



Enormous & Bold

Acts 4-5

About *Enormous Church: How Church is Supposed to Be*

Two thousand years ago, a gathering of people in a Middle Eastern city began a movement that would circle the globe and leave its mark on individuals and cultures on every continent. This movement eventually became known as The Church. The church isn't a place; it's a movement. And ... it's still moving. Whether you consider yourself a church person or not, *Enormous Church*, seeks to reveal the story and meaning of the earliest gatherings of Christians.

Bottom Line

Don't be a secret Christian any longer. **Be Bold!**

Introduction

I don't know what comes to mind when you hear the word "church." Odds are, it is a far cry from what first century believers thought. They didn't think building, rows, pews, robes, hymnals, liturgy, or committees.

The church began as a **movement** fueled by an event: **the resurrection of Jesus**. It was led by eyewitnesses and it was enormous from the start. On opening day, over 3,000 people joined. Two weeks later, another 5,000 men joined in one day.

This movement was unsettling to the status quo, so there was **resistance**.

In response to resistance that could have easily affected livelihoods, reputations, even lives, the early Christians prayed... Not for protection... Not for the resistance to go away. **They prayed for boldness.**

"Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

~ Acts 4:29-30

Struggle

Isn't it strange that we live in one of the **safest, freest** countries in the world. Most of us live in the safest parts of the safest, freest country in the world, and still our prayers center around safety.

We live in a culture where boldness about our faith will cost us almost nothing, and we still **lack boldness**.

If the early church had been safety-conscious and rights-conscious instead of bold, the message of Jesus would have disappeared within six months of the resurrection.

Instead, they prayed for boldness.

Truth

Read Acts 5:27-42.

It's a bit embarrassing to have this much freedom, this kind of church, and so little boldness... Isn't it?

Here are some baby steps:

- BOLD is deciding to say something when it would be easier to say nothing.
- BOLD is taking advantage of the opportunities that present themselves.
- BOLD is creating opportunities.

It's time to pray for boldness.

Conclusion

If you aren't a church person, not a follower of Jesus, and you wonder, "Why can't Christians just leave me alone?"

Good news. Most Christians do just that. You're around Christians all the time, and you probably don't even know it. They're acting like undercover Christians, secret Christians.

If we'd been doing our job, things would be different. But we got busy. We got distracted. We got safe. And I'm sorry. **Let's get BOLD.**

On your way out today please don't forget to get your bracelet.

Next Steps

- Memorize Acts 4:29-30
- Repent of being an undercover Christian.
- Pray for boldness.
- Be bold. Say something when it would be easier to say nothing.
- Be bold. Take advantage of opportunities that present themselves.
- Be bold. Create opportunities.