

Love Boldly

Be Brave.

Introduction

Love Boldly. Why? Because true bravery, the kind Jesus exhibited, is only inspired by Love.

There is such a thing as selfish, or stupid, bravery, which is not what I'm talking about... done for the sake of ego or personal thrill.

Examples:

- eating [puffer fish sushi](#).
- daredevil falls off 62 story building ([article](#))

In looking at the bravery Jesus exhibited, "it was always about the person. About what was going to wake them up, point them to God, draw them into the wild and beautiful Kingdom. Bravery isn't bravery if your ego and need to be right get in the way. True bravery is bold love. True bravery is being like Jesus." P.74

(Article here with Attributes and quotes about courage: [Psychology Today.](#))

Big Question: Are we willing to take risks, move past our fear, for the sake of showing Jesus' love to the people in our lives?

Take a minute to think of the most courageously loving person you know. What do they do that shows you courage? What do you think is the motive of their courage?

Embracing Everyday Interactions

Jesus was the bravest person that ever lived. To be like him in our conversations and relationships requires that we risk for the sake of love at times, opening ourselves up to awkwardness, misunderstanding, and loss of control.

Biblical Text Options

John 4 – Samaritan woman at the well – Jesus Risks Reputation

How incredibly inappropriate for Jesus to be speaking with a Samaritan woman at all, especially when she was alone with no one to vouch for him? And, it wasn't just a few necessary words...Jesus initiated, and carried on, a lengthy



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Biblical Text Options (cont.)

and deep conversation with this “questionable” woman. John’s description that the “disciples were surprised” when they returned and found him talking with her does not adequately convey the shock they would have felt that a rabbi was talking to a woman about deep spiritual truths, and a Jew with a Samaritan! All sorts of religious and cultural boundaries were being broken by Jesus. Had there been an “Enquirer Magazine” at the time, this would have been front page fodder. So, why? Why would Jesus risk what seems like unnecessary loss of reputation and potentially, credibility? Here are a few ideas, I’m sure you can come up with more...

- To restore the dignity of a woman rejected and maligned by her community (even if for “good reason” according to local culture)
- To release the God-given, but buried, gifts of influence and evangelism in her.
- To demonstrate a new way to his followers by dismantling the prevailing religious and cultural lies about the value and role of women in the eyes of God.

Matthew 16:21-26 – “Get Behind Me Satan” – Jesus Risks Friendship

Seems kind of harsh, doesn't it? After all, Peter had just announced Jesus as Messiah, revealed by God himself. And, isn't it kind of sweet, Peter loves Jesus and doesn't want to hear talk of Jesus suffering. Seems so very understandable. But Jesus goes ahead and calls him Satan. Wow! Why would Jesus risk hurting, and possibly losing, a best friend? Some possibilities...

- Love for the world, which required commitment to fulfilling the will of his Father.
- Love and concern for Peter, those hearing the conversation, and those Peter would lead in the future. That they would not be deceived.
- Jesus knew what was in Peter's heart...perhaps over-confidence, pride, or his propensity for brash, emotional responses

John 2:13-25 – Jesus Clears the Temple – Jesus Risks His Life

To enter the bulls eye of religious power at Passover, wielding a whip and claiming God as father, would have seemed a foolish move to anyone valuing his life. But, not to Jesus. Looking foolish seemed to be the least of his fears when he entered the temple and turned over the tables of the money changers and sellers. Why?

- Good question. At no other place do we read of Jesus being violent (wielding whips).



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Biblical Text Options (cont.)

- Zeal for his father's house consumed him, as prophesied. He probably didn't plan in advance to do this.
- These people were misrepresenting the heart of God, in the name of God to people, many of them poor, who had come at great financial cost to worship God... and that was NOT OKAY.

Application

How do we grow in being brave enough to do the most loving thing, to move past our fear and insecurity and into the bold and risky love that Jesus modeled for us? The book offers several suggestions.

- Find your Barley Field
- Stand Alone (When Necessary)
- Say Something Crazy
- Be Full of Grace (and Truth)
- Relinquish Control

Stories or example from leader/preacher about courageous love:

- When were you afraid, but risked for the sake of love and obedience to God, and love for others...and the "results" were known and positive?
- When did you risk, and the "results" seemed negative, or you never knew, or you experienced some pain as a result of the risk you took, or you later realized you were actually in error?

Closing

Before leaving today, lets take a moment to be quiet. Before God and one another, is there a place of fear in your life that is holding you back from the wildly loving life God has for you? Let's pray and ask God to give us wisdom and courage to walk forward in his way.

Encourage them, if something came to mind, to speak about it with a wise and trusted friend, and seek accountability to act.

