

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

Pastor Ben did a great job last week setting us up in Acts Chapter 4, and we will continue looking at that this morning. As you are turning there, you know I sometimes wonder whether or not I would have lasted had I been born a hundred or two hundred years ago. Do you ever stop and think about what life was like then compared to how it is now? When I think of then versus now I think how much I love my life the way it is today, because seriously I really, really like living during this period of human history. And that is because I like airplanes, and cars, and microwave popcorn. All of those things are kind of high on my value scale.

And I really like air conditioning, and my iPad, and wireless internet. I also like antibiotics, and Tylenol, and knowing Urgent Care is right down the street. That is very convenient, right? I like Netflix and Amazon. I go to Walmart, now that is usually just for the entertainment, but I do enjoy those kinds of places. I like the variety of food we have available. I can go to McDonald's, or McAlister's, or McCormick and Schmick's, depending on where my budget is. I spend a lot more time in Walmart than McCormick and Schmick's, but the fact is we have all these different levels. And there is a lot to be said for living when you have anesthesia, Charmin and A&W Diet Root Beer, and to have them all in the same life span.

This is good stuff, and I am really glad to be alive during this time period, because I hear people talk all the time about the 'good old days,' and I don't really think they were. I am not a big fan of polio, smallpox, outhouses, and people dying of kidney stones. They used to fight wars with axes and spears - seriously, that is not for me. I like my shoes with arch supports, and I like not having to actually kill my pig to get my bacon. (*Laughter.*) I will admit to all of that.

Frankly, what I have just admitted is that I am a big old sissy that would have died early and ugly had I lived a hundred years ago. But in many ways it is easy for us to grow so comfortable that we become complacent. And so complacent that we focus on convenience and ease, even when it comes to our spiritual lives. When we think about it from our American spiritual perspective we realize that today you and I literally, if you live in this metropolitan region, chose this church out of over one thousand other churches or houses of worship we could have gone to. A thousand churches to choose from, and that just seems ridiculous.

A thousand different churches means we could visit a different church every week for the rest of our lives, and then die before we got to visit all of them. That is the reality of living in the Bible Belt like we do. If you don't like any of the thousand churches you might visit, then you could still link to ten thousand more churches on the internet. You could watch their services live, by video or by podcasts. Great preachers who have died

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

can still be heard today on the internet because it is all there. Our buildings are climate controlled, our pastors are educated, our Bibles are covered in the finest of Corinthian leather, if you are still old school enough to use a Bible with pages, because many of us now use our electronic devices. And thanks to the internet we provide here you can actually fact check me during the message, so that by the time you walk out, you can let me know if you thought I was off a little bit.

Our music is professional quality, and our curriculum on any spiritual topic is two clicks away on the internet. We have child care, and a café, and added seating. And of course we have that wonderful thing we call ‘the first amendment,’ which is very nice for us. And then I remember this time I was in Cuba when all of a sudden it all came back into perspective for me, because I was with a group of about forty pastors that have house churches, and we were praying. Now I only speak enough Spanish to be dangerous so after being able to say ‘water ‘and ‘bathroom’ I am pretty much out of commission.

So these pastors were praying in Spanish, and I am praying in English. After they finished a couple of the pastors came up to me to chat, and I guess in a kind of pious way I said, ‘*I just want you guys to know I am praying for your future freedom.*’ And I said that because I always see the lack of freedom they have there, the opposition that they face daily, and the danger that many of them are in for simply preaching the gospel and trying to raise their kids in the values of God’s Word. It always impacts me deeply every time I go there.

So I said, ‘*I am praying for your future freedom.*’ And one of the pastor friends looked at me, and said through the interpreter, ‘*Please do not pray for our freedom. Pray for revival. We do not pray for freedom here. We pray for revival, because we fear that if freedom comes the way you have it in America that our people will run from God when right now they run to God, because He is all we have.*’ Would you please hold the invitation now so I can come forward and repent of my sin. (*Laughter.*) That hit me right between the eyes.

But the fact is in this passage we will be talking about this morning we see a prayer meeting. And right before this prayer meeting that we are going to look at this morning, and as Pastor Ben taught last week, Peter and John had been detained or arrested for the crime of preaching in the public street, telling the people that the Messiah had come, and that they had killed Him. They said death could not hold Him, He was resurrected, and they needed to repent of their sins, be baptized, learn His Word and live it faithfully. That was their crime.

They had been arrested, detained, questioned, challenged, intimidated and threatened, and they knew now what the rest of their life was going to be like. It was

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

going to be rough. It was going to be stressful. It was going to be hard and even harsh at times. And eventually Peter would die as would ten of the other eleven disciples for the crime of following Jesus. They knew they were going to be facing opposition.

So what happened when they got out of prison? What happened when the prison doors where they had been detained were opened and they could leave on their own? I wonder what I might have done under those circumstances. Would I have run back to my home town? Would I have run to the safety of my own home? What would I have done?

Well, Acts Chapter 4 records what they did. So let's look together at Acts Chapter 4 and beginning in verse 23. I want to read it all the way through first, and then we are going to talk a little bit, and then we are going to go back and look at it verse by verse all the way through. And then I am going to give you some ways I think you can apply it. So let's begin in verse 23.

***“When they were released, they went to their friends.”*** So that is what they did. ***“They went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, ‘Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit.’”***

Then there is a pause here that I want to make sure and point out. And in many of your translations you will see that it looks different in the way it is written. And the reason it is different is because they are actually quoting Old Testament Scripture. This passage of Scripture that is in the next two verses contains a couple of lines out of Psalm Chapter 2, which is a Davidic Psalm, and it is written about the life of King David. So when you read this, you are taking a trip back into history and back to Scripture.

***“Why did the Gentiles rage,  
And the peoples plot in vain?  
The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers were gathered together  
Against the Lord and against his Anointed.”***

And now we are back to real time in verse 27: ***“For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. 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***

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

*performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”*

I am quickly reaching a conclusion that we can now see the generation of believers in America who may also face a level of opposition that has been largely unknown in this country since the earliest days of the republic. A little brief history that many people are not aware of is there was religious persecution that took place quite severely in some cases, with beatings and imprisonment, in the early American colonies.

One of the reasons that this occurred is because the immigrants took their worst habits of Europe and brought them to the United States. Many of them who were seeking spiritual freedom for their particular denomination and sect came over and tried to put in place a system that was similar to what they had in the European nations, which was a church state. In Germany it was Lutheranism, there was Calvinism and there was a Church of England which was Anglican. And Spain, France and Italy all gave honor to the Roman Catholic Church.

If you were not a member of the church state, all kinds of things could happen, anywhere from losing property, or not being able to own property, to being imprisoned. If you practiced your faith in a way that you wanted to that was different from the established faith you would be persecuted, you would lose financially, you would be taxed at a higher rate, and you would be forced to pay taxes to support churches that practiced things you didn't believe in. This was going on in Europe and this is why many of our ancestors, mine in particular who came over on the Mayflower, left their nation and came here.

And then they proceeded to establish the same bad patterns here in the United States, because several of the early colonies had state religions. And there was one denomination that particularly came to the front and said, 'No,' and in the process the Baptists were the ones who were often being imprisoned in places like Pennsylvania and Rhode Island. And they went to a man by the name of Thomas Jefferson and said, 'Protect our ability to worship as we please.' So he wrote documents, I have actually seen some of the letters written in his own hand, and these letters said there needed to be a wall of separation between church and state.

The reason that that argument was made on the part of Thomas Jefferson to the other founding fathers was because he did not want to have a state that had only one religion that was the established, approved religion, and then persecuting everyone else.

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

That is the origin of separation of church and state. It was never to protect the state from the church; rather it was to protect the church from the state.

By the way you aren't going to learn this history in high school or college in the same way so you would have to do your own research. But the documents are there, and I have literally seen the letter myself of what Thomas Jefferson wrote. Many people believe that this is in the Constitution, but it is not. It was a court decision that was based on a letter written by Thomas Jefferson, but it is not in the Constitution, except in the form of the First Amendment which gives all of us the freedom to be able to worship as we please. And that was a byproduct of the persecution of the earliest days in the American colonies.

So that gives you some historical perspective on this. I wanted you to know that as it is important because today we see threats against it in a new and fresh way. I am not trying to scare anyone, but it is real. Unless you have been asleep in recent years you will have to admit that there has been a seismic shift in our nation in how Christianity, particularly evangelical Christianity, Bible based Christianity, is perceived. And we have entered a period, sometimes referenced as 'postmodern post-Christian.' Postmodernism is attached to this post-Christian decline.

So we decided back in the 1800s that God was not important, and that He was not part of our creation, therefore we were not divinely created supernaturally in His image, but that we are here because of some kind of cosmic fluke whereupon we evolved into existence. So when Mr. Darwin changed how we viewed God, it rippled all the way through from science to education to law, over a period of about a hundred years, as each new generation adopted it even deeper.

Today there is a generation who believes that there is no God, or if there is He is irrelevant, which is the fundamental premise of secular humanism, and secular humanism comes out of postmodern thinking. So when you believe that then anything goes and there are no absolutes. Right and wrong are a matter of opinion or politics. There are no absolute governances or principles on which you govern, but rather you govern by whim, convenience, pragmatism, on what works, and not by an absolute standard that has always been true, is true today, and always will be true for all people at all times and in all situations.

The Biblical worldview, the one established by the great rule maker Himself, the great designer Himself, He who predestined all of these things in His creation, has been made by them irrelevant. And in doing so, they have taken that which was stable, sure

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

and eternal, and turned it into chaos. And that is what we see happening morally, spiritually, economically and socially. Our homes are in distress, our relationships are tragic, promiscuity is everywhere and violence is increasing. We are constantly inventing new ways to define values that were always set and sure.

What happens when a nation steps away from absolute truth is we step away from God and we step into darkness and chaos and disorder. And with that, those who believe in truth become the problem. And in many parts of this country if you believe this book, if you believe in God, if you believe in truth, if you believe in absolute values, if you believe in certain rights and wrongs, you are now part of the problem.

Now I am not trying to go all conspiratorial on you, and I am not trying to imply the world is ending and we are all going to die. I am not trying to do that, but I do think we are unwise if we are not prepared for the battle that is to come. There is a battle that is coming, and our generation has been very, very comfortable with our protections, as have previous generations for a little over two hundred years in our nation's history. But those days are disappearing.

And do you know why I know they are? It is because we are moving away from truth and we are following the path of civilization around the world since the existence of civilization. Our natural drift is always away from God. And so the weird thing about the United States has been that we have lasted this long, and the reason we have lasted this long has been because we have followed Him longer than many other civilizations have in the past. So what am I saying? I am saying this - we better know what we believe and why we believe it, and we better follow the example of the early apostles, and we better look at how they prayed because when they prayed they said, *'Let us be bold! Let us be bold!'*

Now what does 'be bold' look like? What does it look like for us? And I am not going to tell you it looks the same for you as it does for me. For me, sometimes it is more public. For me, sometimes it involves being in a different place in the world because of my commitment and activity in international missions and training national pastors.

For you, it may be standing up for something at work. For you, it may be answering a question carefully but honestly, based on your beliefs that God's word and God Himself matters. For you, it may mean removing yourself from some environments. It may be refusing to participate in something you know is immoral,

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

illegal, unethical or unbiblical. It may be experiencing loss of opportunity, loss of relationships, loss of standing or loss of prestige.

But for all of us the question is - when we have a choice between being silent about the hope of our future, or being clear about the hope on which we build our entire lives from this day forward - will we be bold or not? I don't care if you are just twelve years old sitting in here, you are in middle school, and maybe tomorrow morning you might be in a situation where you will have friends, or maybe even teachers around you who are going to try to convince you that what you have learned and believe in your home from your mom and dad, or what you have learned and believe in church isn't right. They may tell you that it isn't true, that it is silly, that it is unsound, uneducated and that it keeps you from having fun.

And at some point you are going to have to say, *'Either I believe this stuff or I don't believe this stuff.'* Some of you guys are in high school, some of you are in college, and some of you are in my Life Group, and I know what you are going through. I hear your stories, and you are constantly being attacked over and over again for being 'one of those Christians,' who believe in absolutes, who believe there is a God and He matters.

Others of you may be older, you may be in a career, or you may be in a social circle where constantly everyone around you is living their lives to the beat of an uncertain drum, while you look at life with clarity through the absolute standard of the Word of God, and at times it causes relational dissonance. People misunderstand, and sometimes when they misunderstand, they get mean. They get cruel. They get threatened. And for you it may feel like persecution, and it may indeed be.

You see we need to be bold before the soldiers come. We need to be bold before prison awaits us. Many in generations past have faced opposition and then have gone to the gallows for executions, and we need to be bold before that. We can be bold today in our work places, in our homes, in our own communities, in our own social circles, and sometimes in our own families. So that is what we are going to look at as we go back to our Scripture for today. And we are going to do one of my very favorite things and that is just to go through it verse by verse. Let's let the Word of God say what the Word of God says. You don't need me adding a huge amount, I just hope to add some clarity to it, because the Word of God has a path, it is our *'Seri'* for going through these divisions. *'Turn right here, then turn left at the next corner.'* So let's let God speak to us through His Word and through the Holy Spirit.

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

I have told you before that I am a Christian college professor but I am also a doctoral mentor for a bunch of students working on their doctorates. So March 1<sup>st</sup> was the date they had to have their dissertations turned in for reading and the orals completed in order to march at the graduation in May. And my email chime kept ringing all day long Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup>. I am not exaggerating, but I have a stack of papers I printed out that is very, very deep. On the first page of every paper though is what is called a ‘thesis statement.’ You guys in high school and college probably know what I am talking about. By the way, if you ever want Pastor Dan to kind of give you a few pointers on writing a good thesis statement, please look me up. I love doing this kind of stuff. I know I am weird and need counseling but I enjoy doing it.

So as we look at the Scripture we need to look for the thesis statement. And the thesis statement in this passage is found in verse 29, and it is why they were praying. **“And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness.”** They were praying that they might have boldness. So all the verses before and all the verses around it are referencing the thesis which is that they wanted to be bold.

Look what they did in verse 23. **“When they were released, they went to their friends.”** Notice it did not say they went to their homes, nor did they hightail it out of town where it would be much safer. No, that is not what they did. **“When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.”** They went back to the people of God. They went back to the church, the infant church, the church that was growing so fast they couldn’t keep up with it, but these were ‘their people.’ They returned to their spiritual family.

And may I say this, many times in the face of opposition you are going to have a choice of whether you are going to run to, or run from, the people who love you most, who will be there for you. By the way, if you get overtaken in sin, if you mess up, if you make a gigantic poor life choice, Satan will always try to convince you to run away from the people who will love you the most. I have lost track over the years of how many times a young couple, often teenagers, start fooling around and the next thing you know someone is pregnant. And do you know what they do way too many times? They try to hide it and run away from the church. They are ashamed, they are embarrassed, and sometimes their choice is abortion. They end a life and then carry the guilt of that for the rest of their lives.

And I want you to hear something. I don’t care whether you are addicted, you have messed up, you have had an affair, somebody is pregnant, you have lied, you have

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

cheated, you have cops breathing down your neck, I don't care whether or not anyone else but you knows and it is tormenting you constantly, whatever your situation is don't run from Him, run toward Him. (*Applause.*) Don't run from His people; run for His people. Satan wants to tell you that those people will judge you, they will hate you, they will talk behind your back. If you want lies, Satan has a ton of them for you because he is the father of lies. But let me tell you the truth, if you mess up do you know what we are going to do? We are going to accept you where you are and love you to where you need to be. That is what we are going to do. (*Applause.*)

Don't compound your problem by running the wrong direction. You can't ever run so far away that you are not going to have to deal with it anyway. Who do you want to deal with it with you? How about some people who love you and love Jesus? I want every young person here to hear this - if you mess up someday, somebody gets pregnant, somebody gets expelled from school, somebody gets pulled over by the cops and you don't pass the breathalyzer test, whatever it is - don't run - come home because we will love you. And we will help you every step of the way. Do you know why? It is because every one of us has had a point in our lives where we needed a big dose of grace ourselves. So don't be afraid of that. And don't compound what Satan means for evil by running away from those who love you most and best. I promise you will never regret it if you do it.

So Peter and John went back to their people. Next look in verse 24, "***And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God.***" What is that? That is prayer. So the first thing they did is they went back to their spiritual family and the second thing they did was to pray. And you notice what they did - "***they lifted their voices together.***" Some versions say, 'with one accord.' Now they are not quoting a prayer, but what they are doing is they are in unanimity. They are praying out loud.

By the way I am going to park here for a second. I love the sound of spontaneous prayer. Ben and I actually did a podcast on prayer recently and I hope you will listen to it. So many times when we pray we pray around the room, and that is the way you learn to pray and I get that. I am not criticizing that, but at some point I have to admit that I have the attention span of a hummingbird, so about three words into your prayer I am doing a grocery list, or I am doing my 'to do' list. I am sorry, I don't think I have ADD, I just have a short attention span. I don't want to be medicated so that is what I call it.

And then usually you have someone when you are praying around the room who is praying to be heard by you and not by Him. So then they pray in the King James version. Have you ever heard people do that? '*Our gracious heavenly Father, God of*

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

*Abraham, Jacob and Isaac and Jehoshaphat and all the fat fellows and Rehoboam and Jeroboam and all the Boam boys.* I mean they just go all out because they want you to know what great Bible scholars they are. I do hope I didn't offend anyone by that.  
(*Laughter.*)

But there is something sweet about just getting in a room and not caring about who is listening, because you aren't talking to them anyway, and just talking to the Lord. I love praying with people on mission fields because I don't understand a word they are saying but I sure understand who they are talking to, and that is a beautiful thing.

And that is what was going on here. They were just all praying. We see it over and over in Scripture. Remember when Peter was in prison and the angel led him out. He knocked on the door of the house where his friends were praying, but no one could hear him but a little girl, because they were all praying out loud. They were just a bunch of crazy charismatic Christians or something talking to their God.

And here these people knew this was important and they were praying in unity and they were praying for boldness. By the way I have noticed that many times when I pray I am praying about me, and I hate it when I realize that. *'Lord, protect me and keep me from facing hard times.'* That is probably how I would have prayed there. *'Lord, bind Satan's agents. Put a hedge of protection about me.'* I am not quite sure what that hedge means when I hear that. In my mind a hedge is something that needs trimmed. *'Lord, spare me from the darts of Satan.'* I can get all like that, but the bottom line is I am praying all about me. *'Don't make me uncomfortable, Lord. Don't let people laugh at me. Don't let people threaten me. Let me always be able to sleep at night without having worries.'* And we pray about me, me, me.

That is not what Peter, John and the church prayed for. And I love this because I have learned so much about how this was a proactive challenging prayer. And it was a confident prayer, a declaration, a calling out and an appeal. *'I am not running from this opposition, Lord. I am here to do battle, so may I ask of you this for me, let me be bold.'* They were basically saying, *'Bring it! Give us your best shot Jewish rabbis, spiritual elite leaders and Roman centurions. Bring it, because I believe.'*

Tomorrow morning we are not going to be in the safety of this church. We are going to be on I-77, or we are going to be navigating the bus route to uptown, or we are going to be walking into the local school, or we are going to be in an office, and people are going to be talking about their weekend and who got high and who got drunk. You know what I am talking about. *'What did you do, Dan?'* *'Oh, I went to church.'* And

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

they may laugh, so how am I going to respond to that? And again I want to say this, if you are eight years old, eighteen years old, or forty-eight years old the bottom line is this: Christ calls us to be bold.

Why could Peter and John be bold? Well, let's look in the second part of verse 24. "***They lifted their voices together to God and said, 'Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them.'***" They could be bold because they believed in His supremacy. It says 'sovereign Lord' here and some translations say 'Christ Lord.' And the word Christ or Sovereign means 'God of all.' In other words they saw him for who He was and that is 'the one.' Not 'a one,' but 'the one,' the sovereign God.

Now why is that important? It is because all throughout the Old Testament and the New Testament we are reminded to "***Have no other gods,***' have nothing else more important. Have no idol, have nothing in a place superior to God. And they could pray for boldness because they believed that He was 'the one.'

Apologetics moment: there are those who believe that there is more than one way to Heaven. There are beliefs that say there are many gods; we just call him different names. There is an effort in postmodernism called Pluralism, better called Universalism, where all religions are equal. If we have to tolerate it, let's make them all equal, with none better than the other. So it is wrong for you to suggest that you are right and they are wrong, because your god is no better than their god.

Oh yes, He is!! There is one God, Jehovah God. Maybe you think that just sounds really dogmatic. Well, I am not quoting Dan, I am quoting the words of God and He is the great "***I AM.***" That's a period, and end of discussion. And Jesus reinforced it when He said, "***I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes to the Father but by me.***" Again, that a period, and end of discussion. That is the relief that you can feel. You don't have to defend that because they are not your words, not your opinion. Truth is truth, and all we are doing is saying, '*this is what I believe based on my view of God.*'

Now there have been different beliefs for generations, but that doesn't mean that I have to change my beliefs just to make someone else feel comfortable, or to make someone accept me. Truth is truth, and there is only one God. And that is why when these people got together they were reminded of that. Some knew about the stories of the Egyptians. Some knew of the Roman beliefs. Some were aware of the Greeks religion. All of these were polytheists with many gods. But the early church said, '*No, we have one God, Jehovah God, and Jesus, His Son is our Messiah.*'

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

The second thing we need to look at is found in verses 25 and 26, where it says: ***“Who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit.”*** So here is the intro, this is what came through David. And now we are going to quote the Old Testament:

***“Why did the Gentiles rage,  
And the peoples plot in vain?  
The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers were gathered together  
Against the Lord and against his Anointed.”***

So the second reason they were able to ask for boldness and to be confident was because they were knowledgeable of Scripture. They had history. They had the record. They were quoting Psalms 2 which was a Davidic Psalm. This is what happened even with David. Satan always wanted to disrupt the coming of the Messiah and that is why David was opposed, because Jesus was to be born through the lineage of David. Jesus was to sit on the throne of David and so that was important. So these people knew their Scripture, and because they knew the Scriptures, they had confidence, they had boldness.

Now let me ask you this question - do you know yours? I mean this is our only authority; otherwise it is just opinions. Do you know the Word of God? I am so excited, but then I am always excited, but I am really excited because we are planning 2020 already. I can't tell you what all we are going to do, but I can tell you this, by the end of 2020, we are going to have a whole new perspective on this book. We are making plans and it is going to be so exciting, because every time you open this book you draw closer to God. And I want to be closer to God next year than I am this year. And the key to that is to knowing Him, and if I know His Word than I know Him.

So because these people knew Him they could ask for boldness. They knew that He had given His servant David boldness. God protected him from those who would bring him down. And based upon that reputation, based upon that history, based upon that knowledge, and that recorded truth, they could ask Him to do it for them too.

Here is the third thing. They could also pray for boldness because of His suffering. Look in verse 27 where it says: ***“For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel.”*** They knew they could ask for boldness because their Savior had suffered for this so it is important to Him. Here in this city, the city of peace (Jerusalem - ‘salem’ meaning ‘the dwelling place of peace’) they knew what happened. The Romans, the Jews and the Gentiles conspired together to

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

murder the Messiah. And He found it worthy to die for us. When someone dies for you it ought to give you a sense of boldness. *‘If He loves me that much I can trust in Him, I can rest in Him, I can be confident in Him.’*

Now look in verse 28 if you would. ***“To do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.”*** So they believed in His supremacy, they had knowledge of Scripture, the example of His suffering and now they had confidence in His sovereignty. Notice what they said, ***“To do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined.”*** In other words, nothing comes to God as a surprise. He has already planned this.

Do you understand that God in His sovereign design realized that suffering is a part of the journey? And in that suffering we experience victory. Nobody likes the suffering, but we all like the victory. Right? And there is victory for us, there is victory around us, but most of all it is His victory that we are interested in. For His plan to be completed, for the final chapter to be written, for the story to be closed, some of us must suffer. *‘Well, that’s not fair.’* No one said life would be fair. That is not God’s fault; that is Satan’s fault, and it is our fault for following Satan.

But even in the midst of all of our mistakes, God still loved us enough to make a plan of escape. And the suffering will be worth it. Every mother who has ever given birth here today understands that the suffering is worth it. There is that moment in time when you are like, *‘No! I didn’t sign up for this. I am mad at you, I am mad at the doctor, I am mad at the nurses. I am mad at Eve. I am mad at Adam. I am mad at everybody, because this is not fun.’* But then something miraculous happens in the three feet difference between that nurse’s arms as she wraps that baby up and when she places it on your chest. And then it is like, *‘Ah, this was so worth it.’*

We used to sing an old gospel song, *‘It will be worth it all when we see Jesus.’* So no matter what you are going through, understand it is but for a time we labor, for a time we travail. The Bible tells us that the earth itself literally groans under the consequences of a fallen creation in sin. But it will be worth it all. Why - because He designed it so. He is sovereign. And He Himself suffered in His own design so that you and I could have eternal life.

Look in verse 30: ***“While you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”*** There is another reason we can have confidence in our prayer for boldness and that is because of the demonstrations of God’s strength. ***“All things were made by Him and by Him was***

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

*everything made that was made.*” His strength has no ending, and that is called omnipotent. And when we realize that we realize that there is nothing outside the purview of God, the power of God, the design of God, and we can rest in that, even as we are in labor, suffering and hurting.

And then finally look in verse 31: “*And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God.*” How? - “*with boldness.*” That’s because of the presence of His Spirit. And because you have the Holy Spirit in you, He will give you the boldness you need. Again, God may not be calling you in the same way He has called me, or how He has called the next person down the street. Some people God calls to sell everything and go to a mission field. I get that. Sometimes God calls people to be public proclaimers, prophetic voices railing against sin calling people to repentance. Not all of us, but some of us.

Some He has called into the work place. Some He has called into their own homes, to their own families, to their region. I am not going to tell you how God has called you, that is between you and His Holy Spirit. I am here to tell you that He has called all of us to Great Commission work, and to great commandment work. The great commandment is to love the Lord first, best, and always, and then love your neighbor as you love yourself. And then to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. And the world begins at our doorstep.

So what do we do with this? Well, three things, and then I will close. Number one - appropriate boldness comes from confidence in God and not from us. Remember this - appropriate boldness comes from confidence in God and not from us. Sometimes we like to listen to Satan who will always give us an excuse for being cowards rather than bold. He will tell you that you are not smart enough, not articulate enough, you don’t have enough education, you are not old enough, or you are not young enough. He will give you any number of reasons not to be bold.

And I am here to tell you that appropriate boldness is not about trusting yourself; it is about trusting Him. So wherever you are, and in whatever circumstances, remember these people were dealing with high up government officials and very educated leaders. In fact the Scripture noted in the early part of the chapter that they looked at Peter and John and couldn’t understand how these men could do what they had done because they were common fishermen. They were like factory workers, blue collar workers, they hadn’t been to college. They were just regular ordinary guys, but God used them to rock the world.

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

So please, please, please don't think because you didn't have the benefit of an education, or the benefit of a silver spoon in your mouth when you were born, or you have an accent, or whatever other excuse that Satan wants to give you that makes you feel less qualified than someone else to speak the truth. No, this is for all of us, because our confidence is not to be in us, it is to be in Him.

The second principle is this - we are not in charge of the outcome, just the obedience. This takes a huge load off of me and you as we do our ministry. I pastored a church once where I felt like every single Sunday I would line up, grit down, and then run as hard and fast as I could into a brick wall, whereupon I would lose consciousness for a few moments, get up, shake myself off and wonder why in the world that was so futile, and then be called to do it again and again and again. But you see my responsibility was never to be on the results, the outcome, it was always about being obedient, being faithful to the calling, and in realizing that it makes a huge relief. You don't have to worry about whether anyone listens to you, changes, notices, likes you, dislikes you; it doesn't matter. All we have to do is be faithful.

The last thing is this - embrace God's truth with boldness, not of personal opinions or preferences. Embrace God's truth with boldness. Don't embrace your opinions, your preferences, your style, your politics and all the other things we feel strongly about with boldness. And sometimes what we do is we embrace all of those other things with boldness, and then we don't embrace truth with boldness. Some of us are more emphatic about whether or not the Panthers have a good team or not than we are about whether the gospel is truth. Some of us feel far more strongly about politics than we do the gospel. I mean we will fight till our fingers bleed on the internet over some stupid little issue but we haven't told anyone about Jesus in months. So swap that. Let's embrace God's truth with zeal and boldness, and let somebody else argue about the other things, or certainly not at a level that is equal to our thirst for being bold with the truth.

So let me ask you this question. What does boldness look like in your life? What is your prayer life look like? Are you praying for boldness? Are you praying for opportunity? Are you praying for confidence? Or are you praying for comfort and ease and relief? I wonder what we might be able to accomplish for the kingdom of God if all of us meant it, came together, and said, '*Lord, make me bold, not for my sake, not for my comfort, but for your kingdom's sake.*' Well, we know what would happen if we did that because we have read the rest of the book of Acts. And when I come back next time to preach in a month or so, the Acts church is about to go viral. Let's pray.

**BE BOLD! - ORIGINS SERIES**  
**PART 1- THE WAY CHURCH SHOULD BE**  
**Dan Burrell**

---

*Father, we love you. Thank you for this example of boldness by Peter and John and help us apply it to our lives today. Help us to understand that we are not responsible for the outcome, but we are responsible for being obedient. Father, help us to pray and ask for boldness, not comfort and ease. And Father, help us remember that confidence comes from you and realize when we do things in your power they matter for eternity. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.*

*The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.*