

The Power of Boldness

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Pastor Jacob Howell – 11.09.2025

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Summary:

- This sermon examines the early church's response to persecution in Acts 4, highlighting the concept of biblical boldness as a spirit-empowered conviction that enables fearless proclamation of the gospel. It emphasizes the importance of prioritizing prayer and unity before action, urging believers to seek God's will rather than trying to change their circumstances. It challenges believers to find their strength in God's sovereignty, understanding struggles as part of their participation in Christ's life and death, and to seek divine empowerment for boldness.

Key Takeaways:

1. Biblical Boldness Defined

Biblical boldness is a spirit-empowered conviction that leads to clarity of purpose and fearless proclamation of divine truth.

2. The Power of Togetherness

The early church's first response to persecution was to gather together in prayer, not to fight alone.

3. Go Spiritual First

Our first step determines our second step. Starting with prayer positions us for God's power rather than worldly solutions.

4. Sovereignty Over Circumstances

The early church focused on God's sovereignty rather than demanding changed circumstances.

5. Boldness is Sought, Not Taught

We receive boldness by asking God to empower us, not by following a formula.

Discussion Questions:

Section 1: Understanding Biblical Boldness

How would you define boldness in your own words? How does that compare to the biblical definitions shared in the sermon?

The sermon mentioned that boldness doesn't always mean being the loudest. Can you think of examples from Scripture or your own life where quiet strength demonstrated boldness?

Read Acts 4:23-31. What strikes you most about the early church's response to persecution?

Section 2: The Power of Community

Why do you think Peter and John's first action was to return to their community rather than handling the situation alone?

The sermon stated: "What we do together affects what we do alone, and what we do when we're alone affects what we do when we're together." How have you experienced this truth in your spiritual life?

What barriers prevent you from sharing your struggles with other believers? How can this group help overcome those barriers?

Section 3: Going Spiritual First

When facing difficulties, what is typically your first response? How does it compare to the early church's response of immediate prayer?

The sermon mentioned that going spiritual first doesn't mean being apathetic about real-world issues. How do we balance spiritual priorities with practical action?

Read Ephesians 6:12. How does recognizing that our struggle is spiritual rather than physical change how we approach conflicts?

Section 4: Sovereignty and Circumstances

The early church prayed about God's sovereignty before asking for help with their situation. Why is this order significant?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-12. Paul describes being "afflicted but not crushed, perplexed but not despairing." Which of these contrasts resonates most with your current situation?

Share a time when you experienced God's power in the midst of difficulty. How did recognizing God's sovereignty help you persevere?

Section 5: Seeking Boldness

The early church prayed, "Enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness" (Acts 4:29). What areas of your life need this kind of empowerment right now?

Why is it significant that they asked God to "enable" them rather than to "teach" them to be bold?

What is one specific way you can seek boldness from God this week?

Practical Applications:

This Week's Challenge: Choose one of the following to practice this week:

1. Option 1: Prayer Partnership

- a. Identify someone in your life facing opposition or difficulty
- b. Commit to praying with them (not just for them) this week
- c. Practice "going spiritual first" together

2. Option 2: Declare God's Sovereignty

- a. Write out a current struggle you're facing
- b. Write a prayer that declares God's sovereignty over that situation before asking for help
- c. Pray this prayer daily

3. Option 3: Seek Boldness

- a. Identify one area where you need boldness (sharing your faith, having a difficult conversation, taking a stand for truth)
- b. Each day this week, specifically ask God to enable you with His boldness
- c. Take one step of action in that area

Closing Reflection:

Memory Verse:

- "Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness." - Acts 4:29

Final Thought:

- Boldness is not about our strength or ability—it's about being filled with God's Spirit and empowered by His presence. This week, let's choose to go spiritual first, seek God's face together, and ask Him to enable us to live with clarity and courage for His glory.

