

Proverbs 28:1

“The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.”

This is the last part in the series on being BOLD...and I can't help to wonder...has anything in this series challenged you to live with a deeper sense of what it means to be bold in Christ?

We have found out that boldness comes from belief...from what we believe about God, who He is and His character. Is He good, faithful and just? If we believe He is all that and more...our character can reflect those qualities boldly

We discovered that bold prayers come from listening first and then praying with God's will... and His purposes in mind. Then our prayers become bolder because they are an extension of His heart.

Boldness is our willingness to do the right thing at the right time, regardless of the opposition or fears we may face. It may be risky, but not reckless...there is always purpose in moving with the boldness of God.

Bold prayers, bold hearts...two ways we reflect the relationship we have with God in the world we live in... and now we come to something that may seem unimportant, underappreciated or even ignored...our voice.

If I gave each of you one uninterrupted minute to speak your mind this morning... to express any opinion/thought/idea...I wonder...do you know what you would say?

Luke 6:45...Jesus tells us...

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

What our hearts are full of...we bring out. Our opinions/words/actions/deeds/thoughts and what we count as treasure, come from what our heart is full of... sobering isn't it?

The Greek word for evil here means...hurtful, diseased and full of malice.

The Greek word for treasure means a place where valuables are kept, where precious things are stored.

The challenge in this passage is this thought...

There could be things we have stored up; things we keep as precious...that are not the treasures we should be keeping...and they come out of our mouth hurtful, diseased and full of malice.

Bold prayers, bold hearts depend on what our heart are full of!

Turn to Acts 4:16-20...Peter and John, Let's see what their hearts are full of

"What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everybody living in Jerusalem knows they have done an outstanding miracle, and **we cannot deny it.** (17) But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn these men to speak no longer to anyone in this name." (18) Then they called them in again and **commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.** (19) But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. (20) For **we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.**"

Some lessons from this passage

First... The world is going to try to silence your voice

The world is going to reject truth, even if they see it and can't deny what they see. The world will see evidence of God right before their eyes and still reject the truth. They are going to try to silence your voice, try to make you back down from what you believe. We should not be surprised by this. More importantly...we should not be silenced by this.

God encourages our voice to be bold... Acts 18:9-10

And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, "Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent. (10) for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people."

God is saying... Don't let fear make you mute, unable to speak... for He is with us.

Second...We speak boldly when we believe deeply!

Peter and John say this simple phrase... "**we cannot help speaking**" In this phrase is the word Greek word "dumanai (doo-nam-a-hee)", it means power, enabled by God. This phrase is huge faith booster for our voice because it can be translated to say...**I am powerful to speak!**

Is boldness rising in your spirit yet? I've got something more...and it has to do with lions.

A lion's roar is the loudest of any big cat and can be heard up to 5 miles away. Their roar helps them find other lions as well as to proclaim their territory. A pride's territory may include up to 100 square miles. It needs a big/loud voice to communicate over its territory.

Why is this so cool? In my study a cross reference to this passage in Acts is found in the book of Amos...listen to this!

The lion has roared--so who isn't frightened? The Sovereign LORD has spoken--so who can refuse to proclaim his message? Amos 3:8

Peter and John are proclaiming... because we believe so deeply about the things we heard and seen about Jesus, because of the lion in me...I am powerful to speak! The LION of Judah has roared over His

territory (the world) and I can't refuse to speak the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ...it is the power to save. It is morally impossible, I can't avoid it...the LION has roared and I will speak for Him!

One more lesson but found in Philippians 1:14

A bold voice is Contagious

And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Paul's imprisonment for being bold for Christ encouraged other followers to do the same. The phrase "having become confident" means to convince, to persuade and make friends with...the other believers were in deep relationship with Christ and each other. They encouraged each other to be bold...through relationships!

The best way to start a movement of bold witness is to step out in boldness ourselves. Such a movement begins with prayer.

Pray for God to guard your words - Psalm 141:1-4

A psalm of David. O LORD, I am calling to you. Please hurry! Listen when I cry to you for help! (2) Accept my prayer as incense offered to you, and my upraised hands as an evening offering. (3) Take control of what I say, O LORD, and guard my lips. (4) Don't let me drift toward evil or take part in acts of wickedness. Don't let me share in the delicacies of those who do wrong.

Ask Father to set a guard over the words that come from our hearts. Did you notice how that starts? With worship! When we worship God first, our heart flows with words that bring life and purpose. Then our words can influence the world around us and keep us from drifting away from the Father's heart.

Pray for the right words - Ephesians 6:19-20

Pray that I will be given the message to speak and that I may fearlessly explain the mystery about the good news. (20) I was sent to do this work, and that's the reason I am in jail. So pray that I will be brave and will speak as I should.

We are powerful to speak when we pray this way...bold prayers, bold hearts, and a bold voice comes from hearing the LION roar inside of us... let us not be silent with the message of the Gospel.