

Take a Risk!

A monthly publication from Risk Takers for Christ

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Platinum
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2025

Candid.



Never Say Never Again

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

Never Say Never Again is a 1983 spy thriller in which Sean Connery reprised his role as British Secret Agent James Bond for the seventh and final time. Connery, who was the original Agent 007, had retired from the role after filming *Diamonds Are Forever* in 1971, reportedly saying that he would never again play the part of Bond.

Well, times change, and Connery's final turn as 007 was both a critical and commercial success, grossing \$160 million at the box office (approximately \$520 million in today's dollars).

So, Dale, what does that have to do with Risk Takers for Christ?

Well, in April 2020, amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, our prison ministry basketball team was the last volunteer group permitted to minister in the Florida Department of Corrections before all 75 adult institutions were locked down to prevent the virus from spreading. Fifteen months later, in July 2021, I contracted the deadly Delta variant and nearly died myself. As a result, our basketball team disbanded and following my recovery, Risk Takers focused on other areas of ministry such as our Living H2O Initiative (a weekly basketball outreach to at-risk youth), Midway Bible Fellowship (our new church plant), Grandparents for a Godly America, and our weekly devotional messages.



However, over the past several months, my son Chris and one of our former basketball players, Mike Maher, have been planting seeds about revitalizing our prison ministry team. I told them that I supported the idea, but they would have to take the lead because my ministry plate was already full.

And so, they did, starting with talking to some of the young men who attend our Living H2O Initiative and reaching out to a few former players. Before we knew it, we had a core group of 10-12 very talented basketball players ready and willing to take up the torch and go back behind bars.

Once we had a full squad in place, I contacted the Florida Department of Corrections to gauge their level of interest and was blown away by their enthusiasm.

"Oh, this is the best news!!!" wrote the Director of the Office of Programs and Re-Entry from the Central Office in Tallahassee. "I am so ready to welcome you back!"

There are still a few hurdles to cross such as completing background checks and volunteer training for our new players but our first visit is scheduled for Saturday, November 1st to Okeechobee Correctional Institution. After that, we expect to conduct quarterly trips to more than a dozen different correctional facilities throughout the state.

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Seeing the True Light

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

“Money is never going to satisfy you. Fame will never satisfy you. Nothing in this world is going to satisfy you except for God.” - Bennett Stirtz

I just finished reading a biography of Hank Williams, one of the forerunners of modern-day country music. He was born in a small town in rural Alabama on September 17, 1923, and as a boy, Hank (whose real name was Hiram) would sing and play his guitar on street corners in Georgiana as passersby tossed coins in his direction. Later, his family moved to Montgomery where he won a local talent show and was signed to host a radio show of his own while still in his mid-teens. Hank soon formed a back-up band called The Driftin' Cowboys, dropped out of school, and started performing at honky-tonks throughout the southeast.

Around this time, Hank met and married his first wife Audrey, who wasn't legally divorced from her previous husband. Their tumultuous marriage lasted until 1952 and involved a series of drunken brawls and breakups as well as a multitude of affairs.

Eventually, Hank relocated to Shreveport, Louisiana where his career really started taking off, but so did his drinking, which had started when he was just a teenager. He also suffered from chronic back pain, which was later diagnosed as spina bifida occulta but never treated except with a cumbersome back brace and high-powered drugs such as morphine and chloral hydrate.

In 1947, Hank recorded his first breakout hit, *Move It On Over* and joined the popular “Louisiana Hayride” radio show. A year later, *Lovesick Blues* soared to #1 on the charts and Hank became an established star, becoming an official member of the Grand Old Opry and raking in big bucks with a lucrative recording contract.

Hank went on to write and record such timeless hits as *Cold, Cold Heart*; *Your Cheatin' Heart*; *Hey, Good Lookin'*; *Jambalaya*; and *Take These Chains from My Heart*. Twelve of his songs reached #1 and 55 of them charted in the Top 10.

In 1952, Hank married Billie Jean Jones in another mar-

riage deemed unlawful for the same reason (her divorce from her first husband had yet to be finalized). He also fathered at least one out-of-wedlock child, Antha Jett Williams, who went on to have a recording career as did his son Hank Williams, Jr.

Hank, Sr. died on January 1, 1953, somewhere near Oak Hill, West Virginia, in the backseat of his powder blue Cadillac convertible. The official cause of death was listed as heart failure, but certainly his years of alcohol abuse and recent addiction to powerful painkillers played a major part.

Hank Williams, country music's first megastar who had fame and fortune at his fingertips, was just 29.

(In 2015, a biopic was made of Hank's life, titled "I Saw the Light", named after his 1948 hit song that was also sung at his funeral.)

I hope and pray that this supremely talented but ever-tortured man really did see the Light before it was too late.)

“What does it profit a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” Mark 8:36-37 (BSB



Shop and Give

Do you buy Christian books, Bibles, or gifts online? If so, Christian Book Distributors (www.cbd.com) is the absolute best place to shop. Even better, Christianbook will give back 4% of your purchase price to Midway Bible Fellowship, the church that Risk Takers for Christ planted in 2022.

Simply type in our GiveBack ID: MGVVPU or use the following QR code:



Never Say Never Again

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As you can imagine, I couldn't be more excited! After 35 years of ministering to more than 500,000 inmates across North America and Africa, I thought my prison ministry career was over, but God had different plans. And whereas, as I approach my 66th birthday, I may not be leading the charge on the playing field, I will be mentoring a new generation of missionary athletes to follow my footsteps.

Of course, all of this is going to take some time and lots of resources. New players means new uniforms, 15 of them to be exact, at \$65 each. We also need to buy a new portable sound system, indoor/outdoor basketballs; first aid supplies, and of course, loads of gospel literature. Add in transportation costs such as van rental, gas, and meals as well as expenses involved with following up on each inmate who completes a response card at one of our games and you can see that this is going to be an expensive - and completely unbudgeted - new ministry endeavor.

However, in my 38 years of missionary service, I have learned that when God opens a door, we are to walk through it, trusting Him every step of the way. As a dear friend of mine constantly reminds me, "Where God guides, He always provides"...and God is guiding RTC back into prison to "proclaim liberty to the captives" (Luke 4:18).

I Corinthians 5:7 says, "For we walk by faith, not sight," and so that is exactly what Risk Takers for Christ is going to do. At a time when our coffers are nearly empty due to a very sluggish summer season, we are stepping out in faith and trusting that God will supply for BOTH the general needs of our ministry as well as this exciting new evangelistic opportunity.

Will you be a part of God's provision? If so, I ask you to prayerfully consider making the most generous gift you have ever given to RTC so that we can march boldly through this new ministry door that God has opened while continuing all our other vital outreaches.

Here is a breakdown of our current needs:
\$1,045 for 15 basketball uniforms @ \$65 each (plus \$70 shipping)
\$650 for gospel literature (Bibles, Gospel of Johns, tracts, etc.)
\$500 per trip for travel expenses (rental van, gas/tolls,

and team meals)

\$400 for 12 basketballs (4 game-only and 8 giveaways, 2 per institution)

\$300 for a portable sound system

\$200 for postage for follow-up mailings

\$100 for first aid supplies

Total: \$3,195

That's almost \$3,200 just to get our basketball team up and running through the end of this year, not counting the costs of future prison trips that we already have scheduled through the end of 2026... PLUS our ongoing ministry needs that average \$10,000 per month.

So, as you can see, **we need as many of our faithful friends like you to answer this call for help** with a generous tax-deductible gift that God will use to bring the life-changing gospel message to lost prisoners, at-risk youth, and the hundreds of other hurting souls we minister to every month.

To make a tax deductible donation, please visit www.risktakersforchrist.org or mail your check to PO Box 651421, Vero Beach FL 32965

Living H2O Photos

Recently, one of the young men who attends our Living H2O Initiative requested the opportunity to share his personal testimony. He did an absolutely AWESOME job and because he was speaking to his peers, he commanded their full attention and respect.



Ministering to Your Husband's Killers

by Rev. Dale Glading, President

"To pray 'thy will be done,' I must be willing, if the answer requires it, that my will be undone."

- Elisabeth Elliot

Elisabeth Elliot (nee Howard) was born on December 21, 1926 in Brussels, Belgium to missionary parents who moved the family to Philadelphia when she was an infant. Elisabeth grew up in Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and New Jersey, and later attended Wheaton College in Illinois, where she studied classical Greek to prepare for translating the Bible into an unknown language.

At Wheaton, Elisabeth met a fellow student named Jim Elliot who had a heart for lost souls and in particular, for native tribes in Central America. Jim and Elisabeth were married in Quito, Ecuador in 1953, and spent the next three years ministering to the Quichua and Huaorani (or Auca) Indians. In 1956, Jim - along with Nate Saint and three other missionaries - was speared to death by those Indians.

Undaunted, Elisabeth and Rachel Saint, Nate's widow, chose to live amongst the Huaorani and Quichua tribes for five years, from 1958 to 1963. Not only did they successfully translate parts of the Bible into their native tongues, but they also led their husbands' killers to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

Eventually, Elisabeth Elliot returned to the U.S. with her daughter Valerie, who was only 10 months old when Jim Elliot was murdered. She married a professor at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, where she became an

adjunct professor herself. Unfortunately, her second husband died just four years later and so, Elisabeth married for the third and final time in 1977 to a hospital chaplain.

Throughout her life, Elisabeth Elliot penned 25 books, the best known of which - *Shadow of the Almighty* and *Through Gates of Splendor* - describe her life and ministry with Jim Elliot. Elisabeth died in 2015 at the age of 88, having suffered from dementia for the last 10 years of her life.



As she said in today's quote, no one would want to be tragically widowed at such an early age and left to raise an infant daughter by herself, only to lose a second husband within a few years of remarrying. And certainly no one would desire to spend their supposedly "Golden Years" battling dementia.

But that was God's perfect plan for Elisabeth Elliot, and she accepted it with faith, grace, and courage... which is why her life story continues to inspire countless thousands of people to this very day.

"Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will, but Yours be done." Luke 22:42



Midway Bible Fellowship

Proclaiming God's Truth & Demonstrating His Love

9:30 a.m. - Coffee & donuts

10 a.m. - Worship service

1950 S US Hwy 1, Vero Beach FL

Living H2O Initiative



Mondays from 6-8 p.m.
First Baptist Church of Vero

Join us for some Bible &
Basketball
Free Snacks Provided

Our Staff & Board Members

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