

Take a Risk!

A monthly publication from Risk Takers *for* Christ

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Introducing the "New" Space Cowboys

by Rev. Dale M. Glading

"Space Cowboys" is a movie that was directed and produced by Clint Eastwood in 2000. In addition to Eastwood, it starred James Garner, Tommy Lee Jones and Donald Sutherland.

The somewhat implausible, but extremely compelling plot features a Russian satellite that is decaying and about to plunge to earth. Because its operational system is so archaic, NASA is forced to recruit and reactivate an old team of retired fighter pilots and once-aspiring astronauts.

Now in their 60's, these grizzled veterans of the space program possess the necessary tools and training that their modern-day peers lack.

Working together, they use their decades of experience to handle and diffuse one problem after another. Twists and turns that would overwhelm younger and less-experienced pilots are simply challenges to be faced head-on and overcome.

The bittersweet conclusion shows Jones' character willingly sacrificing his life for the sake of his fellow crew members, thereby averting a potential nuclear disaster.

Fast-forward to November 13-15, 2017. Risk Takers for Christ sponsored a three-day Bible

conference at Cornerstone Baptist Church in Sebastian, FL. Titled "Three Days of Teaching & Three Nights of Preaching," it featured six in-depth teaching sessions on the minor prophets and three powerful messages from Isaiah 1-6.

Just who were the presenters? Three "grizzled veterans" of the pulpit: Pastors Tom Cox, Dave McMurray and Bill Waltz. Two Baptists and a Presbyterian. Interspersed throughout the conference was the singing and guitar-playing of Kenny Munds, an award-winning country and gospel music vocalist. Combined with yours truly, who organized the event, our five-man team had a combined 150 years of ministry experience.



In today's Christian culture, hipster preachers are all the rage. But whereas Scripture clearly teaches that we are not to look down upon younger or less-experienced pastors (see I Timothy 4:12); there is definitely something to be said for having decades of real-life experience in the church and in the pulpit.

Such was the case during our three-day Bible conference. Pastor Tom taught us some valuable lessons from Jonah and Pastor Bill shared some profound insights from Hosea, Habakkuk and Haggai.... the "3-H Club." Then, each evening, Pastor Dave preached a dynamic message on the holiness of God. As if that wasn't enough, Kenny tied everything together with scores of original songs.

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Introducing the “New” Space Cowboys

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Here is what some of the attendees had to say about the conference...

“I was blessed immensely with edification, exhortation and comfort from the Holy Spirit as I heard the men preach and teach, as well as when I talked to each one individually. Dale, you are very fortunate to have such friends (and a wife) who were there for you and the church at that excellent Bible conference. Thanks to the Lord and all of you for doing this for us.” - Ken Simmens

“If you missed the meetings this week, you missed a precious time together with God's folks learning from His Word through some wonderful men and musicians.” - Brenda Sistler

The Best Day Ever

by Rev. Dale M. Glading, President

After three decades of prison ministry, some days behind bars stand out over the others. Saturday, November 11th was one of those days.

Our team gathered for prayer at 4:00 a.m. before making the two-hour drive to Polk City FL. There was my son Chris and me, Michael Kelley, Tom Palladino, Justin Vandal and Shane Wright. Five basketball players and one non-playing volunteer.

We arrived at Polk Correctional Institution and were quickly informed that there was an extra inmate team that wanted to face us. That meant that instead of playing one game in the morning and one in the afternoon, we now had two morning games against two different teams and a third game after lunch. Each inmate team would be fresh and well-rested, as well as hand-selected from a population of 1,500 men.

With no subs, we realized that we were facing a monumental task. However, I have seen God perform countless miracles throughout my ministry career and so, we agreed to give it our best shot.

The first game was extremely close until late in the second half, when we started to pull away. Our team wound up winning handily, which pleased the 200 spectators surrounding the court. All of them received evangelistic

Perhaps the most frequently heard comment was simply, “I wish this conference could last all week!” Which got me thinking... and praying.

What would happen if we made our “century and a half” of ministry experience available to other churches and Christian groups? Would other congregations benefit from the spiritual wisdom of seasoned pastors like Tom, Dave and Bill? And would believers across the country be blessed by Kenny’s God-given musical talents?

After consulting with the rest of our team members, we have decided to offer our services on a limited basis to any interested parties. No church is too large, and no church is too small.

Not all of us may be able to make every trip or accept every invitation, but we have a few other “space cowboys” ready and willing to fill in as needed. So, if you would be interested in scheduling our ministry team, please call me at 772.539.1826 or email me at dale@risktakersforchrist.org.

literature and many of them stayed for our post-game gospel presentation.

No sooner had we finished our program, but it was time to start the second game. This one was even closer, but we dug deep and managed to win by three points. Then, it was time to leave the institution for a quick lunch, before returning for the third and final game.

In front of an entirely different - and very boisterous - crowd, our team picked up right where we left off. Sparked by consecutive three-pointers by Michael Kelley, Chris Glading and Justin Vandal, we jumped out to a 17-2 lead and never looked back. Michael and Chris scored more than 50 points between them, Justin played consistently well, and Shane Wright dominated the boards as he did in the two morning games.

Winning so decisively when we should have been too tired to play earned the respect of the inmates, which led to many of them listening intently to our second gospel presentation of the day. In God’s providence, no sooner did I finish preaching than the skies opened up and a gentle rain began to fall.

Tom Palladino, who had shared his testimony twice that day, covered our sound equipment and gospel literature as we made our way to the front gate. Three hours later, after a short dinner break, we arrived back in Vero Beach. Exhausted, but exhilarated... and ready to do it again!

Photos from our recent "Three Days of Teaching & Three Nights of Preaching"



During this Christmas season of giving, please consider making a generous year-end donation to Risk Takers for Christ. Our staff is small and our budget is too, which makes your gift even more appreciated.

Merry CHRISTmas to you and yours!



Revival Fires Burn Bright in Fulton County

For three days, October 27-29, revival fires burned brightly at Pleasant Ridge Church of the Brethren in Needmore PA. Risk Takers president Dale Glading preached three powerful messages from the Gospel of Mark and God's Holy Spirit was definitely present and "on the move."

Here is an email we received recently from Pastor Mac Miller...

"I wanted to thank you for coming and sharing your messages for the weekend at the end of October. I truly felt the Lord's leading as you shared messages that were for Pleasant Ridge. I know that everyone who came agreed that your messages spoke to all of us."

To schedule Dale or another Risk Takers speaker for revival meetings, a men's conference, pulpit supply or other church events, please call 772.539.1826 or email info@risktakersforchrist.org.

Upcoming Risk Takers Events:

- ◆ December 9: Softball at Lake CI, Clermont FL
- ◆ January 7-9: American Correctional Association Winter Conference, Orlando FL
- ◆ January 13: Basketball at DeSoto CI, Arcadia FL

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My Name is Harmon

My name is Harmon, and I have attended every Risk Takers game and conference held at Sumter Correctional Institution since 2014. We are looking forward to your upcoming visit and awaiting a ready word from God.



Thank you from every inmate incarcerated here, for your dedication and love for evangelism to the sick and hurting. Don't ever feel like your visits are not working. Keep in mind that as long as God is involved, someone is being blessed.

The reason I am reaching out to you now is due to the devil's involvement in hindering our ability to receive donated basketballs. The main unit that you visit now only has one ball that is, in a word, torn. It's not even outside court ready. We are in critical need of balls and are praying that God would use someone to bring donated balls into our facility.

If it's in God's will, we pray that when you come God will show favor and allow some type of relief to us within these walls. I understand the enemy's desire to steal, kill and destroy. Anything positive and uplifting, he is trying to discourage.

Whatever you are allowed to do, we are grateful for the effort and time. Again, thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to lend a helping hand to us.

May God bless your ministry, and may He increase it one hundred-fold. Tell your team we are looking forward to their visit; it's been a while. We love you all. Keep the faith and stay the course.

Editor's Note: It was our pleasure to donate two brand new leather indoor-outdoor balls to Sumter CI. Since Florida state prisons do not have a recreation budget, we make an effort to donate free sports equipment every time we visit.

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