



Six Week Pursuit
Impact Culture

Dear Church Family,

I will be frank: when I am with my extended family for a get-together, the last thing I expect is a move of God. That would be weird wouldn't it?

Well, on one occasion, I was at my cousins' home in the backwater of the Cascades. Typically, you could expect my cousins and me to be running around town or playing video games. But today was different. I happened to walk in on a conversation between my mom and her sisters. One of my aunts was dealing with tremendous pain and was struggling physically.

Now admittedly, I do not recall if I acted of my own volition or was asked by my mom, but somehow, I ended up praying for my aunt. I thought nothing of it at the time. However, years down the road, my aunt revealed to me that that prayer was one of the most special moments in her life; her heart was genuinely touched. That moment has marked and challenged me.

Inviting Jesus into your family can be difficult. Forget sharing Jesus with people we don't know; we can't even seem to share Him with our own families. And when we do, it's relegated to church attendance, *Why is it so hard?* bedtime prayers, prayer before meal-time, and maybe family Bible reading. But let's be honest with ourselves, we struggle with even these. And, keep in mind, these are the minimum. These habits alone will not IMPACT CULTURE or transform our families.

We need more! We need the Baptism of the Spirit, the overflow of Jesus' presence in our lives. Our family, kids, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and yes, even that cashier at the gas station, all need to see Jesus daily. They need to see Jesus IMPACT CULTURE. They want to see a transformed life!

Jesus' followers experienced a radical life change when the Holy Spirit overflowed in their lives. This change was so significant, that the church immediately began to **IMPACT CULTURE**. Take Peter and John for example. One day they are headed to the local temple to pray; basically, on their way to church. Then, a crippled man calls to them for money. It is more than likely both Peter and John have seen this man several times before. But today was different. Today, Peter was walking with the Spirit. Today, Jesus was going to heal a crippled man through Peter.

The transformed life

Peter looks at the man and does something unexpected. Instead of giving the cripple what he wants, Peter gives him what he needs. Jesus heals the man on the spot. The dude is so ecstatic that he runs into the temple shouting and praising God; all the while leaping like a madman! 2,000 people come to believe Jesus because of this. Whew! What a day of victory!

We need boldness!

Well, almost. Peter and John get arrested for preaching Jesus. Oddly enough, this doesn't even seem to faze the guys. After being released, Peter and John return to their church family filled with joy. And, do you know what they immediately pray to God for?

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” – Acts 4:29-30

Look at Peter. He knows exactly what God wants to do. When the cripple asks for money, Peter doesn't preach at him to get over materialism. No, instead, Peter looks at the man and sees what God wants to do. This is true faith; knowing what God wants and acting on it. The man was not healed because he or Peter wanted him to be healed. He was healed because God wanted the man to be healed, and Peter knew this. That, my friends, is God-given boldness.

God-given boldness

Picture this: a life without guessing what Jesus wants for you, your family, your friends, your neighbors, or anyone else. What if you just knew? You don't need to live life trying to guess and figure out how God works. You can be lead. You can know.

God wants to move through us church. He desires to work in our day-to-day lives and interrupt our schedule with life-changing encounters. That is what it means to be Spirit-lead. It is not all mystical and foreign. It is a transformation that opens our eyes to

The overflow of boldness see what people truly need. And it is a transformation that makes us living proof that Jesus is alive and active!

Church, we need this overflow! We need this boldness that fills us with authority to prove Jesus, declare Jesus, and earnestly follow Jesus. It is not complicated. It is not difficult. The will of God is not some foreign mystery that you have to seek after. The will of God is readily available and can invade your simple day-to-day life in a crazy way. Church, let's pursue boldness!

With love,

Pastor Vern Pastor Ly

Group Discussion

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group.

1. What do you think of prayer times, Bible reading, and church being the minimum in following Jesus?
2. With how busy our lives can be, just prayer and Bible reading can be difficult. But why is it so difficult? Why can reading our Bibles and praying consistently be so hard?
3. Read Acts 4:23-31. What do you think of the church's response to persecution? Have you ever faced true hardship for following Jesus? What was that like? How did you respond? Why do you believe the church responded by praying for boldness?
4. Have you ever struggled to find the will of God? Every believer experiences this feeling at one time or another. How can we overcome our uncertainty in following God? How do you become bolder in any relationship? Can that relate to trusting God more?

Closing Prayer

Close your time together in prayer. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about based on the topic of today's discussion:

- Pray for God-given boldness.
- Tell God you desire to know Him more.
- Ask for God to reveal to you His ways.
- Pray for God to have His way; that His will would be done in your life.
- Pray for the Baptism of the Spirit

Bold • ness
/'bôldnəs/
Showing a
fearless
daring spirit,
standing out
prominently
- Dictionary.com

Weekly Challenge

Pursue boldness. Maybe the Holy Spirit is already prompting you to take action; to minister to someone in your life. Don't wait, take action! Ask God for boldness to do His will. He will give you His brand of boldness that never fails.



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KID'S KORNER

Questions for Kids

If you have children, here are some questions you can go over with them.

1. What's the bravest thing you have ever done? Why did you do it? What did it feel like to be brave?
2. It takes bravery to talk about Jesus. Have you ever told someone about Jesus? What was that like? How did that person react to you sharing Jesus?
3. What if I told you God wants to give you bravery and boldness. What would you do if you were braver? Why do you think God wants to make you braver?

Did you know?

A St. Bernard named Barry saved over 40 people in his lifetime! Barry braved freezing weather and blizzards to save skiers and hikers trapped or injured in the snow!

That's one brave dog!

Closing Prayer

Pray together as a family. Here are a few ideas of what you could pray about.

Jesus help us to:

- Be brave!
- Tell others about you.
- Trust you completely!

THE EXTREME CHALLENGE

Do you have what it takes to conquer this challenge?

Talk with someone about Jesus. Could be your mom, dad, brother, sister, cousins, uncle, aunt, or any other relative. Could also be your friends or classmates. And it doesn't have to be hard. Maybe just tell someone you are thankful for what Jesus has done in your life. Easy right? Then let's do it! Let's talk with someone about Jesus!