

Published based on [Are You Ready to Take a Risk?](#)

Are You Ready to Take a Risk?



To live is to risk, and it's been that way since day one. God put Adam and Eve in the Garden and gave them a choice. Religion often finds this uncomfortable at best and unacceptable at worst. Oh, no religious system would declare openly that God was wrong, but their practices and rules say that they disagree with God on this matter.

Herein lies one of the differences of religion and spirituality. As I explore God and others and my own life through spirituality, I can risk. I can expand my boundaries. I can look at you and draw the good out of you and your life, apply it to my own, and still not totally agree with everything you are and everything you believe.

Religion, on the other hand, says, "You must be just like me." Religion narrows our focus and our ability to take a risk.

I know a few of you are already ready to throw rocks at me, but stay with me for a minute or two. Take a risk.

We as Christians say that we place the ultimate value on freedom, yet freedom often makes us very uncomfortable. If we allow people in our churches to be free, they might do something or say something or believe something that is WRONG, something that makes us look bad, something that stains our reputations. Duh, that happens anyway!

Yet if we as communities of faith and as individual families can bless people to take risks, we have become more like God. Back to the Garden. He gave Adam and Eve a choice.

When I say that we should encourage others to take risks, I am not saying that we encourage others to try out all kinds of sin, not at all. I am saying that in order for true freedom to exist in our families and communities of faith, we must release control.

I find that controlling behaviors and beliefs are very closely tied to fear. If I can control how you act and what you think, then I may feel safe. I know you will be just like me, and I like me! May I challenge you that that is not true safety and it certainly is not true freedom!

God gave us choices. Yes, the choices carry consequences, but God was not afraid to allow mankind the ability to choose incorrectly. He was committed to helping mankind through his wrong choices.

Look at Jesus' choice of his 12 disciples. He never tried to control them. He chose a crowd of men so varied in their backgrounds and personalities. Jesus was not interested in having a cookie cutter crowd around him. He was safe with their freedom. He was not afraid to risk being involved with mankind and all the messes that thought would entail.

Now hear me correctly. I am not saying that there is no right and wrong. I am not saying that sin is okay. I am not saying that there are no theological boundaries. I am saying that risk-taking is okay with God, and therefore should be okay with us.

We should be able to take the risk to try a new job. We should be able to take the risk to read an author who is not just like us. We should be able to glean from a true variety of friends, knowing that every human has a gift inside them.

In the church world, we have often hid behind our lists of rules and required everyone to be just like us if they are to be “okay”. That makes us feel safe, but I find that God is not super interested in the kind of safe feeling that comes from limiting humanity's ability to take risks. He does care greatly that we are safe in all the appropriate ways, such as physically, mentally, emotionally, etc.

It was kind of funny to me that I was thinking of writing this blog. I had ran across this quote on another blog that so provoked me. I felt that it described a lot of my process in the last couple of years. I thought, “I’ll Google the author of the quote just to find out who they are.” Oops. I found out that the author might not be someone who I would recommend to my readers carte blanche. How humorous that God would speak to me through someone who doesn’t fit into my spiritual box! Voila! That’s the point. We can receive truth because it is the truth even if the source is different than we are.

So I am challenged. Do I share the quote with you and risk you reading something else the author had written that might not build you up? I am going to take the risk. I am going to believe in you all as unique creations of God who have the ability to make wise choices.

“And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”
Anais Nin

You see, this is the point God brings us to. One day it gets so painful to stay where you are, that we either have to take a risk or die emotionally. God invites the crisis. The process involves faith. Dare we trust a God who gives us such freedom?

God doesn’t force us to do anything. He doesn’t enslave us. He invites us to the more perfect way, the way of love. God’s love allows us to choose. We can choose Him, or we can refuse Him. It’s up to us. Yet when our hearts are longing to serve Him, He provides the grace for us to choose correctly.

How do you relate to God and to others?

Do you approach your relationships in fear?

Do you feel God is going to zap you if you get it wrong?

Let me share a revelation with you: you will get it wrong, probably more days than not. God works through the process. He is committed to you. He teaches you.

Anything that I believe that has not been truly learned experientially is subject to fall apart when tested and tried. Anything that has become a part of who I am because I have walked it out and lived it, is not so subject to fall apart.

For example, my faith cannot be your faith. You can follow me and learn from me, but at some point, your faith has to become your own as you take the risk of opening your heart and life to blossom.

I teach my children about my beliefs and my faith, but one day, and hopefully it is happening bit by bit along the way, one day they must exercise their own faith and learn that God is their God. They must develop personal faith because my faith, although a good foundation, cannot sustain them when they personally go through trials in their adult life. Well, perhaps more on this later, but let’s end with some questions.

- Is your relationship with God based on fear? (I am not saying respect which is different.)
- Are you constantly afraid that you will do the wrong thing?

- Are you afraid of missing God even though your heart's desire is to serve Him? God wants you to know that He will guide you. He is bigger than you. He can orchestrate everything in your life for your benefit and His blessing. Don't be afraid to take the risks that you feel He is leading you to take.
- Is your family system based on fear?
- Do you feel you must control your husband? Your wife? Do you try to control your kids? (again, not talking about throwing out common sense but I am talking about teaching your kids to truly live.)
- Is your community of faith a fear-based community?
- Does it allow you to try your wings?
- Does it encourage creativity?
- Does it allow you to disagree or does it demand that everything about you be just like everything about the leaders?

Today, I am encouraging you to dream, to think, to risk. Refuse to live from a mindset of fear. Oh, you will make some mistakes, but God will teach you as you go.

Blossom. It's a beautiful world when you open yourself up for the view.

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