

The 3rd Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, June 14, 2026

“Marks of the Early Church ~ Bold in Witness”

Psalm 27:1-6 Acts 4:5-20 Matthew 10:16-20, 26-33

The church was never meant to be a holy _____, gathered safely behind closed doors. Instead, Christ calls His people to bear _____ to Him in a hostile world.

Acts 4 reminds us that bold witness isn't reserved for a few gifted Christians, but is the _____ of every believer.

3 LESSONS ABOUT BOLD WITNESS

Lesson #1: _____.

After healing the lame man, Peter proclaims the gospel to the crowd, arguing that Jesus crucified and risen was a _____ of what the prophets had foretold, and then calls them to _____. As you might expect the religious leaders saw this as _____, and so, Peter and John were arrested by the temple police.

“By what power or by what name did you do this?” (Acts 4:7)

“Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.” (Acts 4:10)

He doesn't draw attention to himself, he doesn't boast about his faith, or point to the church. He points to _____. Everything _____ on Jesus Christ—crucified, risen, and reigning.

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

Peter isn't presenting Jesus as one helpful spiritual _____ among many. He isn't suggesting that Jesus is simply one path among several equally valid paths to God. He's declaring that salvation is found in _____ alone.

The early church was bold because they were utterly _____ about who Jesus was.

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6)

“For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5)

The apostles weren't trying to win an argument; they were bearing witness to a reality they knew to be _____. They were convinced that they'd found the _____ of eternal life. And, because they believed that, they couldn't remain _____; their conviction gave them _____.

Many believers today struggle with witnessing to their faith because they think it requires having all the _____. However, Acts 4 reminds us that bold witness begins somewhere much deeper—with _____ Christ.

What stood out wasn't their credentials, but their _____ to Christ.

The strongest witness is often not a polished argument, but a _____ life.

“Always be prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15)

Witness begins with hope and with confidence in Christ. And the more clearly we _____ Jesus, the more naturally we'll _____ about Him.

Lesson #2: _____.

“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them...” (Acts 4:8)

Peter isn't standing there in his own _____. He isn't relying on natural courage, personal charisma, or exceptional intelligence. He's speaking as a man whose been filled and _____ by the Holy Spirit.

The real hero of this story isn't Peter; it's the _____ working through ordinary believers, which is why the Book of Acts is often called “The Gospel of the Holy Spirit.”

Peter had encountered the risen Jesus, was restored by Him, and was filled with the Holy Spirit. The difference wasn't just greater _____; it was divine _____.

“When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” (Matthew 10:19-20)

Acts 4 is the _____ of that promise, and Peter is living proof that Jesus keeps His word. The Spirit gives him wisdom, courage, clarity, and the _____

he needs at exactly the right moment.

The apostles pray, and the Spirit empowers them. The church faces opposition, and the Spirit strengthens them. _____ open for the gospel because the Spirit is already at work in people's hearts. The growth of the early church can't be explained by human effort; it was 100% the work of _____.

We can gather for worship week after week; we can have programs, committees, budgets, and strategies. Yet none of these can create _____ life. Only the Holy Spirit can do that.

The church doesn't move forward because of human _____. It moves forward in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Although these fears are common, the good news is that God never intended us to witness in our own _____. The same Spirit who empowered Peter lives within every believer.

“God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (2 Tim 1:7)

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses.” (Acts 1:8)

The task of witnessing doesn't depend on our ability to _____ anyone—only God can do that. Our job is to be _____, and God will do the rest.

We may never fully see the _____ of our witness this side of heaven, but we can trust that the Holy Spirit is always at _____.

They never viewed boldness as something they _____, but something God _____.

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31)

Lesson #3: _____.

“In order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name.” (Acts 4:17)

The issue is no longer the miracle, but _____.

At that moment, the apostles had a choice: They could obey the authorities and remain _____. Or they could obey God and continue speaking.

“Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge. For we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.” (Acts 4:19-20)

They've seen the risen Christ. They've experienced His forgiveness. They've witnessed His power and received His Spirit. How could they possibly remain silent? Their _____ for Christ had become greater than their fear of _____.

The apostles understood something that every believer must eventually learn: there will be moments when _____ to Christ places us at odds with the expectations of others.

“So have no fear of them...Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.” (Matt 10:26, 28)

Jesus isn't encouraging _____ or arrogance; He's teaching His followers to keep their _____ straight. The fear of God must always _____ the fear of people. The approval of Christ must always matter more than the approval of the crowd.

We naturally desire _____. We want to fit in, be liked, and avoid criticism and rejection at all costs. However, if our deepest desire is the approval of others, we'll often find ourselves _____ our witness

The apostles teach us a different way. They remind us that Christ is worthy of our highest _____.

The apostles remind us that faith was never meant to remain _____.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.” (Matthew 5:14)

This doesn't mean we need to be pushy or _____. Christian witness should always be marked by humility, _____, and love.

Boldness isn't harshness; it's _____... It's choosing obedience over _____.

“Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32)

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The power of the early church wasn't found in its _____, but in its _____ with Christ.