



Week 6 - Risk Takers

WE TRAIN PEOPLE TO LOVE GOD & THEIR BODIES.

“For God so loved the world that He gave....” John 3:16

Take your time with the verse. Go back. Read it OUT LOUD.

No greater risk was ever made than this– that God would give Jesus to rescue an orphaned and broken race of ungrateful sinners.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son...”

God’s risk involved giving His very best – His one and only Son, Jesus. To rescue. To restore. To redeem. To pour His love out on people who, for the most part, will reject His great affection.

God is the ULTIMATE risk-taker. He risked his beloved Son to rescue and redeem this world back to Himself. *To clarify, this does not imply that God was ignorant in any way or unaware of the cost of His giving.* Out of His omniscience, He freely gave. Knowing fully that most of humanity would reject His Son, He loved us and sent Jesus. We are made in His image. Our lives are designed to be marked by risk-taking, and God-first leadership always requires stepping outside of our comfort zones.

Comfortable being
uncomfortable

Risk-taking Leadership

God’s vision and mission for Revelation Wellness and for each person’s life require risk. Every aspect of God first leadership—executing an organized plan or developing deeper relationships—requires risks.

Webster defines **risk** as *the possibility that something bad or unpleasant (such as an injury or a loss) will happen*. **Risk-taking** is defined as *the act or fact of doing something that involves danger or risk in order to achieve a goal*. Meaningful reward is often tied to meaningful risk. Growth in business, family, ministry, and relationships requires stepping into the unknown. But notice: true risk-taking is purposeful. It is not recklessness. The risk serves a goal.

In business, risk often determines the success of a venture — but always within the framework of risk management. Wise leaders set guardrails. They assess, plan, and move forward with intention.



In leadership and ministry, the highest risk is obedience to the Holy Spirit. Obedience requires faith-filled action guided by wisdom. This is godly risk management. It is not impulsive behavior, reckless boldness, or dramatic gestures for their own sake. God-first risk begins with listening and continues with obedience.

Obedience requires faith, and faith requires risk. Obedience always costs something. But a leader committed to following God will take the right risks — and reap both present fruit and eternal reward.

If we are to fulfill the vision and mission God has entrusted to us, we must be willing to risk obedience. The call is not to reckless action, but to courageous faith.

Leading with a heart of faith and risk comes from understanding that LOVE > FEAR.

Risk-Taking Leaders

Of Jesus' 12 disciples, Peter and Thomas most accurately reflect the two ends of the risk-taking spectrum. Peter the Apostle began his journey with Jesus as a brash, quick-to-risk fisherman. Under Christ's leadership, he grew from a man marked by boldness without the restraint of wisdom into the one Jesus called the "rock" of His church. (See Matt. 16:18) Peter's life was marked by risk - motivated by love and devotion to Jesus.

In Matthew 14, Jesus and His disciples had just finished feeding the 5000, and Jesus sent the disciples across the lake while He prayed alone with the Father. Jesus then walks upon the water, approaching the disciples in a storm-tossed boat. Read Matthew 14:26-29 below:

When the disciples saw him walking on the water, they were terrified. In their fear, they cried out, "It's a ghost!" But Jesus spoke to them at once. "Don't be afraid," he said. "Take courage. I am here!" Then Peter called to him, "Lord, if it's really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water." "Yes, come," Jesus said.

"If we allow ourselves to live recklessly for Him, then we ...will see His glory. We will see Him do the impossible."

Francis Chan

Peter's response conveys his heart to risk all for Jesus. Jesus quickly responds to Peter – *Come!* There must have been such joy in Jesus' heart as Peter risked his life by stepping out of the boat onto the water into the storm. **Risk requires getting out of the boat.**

Thomas's journey with Jesus reflects his hesitation and fear. Upon the resurrection, he was the first to doubt instead of believing. Jesus did not reject him or shame him. In John 20:24-29, we see Jesus' tender yet firm

restoration of Thomas. He simply called Thomas up and rebuked the unbelief. He dug out the gold in Thomas. Some of us have a timid heart that requires faith to risk obedience. Joy, freedom, and eternal destiny are found in Holy Spirit-led risk-taking ☺ Not all risks are the same.



Some risks require the restraint and discernment of wisdom. Others demand bold, courageous action without hesitation.

Maturity is knowing what is required in the moment — and having the character to respond accordingly.

What boat are you sitting in that Jesus is waiting for you to step out of? Maybe it is a relationship where forgiveness needs to be offered? Perhaps a neighbor whom the Lord has called you to share the Gospel with. Maybe, just maybe, the next risk is your heart — surrendered more freely to the King Himself. Risk-taking leaders set a precedent of faith and obedience for those being led. Rarely will followers go beyond the actions of their leader. *Remember, leadership is influence.* Risk looks like obedience to the commands of Jesus Himself while walking in an intimate relationship with the Father. How do we live God-first as risk-takers in daily living and leading??

Loving the Unlovable

One of the most significant risks leaders must take is the risk of love. Loving those who respond well to us or are similar to ourselves is relatively easy. The greatest leadership challenge involves loving those who grate on us or whose personalities differ from ours. Leaders are responsible for loving and leading impartially, which is a challenge. Naturally, every person gravitates toward those with similar personalities and bends, but not so with a leader whose life is submitted to the King of the universe.

Proverbs 27:17 is frequently quoted, put on coffee mugs, and used as a “motivational” bible verse. It states: *“As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”* Iron sharpening iron is a fiery, spark-filled occurrence. Matt Chandler, the pastor of Village Church, jokes that Proverbs 27:17 is not referring to “iron cuddling with iron.”¹ Leading broken and hard-to-love people will sharpen our leadership skills and enlarge our hearts. God desires that challenging relationships help leaders remain humble and rub off the sharp edges in their own hearts. Loving the unlovable is risky. Just because we love well does not mean love will be received or returned. Yet obedience and love offered in faith please the Father. (See Hebrews 11:6) In risking love, we will receive a great reward from our King, even if there is no guarantee of the response we desire from those we love and serve.

“Life doesn’t come with guarantees. That can make it risky and perhaps scary, but it’s also what makes it interesting and fun. As you go through life...the shining memories will be the times you took a leap of faith, whether you won or not.”

-Sharon Good

Become a Gold-Digger

As a leader, pay attention to the people who irritate or challenge you. That reaction is a cue, not a conclusion. Instead of writing them off, choose to become a gold-digger. Look intentionally for what is valuable. Sometimes that means digging through a lot of dirt to

¹<https://vimeo.com/111930512>



uncover it. Every person bears the image of God (Gen. 1:27). That alone makes them worthy of dignity and love — even when they are immature, wounded, or difficult. Scripture reminds us, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23, ESV). None of us stands on higher ground. We live by grace. Risk grace. Lead with love. Ask the Father for His perspective on challenging people.

Risk-filled Service

Jesus modeled servanthood when He washed the disciples’ feet and also modeled risk. He was aware that everyone in the room would abandon Him that evening, and one of them would betray Him. Yet He freely washed their filthy feet. *He pre-forgave them.* He risked His heart and His love for them. The kind of God-first risk that brings freedom sets a standard of love regardless of the “worthiness” of the ones being loved. Serving someone makes it hard to see them as unlovable.

Risk seeing the WHOLE person. Ask the Lord what is going on beneath the surface. The Holy Spirit will grant a leader who seeks it insight into those he or she serves.

Dream Big Dreams – Think the Unthinkable

Dreams from God require us to get out of the “boat” of comfort and familiarity. Acting on our vision, mission, and core values daily causes us to grow in dependence on God, in our gifting, and in our relationships. The comfort of daily life does not create a platform for dreams or growth. It is easy to forget that life is not about the present but eternity. We must risk our comfort by dreaming big with eternity in mind. Christ-like leaders seek to understand that our time here is like a vapor and belongs to God Himself. “Taking risks for God and living a life of obedience to His calling will guarantee that we do not waste the finite amount of time we have.”² Eternal-minded living frees a leader from complacency and fear. Return to the vision and mission God has given you. Continue to dream big dreams. Think the unthinkable. Lead from the dreams God has given you.

With vision, mission, and core values established, dreams and obedience come into play in new and exciting ways. As a leader begins to live out their identity as well as the pillars of loving others and serving from God’s heart, he or she becomes better equipped to think the unthinkable and to dream wild, passionate dreams for the kingdom, for God’s glory, and the good of those around them!

**“Come to the Edge.
We might fall.
Come to the Edge.
It’s too high!
COME TO THE EDGE!
And they came.
And he pushed.
And they flew.”**

Christopher Logue

Leaders embrace risk-taking and help others to do the same. The quote from Christopher Logue speaks clearly to the need for leaders who will call followers to the edge of their dreams, faith, and comfort- and gently push them into

² <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christiancrier/2014/12/2/top-7-bible-verses-about-taking-chances/>



destiny. Our influence as leaders speaks volumes when we live out what we ask those we follow to do.

Risk-Taking Tips

- *Risk saying NO to what God has NOT called you to do.* Leaders must remain on task. It is easy to be pulled away by well-intentioned people who admire a leader's gifts and abilities. Not every opportunity is from God. Eph. 5:15-17
- *Risk humility.* Be the first to apologize, the first to humble yourself in relationships and actions. 1 Peter 5:6
- *Risk regret.* At the end of every life, no one ever wished they played it safe. A riskless life will end with regret over a life not fully lived.
- *Risk your comfort.* Begin with baby steps of faith and risk. For example, if you want God to enable you to hear His voice and minister more effectively, risk acting on what He is showing you NOW. Share an encouraging word; listen to how the Holy Spirit wants to interact with those around you. Comfortable being uncomfortable!
- *Risk your heart.* Love God. Love others. At the conclusion of your life, nothing else weighs more than these two. Did you risk loving the unlovable? Did you risk comfort and fear, and smallness by obeying and following Jesus?
- *Risk pleases God when it is a heart response of obedience and faith.* He rewards God-first risk. Hebrews 11:6
- **Love>fear.** Jesus risked His all for us. Let's follow His example as leaders and risk joy, peace, truth, and grace.

**Do one thing a day that
scares you.
Eleanor Roosevelt**

Hebrews 11 has often been labeled the "Hall of Faith." This one chapter contains story after story of those who risked their lives, stepped out, and obeyed God for His glory and their good. Abraham risked his family, leaving all familiar to him as he obeyed God's call. Moses risked a high position of honor in Egypt to serve God's people as their shepherd. Esther risked her life as she approached the king to save her people from certain annihilation. Each of the disciples left behind their familiar former lives to follow the new Rabbi named Jesus. Paul sacrificed his influence and position in the high councils of the Jewish religion after he encountered Jesus. Jesus Himself took the most significant risk of all – He obeyed the Father in coming to live as a man, and to die for our sins, rising again in power so that we might receive His great gift.

God-first leadership involves risk because there are no guarantees that what we desire will be the result. Even if we love the unlovable while dreaming big dreams for our lives and our world, the result remains in God's hands.



Every relationship has three elements: *God's part, the leader's part, and the other person's part.* The only part we are responsible for is our part to obey and do all God asks of us. Risk requires FAITH. Leadership requires faith – not in those being led, but in God. Remember- God-first, God-only. Risk your heart and actions on the One who first risked it all.

A life well lived will be a life of risks. Effective leadership that lives beyond a lifetime requires risk. Learning to hear the Holy Spirit out of an intimate relationship with Him enables us to take wise risks – not foolish ones. God-first leaders take risks that the Lord leads them to take. Becoming all God created you to be will be uncomfortable ...and the most fun you could ever dream of. Jump out of the boat!

Brave yourself. The risk is worth it. You might fall when risking. However, the pain of regret far outweighs the sting of a brief failure as you walk out of obedience to the Lord.

**If we live by the Spirit, let us
also keep in step with the
Spirit.
Gal. 5:25 ESV**



"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood;
who strives valiantly;

who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming;

but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause;

who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly,

so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

Theodore Roosevelt



Training Exercise—Day #1 Risk-Taking Mindset

Your assignment today is to listen to the podcast below: "Cornerstone Beliefs" (you can also search by title - Cornerstone Beliefs)

 Bill Johnson- Cornerstone Beliefs

**"The goodness of God makes it possible to dream."
Bill Johnson**

What are the main things that the Holy Spirit highlighted in this teaching?

Where do you shrink back? Where are you to make room for risk?

Where is God calling you to risk comfort or the familiar, to move forward?

This call to know who we are in Christ and who He is in us frees us to dream big and risk obedience. What does this look like in your leadership, in the places the Lord has given you influence?

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.



Training Exercise—Day #2: Assess your Risk-Taking Nature

Prayerfully read through Joshua 1.

Peter or Thomas - Are you naturally a risk-taker?

Do you tend to hold back, fearful of risk and possible failure?

Do you tend to leap forward without seeking the wisdom and timing of the Lord?

“When it comes to risk-taking, there are two extremes. Some people are afraid to take even reasonable risks, wanting guaranteed results. This can result in a life that's flat and lackluster. Others take risks easily, believing their willingness to leap makes them courageous. But taking major risks without thinking them through is foolish, and such people often find themselves picking up the pieces of shattered dreams.”³

Knowing how you are wired (to jump or to hesitate) gives you the power to move forward well. Take the time to talk to the Lord about the risk-taking bend of your heart. What does He show you?

If you could do ANYTHING in the world – no limits of power, money, or time- what would you do? What can you risk TODAY to begin to do that dream?

Nothing is impossible with God; therefore, we are free to take risks in the kingdom; no longer bound by fear, we dream relentlessly and get out of the boat to follow Jesus wherever He may lead.

What does risk, a.k.a. faith and obedience, look like for you in this season? How are you going to get out of the boat today?

Luke 1:37 “For with God nothing will be impossible.”

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.

³ <http://www.goodlifecoaching.com/CreativeLife41.htm>



Training Exercise—Day #3 Risk Taking “I will's”

Please read this article on Risk-Taking:

https://www.churchleadership.com/leading-ideas/effective-leaders-know-when-to-take-risk-s-and-when-to-exercise-restraint/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Do you tend to risk-averse or risk-inclined leadership?

Record ways you are being called to step out.

Record ways you are called to hold steady.

Who will you risk loving more?

What action will you take this week to move forward out of the boat?

Who in your life is hard to love? Why?

Do you notice certain personalities that grate on you? Why?

List one person who challenges you to lead with love. What would happen if you risked seeing that person beyond your experience with them?

How would you relate to them based on this idea of risk and love?

Write out your **I WILL** statements that give ACTION to your desire to step out in obedience.

Brave yourself. Live and love beyond self to the dream that God has for your life and for the world. GOD’S DREAM over self-pursuit!

Connect with your swim buddy. Share your experience, what you learned, and what challenged you.