

Enabled Boldness Began With A Bold Prayer

Acts 4:29-31 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." 31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

A Church Enabled With Boldness

This surge of Enabled Boldness was not just a one-day event, but it continued to be the norm for the church as they forged ahead.

Acts 4:33 With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (great power only comes from the enabling of the Holy Spirit.)

And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all... (this enabling by the Holy Spirit wasn't just for the Apostles, it was available to every church member as well.)

- Others joining the Church, like Saul, were also enabled with the Holy Spirit of boldness.

Acts 9:27-28 But Barnabas... told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. 28 So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.

- Paul and Barnabas waxed bold!

Acts 13:46 Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly (KJV – waxed bold): "We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

- Paul and Barnabas speak boldly In Iconium.

Acts 14:3 So Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to perform signs and wonders.

(Exactly like the prayer the church prayed!)

- Paul preaching boldly in Ephesus.

Acts 19:8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.

- Paul said his imprisonment emboldened the church of Philippi even more!

Philippians 1:14 (NLT) And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message without fear.

- Even in chains, Paul was not ashamed and continued to be bold for Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:20 (NLT) For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die.

- Paul asked the church in Ephesus to pray that he would continue to teach boldly.

Ephesians 6:19-20 And pray for me, too. Ask God to give me the right words so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. 20 I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him, as I should.

- In Christ Jesus, all believers find confidence and boldness.

Ephesians 4:12 (NLT) Because of Christ and our faith in him, we can now come boldly and confidently into God’s presence.

The Boldness Cycle

1. The church boldly prayed, in the face of persecution, to speak boldly the word of truth.
2. The followers of Christ were filled and enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak boldly.
3. They, and every believer to follow, must be obedient and speak the words of truth.

Repeat....

The Acts 4 Boldness Prayer Continues to be Answered As the Enabled Church Walked in Obedience

Acts 5:12 The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon’s Colonnade....

Acts 5:14-16 Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. 15 As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter’s shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by.

16 Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

1) Bold Obedience Often Brings Opposition

Acts 5:17-18 Then the high priest and all his associates, who were members of the party of the Sadducees, were filled with jealousy. 18 They arrested the apostles and put them in the public jail.

This is their 2nd time in jail. They had already been arrested for preaching about Jesus, told to never do it again, but they couldn’t not talk about Jesus.

Acts 4:18-20 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, “Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

*“Not ready to face opposition for your obedience, You’re not ready to be used by God.”
-Craig Groeschel*

2) Bold Obedience Brings About Miracles

Acts 5:19 But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the jail and brought them out.

Notice that the author, Doctor Luke, didn’t make a big deal about the angels and the jail break. It’s almost as if we should just assume and expect miracles as an everyday part of our life when we are walking in obedience.

3) Bold Obedience Always Requires Faith

Acts 5:20 “Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people all about this new life.”

A simple command without a lot of explanation. Go here, tell the people this.

There was no, “if you do this or that, this will happen.”

No promises, just a command that needed quick and immediate obedience. And that’s exactly what they did. **Acts 5:21** **At daybreak they entered the temple courts, as they had been told, and began to teach the people.**

- Not doing what you are told to do is disobedience.
- Delayed obedience is disobedience.
- Partial obedience is disobedience.

The Apostles were found, walking in obedience, boldly speaking the word, and brought back to court.

Acts 5:27-28 **The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. 28** “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,” he said. “Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.”

Acts 5:29 **Peter and the other apostles replied: “We must obey God rather than human beings!**

A Pharisee named Gamaliel gives a persuasive argument on why they should punish the Apostles and let them go and the court agrees.

Acts 5:40-42 **His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.**

41 **The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.**

I wonder what their prayers sounded like as they walked home that day. I bet their prayers went something like this...

Acts 4:29-30 **Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30** **Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”**

The Boldness Cycle Continued, They Never Stopped

1. The church boldly prayed, in the face of persecution, to speak boldly the word of truth.
2. The followers of Christ were filled and enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak boldly.
3. They, and every believer to follow, must be obedient and speak the words of truth.

Acts 5:42 **Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.**

Bold Next Step – Today I will consider if, where, and when did I allow the Boldness Cycle to stop in my life.

- **Am I still asking for boldness to speak?**
- **Am I walking full of the Holy Spirit’s enabling power?**
- **Am I being obedient in speaking the good news of Jesus without stopping?**