



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the last week of our *Worth the Risk* series! Last week, we focused on taking risks with our platform as we explored how God's gifted each of us with a unique circle of influence in our Little Iowa. Regardless of the scope or scale, we each have an opportunity and responsibility to steward our platform in a way that shines God's light into the world.

As we have throughout this series, look back on the past week to answer the questions below. If you're with your small group, share your answers.

- Have you defined your platform and sphere of influence? What unique people and places make up your platform?
- How has focusing on your influence impacted your interactions in your Little Iowa? Have you reflected on these moments?
- Have you made quiet time for God to speak, work and fill you up this week? What was the impact of that time? And if not, do you sense you may need it?

Remember, we can't give what we don't have. As Pastor John said, our credibility and subsequent ability to influence our Little Iowa for God's Kingdom begins in the quiet place. Choose to quiet yourself before Jesus every day so He can grow, refine and refill you so you can pour His grace and truth out to others.

DISCUSSION

Over the past five weeks, we've learned, discussed and begun shifting our perspective to identify and capitalize on Kingdom opportunities with our people, property and platform. In each of these areas, we've unpacked how God expects us to take risks for the growth and glory of His Kingdom.

At different points in this series, you were likely inspired, challenged, convicted or encouraged to take a new risk or make a change, and as you've worked through these study guides, you've had the opportunity and challenge to begin practically applying these moments. Yet, as we wrap up this series, we have to admit it can be all too easy for these moments to remain moments, especially when new content and learnings lie just around the corner.

1. How often do you look back on your learning from previous sermon series? When is the teaching and content often most effective?

Nothing is worth the risk more than answering God's call to use the gifts He's given to participate in and contribute to His mission. God has uniquely called you to know Him in this time and place so you can help others come to know His love, grace and redemption. We can't afford to forget or simply add to the library of learnings and opportunities in our minds.

In the words of Pastor Jesse, "It's one thing to know what risks you should take with God, but it's another to actually do it."

2. **Read Luke 14:25-35, the Cost of Being a Disciple.**

- Does your current engagement with God and His mission look like a fan or a follower?
- In what area(s) of your life are you choosing your plan instead of Jesus' plan for you? Why?
- If you were to release your plans for Jesus' plans in these areas, how would you start making these changes?

Jesus isn't after just certain days or aspects of our lives when we choose to follow Him. He wants to **own**, develop and redeem every part of it. Sometimes, we fool ourselves into believing we're following His plan when we're just saying we are. If the questions you just answered were convicting or difficult to admit because God is drawing some of that to the surface, own it. It's a gift to honestly and soberly look at where we still need to surrender our own plans because we can see where to invite Jesus in to help us.

We get to step across the Faith Line for free because Jesus paid it all. But, we get to follow Jesus only when we plan to give it all. So, let's make some plans! To help us apply our learning from this series, we're going to develop Personal Leadership Development Plans – an internal tool used by Prairie Lakes Church's staff to grow in their leadership. Instructions and a template are located at the end of this study guide.

3. Take five minutes to read over and familiarize yourself with the tool. Then, spend 15-30 minutes creating a plan for you to grow in one specific area based on what you've learned the past five weeks.
 - Narrow the scope to an area you need to surrender your plan for God's. This may include your perspective, people, property or platform.
4. Take 15-30 minutes to "scrub" and finalize your plan (instructions on the last page). If you're with your small group, share and scrub your plans together.

Well done! You should now have a plan to help you clearly and concretely develop in a specific area with God over the next 90 days. Before placing this on your fridge or in a drawer, set a reminder on your calendar for the date you targeted to accomplish your goal. Schedule additional reminders at 30 and 60 days to keep the plan in front of you and in your rhythms with God.

With these plans established, prepare for resistance. Life will still be busy. Unanticipated life events will crop up. The change you're hoping to make will feel difficult and tiring at times. You may want to stop or forget about it just one week in. Expect and plan for these moments in advance. How can you build your support and defenses to stay committed? If you're with your small group, support and hold each other accountable by checking in on your plans every few weeks.

5. What resistance can you expect over the next 90 days? Will it be external or internal? How will you prepare for this?

God isn't expecting perfection from you over the next 90 days. But, He is expecting you to go down fighting. Fighting for your people, with your property and having built a platform that makes much of Jesus. Remember, in the end, **Jesus wins**, and He wants as many people as possible on His team and in His family. It's always worth the risk.

PRAYER

Pray over your Personal Leadership Development Plan asking God for commitment, clarity and grace as you execute it over the next 90 days. Praise God for the learnings, conviction and encouragement you've experienced during this series. Close your prayer by asking God to protect and guide you through the specific resistance you're anticipating. If you're with your small group, share these so you pray for one another outside your time together.

That wraps up our *Worth the Risk* series! Thank you for participating. We hope your time has been impactful and meaningful in shaping your ongoing relationship with Jesus. Remember, Sermon Study Guides are available every week on [our website](#)!



INSTRUCTIONS

- ☐ **Identify (1) key focus area** from the material today that you'd like to grow in and **write it** in the top left corner of the form below.
- ☐ **Evaluate that focus area's current health**, with "R" (Red) being the least healthy, "G" (Green) being the healthiest, or somewhere in between. **Circle** the appropriate color.
- ☐ **Draft a plan** using the form below that, if you follow it, will cause your area of focus to become **more "green."**

AS YOU DRAFT YOUR PLAN: X TO Y BY WHEN

A simple planning formula to help you execute is: "x to y by when." In other words:

- **"x"** – Where am I starting? If I rated myself as "red," what does "red" look like from an internal or character standpoint? How about from an external or behavioral standpoint? What are the symptoms of being "red" in this area? What is my "redness" producing on my teams? What is stuck because I'm red?
- **to "y"** – Where would I like to be? What does "Green" practically look like? What kind of outcomes would I expect to see?
- **by when?** Each plan will last the duration of the ministry season – about a 4-month period. What are the benchmarks or dates/deadlines along the way that you could hold yourself accountable to?

AS YOU DRAFT YOUR PLAN: STRATEGIES

Strategies are the **"how's"** – the actions you'll take that will lead you to be greener in your focus area. As you go to identify these strategies, think:

- **Knowledge:** books, trainings, podcasts, events, experiences
- **Relationships:** meetings, coaches, mentors, accountability
- **Roles/Responsibilities:** things you could do, create, or take on that would push you to grow in your focus area

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STATUS: R R/Y Y Y/G G

What does “x” look like in this area of your leadership?

What does “y” look like in this area of your leadership?

How will I get from x to y in the next 90 days?

STRATEGIES	DATE

SCRUB YOUR PLAN

Finally, after you've created your plan, spend some time scrubbing your plan with your team around the table together. As you listen to each of your team members share their plan, think: is it...

SPECIFIC?

The plan needs to capture very clearly the x and the y. Generic language or platitudes won't be very helpful. The more specific the plan captures where you are and where you'd like to be, the better.

BEHAVIORAL?

Can you see clear action language in the strategies? Would you know exactly what the person is doing? Could you follow that plan if it was given to you?

RELEVANT?

Will the strategies actually get the person from x to y? How effective/likely will it be that, if they do what they say they'll do, that they'll arrive at their goal?

PERMISSION?

Do they have the permission that they need from their supervisor or any other key stakeholders?

RESOURCES?

Do they have everything they need to get their plan done: money, time, margin, etc.?

SCOPE?

Are they trying to do too much in the time allotted? Too little?