

This guide is designed to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use, and there may be instances when you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience, not complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool rather than a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

In the sermon, Dr. Bart Box referenced Franklin Graham's ability to turn any subject back to the cross with boldness. Share examples ways you or people you know have an uncanny way of turning a conversation to a subject that's important to them, such as a new job, a major accomplishment, or a win for a favorite team. Explain that today you'll look at how Peter and John turned every conversation to the name of Jesus.

Option 2

Ask volunteers to share with the group the boldest thing they've ever done. Ask these questions to each person who shares: What was your motivation? What was the outcome? Are you always that bold? Why or why not? Emphasize how bold the early church was in sharing their faith, and how true boldness in sharing the gospel always comes from the Holy Spirit.

Review the Message . . .

Luke probably wrote the book of Acts sometime between 60 and 70 A.D. to present a history of the early Church after Christ's ascension. He recorded with great detail the apostles' journeys and the Church's growth, encouraging believers facing persecution with Christ's ultimate triumph. The book begins with Christ's ascension and ends with Paul under house arrest in Rome.

A BOLD STRATEGY

Acts 4

Four Keys to a Bold Strategy

- **Remember the saving power of Christ.**
 - **The truth: In this world we will always encounter deep-seated opposition to the truth of God.**
 - **The takeaway: Boldness is birthed by recalling God's mercy toward us in Christ.**

Discussion . . .

- Read Acts 4:1-12. How did Peter and John respond as they faced opposition?
- What was the Sanhedrin's charge against them?
- How did Peter show his complete reliance on Christ and the Holy Spirit in his address?

Application . . .

- Describe a time when you encountered opposition to God's truth.
- How did you handle that opposition?
- Would you have liked to handle the opposition differently? If so, in what way?
- In light of the truth that recalling God's mercy births boldness in our lives, take a few minutes to share some ways in which you are especially aware of God's mercy in your life.

- **Realize the profound power of the gospel.**
 - **The truth: We see the power of the gospel in . . .**
 - **The life of the lame man.**
 - **The life of the early church.**
 - **The takeaway: Boldness . . .**
 - **Is not rooted in our personality.**
 - **Is not rooted in intelligence.**
 - **Is rooted in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.**

Discussion . . .

- Read Acts 4:13-22. How did Peter and John rest in God's sovereign power when they were before the Sanhedrin?
- How did the Sanhedrin react to their "ordinariness"?
- How would you describe Peter and John's response to their threats in verses 19-20?
- How does the healing of the lame man show the power of the gospel?
- Why is it significant that the man was over 40 years old (v. 22)? What would that mean to the witnesses in his community who watched him suffer for so long?

Application . . .

- Have you ever thought that you didn't have the right personality or education to be a bold witness?
- Why are we tempted to find boldness in our own strength instead of Christ?
- Why does rooting our boldness in anything other than Jesus doom us to fail?

- How should believing in the power of Jesus' resurrection change the way you share the gospel with others?

- **Rest in the sovereign power of God.**
 - **The truth: Our God is the Lord of all.**
 - **The takeaway: Boldness is encouraged by fresh reminders of God's sovereignty.**

Discussion . . .

- Read Acts 4:23-30. How did Peter and John's prayer show that they rested in God's sovereign power?
- What did they acknowledge about God in verses 24-28?
- Why is it important that they referenced David's words in Psalm 118:22?
- What did they ask God to do in verses 29-30, and in whose name?
- How did their understanding of God's character in the past influence the way they petitioned him?

Application . . .

- Why is it important for us to acknowledge God's character and His actions when we pray, just as Peter and John did in verses 28?
- Should praying Scripture (as Peter and John did in Acts 3:25-26) make a difference in the way you view and approach God? Why?
- Why should Scripture always be your primary source for fresh reminders of God's sovereignty?
- Are there other places that you can find reminders of God's sovereignty?

- **Rely upon the enabling power of the Spirit.**
 - **The truth: Past boldness is no assurance of future boldness.**
 - **The takeaway: Boldness demands continual reliance upon God's Spirit.**

Discussion . . .

- Read Acts 3:31. How did God show Himself faithful after they prayed?
- What was the result of their being filled with the Spirit?
- How do you know that they continually relied on the Spirit?

Application . . .

- What does it mean to rely on God's Spirit?

Message Discussion Guide

ACTS: A BOLD STRATEGY

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. Bart Box

January 16, 2011

Acts 4

- Why is reliance on the Holy Spirit a daily choice?
- When you've asked God to give you boldness and open doors to share the gospel, how has He proven faithful to you in the past?
- How would you describe your level of boldness now? How would you like to describe it in the future?
- Close your time together by dividing into groups of two or three to pray. Direct each group to pray for one another and ask God to increase their boldness in sharing the gospel by the power of His Spirit. (Before praying, group members might want to share specific names of people they want to come to Christ or in specific circumstances in which they want to ask for wisdom and boldness to witness.)