

Courage to Stand

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the transformative power of God's Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, drawing parallels to the early disciples who, despite their failures and insignificance, were empowered to boldly proclaim the work of Christ. It encourages listeners to seek God for courage, vision, and boldness in the midst of crisis, reminding them that God can work through their weaknesses and bring about remarkable change. The message underscores the importance of prayer, faith, and speaking boldly about God's love and power to impact those around us.

Scripture: Acts 2:1, Matthew 21:22, 1 Corinthians 1:27, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 4:13, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Empowerment by the Holy Spirit", "Boldness in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

Hi, this is Pastor Carter Conlon again, talking to you one more time from Times Square Church, right in the middle of Times Square in New York City. How does it feel, how do you think people feel of God before us in times of crisis and hard to believe that God could somehow use their lives to make a difference? Have there been others before us or are we the first? You know, sometimes in the midst of our trials we can begin to think like, wow, has anybody ever gone through this? Come back with me 2,000 years ago, when 120 people went into an opera room, Book of Acts chapter 2, 120 people who had tentatively failed Christ when they thought He needed them the most, 120 people who were aware of their own failure, their own insignificance, 120 people are living in a crisis time. I mean, the society had just crucified their Lord.

It just doesn't get any worse than that. There's a bloodlust, I guess, among the people. They've just crucified Christ and they're in no mood for His followers.

I think we're living in a generation today when a lot of the world is not in the mood for the followers of Jesus Christ. These 120 failures, in my estimation, just went into that room and they just began to pray. And when they began to pray, God's Holy Spirit came upon them and He started to show them things that

were going to happen in their lives, not only in the present day, but in the future.

And they stepped out of that upper room with a boldness that only God could give, a courage, not a boldness, but a courage that only God could give, and they started to publicly proclaim how God had touched their lives and what Jesus Christ was going to do in them and through them in the future. The Bible says they were speaking in the Greek, it was the megalos of God, which means they anticipated outworking of the inward presence of Christ in them. In other words, God is in me, God has given me a promise, this is what God is going to do.

And they were speaking it in such a way that the people around them knew that only God could give this kind of vision and revelation and courage to stand in the crowd at this time and under these circumstances. You and I need to pray again. We need to say, 'Lord Jesus Christ, you've got to give me the courage to stand, you've got to give me the vision, you've got to give me the Word, God you have to give me something that will glorify you in this crisis time in which I'm living.' As they stepped into the marketplace and began to publicly profess these inner workings of Christ and the anticipated power of God that was not only on them but what was going to be on them in the future, suddenly people began to turn.

People who are looking for hope in a dark time began to turn, began to look, began to listen, came under the conviction that there is a God, He does have a people, He does indwell those whose hearts are towards Him and He does give courage and vision in a time when courage and vision seems to be lacking or almost in some sense gone. And this little band of believers not only saw the knees of three thousand people bend to God that day when they stepped out of that upper room, but eventually even the might of the Roman army and the Roman nation bent its knee to Christ. Amazing! Amazing! My brother, my sister, don't underestimate what God can do through you, because to underestimate that is to underestimate God Himself.

It's to say to God, 'Well, you did that for them, but you can't do that through me.' But who are we to tell God what He can or can't do? He actually takes delight in taking things that are nothing to bring His own name to reputation. He takes us in our foolishness, He takes us in our weakness, when we're confused, when we don't feel like we've got anything to offer His kingdom. Then suddenly He says, 'Well, maybe you don't, but I do through you.' I want to challenge you to pray again in the midst of our crisis time and say, 'Lord, give me a word, a vision, a love, a boldness that casts out fear.'

Give me the ability to start speaking to people who need to hear that You live and that You love them. Give me, God, what I need so that people may turn and their knees may bow again. And when you do that, remember Jesus Himself said, 'Whatever you ask believing, you shall receive.' That's the promise of God to you today.

You ask believing and you shall receive. I look forward to meeting you out in the marketplace, because we're going to lift our voices together and we're going to watch what God can do. God bless you.

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