

Our theme at Believers Church this year is “Enabled Boldness”. I believe it is time for the church, “Big C” and “Little C”, to rise up and boldly do what God has called us to do. To boldly speak the truth and grace of Christ Jesus, and to boldly live victorious lives in Christ Jesus.

- I’m tired of the beaten down, worn out, and defeated church mentality.
- I’m tired of the lies of the devil that we believe and that fill us with anxiety, stress, and depression.
- I’m tired of culture shaping the church rather than the church shaping our culture.
- I’m tired of what I like to call, for the lack of a better term, “Wimpy Church.com”.

It’s time for the church to be that glorious body of Christ Jesus that we are called to be. To live as Children of God and set the standards that the world will desire to be a part of.

A strong, powerful, attractional church, rather than a weak, pitiful, and dying church.

Enabled Boldness

Our theme is summed up in **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.

The back story of Acts 3-4:

- In the process of going to pray, the Lord healed a crippled man through Peter and John.
- Peter then preached a powerful sermon proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus, the savior, to the astonished group of people, but offended the religious leaders earning Peter and John’s jailing.
- When Peter and John were released, they were threatened and told not to talk about “Jesus” anymore. **Acts 4:17-18**
- This threat led Peter and the church to be different in the way they prayed. **Acts 4:23**

We looked at this prayer in detail in our “Different” series and we will go back to this prayer in more detail later this year. But the main thing we need to gather from this prayer today is that when the church was faced with a difficult, if not impossible situation, they asked the Lord to “Enable” them so that they could do what they were called to do- speak the Word boldly.

This prayer was answered, and enabled boldness came to them by the infilling of the Holy Spirit!

I Can’t Do What You Are Asking Me to Do

Have you ever been asked to do something that you can’t do? It was beyond your abilities?

I believe that what Jesus has asked us to do, is asking us to do, and will continue to ask us to do is almost always beyond our natural ability to pull off. This seems to be something that Jesus likes to do. Look at what Jesus told His disciples and us, as his disciples, as well.

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

John 14:12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

How were the disciples going to do the works of Jesus, much less greater things?

How are we supposed to do these things?

Jesus didn’t expect them to do this with their own power and ability. They would need more.

Acts 1:4-5 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about.

5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Later, the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2:1-4 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. **3** They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4** All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as **the Spirit enabled them**. They were enabled by the Holy Spirit!

Even after Jesus commissioned His disciples, He instructed them to wait and not attempt anything in their own power and strength, but to first be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

We need more than our own strength, abilities, and talents. We need more than our own boldness... We need to be enabled with the boldness of the Holy Spirit.

Peter's Transformation to Enabled Boldness

How did Peter go from a fisherman and the disciple who denied Jesus three times, to a bold Apostle?

- Peter Was Baptized in the Holy Spirit's Enabling Power **Acts 2:1-4**
- Peter Stood Up with Boldness! **Acts 2:14** Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.
We must stand up in the power of the Holy Spirit, stand up in boldness, stand up with courage, stand up in a dark world, stand up in persecutions and sufferings, and stand up for the truth.
- Peter Writes to Remind Us... **His divine power** (the power of the Holy Spirit) **has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.** **2 Peter 1:3** Through the power of the Holy Spirit, you've got everything you need to live a godly, enabled with boldness life.

Filled With the Holy Spirit and Boldness

Acts 4:31 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.

The early church immediately got what they prayed for... BOLDNESS!

Now, they still had to do their part and keep speaking the Word! The one thing that the religious leaders had concluded would stop the Gospel from spreading was for the church to stop speaking the words of truth. **Acts 4:17** “...warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name.”

This is still the mindset of the world today, “If we can just cause the church to cower down in fear and stop speaking the truth, we can infiltrate society with our lies and deceptions.”

Therefore, church, we must be enabled with boldness, and then take action to speak to the truth!

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 4:32-35 All the believers were one in heart and mind. (the supernatural unity that only comes from the enabling of the Holy Spirit.) **No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had.** (the supernatural generosity that only comes from the enabling of the Holy Spirit.) **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, but for every church member as well.)

As We Speak...Confirm the Bold Word of Truth

Acts 4:29-30 29 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 Apostles' Words Were Confirmed With Healings, Signs, and Wonders

Acts 5:12-16 12 The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. 13 No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. 14 Nevertheless, more and more men 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.

Non-Apostles' Words Were Confirmed With Healings, Signs, and Wonders

Acts 8:4-8 Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. 5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. 6 When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. 7 For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. 8 So there was great joy in that city.

The result of enabled boldness and actively speaking the truth? Salvations, Healings, Signs and Wonders, and Great Joy in the City!

We Can Do What We Are Called To Do Through Enabling Power

Acts 4:29-30 29 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."**

Acts 2:22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which **God did among you **through him**, as you yourselves know.**

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things **through Christ who strengthens me.**

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

Bold Next Step: I will memorize, think about, and pray Acts 4:29-31.

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