

“Living Dangerously” talk series

1. Facing Fear--boldness, taking a stand

- this could be an intro talk to series, as an overview of the whole series
- fear vs. faith--fear is faith in something else
- movie “Fearless”--man thinks he can't be killed because he escaped from a plane crash
- include fear of evangelism as principal application
- what does it mean to *face* fear? Part of the problem with fear is often that we have never faced it; we've never looked it squarely and identified exactly what we're afraid of. If we are afraid to look at what we fear, we too easily run from it without ever confronting or standing up to it.
- Facing fear exposes our true heart--the things we truly value. We learn where our identity is really centered.
- the speaker could “exegete” their own fear of evangelism
- fear of rejection is often at the root of our fear of evangelism (and many other things). What does it mean to live in a way that exposes us to rejection. (fear of being stupid, looking like we don't know what we're talking about)
- fear that there really is some devastating objection to the gospel out there that we will hear if we evangelize.
- facing fear requires repentance.

2. Love beyond Fear (there's really no such thing as love without fear)

- call people to a risky life of love, rather than a grey, monochromatic life of self-protection
- if we are going to experience love, we are going to have to risk--we are going to have to face our fears. Love without risk is impossible. The level of love we can experience is directly related to the level of commitment we make (examples: marriage, being committed to a campus for 5 years as staff)
- so, to love we must hurt. Even under the gospel love will still bring us suffering; but life in the gospel is life under a greater love that gives us strength to love and to suffer
- becoming a Xian increases our ability to cry and to laugh--increases our ‘dynamic range’
- without Jesus, love is perhaps too risky altogether
- we know we love someone when we have given them the power to hurt us
- 1 Jn -- there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear (converse=without perfect love, there is significant fear!)
- rejection is an issue here again!
- fear of pain, hurt
- fear of investing too much and suffering loss, losing a part of yourself
- having the faith to love others
- love isn't just about being nice--it is about confrontation, “hard love”
- song “The Heart of the Matter” by Don Henley (ca 1990)-- “I think it's about forgiveness, even if you don't love me any more.”
- song “Hard Love” by Bob Franke--recorded by Claudia Schmidt
- “Pretty Woman” quote-- “the rule is, just don't let anyone kiss you”
- C S Lewis--we have replaced the classical virtue of “love” with a modern ‘virtue’ of “unselfishness”

3. Costly Integrity

- Psalm 15, from Peterson's translation: “keeps his oath, even when it hurts”
- Speaking the truth vs. avoiding the truth, fearing conflict
- taking responsibility for actions vs. blaming, or manipulating people
- broken promises
- Acts 5: Ananias & Sapphira (an example of a deadly lack of authenticity)
- Dishonesty in the real world, expectations of dishonesty on the job (and how integrity can get you into trouble: Joseph with Potiphar's wife)

- Doing the right thing even when you know you would never be caught
- Angle: Paint the problem to which the answer is integrity: examine short cuts which don't produce the solution. They are more costly in the long term. COSTLY INTEGRITY is the best deal. We definitely don't want to simply challenge people on integrity without giving them an attractive picture of integrity.

4. Commitment

- Skit: Two people writing their marriage vows, watering down what they would be willing to commit to
- Develop the characteristics of commitment: means saying that something else is more important than I am--and that life will be worth it, better for me by committing
- Idea: make a tape mixing lines of recent (late 80s and later) songs with lines re: commitment, promises made and broken, etc.
- What is possible when you have a life of commitment that is not possible without it? security, transcendence, larger purpose, legacy or posterity (literally children impossible w/o commitment, but also a sense of building for the future), impact beyond yourself.
- Investing in relationships for a lifetime: nurture them now and they nurture you later.
- Speak about divorce, its currency and it as an example of the need for commitment. Social, personal costs of a lack of commitment.

5. Crazy Generosity

- What does generosity look like in our culture? Generous when convenient or easy; generous with people who are generous with you; low commitment generosity.
- Movie: *It Could Happen to You*.
- Stories of generosity.
- Money is a spiritual issue. Also time.
- Luke 16, being generous for a good purpose.
- Luke 14: Banquet: generosity that doesn't make sense.
- Mark 10: God's economy of abundance.
- Paint the attractiveness of generosity.
- Building the tabernacle (Ex 35)
- Suggest having a hospitality budget.
- Why be generous? What keeps us from being generous? We fear the cost of generosity and don't see its value or benefit.
- Crazy generosity = not holding on to yourself very much. Generosity that doesn't make sense.
- The impact of generosity: Jean Valjean's life. Generosity == grace. Value of people vs. things.

6. Fear of Death

- Mark: Jesus & Peter's trial: fearing Jesus' death as a disciple.
- What are you willing to die for? Peter wasn't until Acts. He claimed he was willing to die a glorious death as a hero (Mark 14) but not willing to die a humble death, as a criminal.
- Fearing the pain of death and suffering.
- Failure? represents a sort of death.
- Live life as fast as possible, hopelessness.
- Does failure put students in touch with the reality of death? Does death?
- What does death represent? "I hope I don't get caught (with Aids)"
- Paint the horror of death. Cancer, wars. And the claim that Jesus frees us from this.
- 1 Corinthians 15:55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"