: The Coming Revolution of Men Who Care*, Kenny explores the Bible thoroughly and thoughtfully, providing a field guide for how men can

not only heal the wounds of past generations but also lead with the clarity, conviction, and compassion of Christ.

CHRIS HODGES, senior pastor at Church of the Highlands and author of *Fresh Air* and *The Daniel Dilemma*

More than a self-help book, *Dangerous Good* is a biblical play-by-play map to male authenticity and freedom in Christ. Each chapter is an intelligent and compelling guide to higher-level character, personal awareness, and a dangerously good self! Women, this is the book you've been waiting for! Toxic patriarchy and toxic feminism are turned on their heads. Christ's model of mutual respect, male integrity, and biblical feminism collaborating together for family, church, and community leads the way for a dangerously good *movement!*

ANNETTE OLTMANS, founder of The MEND Project

I love so much about this timely, inspiring book. While our culture flounders to make sense of gender differences, Kenny Luck expertly outlines the divine solution to both broken masculinity and reactive feminism, calling men to step up and into their full potential. Look out, evil: Dangerous good is coming for you!

JESSIE MINASSIAN, blogger, speaker, and author of *Family: How to Love Yours (and Help Them Like You Back)*

From the day I first met Kenny twenty-five years ago, he has always told me the truth. Nothing has changed since then. This book tells me the truth about me and the one who knows my identity best—Jesus. With memorable turns of phrase, beginning with the very title, *Dangerous Good* is a winsome, passionate, biblical call for men of God to *bear a family resemblance*.

GREG HOLDER, author of *The Genius of One*



**Kenny
Luck**

Dangerous Good

**The Coming
Revolution of Men
Who Care**

NAVPRESS 

*A NavPress resource published in alliance
with Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.*



NavPress is the publishing ministry of The Navigators, an international Christian organization and leader in personal spiritual development. NavPress is committed to helping people grow spiritually and enjoy lives of meaning and hope through personal and group resources that are biblically rooted, culturally relevant, and highly practical.

For more information, visit www.NavPress.com.

Dangerous Good: The Coming Revolution of Men Who Care

Copyright © 2018 by Kenny Luck. All rights reserved.

A NavPress resource published in alliance with Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

NAV PRESS and the NAV PRESS logo are registered trademarks of NavPress, The Navigators, Colorado Springs, CO. TYNDALE is a registered trademark of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Absence of ® in connection with marks of NavPress or other parties does not indicate an absence of registration of those marks.

The Team:

Don Pape, Publisher

David Zimmerman, Acquisitions Editor

Elizabeth Symm, Copy Editor

Daniel Farrell, Designer

Cover illustration of lion copyright © by Brandlogo/Creative Market. All rights reserved.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, *New International Version*® (NIV®). Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from *THE MESSAGE*, copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. Scripture quotations marked NASB are taken from the New American Standard Bible,® copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Some of the anecdotal illustrations in this book are true to life and are included with the permission of the persons involved. All other illustrations are composites of real situations, and any resemblance to people living or dead is purely coincidental.

For information about special discounts for bulk purchases, please contact Tyndale House Publishers at csresponse@tyndale.com, or call 1-800-323-9400.

Cataloging-in-Publication Data is available.

ISBN 978-1-63146-890-2

Printed in the United States of America

24 23 22 21 20 19 18

7 6 5 4 3 2 1

CONTENTS

- Introduction: Powerfully Made:
Glory—the Dangerous Good Impulse *xiii*
- 01** Powerfully Formed Men:
Identity—the Lost Lions *1*
- 02** Powerfully Convicted Men:
Morality—Simple but Strong *19*
- 03** Powerfully Connected Men:
Community—the Spirit of the Rapscaillon *35*
- 04** Powerfully Impacted Women:
Dignity—the Arsonist and the Firefighters *53*
- 05** Powerfully Affected Children:
Legacy—Worth and Peace *69*
- 06** Powerfully Delivered Justice:
Relevancy—Brilliance and Blackness *89*
- 07** Powerfully Opposed Movement:
Ferocity—Treachery, Power, and Zeal *113*
- 08** Powerfully Remembered Men:
Visibility—the Song of the Unsung *133*
- 09** Powerfully Impassioned Men:
Fervency—the Arrival of Revival *159*
- 10** Powerfully Called Forward:
Bravery—Understanding the Times *181*
- Notes *191*

INTRODUCTION

POWERFULLY MADE

Glory—the Dangerous Good Impulse

PICTURES CAN PREDICT A PASSION.

I found an old photograph in my garage: me at four years old, sitting on a tricycle, wearing a huge Batman helmet. I paused to laugh—that helmet rarely came off my head. I was also the enthusiastic owner of Batman T-shirts, underwear, pajamas, even a toothbrush. This old, yellowing Polaroid said it all: I wanted to be Batman then.

I still want to be Batman. I am still putting down money for the movies, the apparel, the theme park experiences, the coffee mugs. Marvel and DC comics have a hold on me. And not only on me but also on men all over the world. Wherever I travel to speak, I like to ask, “How many of you owned superhero clothes or accessories when you were little?” Without fail, 90 percent of the men in the room raise their hands.

We start dreaming early. Before Batman became my thing, my dad bought me a coonskin hat, and I sang the *Davy Crockett* anthem more like a prayer than a song. When Davy Crockett lost his appeal, the coonskin cap giving way to my Batman pajamas and plastic helmet, I sang Batman’s theme song—I still can. The caped crusader, too, was eventually

knocked off his throne—by less mythical but equally strong men masquerading as Vikings, Steelers, and 49ers. I pestered my mom into getting me their helmets and pajamas as well. Lots of those pictures exist too.

For reasons unknown, I was drawn to men who strapped on a uniform and confronted their opposition on the way to the glory of achievement—and experienced subsequent appreciation by adoring fans. Men who faced off and showed up. As a little boy, I was searching for a way to express those very aspirations inside me. It was like I was pregnant, carrying this stuff around, looking for a way to give birth.

My guess is that you have a few pictures of your own. These vintage snapshots represent the early rumblings of a magma boiling deep within—like the steam emanating from the hillside, suggesting to a volcanologist that something's lurking underneath the ground, and soon the pressure below will overcome the pressure above.

Men and magma. It's so perfect:

- A superheated substance and force seeks a channel of expression.
- It percolates and bubbles for a long time. The passing of millennia is not unusual.
- It's energy, color, and potential—a driving force.
- When it bursts out—when the volcano erupts—it changes the landscape.
- It is rare and oddly beautiful. People want to see that bright-orange spectacle.

The aspirations we carry around in our hearts as men are like magma. They are deep inside, pushing up from within, and hoping for expression. When they surface, for better or for worse, they impact everyone.

The Eruption of a Generation

Significant volcanic eruptions are known for changing the landscape permanently. The blast zone is measured, recorded, studied, analyzed, and ranked based on the intensity and impact. The same is true for generations of men. We rise in response to the trumpet call of history to confront the issues of our time for good.

To this end, it is time for the men of *this* generation to let their aspirations inside make their way to the surface to be measured. To do so not only requires courage but also demands that this generation look at their world, look in the mirror, and then ask some deep questions. We are responsible for this hour of history—responsible before God and humanity.

Some questions a wondering world is hoping to have answered concerning this generation of men are

- What does the future of masculinity portend for humanity?
- Will masculinity continue to retain its negative connections with the world's injustices?
- Will there even be a measurable spiritual eruption of good among men in this generation?

- What aspirations do they possess that will visibly manifest?
- Will the expression feel selfish and immature or outwardly focused, for the benefit of others?
- How will women, children, and the wider society suffer or benefit?
- Will male-rooted pain keep rising in communities, or will strong love and justice rise up as it has in special generations and movements in the past?

At a precise moment in time, in a public display of identity, energy, and expression, the magma within Jesus burst forth. It came out in proclamation, then declaration, and then action. This is the ever-expanding blast of life every Christ follower has been covered and transformed by—a spiritual explosion so powerful that it is still rippling outward to the ends of the earth through willing men. The bright-orange magma shot out of Him like this:

The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me,
Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.
He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set free those who are oppressed,
To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD.¹

Jesus announced to His community that He had been *weaponized* by the Spirit of God to be dangerous with

goodness. He would start crossing cultural lines and breaking the rules of broken-male culture whenever God's will or God's Word called for it.

Jesus' proclamation is ground zero of the dangerous good movement. Male culture changes over time and across cultures, but the core of it is constant: It has always been broken, just as it's always been male. Men, enticed away or wandering off from the identity given to them by God, seek a secure identity in non-gods, which then gradually take over their expression of their masculinity, which causes others to suffer.

But the same Spirit that came upon Christ, and came out of Him in words and dangerously good actions, is now at work in you. This is the direct implication for every Christ-following man—and, as we'll soon see, more significantly, for called millennial men: The Spirit is pushing up into the world, in a similar game-changing and revolutionary fashion, *through you*:

Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.²

Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [Christ] might be the firstborn among many brothers [us].³

The Spirit of the Lord is saying to the men of this generation,

You are the brothers of the Dangerous Good One.
His Spirit dwells inside of you and is seeking a

living expression through you. Every aspiration for greatness you have inside is possible, and the special power you need for your calling is standing ready to empower every act of goodness you take to the glory of God.

Sit with this. Ponder it. Receive it. Let it come over you.

Settling Is the Enemy

In any good superhero movie, the hero must overcome some force, some issue from his past, some evil, or some substance that works against his ability to protect the innocent and bring justice to the bullies. The forces working against today's generation of men on their journey toward a fulfilling and strong expression of masculinity are subtle but powerful confrontations with reality. Under the normal pressures and disappointments of life, our feelings can persuade us to lower our standards. Over time, our visions of being and doing good get hijacked or labeled unrealistic amid the swirl of life and competition on earth. Heavy gravities of existence attack our resolve, cool the magma inside, and shake us loose from our truest spiritual identity. When that happens, it starts the process we all loathe as men: *settling*.

We settle when we become content living in a way that is less than Christ's example and call upon us. We fashion a culturally safe, self-styled faith built on being not an *expression of* but *affiliated to* Jesus. We go to a worship service, we

attend a small group, we read the Bible or a Christian book. We are a threat to no evil. When we are at our most timid, even the idea of a dangerous and good expression of masculinity makes us quake with fear. We don't want to appear intolerant, misogynistic, or—God forbid—masculine in a Christlike way.

Throughout history, the “masculine malaise” of identity and expression vacillates between faith and fear. This dance of identity moves men to seek inner relief and grasp at whatever assuages our male self-loathing, on the one hand, or our longing for the dangerously good expression of masculinity we lack, on the other hand. We want meaning that is uniquely masculine, but we act as though we don't know where to find it. By default, we turn to broken-male culture to define masculine meaning and promptly start borrowing trouble like schoolboys—even as Christ followers. Or worse, we blend in, play it safe, and don't rock anyone's boat.

Watching our frustration and decidedly undangerous lifestyles is the Dark One, who meets our lack of fulfillment and identity as men with lies of false greatness and glory. These lies sound good at first but ultimately hurt people or otherwise neutralize sons of the King. The message is *Be great—through indulging yourself, impressing others, increasing materially, or simply being nice*. Christ-following men might even accept a deeper deception: *Don't take your masculine identity too seriously, or people will label you as narrow-minded, intolerant, or just stupid*.

If you have any doubts about these pages from the Dark

One's playbook, dust off the Gospel of Matthew. There you'll witness the Son of God, in a weakened state, being offered false visions of greatness in a ploy to discourage Him from being dangerous with goodness.⁴ Thank God Jesus didn't settle; He gave that deception a healthy whack of God's truth.

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"⁵

Here's the thing: We need to do the same!

Just as Jesus had this turning-point confrontation with evil, this generation of men is at its own turning point in history. A story will be told about you. It will take courage and discipline to embrace the divine hopes and aspirations connected to your life. You will have to fight to regain a foothold on the beaches of your identity, regain control of your energy, and release an expression of the character of Christ that meets your deepest needs as a man.

The first step into that fight is to become aware of a nasty and intentional cultural campaign that has been messing with your identity and destiny as a Christ follower. The second step is to realize that the truest thing about you is what God says is true. His message to the brothers of Jesus? You are His, and eternity is coming.

Deep within you is a voice you have been trying to compartmentalize, rationalize, mute, or simply explain. In your heart, you know that you are more than what you have

become, and you can't become the man you were created to be by remaining who you are. The answer to this dilemma is near, not far: Christ in you. With that in mind and looking ahead to the rest of the dangerous good journey we'll explore in this book, I have only one encouragement: Don't dabble.

Eternity Calling

In the Bible, Solomon dabbled with his identity, compartmentalized his calling, and experimented with identities outside of God. He reflected on his journey—the inner conflicts and the struggle to find spiritual clarity and masculine success—in the book of Ecclesiastes. There we find him paralyzed by seeing the answer and the problem at the same time:

He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.⁶

He had the problem right intellectually, but he was trapped in the fog of his own hesitations and bad choices. He had to fight to see clearly. This was a man of God who guzzled at the fountain of cultural masculinity. Plenty of pleasure. Plenty of power. Plenty of possessions. And puh-lenty of women. But now, with the clarity only hindsight can give, he grieved his life and lamented over selecting the wrong vision for finding meaning as a man. In this way, he speaks for hundreds of millions of men who sense the same dilemma.

As God's Spirit moves upon and quickens the hearts of this generation of Christ-following men, whole communities of guys all over the world are reconnecting masculinity to eternity. The strong, transcendent purpose of Jesus Christ is being released for this time in history, and it is flooding into the hearts of willing men seeking a dangerous good identity right now.

There's only one realm in which the dangerous good impulse becomes a life-giving reality: the Kingdom of God. It has a King, it has authority, and it has an experience we can enter into as men without wishing, fantasizing, hoping, or wearing a superhero suit.

The ever-growing movement emanating out of the Kingdom of God will be increasingly visible and distinct in all human history with respect to its intentions and actions. It will deliver masculinity out of its cultural labels, caricatures, and quagmires of disrespect and doubt into the shining light of Christ. Most importantly, it will enter the small spaces where life is really felt, redeeming them and bringing to them Kingdom power, life-giving help, justice, and compassion.

The world has been waiting for this movement for a long time. Evil has been fearing it, and Jesus has been planning His return around it.

It's what we have felt and wanted since we were four years old in our Batman helmets.

The Dangerous Good are coming.



01

POWERFULLY FORMED MEN

Identity—the Lost Lions

You don't even know who you are! . . . You're Mufasa's boy.

RAFIKI TO SIMBA, *THE LION KING*

SIMBA IS A “LOST” LION.

If you haven't seen the Disney film about a lion who has lost track of who he really is, go find it, stream it, download it, whatever—and watch it. Simba is a lion cub, the son of the king: a clear bloodline, a clear connection to a clear destiny. At some future moment, he *will* take his father's place. But as life unfolds for the lion cub, events disrupt his smooth transition to the top. He panics and runs (literally) from his identity, responsibility, and destiny into a world that takes the pressure off.

Simba is not lost *directionally*. He actually knows where he is. But he has “lost his way” in terms of his identity. That's

what makes this story so sad and so powerful at the same time. Lions are majestic. Lions belong to prides. Lions—especially the male ones—lead. But Simba grows into a young male lion separated from his pride.

The world Simba has built for himself eventually collides with reality: His pride—his kingdom—is suffering in the absence of a good leader. Simba starts receiving some direct messages that his pride needs him badly. Enter Rafiki the baboon, and Simba's reckoning.

Simba tries to run from Rafiki and his challenge, but “You're Mufasa's boy” means the game is up. Simba is out of place, not doing what he's supposed to be doing. It's a grabbing by the ear, a kick in the backside, and a confrontation of his true identity. Hanging in the air are basic questions: Why are you here? What are you doing? Have you forgotten who you are?

The Lion King is a parable in the tradition of Jesus' parables, which ominously and accurately confront people where they are with who they are. It is particularly significant for this time in history—especially for Millennial men who identify with and follow Jesus Christ. Tens of millions of “Simbas” worldwide—sons of the King in the prime of their lives—are being confronted by the Spirit of God, reminded who they truly are, what the true need of the Kingdom is right now, and what the truest purposes are for a son of the King. Out-of-place sons of God are being chased down, and the Holy Spirit is saying, *I know who you really are. The*

Kingdom calls. Lives are at stake, evil must be confronted, and you are the one who's going to do it.

It's an exciting time as God gathers His own for a show-down with evil.

It's a risk-filled and faith-stretching time of loving confrontation over our identity.

It's time to take your place.

Leaving the “Bubble”

As the story of Simba vividly illustrates, sometimes even those of us who think we know who we are (or who have been told who we are our whole lives by our culture, our family of origin, or God Himself) wander and need reminding. This is a prodigal journey, and it takes many forms—some you would never expect. Maybe college knocked you off the path your identity calls you to. Or perhaps you mistakenly felt you had to be your own man and make your own way, and the faith of your family didn't allow for that, so you caved.

Many men have chosen a Christ-free identity because they were attacked by their own—injured by some well-meaning but insecure Christians who made them feel as though they weren't Christian enough.

For others, innocent wandering turned into a sprint away from your truest identity and toward the world—you knew being a “Jesus guy” meant not winning the approval of others, which, at the time, meant more to you than God's approval.

Regardless of form, prodigal journeys always start with

high hopes for the better. But the idealized version of life outside of Christ eventually bursts like a bubble, leading to prodigal pain.

It's a bittersweet moment. The bitter is all the negative emotions that come with pain. The sweet is that with the "bubble" gone, you can return home to Jesus, who is eagerly waiting for you.

If you are reading this and thinking, *That's not me and it never was*, don't get too smug. Many modern-day Simbas haven't run, but they are most definitely playing it safe in the comfortable ranks of the pride. These are sons of the King—they grew up in the faith. Maybe they were dedicated to God as babies. They attended church and went to Christian camp every summer. They have multiple Bibles and smokin' playlists on their phones right now that exalt Jesus. They may even sport a spiritually inspired tattoo, maybe a Greek word that communicates *Jesus, love, grace, forgiven, the cross, or commitment*. These sons may be young marrieds with kids, good guys, providers. They take their families to church most Sundays, would never cheat on their women, and have a better relationship with their kids than their dad had with them. If you asked them if they love Jesus, their answer would be an unequivocal "Yes, I do" or "I am a Christ follower."

Are they affiliated to Jesus? Yes. Are they activated for Jesus? No.

Are they good guys? Yes. Are they dangerous good? No.

Do they resist evil? Yes. Do they pose a threat to evil? Not even on the devil's radar.

Unchallenged, they remain holy bubble boys, and “It’s all good, bro.” It doesn’t require real faith to keep up the bubble-boy lifestyle, and whatever that lifestyle is, it is not *holy*. It is, rather, *safe*. But God is intentionally bursting their bubbles.

Your bubble might just have popped right now.

God’s holding for you on Line 1.

I Want My Sons Back

This is not the first generation of God’s sons to wander and be called back to their truest identity. The prophetic words of Jeremiah travel hauntingly through time amid today’s generation:

Thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and to Jerusalem,

“Break up your fallow ground,
and do not sow among thorns.
Circumcise yourselves to the LORD
And remove the foreskins of your heart.”¹

Ouch. The unmistakable and convicting message from God to His sons? “Come out of culture, come back to covenant, and start being fruitful and productive for my purposes. Do whatever you have to do, inside or out, and do it now.”

In Jeremiah’s generation, most guys were farmers. They knew what God meant when He told them to stop wasting

their energy sowing among thorns. He was telling them not to give the best days of their best years to a fruitless, godless culture. They also knew that in order to answer God's call, they were going to have to pay a price. Breaking up, reworking, and refertilizing the abandoned or unplowed ground of their relationship with God was going to be painful—it would produce some spiritual sweat and require real work—but it would be worth it.

And then the spiritual thoracic saw came out: Their chests were going to be cracked open for a self-administered open-heart surgery.

Picture that for a second. Gnarly, isn't it?

Why surgery? Because God wanted to save their hearts, hearts that had been infected and diseased by the idols of the age, and refashion them around their identity in God, setting them apart once again for God's purposes. There is no chance these sons of Covenant could miss God's point.

Now it's your turn. This is a prophetic word for this generation's sons of the King.

God wants His sons back—all of them, especially those who have wandered off or feel cast out. He doesn't want *affiliated* sons; He wants *activated* sons who are dangerous with goodness like Christ and who understand they have limited time and a scheduled meeting when their heart stops. He wants sons who know they are created by God, created for God, and going back to God, and who use that awareness to discipline their energy toward Kingdom purposes. He wants sons who think like His Son, who find satisfaction in

what satisfies Him: “My food,” Jesus says, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”²

The King is calling a generation of sons to bear the family resemblance, understand the urgency of the hour, and act in awareness that tomorrow is not guaranteed. The Spirit is calling out around the world to the sons of the King—and saying to you directly—that while not all who have wandered are lost, there comes a time when wandering must end and transform into purposeful pilgrimage.

God’s Spirit is welling up in you for a reason: The King has summoned you back; He is requiring a full surrender to His kingship and Kingdom call.

Practically, that means you need to take to heart that you are not a son of culture, you are a son of Christ. It’s time to aggressively activate your identity. What’s the alternative? Remain an affiliated follower, which is a follower in name only.

The Holy Spirit knows who you are. Do you?

The question of identity is issue number one to God because whatever commands your identity will, by default, command your energy—either toward or away from God’s dangerous good agenda for your life. Every core identity outside of our core identity in Christ saps a man’s energy. A materialist at the core dedicates his energy to making bank and accumulating stuff. A hedonist at his core puts all his time, thoughts, and dollars into self-gratifying pursuits. A narcissist at his core spends massive amounts of his energy on elevating his own visibility, at whatever human or financial cost. All the identities the world has to offer make gods out

of things that are not gods, and these non-gods creep into the lives of God's sons, polluting their identity and diluting their energy for God.

The Bible suggests that a yes to Jesus is, by default, a no to other identities.

Watch your identity carefully: It will command your energy and should lead you to a dangerous good expression as a son of Christ.

But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.³

Just prior to this charge to Timothy, Paul offered a clear rejection of the materialist identity. Instead, Timothy is called “man of God,” an identity with implications for where to go and not go, what to say yes and no to, and, above all, where to put big energy in order to produce a strong eternal expression.

The point here is sharp: *The man of God is not a spectator to God's Kingdom purposes being advanced on earth.* God never intended His sons to *watch* the battle between evil and good; He expects us to *fight* for the good of our faith—in the open, living out the dangerous good calling we have in Him, and, in the process, restating our identity in Christ to the world!

Notice that the dangerous good call each other by their real name: man of God. We speak the man-of-God identity into the chests of our brothers to remind them of their identity. It's one of the best and most powerful things we can do: drive the truest thing about a man deeper into his spirit, deeper into his thinking, and deeper into his living. The great apostle knew identity was the secret power that would (and still does) drive the next generation of Timothys to rise up. He would speak it over them, and they would accept it as the final determiner of who they would be, what they would believe, and how they would behave in their generation.

That's what this conversation right now is all about: a laser-guided reminder that you are His. As the dangerous good, it is our duty to remind one another:

I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you. I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder.⁴

The Truest Thing about You

The truest thing about you is what God says is true.

Competing voices and forces are in a recruiting war over whose version of yourself you will accept, internalize, believe,

and then put your energy behind. But when the man of God believes and acts upon what *God* says is true about him, an explosion of personal transformation occurs.

You abandon any image of yourself that is not from God.

You stop chasing, caring about, and accepting what others say about you.

You're not defined by your feelings.

You are not defined by your circumstances.

You are not defined by your successes or failures.

You are not defined by the car you drive, the money you make, or the house you say you own (the bank owns it, actually).

You are defined—and redefined—by God and God alone (see Colossians 3:10).

In its purest essence, the dangerous good revolution is a revolution of your perspective on you!

But why? Why should I let God redefine me? Why should I release every last part of my will to this process? What will God do in my life if I say yes? If you are not asking these kinds of questions, you should. If I were being asked to accelerate my spiritual commitment to the level of “dangerous good,” I would want to know what I was getting into. What can I expect in real time and in my real life?

Fortunately, we have a complete picture available to us of what a dangerous good life looks like. Jesus came and lived His life as a man; as such, we have a model in real time for how a man lives out his truest identity. He came not only to show us that living for an audience of one is the right way

to be, believe, and behave, but also to motivate us to do the same as men in our time and context. Masculinity starts and stops with Jesus. He is both alpha and omega male when it comes to living in front of God.

Jesus not only shows us what the dangerous good identity *looks* like but also helps us understand what being a man should *feel* like. That's right—I just connected the words *feel* and *man*. Not to worry though, because what we see happening in Christ defies the gender-bending labels of today's culture, transcending and overcoming them. Jesus brings masculinity to a place where cultural man cannot go but where every man on planet earth longs to be: a place where danger and good come together.

As you see Jesus, see yourself reproducing His life in your context. This “identity-driven life” is your precise answer to how a man of God lives, what it means, and how it feels in the masculine context. Specifically, Jesus shows you four things.

Living Out My Truest Identity Gives Me the Greatest Integrity

They came to him and said, “Teacher, we know that you are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth.”⁵

The word *integrity* comes from the math term *integer*, which means whole or undivided. To possess personal and

spiritual integrity means to have a life that is undivided between what you believe and how you actually live and think in real time. Jesus knew that He came from God and that He was going back to God; He knew who He was, so He didn't have to become someone else. His identity in the Father provided an uncommon power over the opinions of people regarding His behavior, as well as an uncommon ability to advance God's purposes without worry. His critics could not accuse Him of hypocrisy; even though they wanted to find dirt, Jesus was the real deal and they had to admit it.

Jesus was not a man pleaser but a God pleaser. He was an audience-of-one kind of guy. He didn't have to overthink social settings or situational ethics because His identity told Him to do that one thing that would show love for God and people in a given moment.

That meant Jesus broke the rules of broken-male culture when compassion or God's Word required it. That is significant. The religious men of Jesus' day marginalized women, children, and Gentiles (non-Jews). As we can see, Jesus wasn't swayed by those men. There is your working definition of integrity and the by-product of a true identity in God: God's man does not pander to people, but lives out God's purposes regardless of the rules of culture. He is a son of Christ, not a son of culture.

The dangerous good revolution is marked by spiritual integrity and will be a movement of *fearless men who are like Jesus*.

Living Out My Truest Identity Gives Me My Strongest Liberty

[Jesus said,] “The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by her deeds.”⁶

Unbound by the opinions of men and only concerned about the opinion of the Father, Jesus was free to associate with anyone and care for anyone. In fact, His identity in the Father provided Him with such a transcendent freedom that people mistook it for having low standards.

When we watch Jesus live out His truest identity, we both see and sense a personal liberty of thought and action. We see Jesus regularly accept those deemed physically unacceptable (lepers), ethnically unacceptable (Samaritans), morally unacceptable (prostitutes), and socially unacceptable (tax collectors) into His life and ministry. His identity in the Father allowed Him to jettison the boundaries and self-absorption of broken-male culture and get into the lives of those who most needed the grace and truth of God.

There is your working definition of personal liberty and the by-product of a true identity in God: God’s man is set free to care about, serve, and dignify people whom lesser men abuse, exploit, or marginalize. He is a son of Christ, not a son of culture.

The dangerous good revolution will be a movement of *free men who are like Jesus*.

Living Out My Truest Identity Gets My Best Energy

[Jesus said,] “As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.”⁷

A fireman puts out fires. A policeman protects the community against lawbreakers. A businessman makes money by providing a service. A foreman manages a project through to completion. What does a man of God do?

Again, our precise example is Jesus. The Son of God does the works of God He has been put on earth to do. The man of God imitates the Son of God and focuses his heart, soul, mind, and strength on doing the works of God with Jesus.

Jesus did not dabble around.

Three years, twelve men, and ultimately twenty centuries of movement were the result of an extremely strong identity and a correspondingly strong focus in His earthly years. Jesus knew the clock was ticking, and such knowledge creates urgency. Urgency, in turn, creates energy and intentionality of effort.

The picture Jesus paints for His followers above is that of a window of time closing on us. Think about an elevator you need to get on and the doors are starting to close. What do you do? Think about the game clock when your team is behind in a close game. How are they acting on the court or field? Think about a surfer who sees the wave he’s been waiting for all morning suddenly start to build on the ocean horizon. How does he react?

Jesus' identity as Son of the Father drove His perspective. He was on mission to accomplish what God had uniquely given Him to do during His limited time on earth. The key word? *Limited*. He did not get bogged down in peripheral, trivial, or temporal focuses competing for His energy. He chose instead to focus on what was central to His identity: heaven.

Specifically, we see the Son of God telling people how to get to heaven, blessing others in ways that helped them to recognize the God of heaven, and completing His mission on earth in anticipation of His return to heaven. There is your working definition of giving your best energy as the by-product of a true identity in God: God's man is on mission in his context—in his geographical space, in his spheres of influence, with the people and opportunities God has given him. He knows intuitively that he has limited time, an unknown ending, and a scheduled meeting with Jesus Himself. He is focused on hearing at that meeting, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"⁸ He is a son of Christ, not a son of culture.

The dangerous good revolution will be a movement of *focused men who are like Jesus*.

My Truest Identity Reflects My Ultimate Destiny

Jesus . . . looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that

they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.⁹

What happens when we die? How you answer that question directly reflects your identity. A man of God believes he's going to God, and when he goes, it's not for the purpose of being ruled in or out of heaven but to be examined as a manager of his life.

Before Jesus went voluntarily to the cross, He contemplated His physical death, offering His most transparent and reflective prayers. Some personal accounting with respect to His life's journey was taking place in this prayer.

The prayer process revealed the thinking process: *Let's see. Did I bring God glory? Check. Did I do on earth what God put me here to do? Check. Can I return home with a clear conscience that I did everything I could to reveal God's love and plan? Check.*

Jesus' prayer reveals that He was ready to go back home to the Father: He had no unfinished business here on earth; He had been faithful; He was complete. His prayer functioned as a kind of final check with the Father.

There is your working definition of how your truest identity reflects your ultimate destiny: God's man knows that his identity in the Father includes being with the Father forever. The visible fruit of that knowledge is faithfulness to the end and completeness when the end comes—no unfinished business.

The dangerous good revolution will be a movement of *faithful men who are like Jesus*.

Passing the Torch

Living out your truest identity in God is the essence of true masculinity.

Don't let rip-off ways of being, believing, and behaving rob you of becoming the dangerous good man God created you to be. I will say it again: You are a son of Christ, not a son of culture.

Examine yourself and know that God wants His sons at full force. Secure in our truest identity and with the Spirit of Christ inside us, we will know what it means to live fearless, free, focused, and faithful to the Father's ultimate purpose and destiny for us.

Only when we know what is true about ourselves and our specific purpose can we actually pull that off. Knowing that I am made by God, for God's works, and I am going back to God should change everything. *But will it?*

Jesus is commissioning you and me to live out our truest identity in the Father *in our time*:

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.¹⁰

Read that passage again and let those words grip your spirit. Let the prophetic declaration over you sink into your soul. Let the expectation of Christ create a healthy and holy fear. Let the reality of your life to this point encourage you or convict you or both. Let it happen.

This is the truest direction you can receive in this moment. God is speaking, and He is executing a good old-fashioned hand-off: “Whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing.” Key words? *Will do*. Don’t debate it. Don’t deny it. Don’t deflect it. Say yes to your identity in Christ, and put your energy where God has said it is supposed to go—immediately. Be a man by being like the Son of Man while there is still time. You may have wandered, but you are not a lost lion any more. You have been reminded. The Spirit knows who you are: You are the son of the King. The reckoning is now because the revolution is about to begin.

Dangerous Good Conversation

What is the truest thing about you?

Reflect on times you have run away from that identity.
Why did you run?

What motivates you the most: Integrity? Liberty? Energy?
Destiny? Why?

How have you experienced these benefits of finding your
identity in Christ alone?