



Embracing Risk: Through Faith

A Four-Week Devotional Guide

Take the intentional time this month to do the Biblical study and personal devotional work to make embracing risk...well....less risky and more faith-filled!

We focused on “Trying Something New” last week. As we turn the corner into May many things come to mind, one of them being: “April showers bring May flowers”. May is known for Mother’s Day and a transition into the height of the blooming season. As you choose to “bloom” and give birth in the dormant areas of your life, we pray this devotional will help you along that journey.

Week 1: Embracing the Risk from Within

This week, we will focus on recognizing the capacity for risk that already exists within you through the “measure of faith” granted to every believer. We referenced the term “calculated risk” last week. This means that the risks you face are indeed challenging, but based on the things we know about God and His gifts; the risk will be more calculated and feel a LOT less “risky”.

Scripture: Romans 12:3 - "as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith."

Take a moment to write down what this scripture speaks to YOU. Also how does this scripture empower you to face risk differently?

Devotional Activity

Internal Inventory: Spend the first three days journaling about specific areas where internal anxiety or fear has created angst or stalled success. (for example: relationship(s) challenges, health, finances, school, the state of the world, etc.)

Theology of Salvation: Reflect on the person and work of the Holy Spirit and salvation. Ask yourself: "How does my identity as a saved person change my tolerance for risk?" What do you possess as a Christian that allows you to focus on risk from a different perspective? (BE SPECIFIC..WRITE THOSE DOWN!!!)

Examples

- **Frederick Douglas:** Escaped slavery and pursued education and literacy.
- **Apple Inc. (1997):** Steve Jobs returned (after being let go) and shifted the company identity back to "Think Different."
- After attending a highly competitive University in Illinois this couple relocated to Detroit. After being employed in both journalism and medicine their maturing sons moved on to college and post college life. Although travel time to Citadel is well over half an hour (on non-bad weather days); this family has been an active and faithful part of Citadel for decades. They've faced challenges head on and have stood the test of time with their FAITH. **(Citadel Story)**

Week 2: Courage to Face the Risk

This week, we focus on identifying and confronting Giants – both personal habits that hinder growth and external systemic issues we are called to address.

Scripture: Isaiah 41:10 - "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God."

Take a moment to write down what this scripture speaks to YOU. Also how does this scripture empower you to face risk differently?

Devotional Activity

The Goliath List: Create two columns: one for Internal Giants (broken relationships, bad habits) and one for External Giants (community poverty, starting a business). Make a list (be exhaustive..you've got a whole week!) of your Giants. The ones that seem LITERALLY impossible are the ones you MUST list. These are true giants!

The Stone Prayer: Choose one specific affirmation to use against each giant. (e.g. Because I am more than a conqueror through Christ, cancer won't conquer me!)

Examples

- **David vs. Goliath:** Using familiar tools to face an unfamiliar, massive threat.
- **Returning to Education:** A woman, after a decade of struggle in an abusive relationship and health challenges, returned for her GED, graduated Summa Cum Laude, and moved to PhD candidacy. **(Citadel Story!)**

Week 3: Trusting the Risk

This week, we will explore using prayer and fasting to find the spiritual rhythm necessary to move forward, even when the path is not fully visible. This is turning the corner from identifying the problem to ACTION towards a solution!!!!!!

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6 - "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding."

Take a moment to write down what this scripture speaks to YOU. Also how does this scripture empower you to face risk differently?

Devotional Activity

Rhythm of Prayer and Fasting: Select a specific "Risk Reset" time each day. Incorporate a period of fasting to heighten discernment. (e.g. Every day at lunch I'm praying specifically about the giant(s) and then fasting one day a week from dinner to fight any spiritual resistance to my decision to fight the risk!!)

Faith Release: Identify (at least) one area where you are leaning on your own understanding and consciously release the outcome to God.

Examples

- **Nehemiah:** Fasted and prayed before taking the massive risk of asking the King for permission to rebuild Jerusalem's walls.
- **Amazon's Regret Minimization Framework:** Jeff Bezos realized he wouldn't regret failing at a startup but *would* regret never trying.
- After being married for many years and being raised in often conservative Baptist churches, this Anglo couple visited Citadel then joined us on our night-time evangelism excursions and subsequent prison, hospital and nursing home outreaches. Decades later they still attend and serve, additionally have served as leaders on our Leadership Team board and have launched their own ministry to youth in prisons and detention centers (**Citadel Story**)

Week 4: Active and Calculated Risk-Taking

This week, we will transition to deeper execution, understanding that the Holy Spirit provides the desire and power to move, allowing us to take calculated steps of obedience.

Scriptures: Philippians 2:13 - "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure"

Luke 14:28 - "For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost..."

Take a moment to write down what these scriptures speak to YOU. Also how does these scriptures empower you to face risk differently? (Be SPECIFIC!!!)

Devotional Activity

The Action Plan: Create a roadmap for a specific risk. Break it down into the *Will* (vision and desire that God has put in you) and the *Do* (the first physical step you will take).

Faith as Fuel: In your journal, replace the word "courage" with "active faith." If God gives the *will*, He is obligated to provide the *do*. (What has God done? What am I going to do?!)

Examples

21st Centruity Dad: After a brutal battle over custody and living conditions, this young man stepped out on faith and went on a journey to be the primary caregiver of his two small children (son and daughter). After work challenges, relational challenges, transportation and housing challenges through trusting God and moving by faith both he and his children are thriving in a new grace and season in their lives! (Citadel Story)

The Clark Sisters: After being raised in the Church of God In Christ, these singing siblings decided to make music that went against the "traditional" music of the church. Their chart topping and innovative song, "You Brought The Sunshine" was released in 1981. This became Gold Certified, and topped Billboard R&B/Hip Hop, Dance Club and Gospel charts in the 80's. They are credited with being one of the most significant bridges of gospel music into secular audiences paving the way for the Winans, Kirk Franklin and others!

Summary

This four-week devotional guide has provided a framework for embracing risk through faith. By recognizing the inherent faith within, confronting personal and external challenges, trusting in God's guidance and Word, and taking calculated steps of obedience, you can move forward with confidence and purpose. Have a Blessed May and "Try Something New!!!!"