

# Voices: A prayer of faith for boldness

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The scene in Acts 4 of the early church gathered together and praying for one another is powerful.

Peter and John have just been released from the council with the command not to speak in the name of Jesus anymore or face dire consequences. The reprimanded disciples run back to their brothers and sisters in Christ and report what has happened to them and the sure future of the church if she continues to proclaim Jesus. In verses 23-31, we see the response of these early believers.



Zac Harrel They stop everything and they pray together.

The church today needs to follow this example. While we are not being persecuted like these believers in Acts 4, we are in a moment in our country where the church needs this prayer. The church needs the filling power of the Holy Spirit.

In this prayer we see a powerful request built on the foundation of trusting faith.

### **The foundation of faith**

First, we see the faith of these believers in their sovereign God. They confess that all they have seen, heard and experienced in the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus are according to the plan and purposes of God. God is working even in the midst of their persecution to redeem and restore his world. They trust God.

We need to trust God. This moment of chaos and evil seeming so prevalent needs a church standing on the foundation of a hopeful, trusting faith. To be who we are called to be and to do what we are called to do, we must be men and women of prayer who stand on the foundation of deep trust and faith in God and his good plan.

### **A request for boldness**

Out of this faith, the church together makes one request of God. They ask God to help them “continue to speak your word with all boldness” (Acts 4:29). In the face of opposition and in the midst of chaos and evil, they ask for boldness.

They don’t ask for safety or comfort; they ask to have the boldness to speak the word of God.

The church today needs boldness to stand for the truth of God’s Word. This is not a call to be politically incorrect. This is not a call for the church to be loudmouthed and full of hate.

True boldness in our day is to stand for the value and worth of all who are made in the image of God. True boldness is not to let the gospel be co-opted by right or left but to be willing to offend both with the truth of God’s

word. True boldness is not just our words, but our actions as well.

Will we be bold enough to open our homes and our lives to those who disagree with us and who look different from us?

The church must stand with radical love and kindness proclaiming the truth of the word of God, calling all to repentance and faith in Christ. The disciples asked for boldness to proclaim the gospel, not the talking points of their political party.

We must ask God to give us this same boldness to speak his word with love.

### **God's answer**

Verse 31 tells us what happens next. God answers their prayer. The followers of Jesus are filled with the Holy Spirit, and they continue to "speak the word of God with boldness."

God answers the prayers of his people when they pray to fulfill his will and redemptive plan of salvation. God will answer our prayer if we pray on the foundation of a deep faith for God to give us boldness to truly be the church.

This world needs the church to be bold with God's word, to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to walk by faith in the plan and purposes of our good God.

Will you pray with me for God to make us bold with love and kindness? Will you pray with me for God to help us let go of safety and comfort for the sake of the gospel? Will you pray with me for God to give us a deep faith as the people of God?

Pray with me and let us be amazed together how God will be faithful to answer the prayers of his people.

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