

Acts 4:13 (KJV)

13 Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

2 Peter 3:9b

9b [God is] not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

God chooses to use His church to fulfill this desire.

Romans 10:13-15

13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

- The missing link between God's salvation message and a lost world is **someone who is willing to go preach** the gospel. It's no wonder that God said this in verse 15:

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, **How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!**

God wants to use His church to fulfill His will - that all should come to repentance.

All through the Bible we are called and commanded to be **WITNESSES**.

Similar to worship, often times Christians look at verses about witnessing as **options** or **suggestions** rather than as **commands**.

Let me remind us that witnessing to lost souls is not an option or a suggestion, but we have been mandated by God to reach into the darkness of this world and share the message of Jesus with sinners! It is a command.

Mark 16:15-16

15 And he said unto them, **Go** ye into all the world, and **preach** the gospel to every creature.

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Matthew 28:18-19

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 **Go** ye therefore, and **teach** all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

The command is consistent ... GO! Go preach, go teach, go baptize ... go be a witness in this world!

How many have received the Holy Ghost?

When God filled you with the Holy Ghost, it was for a purpose. It wasn't just to keep you holy, to get you into Heaven, or to help you live above sin. The Holy Ghost does that, but the primary reason that God filled you with His Spirit was so that you could be empowered to be a witness!

Acts 1:8

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: **and ye shall be witnesses**

If you have been filled with the Holy Ghost, you have all the power you need to go and turn your world upside down with the Gospel!

So we know our mandate. We are to be witnesses!

I feel, however, that there is a missing ingredient which stifles our witness.

We have everything that the early church had. We have the Holy Ghost, we have the scripture, we have the gospel, we have the name, we have the blood, etc.

But it seems that there is a discrepancy between the results that they got and the results we get.

I feel that the missing ingredient is **BOLDNESS**.

The early church apostles preached and reached with **BOLDNESS**.

The last verse in the book of Acts describes the ministry of Paul.

Acts 28:31

31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all **confidence**, no man forbidding him.

When Paul preached about Jesus, he preached with all **confidence**. That is the Greek word "PARRHESIA" which is the same word as **BOLD** elsewhere in scripture.

He preached with **BOLDNESS**, and no man could forbid him!

Paul was a powerful witness for God. He preached the Word and didn't care who didn't like it. Paul was **BOLD** for God.

That's why Paul was able to say:

Romans 1:16

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Paul was **BOLD**, and Paul saw results.

Acts 4:1-12 (NKJV)

1 Now as they (Peter and John) spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

- Even though the preachers got taken away, there was still around 5000 people (plus women and children) that responded to the preaching and were saved!

5 And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,

6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, “By what power or by what name have you done this?”

- The following is Peter’s response **after being in jail for a night**. He didn’t back down from his message at all.
- We are sometimes questioned about our faith and we cower. We’re asked, “Why do you do this or that?” and we downplay our answers.
- But for Peter, these people had just thrown him in jail. These people could take his life. But he never backed down.

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

9 If we this day are judged for a good deed *done* to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,

- Just the day before, Peter and John were walking to the temple, and there was a crippled man laying at the gate called Beautiful. Remember the story? He was begging for alms (money) and Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none, but such that I have give I unto you. In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk.”

10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.

12 Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

Remember who he’s talking to. He’s talking to the ones who killed Jesus. They weren’t just neutral toward Jesus, they were outright hostile toward Him. But Peter’s audience didn’t deter or dilute his message. Peter still stood up and **BOLDLY** declared the truth!

The healing was done in the name of Jesus, and furthermore only through the name of Jesus can you be saved!

The apostles were not ashamed of Jesus. They **BOLDLY** declared Jesus’ name! It could have led to further punishment, more jail time, or potentially even death, but they didn’t care. They were **BOLD!**

Acts 4:13 (KJV)

13 Now when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

Those that looked on saw three things:

1. Peter and John were **BOLD**.
 2. They were both ordinary men.
- You do not need to be a scholar or a theologian in order to be a **BOLD** witness for God! Peter and John were just ordinary men. You can be an ordinary person with no pedigree and limited knowledge, you can have an introverted, soft-spoken and shy personality and still be **BOLD** for God!
3. They could tell that they had been with Jesus.

The religious leaders could tell that the apostles had been with Jesus because of their **BOLDNESS**. You can take whatever you want from that verse, but you know what that says to me? If you've truly been with Jesus, it will make you **BOLD**.

BOLDNESS is the key to show this world that what we have is real. If we will get **BOLD** in our witness, it will help people see Jesus!

All of that is powerful, but you know what I like even more? After the religious leaders let Peter and John go, they gathered with other apostles, filled them in on what happened, and then verse 24 says they started to pray. Look at what they prayed for:

Acts 4:29-31

29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all **BOLDNESS** they may speak thy word,

30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

- The apostles prayed for more **BOLDNESS**. And God granted their request because in the next verse we read:

31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with **BOLDNESS**.

What they prayed for, God granted.

God desires for His church to be **BOLD!**

Let me encourage someone today. I know you go to schools and jobs that are ungodly. I know you are around atheists, agnostics and just plain worldly people that snub the Bible and mock you for what you believe. But if you will stand up in spite of all the opposition and be **BOLD** for God, it will amaze all your critics and astonish all the naysayers. The Bible says that the people marveled at their **BOLDNESS** and could tell they had been with Jesus!!

We are going to conclude this service by doing what those early-church believers did. We are going to pray that God will baptize us with a **BOLDNESS** in the Holy Ghost. A **BOLDNESS** in prayer, a **BOLDNESS** in worship, and a **BOLDNESS** in witness.