

Risk, Safety, and Faith: Missions in an Era of Ebola and Terrorism

1. INTRO: Risk and Safety

- a. Reality vs. perception.
- b. Why is the Ebola virus more frightening than car travel?
Cognitive biases:
 - i. Exaggerating the spectacular or uncommon
 - ii. The unknown and foreign causes fear
 - iii. Sense of vulnerability heightened in situations without control.
- c. Health Care Workers did have disproportionate risk in Ebola: 898 cases/518 deaths. Overall 20-30 x higher risk than general population.
- d. In the 1890's as European and North American missionaries went inland in Africa, they packed their goods in their own coffins. High cost for high expected gain.
- e. So what are we willing to accept today? Our goal is not to die, but given the fact that we all WILL die, what risks are we willing to accept? Where do we start?

- 2. Incarnation: reaching the Majority World means taking on some of the same risks they live with. Faith does not make us immune. Love is a higher calling than safety.
- 3. Cross: Jesus stated that the method of the Kingdom coming was taking up our cross to follow him. Can safety be an idol?
- 4. Redemption: Ultimately, we weigh risk against gain. We need a big view of God's work in restoring this broken world which allows us to risk more.
- 5. Wisdom: Being wise as serpents, innocent as doves. We do not wantonly disregard safety.
 - a. Take reasonable precautions when possible.
 - b. Don't take risks for the sake of the thrill
 - c. No Lone Ranger decision-making. Make decisions with supervisors or consensus.
 - d. But leaving room for people to follow their conscience and do things that might end badly.
- 6. In the end, we have God's promise that He is making all things new. In this world you will have trouble, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.