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Group Guide

The Church Articulates the Gospel with Boldness

Main Passage: Acts 4:19-31

Theological Theme

A healthy church shares the gospel boldly. Acts 4 gives us an example of what this looks like in action and what happens when the church adopts this heart posture.

Introduction

- ❓ Why might we describe the early church as unstoppable?
- ❓ What gave them the power to live this way? How should that encourage us too?

1. Can't Stop, Won't Stop (Acts 4:19-20)

Since the arrival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Peter and John had been boldly acting as Jesus's witnesses, preaching the good news about Him, healing a lame man in the temple (Acts 3:1-10), and helping thousands come to know Jesus and accept His gift of salvation (Acts 4:4). This healing of a lame man attracted the attention of the religious leaders, and Peter and John were taken into custody overnight (Acts 4:3).

- ❓ How did Peter and John display boldness in these verses?
- ❓ What types of risks do we take when we share the gospel in our communities?
- ❓ Application: What risks hold you back from sharing the gospel in your own life?

2. With All Boldness (Acts 4:23-30)

Freshly released from the Sanhedrin, Peter and John returned to the body of believers to tell them everything that happened. In response, they didn't cower or decide it wasn't safe to continue preaching the gospel even though they could have been in very real danger; no, they turned to God in prayer with the intention to keep going. Through our study of Acts, we've talked about the vital importance prayer plays in the life of a believer, and this passage is a beautiful demonstration of prayer in action in the early church.

- ❓ How do you typically respond to obstacles to sharing your faith?
- ❓ How did Peter and John respond? What did they say and what did they specifically ask for?
- ❓ Application: Have you ever prayed for this type of boldness? What happened? If you haven't, why not? What might hold you back from asking for this?

3. Answered Prayer (Acts 4:31)

The believers' prayer was immediately answered in verse 31 with a resounding yes. The heart behind their prayer was one intent on glorifying the Lord and sharing the good news about Jesus, just like He'd commanded, and the Lord immediately equipped them.

- ❓ How did God answer in verse 31?
- ❓ Why can we also have confidence when we ask God for boldness to tell others about Him?
- ❓ Application: Would you describe yourself as a bold in your faith? Why or why not? How will you seek to grow in this area?

Conclusion

- ❓ What words would you use to describe Peter and John's faith here? How can we work to cultivate similar traits in our own sharing of the gospel?
- ❓ What can we learn from the way that the believers prayed in Acts 4, and how can we integrate this into our prayer lives individually and as a group?
- ❓ Who is God calling you to proclaim His message to boldly? How will you respond?