

## Brave Heart or Tender Heart

Week of February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Study by Wayne Arcand

This Life Group study will support the message brought by Elder Mike Tulloch on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

It is easy to appear to be bold when there is no risk, but how bold do we feel when in a public setting or faced with opposition? Where does this boldness come from when we are able to speak the truth bravely but with a tender heart?

In Part 1 of this study, we will examine the source of the opposition Peter and John experienced, and the source of the power that allowed them to speak the truth with boldness. We will also see the rewards of stepping out in faith and allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to work in us and through us.

In Part 2, we will consider how to share the truth of the gospel message with a tender heart.

### Part 1: A Brave Heart:

**Bravery definition** (Merriam-Webster) - the quality or state of having or showing mental or moral strength to face danger, fear, or difficulty.

Start this study by discussing what it means to be brave and some of the challenges we face that calls for bravery on our part.

1. Read *Matthew 10:16-20*: <sup>16</sup>“I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. <sup>17</sup>Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. <sup>18</sup>On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup>But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, <sup>20</sup>for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.
  - a. What did Jesus tell his disciples would happen to them?
  - b. What comfort and encouragement did he give them?
  - c. Consider the sequence of events in these verses:
    - i. What did the disciples have to do?
    - ii. What did the Spirit do as a result?
    - iii. Is there a principle in these verses that apply to the life of a believer today?
      1. Discuss how we can live out this principle and the impact it could have in our lives and on those the Lord brings across our path.

### *Acts 4: (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup>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. <sup>2</sup>They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. <sup>3</sup>They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. <sup>4</sup>But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

<sup>5</sup>The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. <sup>6</sup>Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. <sup>7</sup>They had Peter

*and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"*

*<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! <sup>9</sup> 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, <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> Jesus is 'the stone you builders rejected which has become the cornerstone.'*

*<sup>12</sup> Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." <sup>13</sup> 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.*

2. Acts 4:1-13: To fully understand the courage that Peter and John showed in teaching the people, we need an understanding of who the Sadducees were, the power they wielded, and their position on Jesus. The Sadducees and the Pharisees were two of the major parties of the Jewish high council. They rejected the authority of the Bible beyond the five books of Moses, Genesis to Deuteronomy and they denied the resurrection. They were powerful groups and did not want anything including, some upstart sect proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus to erode their power base.
  - a. Considering that the chief priests and religious leaders were responsible for stirring the people up and this resulted in the crucifixion of their friend Jesus, what do you think would have been going through the minds of Peter and John when they were arrested?
  - b. Discuss how the words of Jesus to his disciples in Matthew 10:16-20 were demonstrated in Acts 4:1-12?
  - c. What was the source of Peter's courage and power?
    - i. Discuss what Peter had to do to receive the source of power?
3. Consider verse 13:
  - a. What do we learn about Peter and John?
  - b. What were they able to do despite what they lacked?
  - c. What was the source of their knowledge?
  - d. What is the source of our knowledge?
4. To summarize Part 1 of this study:
  - a. What do we need to do?
  - b. What will God do?
  - c. Do we have the courage to take that step of faith?

## Part 2: A Tender Heart:

1. What character traits do you think of when you think of someone who has a tender heart? Is there someone who immediately comes to mind when you think of a tender-hearted person?

*1 Peter 3:<sup>8</sup> Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.*

There are many characteristics of a tender-hearted person in verse 8. We will have a look at each phrase.

2. Who is Peter referring to when he addresses this comment to “all of you”? (See 1 Peter 1:1 for confirmation of your answer) Note that the phrase all of you would suggest that there are no exceptions.
  - a. The writer tells us we are, “be like-minded”. In what ways are we to be like-minded – give examples? See Philippians 2:2.
    - i. Why is it important to be like-minded?
  - b. What does it mean to be sympathetic? How do we demonstrate this in our relationship to others?
  - c. We are to ‘love one another’. How? See 1 John 3:17,18. What is it that demonstrates our love for one another. What are some practical ways that you can demonstrate love for one another?
  - d. We are to be compassionate and humble.
    - i. What is the difference between being compassionate and being sympathetic?
    - ii. See Ephesians 4:32. Read this verse also in the New King James Version if you can. What is ‘compassion’ equated to in the NKJV?
    - iii. Read Philippians 2:1-8. Based on these verses, what does true humility look like?
      1. How is true humility demonstrated in a person with a tender heart?

#### For Reflection:

We are often less concerned about taking a physical risk than taking an emotional risk. We might be less concerned about a physical injury than about what someone would think or say if we were to share Jesus with someone. Part of the reluctance to share what Jesus means to us and could mean the person we would like to share with is we are not sure what to say. I would challenge you to write out your story and how you would share what it means to have a personal saviour. The very act of writing it out will help clarify your thoughts. And then pray. Pray that you would experience the power of the Holy Spirit and share the love of Jesus with bravery, but also with a tenderness of heart that would be an encouragement to the listener.

#### *1 Peter 3:15*

##### *New International Version*

<sup>15</sup> *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,*

#### *1 Corinthians 16:13*

##### *New International Version*

<sup>13</sup> *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.*

#### *Ephesians 4:32*

##### *New International Version*

<sup>32</sup> *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*