

Security Briefs Episode 12

Stay or Go? Part 1 – An Introduction

Theology of Risk Paper Link

[Click here to download Theology of Risk Paper directly.](#)

[Click here to go to AGWM's missiological papers page.](#)

Introduction

We are pausing our discussion on risk myths to talk about an extremely common consequence of a risk decision – perhaps the most common. That is making the choice to stay in a context or leave it. This may mean anything from evacuating a country permanently, to making a temporary exit from a city or region due to temporary threats.

But even though this is a relatively common occurrence, it comes with a huge amount of stress – both on the part of the missionary as well as missions leadership. There are also few situations which can cause broken trust and field relationships more easily than a decision handled poorly. It is the wise team, field, or home office leader that approaches this decision thoughtfully and prayerfully.

We will spend an entire episode focusing on leading and following in risk scenarios. But even without that, most of us have probably been through an experience where they have wanted to stay or go and been criticized for their decision, overridden by their leadership, or hurt by how the decision was handled. Relationships, careers, and field dynamics have been harmed because of these types of decisions.

Not only is making the decision to stay or go fraught with stress, however, but so is making the decision when or whether to return.

Staying or Going in Scripture

Even if we turn to Scripture for our answers, we may walk away more confused than ever.

There were times when Jesus withdrew in the face of threats, as in John 11:53-54. Other times he chose to stay in the face of threats as in Luke 13:32.

Paul likewise sometimes fled from threats to his life, sometimes stayed in the face of threats, and sometimes tactically withdrew.

I could go on. While we can draw broad conclusions and principles about staying and going from Scripture. Every risk decision is different, so every decision to stay or go is situational.

Theology of Risk

Staying or going is best approached as part of my personal and organizational Theology of Risk. You will find a link to the AGWM Theology of Risk paper in the show notes, and we are currently working on developing tools to help all of our workers apply this tool to risk decisions.

But in the meantime, we will spend the next several episodes laying a framework for making stay-go decisions in your context.

Now you know.

We'll see you next time.