

## TALK IT OVER

## **BOLD FAITH IN A BACKLASH WORLD**

### **ICEBREAKER**

What's a time you spoke up when it was hard—or stayed silent and wished later you had spoken? (Examples: speaking up for someone being treated unfairly, telling a friend the truth, saying nothing and regretting it later)

### **INTRODUCTION**

Sometimes the hardest time to speak is when it matters most. In Acts 3-4, Peter and John faced a crowd that once terrified them. Instead of hiding, they **stand up, speak up, and point to Jesus**. What changed? They were transformed by the **power of the Holy Spirit**. When you've been with Jesus, you don't fear the crowd.

### **READ | Faith to Uplift**

*“Peter said, ‘Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’”*  
— Acts 3:6 (NIV)

When Peter instructed the crippled man to walk, this miracle didn't happen during a church service, but on their way to the temple. God often moves during the in-between moments when we're just living our everyday life.

That's why it's so important to live with a heart that's ready and available, not just on Sundays, but in the middle of errands, commutes, or conversations. When we're distracted or focused on ourselves, we can miss the moments the Spirit wants to use.

### **How can you prepare your heart so God can use your “in-between” moments?**

(Examples: filling up with God's Spirit by attending church/small group weekly, or playing worship music in your car/office, etc.)

### **READ | Faith to Credit God**

*“Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we made this man walk?”*  
— Acts 3:12 (NIV)

In ancient Jewish culture, many believed only prophets or priests could perform miracles. But here, *two fishermen* are doing it in Jesus' name. That was scandalous—and **powerful**. Peter doesn't take credit, but rather points people to Jesus. Let your spotlight become *His* spotlight.

**Have you ever shared with others about the miracles or goodness of God, even when you weren't sure how it would be received? If so, share an example. When something good happens in life, how can you let others know it was God helping you?** (Example: Sharing how prayer lead you to a unique solution to a problem)

### **READ | Faith to Be Courageous**

*"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said... 'It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth... this man stands before you healed.' ... When they saw the courage... they were astonished and took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

— Acts 4:8, 10, 13 (NIV)

The Sanhedrin (Jewish high council) had the power to imprison, beat, or pressure the disciples. This is the same court that condemned Jesus and pressured Pilate to have Him crucified. But Jesus' disciples stood boldly before them. What made the difference? **They had been with Jesus.** Spending time with Jesus changes everything—it turns cowards courageous.

**What helps you personally "be with Jesus," and how does it affect your confidence?** (Examples: worship music, prayer walks, reading Scripture, etc.)

### **READ | Faith to Be Obedient**

*"We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard."*

— Acts 4:20 (NLT)

In ancient Rome, speaking out, especially about faith, could bring rejection or even persecution. Peter and John knew the risks, but they spoke anyway. They weren't trying to offend—they were simply obeying God.

Today, you may not face jail time, but you might face criticism, awkwardness, or being misunderstood. In those moments, lean on God's strength, not your own. **Don't trade obedience for acceptance.** One day, we'll all stand before Jesus, and in that moment, His approval will matter far more than anyone else's opinion. Let's live now in a way we won't regret later.

**Have you ever been nervous to talk about Jesus? What helped you, or what could help you?** (Examples: asking your mentor or your small group to pray for you, praying for courage and wisdom, etc.)

### **WHAT WILL YOU DO?**

- Spend time with Jesus, and share about Him with others this week.
- Ask God for the courage to be bold and get water baptized, if you haven't yet.
- Write down someone God has put on your heart and pray for them daily.

## **CLOSE IN PRAYER**

Jesus, thank You for giving us courage through Your Spirit. Sometimes we stay silent when we should speak, but we don't want to live in fear. Please fill us again with boldness. Please use our words, our lives, and even our weaknesses to shine Your light to the person You want us to reach. In Jesus' name, amen.

### **DAILY DEVOTION SCRIPTURES**

**Day 1:** For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. — **2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV)**

**Day 2:** When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say. — **Luke 12:11–12 (NIV)**

**Day 3:** After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. — **Acts 4:31 (NIV)**

**Day 4:** Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel... — **Ephesians 6:19–20 (NIV)**

**Day 5:** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. — **Joshua 1:9 (NIV)**