

Summary

This sermon, drawn from Acts 4:1-22, explores the nature of true Christian boldness. The pastor unpacks the story of Peter and John, who were arrested after healing a lame man and preaching the resurrection of Jesus. When brought before the temple leaders, they spoke with remarkable courage, declaring that salvation is found in no one else but Jesus Christ. The key insight is that their boldness did not come from personal confidence or education, but from being filled with the Holy Spirit and from spending consistent time with Jesus. The pastor challenges the congregation to distinguish between worldly boldness and Christian boldness. True Christian boldness is acting by the power of the Holy Spirit on an urgent conviction in the face of some threat. Using the historical example of Polycarp, who died rather than deny Christ, the sermon calls believers to a life of courageous faith, whether that means praying with family, opening a Bible at lunch, redirecting gossip, or standing firm when it costs everything. The call to action is simple: start each day by asking God to fill you with His Spirit and commit to spending daily time with Jesus.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today grateful for Your Word and for the example of those who have gone before us in bold faith. As we open our hearts to discuss what it means to live courageously for You, we ask that You fill each person in this group with Your Holy Spirit. Remove any distractions, any fear, or any pride that might keep us from hearing what You want to say to us today. May this time together draw us closer to You and to one another. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing you have done in your life that took a lot of courage, even if it seems small to others?

Key Verses

- Acts 4:8
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 4:13
- Acts 4:19-20

- Ephesians 5:18

Questions

- The sermon defines boldness as 'acting by the power of the Holy Spirit on an urgent conviction in the face of some threat.' How does this definition differ from how the world typically defines boldness?
- Peter and John were described as 'uneducated common men,' yet the leaders could tell they had been with Jesus. What do you think it looks like in everyday life for people to be able to tell that someone has spent time with Jesus?
- The pastor distinguishes between the Holy Spirit dwelling in a believer and being filled with the Holy Spirit. What is the difference, and why does that distinction matter for how we live day to day?
- The pastor suggests starting each morning by asking God to fill you with His Spirit. How do you currently begin your day, and what would it look like to make that simple prayer a regular habit?
- Peter and John faced real fear, yet they still acted boldly. Can you think of a time when you felt afraid but still chose to obey God? What happened, and what did you learn from it?
- The story of Polycarp is a powerful example of boldness in the face of death. While most of us may never face that extreme, what are some everyday situations where speaking or living for Christ feels risky or uncomfortable?
- The pastor says that sometimes we are so bound by fear that we cannot even bring up the name of Jesus in a civil conversation with people who love us. Why do you think fear of social rejection can be such a powerful barrier to boldness, and how can we overcome it?
- The sermon closes with a reminder that there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. How does keeping that truth at the center of your life motivate you to live and speak more boldly for Christ?

Life Application

This week, commit to two specific practices. First, every morning before you start your day, say a simple prayer asking God to fill you with His Spirit and make you available to be used by Him. Second, set aside at least 10 minutes each day for a quiet time with Jesus. Pick a book of the Bible, read a chapter, write down one thing that stands out to you, and pray. At the end of the week, reflect on whether you noticed any difference in your courage, your conversations, or your awareness of God working through you.

Key Takeaways

- Boldness is not a personality trait or natural confidence. It is a gift from God, given through the power of the Holy Spirit to those who surrender to His leading.
- Every believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in them, but being filled with the Spirit is an ongoing act of surrender and cooperation with God that empowers bold living.
- Spending consistent, daily time with Jesus is the most practical way to develop boldness. People around you will be able to tell that you have been with Him.
- Christian boldness is not about being loud or confrontational. It shows up in everyday acts like praying with your family, redirecting gossip, or opening your Bible without shame.
- There is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved. That conviction, held deeply, is what compels believers to speak and live boldly regardless of the cost.

Ending Prayer

Lord, thank You for this time together and for the truth of Your Word. We confess that we often let fear, comfort, and the opinions of others silence us when You are calling us to speak. We ask that You fill each person in this group with Your Holy Spirit, not just today but every single day. Give us the courage of Peter and John, the faithfulness of Polycarp, and the simple daily discipline of spending time with You so that the people around us can see that we have been with Jesus. May our lives be a bold testimony to a world that desperately needs to know that salvation is found in Your name alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.