

Bible Notes for Small Groups WB 9th July 2023

Acts 4: 1-18 and 29

Acts 5: 20-24

Dangerous Prayers..... Make Me Bold

If we are going to get anywhere in our spiritual lives, we need to be actively taking steps toward that goal.

- **How do you respond to the word 'prayer'?**
- **How comfortable are you praying, speaking to others about prayer, praying in a group, attending prayer days, prayer meetings during the week?**

Children can teach us a lot when it comes to attitudes to prayer. They are often very open, honest and bold.

Small child heard in prayer 'Dear God can you get a new baby for my mummy, the new one she's got cries too much.'

Boy heard to pray 'Hello God I wonder if you could get my brother some brains, he doesn't seem to have any.'

Some people are gifted in prayer, others feel they are not so gifted. Some can pray for an hour or more with no problem, others find ten minutes difficult. Sometimes we hear someone praying and fear we can never match up to that. Sometimes we feel our prayer lives are not working.

Look at the context of prayer in Acts chapter 3 where Peter and John pray for the healing of the lame man. **Acts 3:1-10**

Peter and John had been preaching about the Resurrection of Jesus. Along comes the lame man and they pray for him.

The religious leaders don't believe in resurrection or life after death. They create opposition to the disciples, get them arrested and thrown in prison. They want to know by what name the disciples are healing. Peter and John reply that it is Jesus who is doing the healing, the Jesus those leaders had killed but who God rose from the dead. This gets the leaders' backs up as they don't believe in resurrection. They don't believe the disciples and are afraid of them so they forbid them to continue

with what they were doing. But in prison Peter and John boldly pray for release and the boldness to continue to preach. They ask for power not safety.

- **Talk about a recent time when you had an opportunity to share your faith or were bold for Jesus.**

Look again at Acts 4:29.

So how do we recognise and understand boldness in prayer and response?

1. It triggers opposition

Serving Jesus is not a formula for safety. When we preach the gospel and live our lives in Jesus, we will find opposition. If we want to be serious about our faith lives and pray for boldness that God will be able to use, He will take us at our words and place us where opposition will rise up.

2. It releases God's miracles

As we live in a boldness in Jesus, we will see God's hands at work. It seems to be automatic that the disciples preached and prayed boldly and an angel arrived and let them out of prison. So, if we pray boldly as they did, we may see the power of God we have not seen before.

3. Boldness always requires faith

In Acts 5:20-21 we see the disciples returning to do the very thing that got them sent to jail in the first place. It was what God had told them and equipped them to do and they did it regardless. That is faithfulness.

When we are bold to do what God asks of us, we never know how He will work. If we obey the Holy Spirit, we will see God's work either immediately or later when we look back.

- **Think about the people you interact with. What opportunities do you have to be bold in your faith this coming week?**

How do you think those outside the church would describe our boldness in Christ. Would they see the transformation that God brings about in us when we are truly living and obeying Him? Or will we appear just like everyone else?

Asking for boldness will change us. We will be sent out of our safety nets and into the fire of God's call. We will encounter God. We just need to do what the Holy Spirit says.

What will happen in and through us if we pray to be bold?

- **How is God calling you to live boldly? Consider this question this week, and then commit to pursuing whatever God sets in front of you**