



GO AHEAD, JUMP!

Putting Life's Risks into Perspective

Swoosh! A door flies open. You find yourself sitting with your legs hanging out of the door. But this is not a door to your home, your car, or a train. This door is on a jump plane! The jump plane holds three skydivers, a jumpmaster and a pilot. As the altitude increases, so, too, does the anxiety of those on board. The pilot cuts the engine. Your jumpmaster orders you out of the plane. The rushing wind dries your lips. You lick them as you gingerly step onto the footpad and out of the plane. Your hands grasp the wing strut. Then you slide them up and out, away from the plane and towards the wing. The deafening wind pulls your legs out from under you. You flap helplessly, a lonely flag in the midst of a whirlwind. You question your sanity. Then looking back at the plane through blurry vision, you see your jumpmaster. His index finger stabbing towards the earth, he mouths, "Go!" You...

Would you step out of a plane, hang onto a strut, and then let go? Thousands of skydivers do it every year. Why do they take the risk? Because they have trained and have made a conscious commitment to the sport, with full knowledge of the risks involved.

Do you step out of your bed each morning, hang onto your faith, and let go...let God? As soon as you step out of bed, the risks are there - tension, conflict, weariness and suffering. Christian living is risky. How can you "jump" into life, trusting Him with all the uncertainties in your life?

Let's compare the steps involved in two "risky" activities - jumping out of airplanes and "jumping" into Christian living.

Skydiving

Prepare for the jump with four hours of ground instruction.

Suit up with the proper equipment and safety devices. Board the jump plane.

Follow all instructions of the jump master.

Christian Living

Prepare for daily activities with (Acts 20:32, Ephesians 6:18)

Suit up with (Ephesians 6:11-17 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Follow (Psalm 119:9-16)

Climb out of the jump plane, hang onto the wing strut.

Hang onto (Proverbs 3:5)

Let go of the strut, arch, count, deploy parachute.

Let go of (Romans 6:6-7) _____
Receive (Ephesians 2:8) _____
“Deploy” your (1 Corinthians 16:13-14)

Check your canopy.

Keep “checking” (2 Corinthians 13:5 and James 1:2-4) _____

Enjoy your ride down!

Rejoice (Psalm 100:1-2, Philippians 4:4)

Walk into your landing.

Walk (Deuteronomy 10:12, 2 Corinthians 5:7)

Thank God for a great jump!

Give (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Grounded in Faith

First-time skydivers climb into the jump plane with a rig strapped on their backs and fear tucked into every cell of their body. Once safely on the ground, many first-timers kneel in prayer. They jumped! They made it through a risky situation. With your feet safely on the ground, think about the risky situations that exist in your life. List the situations that are difficult for you to place in God’s care.

Skydivers trust that their parachutes will open fully into a canopy, preserving life and limb. A canopy opening is tense. The harness jerks the skydiver upward. There are only seconds to pull the reserve chute if the canopy doesn’t deploy correctly.

After the initial jolt during the canopy opening, the skydiver is filled with comfort and security. The remainder of the ride down provides a peaceful, gliding freedom perhaps known only by birds. Read Romans 8:28, 38-39, Romans 10:9-10 and Revelation 21:3-4. How are these words like a canopy over your risky situations?

The difference between a parachute and God is that He will never fail us in any circumstance. God is our “jump master.” He is asking us to “jump” into life with faith. Read Philippians 4:19. We can jump into life knowing that He

Read Phillipians 4:13. God not only meets our daily needs, He also gives us _____
_____ to face life’s risks.

From society’s point of view, it seems riskier to trust God than to jump from a plane. Our society celebrates being “in control” - an impossible task. As Christians we know it is God’s gift of saving faith in Jesus Christ which empowers us and leads us to faithfully serve Him. Read Matthew 25:14-30. Since God gives you all you need, what will you do with His gifts?

Trusting God with our lives means doing what we can to obey and honor Him with whatever gifts He has given us, in whatever situations He places us.

Skydiving and, indeed, Christian living can be risky, yet thrilling activities. Read Titus 3:4-7. What can we trust God with that provides exhilaration beyond all our earthly expectations? (See also 2 Timothy 1:7)

Go!

Christians, whether skydivers or not, put the risks of life into perspective beneath the canopy of God’s gracious gift of saving faith in Jesus Christ. God says, “Go ahead, jump!” You...

- Pray for God’s continued help and ask others to pray with and for you.
- Read God’s Word daily.
- Worship regularly.
- Fellowship frequently with your Christian brothers and sisters.

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Thessalonians 5:23 NIV