

Proverbs 14:4
Don't be Afraid of Messes!

Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; But much increase comes by the strength of an ox.

A) I grew up in an era – where we rode Bicycles without helmets, - we built wood ramps to jump our bikes on

B) I grew up during a time when seat belts in the car were an option. Few of us wore them.

1) Piled people into cars – laps – Buick

C) We often rode in the back of pick-up trucks – even as little kids.

D) In my day – Concussion protocols didn't exist – “Shake it off and get back out there.

1) A tendency that has definitely caused a lot of problems

Things today are definitely geared toward being smarter and a lot more careful rather than carefree.

A) But some have suggested that all of the precautions that are required today –

B) Has produced a generation of young people – prone to playing it safe

1) **A generation that is unwilling to take risks.**

I think today's IG, FB/ Social media culture also has an effect on people today being unwilling to take risk

A) Because so often what gets presented on Social media is the best parts of our lives

B) The perfect date, the great vacation, the project that turned out wonderfully.

C) We present the best of ourselves.

1) Some people even photo shop their pics to cover up wrinkles and or acne –

The problem with social media is it creates a fear in people. Not talking FOMO – the fear of missing out.

A) I am talking FOF – the fear of failing – I don't want to fail – so I am not even going to try.

B) But REAL LIFE IS MESSY! – REAL LIFE IS FULL OF FAILURES

1) Real life is full of mistakes

C) Following Jesus is messy too – we make mistakes

D) And Following Jesus and serving Jesus involves being willing to take risks – that is the life of faith.

I am not talking about careless risks – but more so just being willing to take a risk in life.

A) The life of faith is a life of risks –

B) I was once told by a mentor –

“Every Christian should at least once in their lives attempt something so big that if God is not in it – it is doomed to fail!”

C) The Bible is filled with stories of people who took a risk –

1) Stepping out in faith believing in God to work.

D) Result was often something so incredible it was beyond Human comprehension.

E) Consider our text again

Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; But much increase comes by the strength of an ox.

4 Without oxen a stable stays clean, but you need a strong ox for a large harvest. NLT

What do Oxen leave behind? Ox paddies - messes!

A) I like the way the passion translation puts it

“The only clean stable is an empty stable. So if you want the work of an ox and to enjoy an abundant harvest, you'll have a mess or two to clean up!”

TPT

B) A farmer that boast of having a clean barn – is going to have an empty barn –

1) it will be lacking in fruit – lacking in a harvest

C) Where there is a harvest there is going to also be messes – in barns and in life.

Think about Peter – He took a risk!

A)It happened one day the disciples were in boat crosses the sea of Galilee – really a large lake. – **STORMY** –

B)Here comes Jesus walking on the water! – **Ghost** – don't be afraid it is I

1)Lord if it is really you tell me to come to you! – Come

C)Peter gets out of the boat and starts walking on the water.

D)He takes his eyes off of Jesus – starts focusing on **the horizontal** – wind and waves – starts to sink.

But Peter walked on water

A)Yes he got wet – but he was the only disciple whose testimony – walked on water

B)Add that to his resume — Preached 3,000 saved- impressive – **walked on water** - story for grand kids

C)If we fear failing – we will never get out of the boat!

D)Fear is the dark room where negatives are developed

1)Fear of failing can produce a negative mindset where we are unwilling to step out in faith.

E)Better to try and fail than never to try at all!

Baseball player with a career 300 batting average will make the Hall of fame.

A)Tony Gwynn is a good example

B)Batting 300 means that you fail – 7 of 10 times

C)I would rather be the guy who played a whole lot of games and hit 300 – failed 7 of 10 times

D)Than the guy who batted 1,000 went 1 for 1 and got 1 hit and never played again.

1)I want to be in the game.

E)The Christian life is a life of faith – actively walking with Jesus trusting in Jesus

“True peace does not come through enacting measures of self - preservation – It comes through consistent and intentional trust in the Lord.”

ABC's of stepping out in faith!

A)A – Attempt something for God – Do something

B)Don't wait for something to come to you – attempt something for God!

C)1 Samuel 14 - Jonathan and his Armor bearer – 1)“God doesn't need a whole army – he can save by many or few.”

D)Tomorrow lets go over to the Philistines – see what God might want to do. –

1)Armor bearer – Do all that is in your heart!

What a guy – what a friend - doesn't question –

A)He knew that Jonathan was a man of faith – said – lets go for it!

B)True faith in God is Contagious – it inspires others to step out in faith!

THE PLAN - Hide in the Rocks – Then we will expose ourselves

A)If they say – wait there we will come up to you – then we will know the Lord is not in this.

B)Why would the Philistines say that – makes no sense – great set up for an ambush

C)But if they say – Come down – then we will know that the Lord is on our side.

D)Well that is exactly what happened – the two of them had a major victory.

You want to see God work in your Life – Attempt something for God!

A)Willian Carey missionary to Ecuador and India

“Attempt great things for God, expect great things from God.”

B)Don't be afraid to step out and see what God might want to do.

1)Great opportunity for God to do something IN you and THROUGH YOU!

C)A- Attempt something for God.

B- Believe completely in God

A)1 Samuel 17 – we have the classic story of David and Goliath

B)The Scene – two hills / two armies – the valley

C)The Philistine Giant 9’6 breastplate weighed 125 / Spear 25lbs – **BIG STRONG DUDE**

Everyday for 40 days twice a day – Goliath comes down into the Valley of Elah.

A)Send me a man..... / 80 times they have heard this message and nobody moves. –

B)The Army of Israel was frozen in fear/

1)KING Saul gives incentives/ no taxes and his daughter’s hand in marriage – no takers

C)David shows up – **Who is this uncircumcised Philistine....God?**

Why did David see the situation differently than everyone else?

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge.” Psalm 19:1-2

A)David had a big view of God – which made the giant seem small!

B)Donald Grey Barnhouse – Big Godder

1)Their God is too small – He can’t raise the dead, he can’t heal – he can’t part of the sea -

C)Donald you are a Big Godder – you believe in a big God who can do anything – you will go far!

1)He did- Pioneered the idea of bringing sermons to the radio

D)Died in 1960 but his sermons books and Bible Commentaries are still being used today

1)This man of faith who believed in a Big God – left a long lasting Legacy

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.” ~ A.W. Tozer

E)Your view of God will impact – your willingness to take steps of faith.

Many men and women today are living, often with inner dissatisfaction, without any faith in God at all. This is . . . because they have not found with their adult minds a God big enough . . . J.B. Phillips

C)David had a big view of God – saw instead of a giant –

1)he saw a man who was despising his God!

D)David believed in God –

“You come to me with a sword, with a spear, and with a javelin. But I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. ⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand. 1 Samuel 17:45-46

E)David claimed a great Victory for Israel and his faith had a contagious effect on the whole army.

1)The Philistine army was pursued and defeated that day by the armies of Israel

The ABC’s of stepping out in Faith

A - Attempt something for God

B – Believe completely in God

C – Continually look to God

Here is what we need to understand – having Faith doesn’t mean you will never doubt.

A)Great men of God – struggled with doubt – Key is to keep looking to the Lord!

B)Ever lose sight of the Lord? – Elijah did

C)Big victory on Mt. Carmel – followed by a big bout with fear – the threats of Queen Jezebel

D)I am the only prophet left

Runs to the Cave – there he gets centered again He hears the still small voice of God

A)Wind, earthquake, fire - Horizontal

B)Goes Vertical – hears the still small voice of the Lord

“For the place God calls us into isn’t doubt free—how can any place where we walk by faith and

not by sight be that? No, the holy wild is where we have driving and haunting doubts, God-hungry doubts that pull us to our knees, force us to the Word, make us wrestle all night and not let go until He blesses us.”

– Mark Buchanan, Your God Is Too Safe: Rediscovering the Wonder of a God You Can't Control

PAUL DID TOO

A) Acts 18 – Paul comes to Corinth – Synagogue – nope – goes next door –

B) Preaching people are getting saved – including Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household.

C) And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

1) Dejavu – here we go again

⁹ Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, “Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city.”

D) Result – Paul dug in – stayed there a year and a half – longest place of ministry other than Ephesus

Think about Peter walking in the water -when did his problems start?

A) Took his eyes off of Jesus – focused on the Horizontal – the wind and waves

B) If Peter just would have kept his eyes on Jesus!

C) The Holy Spirit is constantly trying to get us to look to the Lord –

1) keep our eyes on the Lord – from whom comes our help

D) Nothing that can come into your life – no storm, no giant, no enemy that he can't handle

E) Promise Keepers Vs Promise Believers

When God makes a promise: “Faith believes it, Hope anticipates it, and Patience quietly waits for it.”

So - Don't be afraid to take risks for the Lord – It is a key to Being surprised by God!

We as a Church love taking risk!

A) One area where we don't take risks is with the Lord's money – GOOD STEWARDS

B) We have taken risks with people:

1) Jeremy Camp – young goofy dude – sure you can play here

C) Phil Wickham – Great heart

Guys who have gone on to be gifted Pastors

A) Evan Wickham – 1st Bible study – two pads – Wife Sandy – he was all over the place

B) Taught at Bible College – met some young men – potential – **all Senior Pastors today of great churches**

1) Jason Duff, Trevor O'Keefe – Marc O

C) Dave Anderson – Home group – let's see – planted in Mt Pleasant Texas

Missions:

A) Lets just see what the Lord might want to do – Russia – tons of trips and churches planted – Kaluga

B) Eastern Europe – 8 people – no clue what to expect – spy out the land

C) God choose to start two churches that led to several more being planted in Serbia, Croatia, Hungary

1) Italy – too many to mention

Sending Phil and Rebecca McKay – to Costa Rica

A) White as can be – neither spoke Spanish – God did an amazing work

B) Church planted – built – handed over to a national

1) Amazing

C) Currently in NZ – Mexico – Guatemala – Philippines

D) Every time – let's just see what God might want to do! – Take a risk –

E)For all of the success stories – there have been some that didn't work out to well – Ok

1)There is fruit in the Barn

Today we are living in much uncertainty –

A)But Things are not uncertain with God – he knows exactly what he is doing

B)So can I encourage you and me to Attempt Great things for God and expect great things from God

C)Continue in the midst of the uncertainty – **stay vertical – looking to Jesus**

Amen ?

Communion:

A)Run the race looking unto Jesus

“let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Hebrews 12:2

Why we can trust Him?

“So, what does all this mean? If God has determined to stand with us, tell me, who then could ever stand against us? For God has proved his love by giving us his greatest treasure, the gift of his Son. And since God freely offered him up as the sacrifice for us all, he certainly won't withhold from us anything else he has to give.” Romans 8:31-32 TPT