

Take the Risk of Living Right

I came in this morning, a little late, but I got something really good. Where is Diane sitting? She made my day. She told me that she moved into this apartment complex, a new place, and she was kind of lonely at first; nobody spoke to her, she didn't know anybody; and then she started simple acts of care and kindness! She started reaching out to people; and she said she's having such a great time in that place as she activates what we are talking about everyday.

And what a magical wonderful testimony to what this is about; It just dawned on me a fresh — you don't have to be lonely anywhere, if you take the initiative to reach out to people. Thank you, Diane. She's a true believer! True believers DO it.

One of the words in the title of this morning's talk is 'risk', because, you know, like what she did, and what caring for people includes, always there is some risk. It's not a smooth, sure thing. It means putting yourself out there where you might get hurt; you might be rejected; it might fall flat.

I thought of the Bible parable that Jesus taught us about the three men who each received a certain amount (100, 300, 500) and they were expected to use what are we given. They were all given something. Usually when you contemplate, or something is said about this verse, it comes out with how bad that one guy was—that he didn't do anything, and he got punished. Well, we'll just kind of lay off him today. But he represents something in all of us that wants to play it safe—wants to make sure it's comes out the way we want it to come out. That's kind of a control issue, right? Control is a good word there. And of the three men, the one who got \$100 and did nothing much with it; he had a sure thing going. He was the only one who could be sure of what was going to happen.

That's the way it is with reaching out; with going into hard places. That's such an important part of this—going into hard places is part of it. Doing the easy things, like cheering up the grocery store; that is Level 1. Going across the street to a stranger in trouble is probably an 8.

In fact, we had one that just happened today, two houses up .I went out to get the paper (this is 6:30) and there is a fire truck - two fire trucks and an ambulance in front of the house—two houses from us. These people we are 'waving friends', but here she was, coming out on a stretcher. So . . . we have we have work to do. We don't know them very well; didn't know they were sick, but there is a little door knocking in store for us.

Okay, we don't know what's going to happen, but when you see that, we know it's there, calling on you—you gotta go. That's level 8 —probably not— maybe 7 . . . 6. It's not a really tough one, but you know you have to do it, and if you play it safe; if you know you're not going to have any disturbance; you're going to have a good week; everything's going to stay smooth; you do nothing—guaranteed, you'll be okay.

We've got to take risks; that's what care and kindness involves; you have to take risks. You have so much inside of you; you are full of appreciation, gratitude, admiration, compassion, interest; you have so much inside of you that just needs to be spread around, spilled and sprinkled on others. You have to start there — that you're one of those people, even if you think you've got little, you still have a lot. And to believe that you are part of God's loving expression, and that he doesn't do it alone. He needs you; he needs us. and we are part of it.

The world is really more in need what we have than ever. You know we love email, don't we?. We love email, and we can have a whole life sitting in front of that TV, or that computer, and the iPad, but because of that, there is growing need for touch, for human interest, for people who look you in the eye and say, "Good morning. good to see you," for people who personally connect with you in some small way. There's a bigger and bigger need everyday because of the wonderful mixed blessing of electronics.

So that's the kind of risk I'm talking about—breaking out of your own comfort zone, pushing yourself in a way that you don't really feel natural, but you know once you start doing it, you'll find it becomes a very wonderful—a comfortable—part of your life.

And that's what we're about; that's what this whole conference, this whole campaign, the *Care Capsule*, the **Miracle of Kindness** book—it's all about getting people infected with this. Not just some ideas in your head, but that you have a way of life that guides you everyday you leave the house. You notice people, you notice the cars that park across the street, you notice people coming out of their houses—you're seeing people in a fresh and new way, and every one of them is a potential candidate for loving kindness, even if your love is only a wave.

One of my favorite stories in the book is Glenn DeMaster. He has a story in there about waving to a new Asian woman who moved into his block, and it's just so beautiful, She didn't respond at first; he kept waving to her, and then one day he realized she was waiting on the corner for him to leave and wave to her. It's such a beautiful story of how small a thing it is, and yet you have to notice people, and you have to believe.

You have to believe that you're a treasure—one of God's Treasures—to be spread around. But it takes it takes a little risking, and in this parable, the wonderful thing is, and this is being confirmed by modern psychology. Godless modern psychology is discovering something we should have noticed all along, and may be did. That when you do something for someone else—for the Supreme Boss, the Lord Jesus, God Himself—when you are working for Him, doing small things, helping others, raising them up, raising the dead, dying for them (and you die for them every time you move out of your comfort zone.) Anytime you smile when you don't feel like smiling, you're dying for them. It's part of dying with Jesus, and you help people, but you are gratified yourself. It is the most substantial, self-nourishing act you can do. You get the reward, and that's why these two men (the 200 and 300 guys) are really the ones we want to look at today. They get double, and that is the story. When you give, you get! That's an extra motivation to keep us at it. I think back in the 60s, I heard this, that 90% (this is another use of my 90%, you know, **90% of Helping is Just Showing Up!**) . . .90% of us is unused. We only use 10% of our capacities, most of the time. 10% of our mentality, our intelligence—all the good stuff in us—there's 90% unused. I believe it, Even if it's only 50%, it's still a lot. And don't you acknowledge that? That there's so much in you that just sits there? You know, you appreciate people, you admire people, you have interest in people, and most of the time it just sits there being cogitated about.

So we want to challenge you; we want you to spread this. We want you to be part of the team, the Care and Kindness team.