

Faith Living: Finding Your Purpose

Risk is a primary component of faith, and the Bible teaches that without faith it is impossible to please God. In Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus condemned the unfaithful servant who would not risk his talent, but hid it to be safe. Jesus called him “wicked and lazy” and took the talent he had and gave it to the one who had invested his five talents and doubled them.

Regardless of our spiritual level—whether a young person full of the excitement of just following Christ, or one who has enjoyed a measure of success in following your dreams, or one who has followed God for many years and is tempted to coast—God wants us to move into risky living: faith living.

We should believe Him for new mountains to climb, new visions to pursue. That is how we grow and develop our faith and move from “glory to glory.” As my late mentor Jamie Buckingham put it so well, each of us should “attempt something so big that, without God, it’s bound to fail.”

Many times Jamie and I sat over lunch near his home in Melbourne, Fla., and he spoke directly into my life. Here are the kinds of things he told me:

- When you have a clear vision, you can risk your own life.
- What is your vision worth?
- Great athletes train hard for a gold medal. People who run to win are willing to pay the price.
- The reason most people quit growing is that they are not willing to pay the price.
- Faith equals risk. Without faith (not without

spirituality or without Scripture memorization), it's impossible to please God.

- God has big plans for you. Don't take what God meant for you and ruin it with mediocre living.
- What are you willing to give up to get what you want?

Setting a goal is like focusing sunlight with a magnifying glass. When your life energy is shining on a pinpoint, you can start a fire. A goal poorly set is better than no goal. In a simplistic way, going somewhere is better than going nowhere.

Writing down spiritual, family, professional, self-improvement or fitness goals often will set in motion the habits necessary to achieve them. The mind moves in the direction of its dominant thoughts, and what you measure and monitor improves.

Our goals should not be self-focused or small. Setting a goal to spend time with your children every day or to buy a bigger home for your growing family is worthwhile, but those still are not life goals and not worthy of people who profess to be led by the Spirit of God. I learned that from Jamie Buckingham. Jamie challenged me to do what I would do if I knew I could not fail.

That challenge became a defining principle in my life. I realized how small my dreams had been and how much I was limiting God. I made a decision to change. Now, I consciously try not to limit God, even though I am sure His plan for my life goes further than I imagine.

If this blessed you, share it with others. From time to time, I'll write about topics like this. Leave me your comments. I enjoy reading them. And if you don't follow me on Twitter @sstrang or Facebook (stephenestrang), please sign up.

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