

WE PURSUE BOLDNESS TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING ON MISSION / SERIES: ACTS

BIG TRUTH: WE PURSUE BOLDNESS TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN

2 Corinthians 7:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:2; Ephesians 3:12

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 4:29

"And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness..."

BIG IDEAS

- We trust in God's revelation.
- We speak God's Word boldly.
- We seek boldness from God.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 4:1-31

KNEEL: LIVING ON MISSION

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The gospel has the power to turn the world upside down.
- They are empowered and chosen to be a gospel witness in the world.
- Our salvation has come by grace alone.



Every student should feel...

- Comfort that the Lord is with them wherever they go.
- Hope in the God of salvation.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read, study, and meditate on the entire book of Acts.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Pray consistently for boldness to make Jesus known.



Every student should want...

- To pursue faithfulness in living on mission.
- To share the gospel with people in their lives who do not know Jesus.
- To sacrifice their personal freedoms for the sake of the gospel

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 4:29

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness...”

Believers turn to God in times of persecution.

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats...”

- Followers of Christ will face difficult times in this world. When Jesus lived on the earth, the people of this world hated Him. He was persecuted. His followers can and should expect the same type of treatment. Because of this, we look to Him for help during these times.
- In Acts, we see that His disciples looked to God for help when they were persecuted. They turned to God for strength and prayed for boldness to make Him known. They didn't cower or turn away. Instead, they prayed for boldness to continue living faithfully for Him.

Believers are sustained by God in times of persecution.

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue...”

- That any believer is able to live faithfully in this world is a work of God's Spirit inside of them. God is the One who enables His people to endure persecution and trials. He is the One who sustains all life and encourages His people to continue fighting the good fight of faith.
- In the early church, His people looked to Him for help in their time of need. They turned to Him for boldness and encouragement. They understood that God would give them the help they needed and sustain them in their darkest hour. The early Christians did not pray for their persecution to necessarily end, but for the faith and boldness to continue sharing the gospel boldly.

Believers should seek boldness from God always but especially in times of persecution.

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness...”

- We should take note that Jesus' disciples prayed for boldness. If they prayed for boldness, how much more should we pray for boldness? Praying for boldness is not a sign that we are weak or lacking in our faith. It is a sign that we understand our deficiency and that we need Jesus for everything.
- We should ask for boldness for our daily lives but especially in our times of trouble and persecution. When we are persecuted, we should ask for boldness to continue to tell the truth in love.

WE PURSUE BOLDNESS TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN

BIG IDEA #1: WE TRUST IN GOD'S REVELATION.¹

[THIS]

The word revelation means an act of revealing or making known. A more biblical definition of the word is God making known divine truth to humans. A lot is said about God's revelation and what He has or hasn't revealed to man. What is true is that His Word, the Bible, tells us what He has revealed. In Acts 4:1-12, we see clearly that He revealed Jesus as the way of salvation for the world. This is revealed throughout all of Scripture. We can read this in the Old and New Testaments. As followers of Jesus, we trust this revelation. We know that this is truth, and His truth is absolute. Trusting in the revelation of God is important if we are going to live boldly for Him. If we do not really believe His Word, it will be difficult to practice boldness when we are challenged by others. We must be like the early believers who trusted in God's revelation of His Son as the only way to know God and have forgiveness of sin.

[THEREFORE]

Read Acts 4:12. What are some of the world's objections to God's revelation of His Son as the only way to receive forgiveness for sin?

Peter speaks boldly in this verse declaring that Jesus is the only way to know and receive forgiveness of our sin debt. The world objects to this truth and instead says that there are many ways to know God. Often, the world says that God doesn't even exist, or He is whoever we want Him to be.

[THIS]

The early disciples trusted God's revelation through His Son. They believed Jesus was the only way to receive salvation and eternal life. They believed this because they knew Jesus and knew God's truth. We can trust God's revelation when we know His Word. The more we learn about God by studying His Word, the greater our trust of Him will increase. As we increase in our knowledge of God's Word, we see His faithfulness play out in our lives and the world around us. This increases our trust in His revelation. Just as the disciples trusted that God had revealed the one true way to know Him, we can trust in God's revelation and should believe that His Word is true no matter what our culture says. Trusting God's revelation is taking Him at His Word. When we do this, we will have boldness in every circumstance. We will live bold lives because Jesus will be the unshakeable cornerstone of the foundation of our faith.

[THEREFORE]

What are some doubts about God's revelation that you have had? How do you approach these doubts?

2 Timothy 2:15 teaches us the idea of knowing God's Word so well that we can answer questions or doubts about it. When we have doubts ourselves, our response should be to go to the Bible to seek answers for ourselves. When we study truth, we will grow in knowledge and understanding. When we doubt, we must not let it drive our actions. The Bible is true even when we do not feel it.

How does trusting God's revelation produce boldness in a believer?

In Acts 4:19-20, we see Peter and John boldly trust in the revelation of God though they faced persecution. When we have great confidence in something, we boldly adhere to it and remain steadfast in it because we believe it to be true. When we trust God's revelation, we know that His way is the only way and without it, we are lost. This makes us bold and willingly to suffer in this life.

1. Acts 2:12: God's revelation of His Son reveals that there is no other way to be saved. Believers trust this always.

WE PURSUE BOLDNESS TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN

BIG IDEA #2: WE SPEAK GOD'S WORD BOLDLY.²

[THIS]

Acts 4:13-21, the disciples were speaking and preaching the gospel boldly. The people around them were astonished that Peter and John spoke so boldly because both men were uneducated and seemingly lacked the skills to speak the truth so boldly, yet God worked in them to guide them to proclaim His truth. Though Peter and John did not have a formal education or the training of Sadducees and Pharisees, they did not shrink back from telling others about Jesus. They didn't let their lack of formal training keep them from proclaiming God's truth boldly to those around them. They could have allowed the fear of man's opinion keep them from speaking truth. They could have made excuses for themselves, but they did not. They spoke what they believed. Even though they were persecuted for their beliefs, they continued to speak the truth. As Peter and John stated in Acts 4:19-20, they could not help but speak the truth. They had to tell others the truth and they would not shrink back from it. Even though their speech was not eloquent, they did not stop from telling others the good news of Jesus Christ.

[THEREFORE]

What are some excuses you have used to not speak God's truth boldly?

Often, our biggest excuse is our fear of what others will think. Proverbs 29:25 and Hebrews 13:6 teach us that we do not have to fear others. Matthew 10:28 also reminds us that we never have to fear other people or anything in this world. God is greater than this world.

[THIS]

Speaking God's Word boldly is not something that will just happen for us. It requires our knowledge of God's Word and our trust of Him. The more we know His Word, the more confident we will feel in our ability to tell others about Him. This isn't enough to speak boldly about Him, though. Using the power of the Holy Spirit is necessary to truly speak God's Word boldly. It is the Holy Spirit who guides us to speak when human discretion would tell us to be silent. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers us to stand up when human wisdom tells us to sit down, and it is the Holy Spirit who enables us to understand and teach others the truths of Scripture. To use the power of the Spirit effectively we must be students of God's Word. Peter and John knew God's truth. They understood the gospel and were able to use the power of the Spirit to speak boldly in the name of Jesus. We can do the same when we know God's truth and use the power of the Holy Spirit inside of us.

[THEREFORE]

What are some situations in your daily life that require boldness?

In our lives we face situations that require boldness. Standing up for what we believe in and remaining faithful in difficult times require boldness. Psalm 138:3 and Ephesians 6:19 teach us that when we rest on Christ, we can have boldness when it is required.

Why is it challenging to speak God's truth boldly but not to be bold in worldly things?

Often, we are too worried about what others think. We let what they think drive how we behave. Mark 8:38, Luke 9:26, and Matthew 10:32-33 remind us that being ashamed of Jesus and His Word is not really an option for us. We must stand boldly and speak boldly if we are to be counted as one of His.

2. Acts 4:20: The early disciples could speak the truth and nothing else because they believed only Jesus could save them.

WE PURSUE BOLDNESS TO MAKE JESUS KNOWN

BIG IDEA #3: WE SEEK BOLDNESS FROM GOD.³

[THIS]

We live in a world that offers help in many forms and through many avenues. Often the world teaches us to find help within ourselves. We are told to look inside of ourselves to find strength to overcome challenges. We are made to believe that courage lives in each of us and we just have to awaken it. While these ideas may seem true, the reality is that we are all fallen and broken. None of us has the true ability to do all that we need to do all of the time. Without the help of God's Spirit, we cannot really live bold lives. In Acts 4:23-31, the disciples' response to their persecution reveals where they found boldness. They didn't return to their homes and look to themselves to find boldness. They didn't seek out a boldness guru, asking for some special formula to make them braver. Instead, they returned to their fellow Jesus followers, and they prayed to the one true God. They sought help from God, the only person who could give them any sort of courage to carry on. They didn't look to the world or even each other to find the resolve to preach the Word with boldness. Instead, they gathered and prayed to God, asking for boldness to continue in the faith.

[THEREFORE]

Do you seek boldness from God or from others? Do you seek boldness from yourself?

1 Chronicles 16:11, Acts 17:27, and Hebrews 11:6 teach us that our help and strength are found in the Lord, not in ourselves. When we need help and boldness, we must look to God. We will not find these things in ourselves or in others. We must look to Jesus for our strength to live boldly for Him.

[THIS]

We, too, should be like the disciples in Acts. We should seek God for boldness in our daily lives and when we face persecution for preaching the gospel. It can be our tendency to turn to other things and even ourselves for strength, but true boldness is found in the power of the Holy Spirit inside of every believer. Seeking God requires that we submit our hearts to Him. We won't seek Him daily if we aren't focused on living for Him. In Acts 4:23-31, the disciples sought the Lord because their whole lives were about furthering His kingdom. He wasn't just some passing idea or thing they did on the weekends. They were living for Him every moment of every day. He was their everything. In the good times, they praised Him. In the bad times, they sought Him for help and still praised Him. He was their reason and purpose. When God becomes our reason and purpose, we will seek Him for boldness to proclaim His truth regardless of our circumstances or what culture tells us we should be doing. He will be the One we turn to and not the one we run to after we've exhausted all other means because we will be consistently pursuing communion with Him.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it tempting to turn to other things and people before turning to God?

It's easier to trust in things we can see and hear than to trust something we cannot tangibly touch. We turn to things that are tangible before we turn to God, but Scripture teaches that we should turn to God always. Philippians 4:6 and Psalm 118:8 remind us that God is the faithful One who can always be trusted and the One in whom we should always place our trust.

How has God given you boldness this week?

Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us that when we do not trust our own understanding, but turn to God, He will guide us. When we seek Him, He will hear us and give us boldness.

3. Acts 4:31: *The disciples were persecuted for speaking truth, yet they prayed for boldness and received it.*