

Summary

This sermon, titled 'Bold as a Lion,' uses the lion as a symbol of boldness to challenge believers to live with confidence in their identity as followers of Christ. The pastor begins by grounding the message in Proverbs 28:1, which states that the righteous are as bold as a lion, and then spends significant time establishing what it means to truly be righteous. He makes clear that righteousness is not something we achieve through good deeds or moral effort, but something we receive through faith in Jesus Christ. Using the framework of Spirit, soul, and body, He explains the difference between justification (the moment of salvation, when the 'switch is flipped') and sanctification (the ongoing process of spiritual growth, or 'turning the knob'), warning that sanctification without justification still leads to eternal separation from God. With that foundation in place, the pastor draws on the nature of the lion to illustrate three qualities every believer should embody: knowing who they are, not being afraid to roar, and refusing to be intimidated. Just as a lion walks with confidence because it knows its place in the animal kingdom, Christians can walk boldly because they belong to the King of Kings. The sermon closes with a call to action, urging listeners to pray for boldness like the early church did in Acts 4, to spend time with Jesus, and to let their transformed lives be a witness to those around them.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today grateful for the gift of Your Son and the righteousness that is ours through Him alone. As we open Your Word together, we ask that You quiet our minds and soften our hearts. Remove any distractions, any pride, and any walls that might keep us from hearing what You want to say to us today. Holy Spirit, lead this conversation. Show each of us where we need to grow, where we need courage, and where we need to simply trust You more. May everything we discuss today draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is an animal that you think best describes your personality, and why?

Key Verses

- Proverbs 28:1
- Romans 5:12
- Ephesians 2:1-2
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Hebrews 4:16
- Acts 4:29
- Titus 3:5

Questions

- The pastor described two categories of people: the wicked and the righteous. How does that framing challenge or change the way you typically think about yourself and the people around you?
- He said, 'I am righteous not because of who I am, but because of whose I am.' What does that statement mean to you personally, and how does it affect the way you approach God?
- The sermon used the image of a light switch versus a dimmer knob to explain the difference between justification and sanctification. Can you describe that difference in your own words? Why does it matter?
- Matthew 7:21-23 describes people who did miraculous things in Jesus' name but were told 'I never knew you.' What do you think it looks like to do religious activity without truly knowing Jesus? Have you ever seen that in your own life?
- The pastor said that sanctification without justification still leads to hell. Why do you think so many people rely on good behavior or religious effort rather than a personal relationship with Jesus?
- The lion knows who it is and walks with confidence because of that identity. In what areas of your faith do you struggle to walk with that same kind of confidence? What holds you back?
- The early church in Acts 4 prayed for boldness rather than protection. How does that prayer challenge the way you typically pray when you face opposition or fear?
- The pastor said that the people around us, our coworkers, our family, and our friends, depend on our boldness. Who in your life needs you to be bolder in sharing your faith, and what is one step you could take toward that this week?

Life Application

This week, identify one situation where you have been holding back out of fear of what others might think, whether that is praying before a meal in public, sharing your faith with a coworker, or speaking up about what you believe. Commit to stepping into that moment with boldness. Before you do, spend intentional time in prayer asking God to fill you with the same boldness the early church prayed for in Acts 4. Write down what happens and bring it back to share with your group next week.

Key Takeaways

- Righteousness is not something we achieve through good works or moral effort. It is something we receive through faith in Jesus Christ, and it is the only foundation for true boldness.
- There is a critical difference between justification (flipping the switch, the moment of salvation) and sanctification (turning the knob, the ongoing process of growth). Sanctification without justification does not lead to heaven.
- The lion is bold because it knows who it is. Christians can walk with the same confidence when they truly understand their identity as children of the King of Kings.
- Boldness is not optional for believers. The early church prayed for it, and the people in our lives depend on us having it.
- Spending time with Jesus is the source of genuine boldness. As Acts 4 shows, others will recognize that you have been with Him, and that recognition comes from a life of real relationship, not just religious activity.

Ending Prayer

Lord, thank You for this time together and for the truth of Your Word. Thank You that our righteousness does not depend on what we have done, but on what You did on the cross. We ask that You help each of us leave today with a clearer understanding of who we are in You. Where the switch has not yet been flipped, we pray for the courage to surrender fully. Where we have been turning the knob but holding back, draw us into deeper relationship with You. And Lord, give us boldness. Boldness to pray, to speak, to live, and to love in a way that points

everyone around us to You. May we walk like the righteous, confident in whose we are, unafraid to roar. In the mighty name of Jesus, amen.