THE COURAGEOUS BOLDNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
Taking the trip from fear to boldness in Christ
“Life in the Spirit”

Introduction

Last week a key truth was shared. With the release of the Holy Spirit comes responsibility from the Holy Spirit. With the release of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 comes the responsibility from the Holy Spirit in Acts 3. And what is that responsibility? It is to bring healing in the name and power of Jesus Christ to a hurting, broken, and sin sick world. We are to follow in the footsteps of our Savior Jesus being led by the Holy Spirit. We are through personal contact, pray fully listening to the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the name of Jesus who gives forgiveness of sin, life and salvation to all who trust in him as their Lord and Savior.

Even though Jesus has returned to heaven, He is still alive! He has come to live in us by the Holy Spirit. Now He is ready to do through us what He did among us in His earthly ministry. The power of God we witnessed in Jesus is now available to us.

So today as we continue our series “Life in the Spirit” we see the courageous boldness of the Holy Spirit in the life of Peter and John. In Acts 4 Peter and John are before the Jewish ruling council because of the healing of the man who was lame since birth. What do we mean by boldness? Here is a definition: “The display of inner courage and confidence in the face of outward difficulty and danger.” God wants for our life and for this church this courage and confidence in the face of difficulty and danger.

As we look at the first verses of Acts 4 Peter and John had every reason to be afraid. Here were two Galilean fishermen standing before the most powerful authority figures in Israel. Here were people hostile, angry, and ready to eat these two alive.

But what we see is not fear but a display of courage, boldness and confidence. Where did this come from? Here were two ordinary people like us. How did they live the kind of life where they were victorious over fear and have a great confidence and courage?

Here’s how it happened. God had given them six great gifts and because they chose to use these gifts and live them out, they went from fear to boldness by the power of the Holy Spirit.

I. The filling of the Holy Spirit (v. 8)

We read in verse 8 that Peter filled with the Holy Spirit speaks. When the status quo that we are so comfortable with starts to slip away and when God starts pushing us in a new direction in our life so that fear starts welling up in us, the
Holy Spirt is the one to cast our fear and give courage and confidence. That is what we see in Peter. That’s what caused Peter to be bold and confident.

Look at John 14 where Jesus is speaking and says “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth.” That word Counselor in the Greek is an ancient warrior word. Roman soldiers went into battle with a partner so that in the heat of battle each soldier would be protected and fight for one another. This battle partner was called your counselor.

Jesus is saying we are not sent out by him to fight the good fight of faith all by ourselves. The Holy Spirit is your counselor, he is our battle partner. This is what the filling of the Holy Spirit is all about. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means we stop relying on our self, our own sufficiency and resources, but rely on the power and resources of the Holy Spirit in our life.

And this filling of the Holy Spirit is not a onetime thing, but a 24/7 life style. We all have places in our life where we have gone back to relying on our self-sufficiency. Yielding to the Holy Spirit is a way of life for the child of God. Self will fail all the time. Only in the power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Jesus name can we conquer fear.

II. The power of Jesus name (vs. 9-11)

Peter and John after the healing were seized, incarcerated, threatened, and intimidated. These are the weapon of the world, weapon of the evil one. But followers of Jesus have completely different weapons. Look at II Corinthians 10:3-4. It says that even though we live in the world we do not wage war as the world does. We use different weapons and these weapons have divine power to demolish strongholds.

Peter responded with the greatest weapon in the arsenal of the child of God, the name of Jesus Christ. Not as some magical incantation. The name of Jesus is the authority of Jesus Christ, the power of Jesus Christ over sin, death, Satan, and every circumstance of life we might encounter. The Holy Spirit living in us brings this power to our lives and in turn brings victory over fear. We see it in Peter and God desires that same gift be in and used by us.

III. The conviction that only Jesus saves (v.12)

Peter goes on and says that salvation is found in no one else for there is no other name under heaven given to man whereby we can be saved. That word salvation in the Greek is Soteria. This word means the undeserved, unmerited, unearned divine deliverance that God gives to people who trust in Jesus. Soteria delivers us from sin, Satan, and the power of death. Salvation, Soteria is God moving and working in our life. It means life with God today, His presence and power each day and it means life forever in heaven for tomorrow. This is salvation. This confidence
and conviction and certainty is found in Jesus alone. Look at John 14 which says very clearly the He (Jesus) is the only way, the only truth, and the only life. No one will get to the Father except through Him.

There’s the story of an elderly man driving home one night on the interstate. He probably should not have been driving but he was. His cell phone rang and it was his wife. She said, Herman be careful the radio said a car was driving the wrong way on the interstate. Herman responded, Thelma, not just one car and they all are driving the wrong way.

When you have the conviction that Jesus is the only way, you have a fervency and compassion of heart because you realize people’s eternity is on the line. That is why Peter shared the truth in love about Jesus who died and rose again and who through the power of the Holy Spirit heal this lame man. It is that conviction that gave boldness and confidence to Peter and John and it will too us also.

IV. The intimacy of closeness to Christ (vs. 13-14)

The leaders saw the courage of these two men and were astonished. They also took note that these men had been with Jesus. Closeness and companionship with Christ leads to courage and confidence from Christ. What I am talking about is the Christ captivated life. This happens when there is a commitment to be close to Jesus, spent time with Jesus, to hear from Jesus and let Jesus lead. That’s being captivated.

One way to do that is daily devotional time perhaps using Portals of Prayer. If you don’t have one take the one in front of you in the hymn book rack. But know captivated means a 24/7 way of life where every moment of the day we are open to Jesus leading and directing. It is referencing all that takes place in our life to Jesus and what he desires for our life. That’s intimacy of closeness to Christ. And when you have that fear fades and courage and confidence rises.

V. The presence of adversity (vs.15-22)

In this section the rulers and leader order Peter and John to stop speaking about Jesus. Peter responded that they needed to obey God rather than men for he goes on saying we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard. You know if I were God, and thank goodness I am, and I saw someone wrestling with a fear provoking situation, I’d consider lightening up a little. I’d want to help them chill out and relax a bit. But God sees fear in life and loves us too much to let us live with that fear. He brings fear closer to us so that we will deal with it. He does it so we will despair of our own power and lean more on Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit, and experience in a new way the filling of the Holy Spirit, the power of Jesus name, the conviction that only Jesus saves, and the closeness of Christ. Adversity brings us closer to Christ and in turn gives greater confidence
and courage. We then know again that if Christ is for us, who can be against us. For as it says in Romans 8 He who did not spare His own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also along with Christ give us all things.

When God permits adversity in our life like he did with Peter and John, don’t moan and groan about it. Start letting God do what he wants to do through the power of the Holy Spirit.

VI. The **practice** of prayer (vs. 23-31)

When Peter and John were released they went back to the group of Christ followers and shared all that happened. The whole group raised their voices together in prayer. They prayed Lord consider the threats from these rulers and leaders and enable your servants, us, to speak your word with great boldness. In the face of fear these followers did not hide, they didn’t hunker down, run away, but they stood up and started to pray. And what did they pray for. They asked the Holy Spirit to work through them and manifest himself through them as they served God.

In the practice of prayer there is great power. When we pray the Holy Spirit moves in a way that enables us to break though fear and move to courage, boldness, and confidence in Jesus. He did it then and will do it today for He is the same God yesterday, today, and forever.

Conclusion

You and I as God’s people today live in a world that is hostile to God and the church. But God calls us out of fear into a new courage and confidence in our life. At a time when great transition is taking place at First Good, God is calling us out of fear and into a new courage and boldness. He is calling us to not rely on our self and our own sufficiency but to let God work in our life with the continued filling of the Holy Spirit, the power of Jesus name, conviction Jesus only saves, closeness and intimacy with Jesus, the presence of adversity, and the practice of prayer.

When we do this we will have and live in a courage and boldness of the Holy Spirit for our ministry together and in our life.