

The Risk Factor

I understand the following to be a "Good Housekeeping" magazine article that lists the types of risks and odds people face.

1 in 12 people will have a car accident

1 in 2,900 will die in an auto accident

1 in 80,000 will die from complications in surgery

1 in 250,000 will die in a plane crash

1 in 1,000,000 will die in their bathtub

Another article from the **Saturday Evening Post** speaks about the things people fear and the probability of their occurring.

- Many people fear being killed by someone they don't know, like a stranger in an alley or a drive by shooting. Yet a person is 8X's more likely to be killed participating in a sport than they are by being killed by someone they don't know.

- Many people are afraid of dying from complications during surgery. However, a person is 27.5X's more likely to be killed in the car ride to the hospital than they are to die from something going wrong in surgery.

Risk is a part of life. Even if a person spent their entire life in the seclusion of their own home and they never left their bed, they would be at risk.

This stinks doesn't it?

Here's a misnomer: I just want to play it safe. Playing it safe is playing to not lose. When Christians play to not lose they never win. The reality of the Christian life is filled with change and risk. There is nothing easy about that kind of reality.

"Far better is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat." **Theodore Roosevelt**

Today's message has a lot to do with destroying the myth of safety and to hopefully deliver us from the seduction of security. All in all, I believe if we seek to avoid the dangers, the hurts and the risks of the Christian life we will simply waste our lives in pursuit of something that does not exist.

When I think about the Christian life, I think about "Risk." Risk is the reality that exposes people to the possibility of loss or injury. Those who risk can lose money, or lose face, or lose health or even lose their life. There is risk all around us.

Scot's philosophical statement of the day: The reason that risk is risky is that we don't know how things are going to turn out.

Here's a thought: God doesn't risk, because God knows exactly how everything will turn out.

Just for fun, look at **Luke 9:23-25** and think with me about how risky this is for any would be follower of Jesus : **23Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. 25What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?**

Pretty risky stuff, huh?

People are not like God in that they know before hand how everything will ultimately turn out. What I'm trying to say is, people are ignorant. I am ignorant. You are ignorant. This is not easy to say. This is not easy to admit--is it?

"The tragic hypocrisy of our enchantment with security is that it lets us take risks everyday for ourselves but paralyzes us from taking risks for the work of the Kingdom." --**John Piper**

Look again at **Matt. 25:14-30**. If God's people tuck tail and run, seeking a safety and security that in reality does not exist, they will lose their life. I certainly don't mean this in a judgmental way, eternally--I mean it more so in how this reality impacts the work of the kingdom of God.

So the risk for the Christian is: **"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. 24For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it (Luke 9:23-24). "Will I trust the Lord and be willing to risk for Him?"**

This brings me back to where we left off last week.

Primarily we looked at what prayer changes. Prayer changes perspective, opportunities and motivation. Paul's word's last week were **"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." (Col. 4:5-6)**

Last week this congregation had a unique opportunity to risk something. I gave away at total of \$200 to 10 people in our worship services.

What do some of you suppose was the risk associated with giving the \$200 away?
What do some of you suppose was the risk for those who took the \$200?

Let me suggest that when a Christian has a level of understanding (by no means do I mean a perfect understanding) of God's love, then and only then are they more able and willing to risk for the Kingdom of God.

Quote "What Kind Of Love Is This?"

If we have at some level an understanding of the love God for us and all humanity, then we will be more able and willing to risk for the sake of others who either do not know Christ or for those who

do know Christ but need God's provision through our willingness to be what God calls us to be.
...and this, make no mistake, is risky stuff!

Steve Sanders- Solo (What Kind Of Love Is This?)

Testimonies

Conclusion:

"If you had permission to do what you really want to do, what would you do? Don't ask how, that will cut your desire off at the knees. How is never the right question; how is a faithless question. It means "unless I can see my way clearly I won't believe it, won't venture forth." **John Elderidge**

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