

First Responders 4 – Run toward the danger

Hello all you beautiful people. Greetings to everyone online and everyone in the room. My name is Chris Fluit and I am so blessed to be the lead pastor here at Redemption Church in Plano Tx.

We are in the 4th week of our First Responder message series.

First Responder Title

I really feel like God has been speaking to us over this series. If you missed any of the previous weeks or would like to revisit them, they can be found on our website, redemptionplano.com or even Youtube.

I want to remind you that a First Responder is someone who is designated & trained to respond to an emergency. This world is full of emergencies and God has called us to respond.

We are going to start today by telling you... God only wants what is best for you.

God only wants what is best for you

You may have been told this before. You may have told someone else this before. After tonight I hope we never say it again.

God sent Noah into a situation where he would be ridiculed and rejected.

God sent Abraham into the unknown and had him bring his family amongst ruthless men. God had Abraham settle in the very part of the world that every world power would try to take... the armies of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome all would trample upon this land.

God sent Joseph into a situation where he could have been murdered but instead was sold into slavery, wrongly accused and imprisoned, left for dead, and to later face his murderous brothers face to face.

God sent Moses into the same land that he ran for his life from because he had killed a man. God sent Moses to confront the powerful Pharaoh.

God sent Joshua, Caleb, and the rest of Israel into a promised land filled with Giants, large fortified cities, and trained armies. God sent them to take this land.

God sent a shepherd boy named David to face a mad rebellious king and a blood thirsty giant.

God sent young Israel boys like Daniel, Azariah, Hananiah, and Mishael into a dangerous exile where they would confront a pagan king, face a lion's den, and a fiery furnace.

God sent prophets before men who would deny the prophet's message and seek to kill the prophet.

God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord and it put him in harm's way. He was imprisoned and beheaded.

God sent His son Jesus into a world where he would be despised, rejected, beaten, stripped, and crucified.

God sent his disciples into a world where all of them faced violence. Only John died of old age... and that is after he was boiled in oil and left to die on a deserted island.

I want to tell you today that God does NOT only want what is best for you.

God does NOT only want what is best for you

Now don't throw chairs at me yet. Let me explain.

God loves you. God cares for you. God is concerned with your well-being... but there are times when God calls us to sacrifice. There are times when God wants us to do what is best for others instead of what is best for our self.

Matthew 16:24 (NIV2011) Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

Matthew 16:25 (NIV2011) For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.

Matthew 16:26 (NIV2011) What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

Jesus says you must deny yourself, you must take up your cross... This may not feel good. This may not be what is best for my physical health.

Jesus says whoever wants to save their life will lose it... Whoever loses their life will find it... There are times when you may lose.

Jesus says it may not be best for you to gain the whole world... It may not be best for you to have that relationship, that job, buy that house... Are you willing to deny yourself and take up your cross?

Do we have a “what’s in it for me” mentality when it comes to Jesus? Are we willing to follow Jesus even if he asks us to do something uncomfortable... even dangerous?

First Responders run towards danger

Firefighters get the call. They jump up and jump into their gear. They slide down the pole. They run to a fire truck and speed to the scene. And once there, they run into buildings that are on fire.

Right now there is a commercial out that features smokejumpers. Smokejumpers are firefighters who parachute into the middle of forest fires. You know it takes guts to parachute into the middle of the fire.

First responders are often called into situations with a lot of unknowns. There was a report of shots fired,,, but how many shooters are there? Where are the shooters? Which one of these people is the shooter.

You have probably witnessed our policemen eating in a restaurant. There they are trying to eat when they get the call... They quickly get up and head out... they leave their food behind... they leave their comfort behind... and they run toward the danger.

In 2016 there was a protest against police violence. There had been some police related deaths against black men in our nation. These stories were very high profile at the time and it brought about this peaceful protest in downtown Dallas.

Our Police officers gathered to protect the very group that it seemed were protesting them. These first responders laid aside their emotions to guard the lives of people who might not like them very much at the moment.

You probably remember that this peaceful protest turned violent when a gunman started shooting at officers.

The protesters ran from the danger. The policemen, the first responders, ran towards the danger. ‘

At the end of the day it doesn’t matter what disagreements there are, what is being thought and said... A first responder lays all of that aside and runs toward danger.

On July 7, 2016, 6 officers lost their life that night and there were 11 others injured.

Those that run towards danger ought to have our respect. Make sure you honor and respect a first responder when you see them. Because at any moment you could be running away from danger and they are running toward it.

Redemption Church, God has called us to run towards danger.

Danger

There are all kinds of dangers... These dangers range from small to severe and all of them kind of affect us differently.

The danger of looking like a fool... what will people think if I offer to pray with them out loud? What if I offer to help but they were just taking advantage of me.

The danger of failure... What if I try and fail?

The danger of loss... I could lose a relationship over this... I could lose my job or position...

The danger of death... All of the first century Christians dealt with the danger of death. For simply being a believer they faced this danger. We are blessed in the USA not to face this very often, but there are Christians in the world right now that are facing the danger of death for simply believing in Jesus.

These dangers affect us differently... For some of you in this room... the idea of you opening your mouth and speaking is a very dangerous idea. For others the thought of opening up yourself to help someone else seems so risky that you don't see how you could ever do it. Others, the idea of you sharing your faith to your friends at school seems like social suicide. Does it seem dangerous to share your testimony that includes a past failure in your life? There are different dangers that cause us to freeze up...

If you are suffering from freeze up today let me help you.

#1 It is dangerous. You are not just imagining it. God is absolutely calling you into a situation that will cause sacrifice. God is absolutely calling you into a situation where you place His will above your own, and you place the safety of others above your own.

#2 This danger is not new. You have faced this danger before. You who are saved have been in danger before, so don't act like this is brand new.

2 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV2011) He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us,

God has delivered you out of deadly peril before. This is not your first dangerous rodeo... this danger is not new. When he saved you he ripped you away from a dangerous place called hell. God has sent people into your life to help you.

God has delivered you before and he will deliver you again! This is how you should respond to danger. Instead of freezing up we declare that God is going to deliver again. We will run towards danger to help others.

"On him we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us." It says he will continue to deliver us... this means that we should understand that the danger we are facing now is not the first time we have faced it... but it is not the last time we face it either. There will be other dangers but God will continue to deliver.

Psalm 68:19-20 (NIV2011) Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. Our God is a God who saves; from the Sovereign Lord comes escape from death.

Our God is a God who saves. He continually saves. No one likes to face danger, but I can face it because I know I have a God who continually saves me!

First responders, do not freeze up,. They understand the danger is real, but that the danger is not new and God will ultimately deliver them... and there is another reason... First responders don't freeze up because there is someone who needs saving.

Someone needs saving

Nehemiah 4:14 (NIV2011) After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and

awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.”

Jerusalem was a defenseless city with enemies ready to attack. Nehemiah instructed the people to maintain their area of the city. The people would be first responders for their own city. He tells them “DON’T BE AFRAID... Remember the Lord! ...and fight for your families, sons, daughters, wives, and your home.”

Remember the Lord! And Remember who you are fighting for!

Church we are fighting for your family... your sons & daughters, your spouse, your home! We are fighting for each other. We are fighting for our community and our city. Plano we are fighting for you.

When you see the latest tragedy on the news you need to be reminded that we are fighting for those people. We are willing to run toward the danger for those people.

As you run towards danger you need to remember the Lord and remember who you are fighting for. Just as those Israelites were responsible for their area of the city, we too need to be responsible for our area of influence. You are responsible for your school. You are responsible for your neighborhood... workplace... family...

You are called to save others

Jesus saves! Of course that is true, but through Jesus you also save others.

Jude 1:23 (NIV2011) save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear...

Have you saved someone? Is someone going to heaven because of you?

You know the action movies with the shirtless muscular guy with 8 guns and limitless ammunition strapped to him. He is facing impossible odds and looks at the camera and says “they may kill me but I am going to take as many of them with me as possible.”

When they say that I am always like “uhoh look out bad guys.” Because there is no doubt that by the end of the movie they are going to do just that. Stallone, Schwarzenegger, Bruce Willis, Keanu Reeves, is going to kick some bad guy butt.

In a non-violent way, and preferably with our shirts on... we need to have that kind of boldness and courage. We need to look at the

danger and say “I am going to take as many of them with me as possible.” Before I step into eternity I want to save as many people as possible. I want to share the gospel with as many people as possible. I want to feed and clothe as many people as possible. I want to shelter as many people as possible. I want to share my testimony with as many people as possible. I want to pray with as many people as possible. I want to baptize as many people as possible. I want to see as many people as possible healed, delivered, and filled with the Spirit. AND I WILL! “Uh oh... Look out bad guys...” Look out hell!

We are literally snatching people from the fire of hell!

Then the last part of this verse says to show mercy mixed with fear.

Mercy mixed with fear

I want to give you the 2 motivations we need to have as we run towards danger.

We need a motivation of mercy. We need a love motivation, a motivation that seeks to help.

Christians, sometimes we have not had the motivation of love. Sometimes we have the motivation of I am right and you are wrong. We have had the motivation of pride. We have sometimes spoken to people in anger .

Christian we are not called to ridicule but to save. We aren't called to judge but to save. We aren't called to beat people down but to save.

Do not run towards the danger unless you are running in mercy, love, and a willingness to help.

But the scripture says mercy mixed with fear. What is that about? Scripture says that God has not given us a spirit of fear... why should we mix mercy with fear.

First Responders have a fearful urgency. They do not slowly mosey to the danger. They run.

Sometimes we have the mercy... the heart to help, but we lack the urgency.

When emergencies happen, every second matters. Any delay could cost lives.

Have you been delaying? Are you urgent? There are people who need your help TODAY...

Musician

Someone needs saving

You know someone who is a heartbeat away from the fire. Will you run towards the danger?

Are mixing mercy with fear? Are you urgently sharing your faith?

Are you willing to face danger for the sake of the gospel?

Philippians 1:12 (NIV2011) Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel.

Are you only interested in what is best for you, or are you willing to sacrifice so that others can be saved?

Are you willing to face discomfort...? are you willing to face danger? Are you willing to set aside your “what is in it for me” mentality? Are you willing lay aside the differences you have with others?

It may be awkward... but will you do it anyway?

It may cost you time and money... but will you do it anyway?

People may make fun of you and reject you... but will you do it anyway?

Your friends and family may not approve... they may not join you on the endeavor... but will you do it anyway.

You may not always be successful... but will you do it anyway?