

Bold as a Lion

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Solomon wrote, "The righteous are bold as a lion" (Pro. 28:1). The lion is called "king of beasts" because he fears nothing. One of the qualities that was responsible for the spread of the Gospel so dramatically in the beginning was the boldness of the saints. Paul asked the Ephesians to pray that he might speak boldly, as he ought to (Eph. 6:19–20). Courage is admired and cannot be ignored, even by one's enemies. Thus, the Sanhedrin marveled at the boldness of Peter and John (Acts 4:13). When the great Restoration Movement swept like a prairie fire across the frontiers of our nation in the 19th century there was a distinct boldness that characterized its proclaimers. Never has a man or a movement attracted any significant following without this trait. Churchill was right when, during the dark days of World War II, he said, "Courage is the virtue that makes other virtues possible." The noblest convictions are suspect and ineffective if they are kept timidly hidden away, unpreached or unpracticed. What will boldness for God cause us to do?

It will make us act right when others are acting wrong. It takes boldness, courage, to be different from the world. Daniel knew the risk of praying, but in spite of this he did it. He had no assurance that he would be delivered from the lions, only that he would be thrown to them. Boldness made him act right when all of the pressure was to compromise and he became literally as "bold as a lion"; in fact, several of them. All of us, both old and young, have known the pressure of the world or of close friends, to do wrong. The challenge is to reach down and come up with some boldness and courage that refuses to let wrong intimidate us in what we know is right. Remember, we are not to be shaped by the world, but by the Word (Rom. 12:2).

It will make us stand up when others fall. It is easy to become discouraged and quit. I can think of many who were once faithful, but are now out in the world again, totally insensitive to spiritual matters. I can think of others who were once active in some good work, but they became offended, or the work got to be "too hard," so all they do now is warm a pew occasionally. There will always be those who grow weary and give up, but the Lord delights in those who continue to stand when others have fallen.

An obvious trait of the early saints was their willingness to speak out. They didn't try to hide the fact that they were members of the church of Christ but preached boldly in the name of the Lord (Acts 9:27–29). The evils of today demand a bold, loud outcry from the righteous. Are we righteous?

[**Note:** I wrote this article for and it was published in *The Edifier*, weekly bulletin of Pearl Street Church of Christ, Denton, TX, November 18, 1982, of which I was editor.]

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