

ACTS SERIES –

Neil launched us off last week by looking at the day of Pentecost. All the disciples were all together waiting for the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:2-4

² Suddenly they heard the sound of a violent blast of wind^(b) rushing into the house^(c) from out of the heavenly realm. The roar of the wind was so overpowering it was all anyone could bear! ³ Then all at once a pillar of fire appeared before their eyes.^(d) It separated into tongues of fire that engulfed^(e) each one of them. ⁴ They were all filled and equipped^(f) with the Holy Spirit and were inspired^(g) to speak in tongues—empowered by the Spirit to speak in languages they had never learned!

This is an entrance, It wasn't meek and mild, God was releasing his power, The Holy Spirit and arrived.

STORY: When I was filled with the Holy Spirit for the first time

There is something that happens when we are filled with the Holy Spirit. It's Gods power dwelling within us.

STORY: I remember being at school once and there was this guy was just hurling insults at me and tuning me. At the time I felt so defeated and almost felt like I couldn't move. But then from around the corner, BRUCE appeared. Bruce was the first team rugby captian (Who captained a side that sadly didn't win any matches in that year) Jokes aside, if there was one thing about BRUCE, he was big and mean-looking. You see I was friends with Bruce. And as Bruce started walking towards this guy, A BOLDNESS suddenly came on me!

Today we're going to be looking at BOLDNESS

Let's read from Acts 2:14

Peter Addresses the Crowd

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. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

¹⁷ "In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,

*I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.*

¹⁹ *I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

²⁰ *The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*

²¹ *And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.^[c]*

³⁷ *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”*

³⁸ *Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*

⁴⁰ *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day*

- **Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit.** He had been empowered.
 - He stands up, and shouts out to the crowd. People aren't quite sure what's just happened...The Spirit has been released and hand of God is moving. Peter knows exactly what has taken place, and the Spirit leads him to preach boldly and announce what had just happened
 - Have you ever wondered what would have happened if Peter didn't get up and speak? Peter knew he had to speak, He was empowered to do so.
- ⇒ **How badly do you desire to speak more boldly for Jesus?** Do you want it enough to ask, to seek and knock, to not give up until we encounter the Spirit. Or if we're honest, would we rather just keep wishing that we were bolder – admiring bold people, talking about our struggles with our fear of man, and settling for a comfortable life and letting our fear go unchallenged.

STORY: When we went to Greece earlier this year to hand out Bibles, I remember us arriving at the first town on the first day, our car boot filled with Bibles. And they send you out into these rural villages.

And I had this thought. ..What on earth am I doing so far away from home, walking through towns where most people can't speak a Word of English, handing out Bibles. Every day we had to surrender our will to the Holy Spirit, and as we prayed and started walking through these towns, a boldness began to hit us.

So how do we understand boldness better? Here are some pointers..

1) JESUS BROUGHT BOLDNESS

From the start of his ministry, Jesus boldly sets out on a 40 day fast, he boldly calls his disciples telling them to follow him. He boldly preached to the crowds, and healed people. He drove out demons and boldly raised the dead.

Ephesians 3:12

In Christ, "we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith" to God our Father

God is completely for us

Romans 8:31-32

If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

- Jesus didn't die so that we can be fearful and timid, No he died to give us confidence and boldness.
- The Holy Spirit didn't come timidly on the day of Pentecost. It was a forceful entry, a powerful entry, and statement of boldness!

Jesus went to the cross boldly for us

Tim Keller says it like this:

You are more wicked than you ever dared believe and you're more loved and affirmed than you ever dared hope at the same time because your relationship with God through Jesus Christ is based completely and sheerly on his grace, on his call, then it means you can't be into either superiority or inferiority at all, because at the same moment you have infinite self-worth from his affirmation and you have infinite realism about your sin.

You can't get an inferiority or superiority. There is a boldness and a humility about you at once. It is absolutely different.

⇒ Jesus Changed everything. He brought in Grace, and defeated Sin, Its' His presence that reminds us of what are we without Him.

2) THE SPIRIT EMPOWERS BOLDNESS

Let's read from Acts 4

Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin

4 The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. ² They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. ³ They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. ⁴ But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

⁵ The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. ⁶ Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. ⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹ If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰ then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. ¹¹ Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone."^[a]

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

¹³ When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. ¹⁵ So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ¹⁶ "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

¹⁸ 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."

²¹ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

⇒ **This is the same Peter who denied Jesus 3 times**, fearing for his life. Surely the Holy Spirit was upon him. Along with John, Declaring Gods Word boldly.

I want to speak into a mis-perception quickly...

⇒ **Boldness is not a personality trait**, a soft-spoken quieter person can be bold at a time when a typically more extraverted person may be quiet.

⇒ **Boldness requires 3 things: Spirit empowered conviction, Courage, and Urgency**

These 3 things are key. If one of them is missing, we won't act boldly. Think about it

- If there isn't sufficient conviction, what's there to be bold about?

- Without Courage we don't have enough strength to act boldly
- Without the sense of urgency, we won't take the opportunity in the moment

How do we know when to act boldly?

Well, do you feel the Spirit on you?

Do you feel convicted?

Do you sense an urgency to mention something.

Often it's a bit out of the ordinary?

It may be to share a word with someone, or simply to ask someone a question, or to Dance or Sing prophetically.

⇒ It's about learning to know the authority and power that is in You Because God lives in you.

⇒ Sometimes I just know I need to share something up front, sometimes I just know I need to share a word with someone.

STORY:

Sometimes when I preach, I feel a particular anointing and authority on me, I can't always explain it, but at times I feel empowered. Its knowing when to act on that.

Sometimes in worship, the anointing can come through as specific instrument as someone plays it. It's about discerning when these moments are.

⇒ We need to learn to acknowledge when the Spirit of God is on us and is prompting us into action, and then be obedient to that.

⇒ The Spirit empowers boldness

3) PRAY FOR BOLDNESS

Check from verse 23..

The Believers Pray

²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God..

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.

Boldness is not a given. Paul asked the Ephesians to pray that he would declare the gospel boldly. Boldness, is not an option for us, but it's also not a given. We need to pray for it.

4) ACT OUT BOLDNESS

If we look, Acts is full of instances where boldness was given in situations where there's no doubt the speakers were tempted with fear: I'm just going to read these out...

- *In Antioch Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas “spoke out boldly” when the Jews publicly reviled them (Acts 13:46).*
- *In Iconium, they were also vigorously opposed, “so they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord” (Acts 14:3).*
- *In Ephesus, Apollos spoke “boldly in the synagogue” (Acts 18:26).*
- *In Ephesus, Paul taught in the synagogue “and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8).*
- *In Caesarea, when Paul was imprisoned, he spoke “boldly” to King Agrippa (Acts 26:26).*
- *And the last thing we know about Paul is that, while under house arrest in Rome, he went on “proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance” (Acts 28:31).*

An author by the name of Jon bloom says it like this:

Yes, we should pray to be filled with the Spirit. But when boldness is needed in fearful situations, and we act in spite of sweaty palms and pounding hearts, Jesus promises to fill our mouths by the Spirit (Matthew 10:20). And so we act the miracle.

STORY OF CHARLES FINNEY

An American revivalist who lived in the 19th Century

Read from book.

CLOSE

In 2018, we have much to be bold about when it comes to our faith. We live in a society that celebrates tolerance and relevance at any cost. Where some mindsets don't make way for miracles and signs and wonders

What would happen if we acted with **Spirit empowered conviction, courage and urgency**

- I believe we would see for people set free
- We would see more healings
- More deliverances
- More people being provided for
- We would see shop workers being ministered to
- Waitrons being blessed
- Our work colleagues being touched
- People healed on the streets
- Our families will feel loved – boldness in the home to share what God is saying
- Words of knowledge being shared
- Prophetic words being shared in a service

⇒ Why is it that we can sometimes be bold in church, but fearful in society. This will only change when we know our father, when we hold in balance the tension of knowing that we're a dirty sinner, but yet we have been declared righteous.

⇒ Gods Kingdom only advances through bold obedience.

⇒ So where are you this morning? Have you been acting out boldly and courageously, or have you been timid, and held back. Boldness doesn't react, it takes ground

How would our valley look if the boldness of God flowed through us all? Imagine the testimonies, the healings, the salvations. It needs to go beyond our comfort zones. Are you available. Are we saying :Lord, Here I am

Bill Johnson, says this:

"I can't afford to live in reaction to darkness. If I do, darkness has had a role in setting the agenda for my life. The devil is not worthy of such influence, even in the negative. Jesus lived in response to the Father. I must learn to do the same."

⇒ Let's live in response to the father
It starts by being filled with the Spirit

Sometimes there's a need to pray and lay hands to impart the Spirit. As we close with a song, we're going to open up a time for anyone who wants prayer to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

If you know you desire more and want prayer to be filled, come up.

Acts 2:2-4

Acts 2:14-21, 37-41

Ephesians 3:12

Romans 8:31-32

Acts 4:1-21

Acts 4:23-23, 31