

## A Leap of Faith

My life has been filled with taking risks. Thirteen years ago when I loaded up the truck and moved from West Virginia to Dallas, the risk involved dominated my thinking. Certainly I could have stayed where I was, doing what I was doing, and enjoyed a secure, stable life. But God's calling was leading me to Texas, and numerous other tangible pieces of data reinforced its desirability as the center of my ministry and business endeavors.

Like any leap of faith, my move and the risk of it produced fear and uncertainty. However, it was not a blind leap off of a cliff into an unknown sea below. I had a job, a ministry, a way of supporting myself. I had fifty families committed to going with me and starting The Potter's House. We were going to something, not just leaving something behind. I realized that I had to live with the consequences of my move whether conditions improved or deteriorated from what we had known.

But before I moved, I had reflected, discerned, accepted responsibility and I had done my due diligence—my research and development. I had sought the counsel of so many wise individuals who know me and my calling, and studied the demographic and spiritual needs in the area that became my new destination. I had faith, but I also had done the hard work of gathering data and listening to others. The move was not a gamble. Faith without works is dead just as works without faith limits you to your own abilities. Faith plus works produces the investment into our purpose that all of us are required to fulfill.

Both gambling and investing require a financial commitment as well the courage to take a chance. However, one is built entirely on chance while the other creates a chance to put legs under your dreams.

When you stroll down Las Vegas Boulevard—"The Strip" as it's called—you should not be expecting to double your money to finance your new business. You should be expecting to enjoy a relaxing time, and if you enjoy paying money to play games, then you've come to the right town for recreation.

When you stroll down Wall Street, then you need to make educated decisions about which corporations' stocks you want in your portfolio. You have to consider both long and short term goals for yourself and your finances. You have to study the market and look at past performance and future projections. Investing requires the resources at your disposal, including your own intelligence and the counsel of others, applied to opportunities for enhancement.

Life will always require us to take risks, but we must discern which risks are worth taking and which will short-circuit our long-term goals for short-term pay-offs. The Bible asks us, “For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost?” (Luke 14:28 KJV) If we only think about what feels right in the moment, then our weaknesses will undermine us every time. We must keep our eyes on the prize of our larger goals and greater calling if we are to make the right decisions at the right times.