

Prepare! in 2020

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 09.06.2020

BE BOLD! – ACTS 4:1-22

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

The kingdom of heaven requires us to be bold. God's people are called to "be strong and courageous" (Joshua 1:9). It's an essential part fulfilling God's will in your life, regardless of what obstacles come your way. In boldness, there is no fear, for God will always be on your side. But there is a difference between being naturally and spiritually bold. Natural boldness focuses on one's self. It's the part of our nature, personality, conditioning, education, and the composite of all things that go into making us who and what we are on a natural level. It's the kind of boldness entirely dependent on our sense of worth, our confidence in our abilities, and our drive to achieve, succeed, and remain in control. Spiritual boldness has its source in God alone. It's the kind of boldness that relies on the Holy Spirit to work from within us. It empowers and enables us to achieve God's good and perfect will and it never fails. In this week's lesson, we will take a closer look at how Peter exemplifies spiritual boldness while under the persecution of the Sanhedrin. Let's get in to our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most or spoke to you from Pastor Ray's message this last weekend?
2. Do you naturally find it easy to be bold? Why?
3. Do you spiritually find it easy to be bold? Why?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 4:1-4

Last week, we studied how God demonstrated the authority of the apostles through the healing of a lame man. Peter then proclaimed the gospel and about 5,000 believed. Peter and John were arrested by the captain of the temple as a result of this preaching. The antagonist were the same Jewish leaders who crucified Christ and they were very angry by the message of the resurrection of Jesus. A key principle of the Sadducees was an absolute rejection of the idea of general resurrection. Therefore, Peter and John were taken into custody until the next day, as it was against Jewish law to hold trials at night.

1. Pastor Ray mentioned, "wherever God blesses, Satan shows up to oppose the work of God". Describe a time where God provided a blessing, but then Satan showed up to oppose the work of God. How did this make you feel?
2. How do you boldly confront opposition from the enemy? (EPH. 6:11-20)
3. Scripture says we are a royal priesthood (1 PET. 2:9) and have boldness to enter the presence of God through the blood of Jesus (HEB. 10:19). How does this encourage you?

Boldness means "courageous or confidence". In the Old Testament, only the high priest went into the Most Holy Place and the people were kept at a distance. We are a royal priesthood and told to boldly enter into His presence by the blood of Jesus. God wants us to have the courage and confidence to come into His presence. He cares for us, and if He is on our side, who can be against us? (ROM. 8:31)

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 4:5-12 and PSALM 118:21-22

Peter and John are called to appear before the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin included 71 members and was considered the highest legislative and judicial body in Jerusalem. Although Peter and John were on trial, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, instantly received supernatural boldness and the ability to speak directly to the heart of the matter. Peter preached Jesus, the Jesus they crucified, the Jesus God raised from the dead, and the Jesus who healed this paralyzed man.

1. Peter experienced the filling of the Holy Spirit in ACTS 2:4 (along with other disciples). He was also filled with the Holy Spirit in ACTS 4:8. This was not a one-time event; it was something God wanted to keep doing in their lives. How can we be more open to a continual filling of the Holy Spirit? (ACTS 5:32; LUK. 9:23; ROM. 12:1; LUK. 11:13; MAT. 7:7, 5:6)
2. Peter spoke the truth to the Jewish leaders who crucified Jesus. He referenced a well-known scripture about the rejected Stone that has now become the Cornerstone. (PS. 118:21-22) Jesus is our Cornerstone, for He is higher than the kings of the earth: He is higher than all the opposing powers of wisdom or of superstition; and He is the head over all things to his church (Spurgeon). How does this encourage you?
3. Peter preached boldly to the Jewish Leaders. Pastor Ray stated we should "Be bold, like you mean it!" What does this look like to you? How can you exercise this type of boldness?

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 4:13:22

4. The Jewish leaders could not believe how these uneducated and untrained men could speak with such depth, knowledge, and boldness. It was as if the Sanhedrin said, "These guys are just like Jesus! We thought we solved the Jesus problem when we crucified Him, but now it is worse than ever!" In these trying times of today, what are some tangible ways we can speak with depth, knowledge, and boldness?
5. The Sanhedrin could not deny the miracle of Jesus in the healed lame man. Today, the only Jesus people may see is the Jesus who shines through us. How can the light of Jesus shining through us be more obvious to others?
6. Peter and John were commanded to stop ministering; however, the Sanhedrin was a religious court and not a civil court. Peter and John answered this command and said, "Whatever is right in the sight of God". The religious court could not argue this response. In a day when right is wrong and wrong is right, how can we stand up for what is right in the sight of God?
7. Peter and John also said "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard". What does it mean to speak the things which we have seen and heard? How might this relate to your personal testimony?

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

The Jewish leaders instructed Peter and John to stop ministering and they essentially said "no". As we will see in the next few verses of Acts, this encouraged the church who specifically prayed for boldness. Over the years, opposition did not slow the church down at all, even when faced with persecution to the point of death. In the Western world, Christians rarely face this type of persecution. Satan instead has attacked us with worldliness, selfish pride, a need for acceptance, and status. It is easy to become the "cultural" Christian who compromises faith and conforms to the world; however, it is the bold and uncompromising Christian, the overcomer, filled with the Holy Spirit, who can make a difference in this world and bring glory to God.

1. What are some areas of compromise in your life? Make a bold commitment to overcome these areas of weakness through the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. God is long-suffering with lost sinners. His patience allows time for them to repent (ROM 2:4). How do we boldly, yet patiently be a witness for Christ?

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3. Pastor Ray mentioned the way to reach the masses is by helping the individual. Who is an individual you might boldly, yet patiently reach out to this week?

PRAYER

Lord, we remember the sacrifice that was made on the cross for us. We remember the blood that was shed for our sins. We remember, though our sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Thank you, that we have the honor and privilege to boldly enter into your presence, by the blood of Jesus. Lord, help us to hear what the Spirit is saying and boldly inspire us to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ.

We have boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:19) ...