

SESSION 2 - HIDDEN BOLDNESS



Breaking the hard ground of insecurity & conformity

LEADER'S NOTES

Key Scriptures:

Ephesians 3:11–12 (ESV); 4:1–16 (NIV); Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Testimony discussion:

Can you describe a moment when God met your obedience and empowered you to be bold beyond your own strength?



This week we explore hidden boldness. In Scripture, boldness is closely tied to our identity in Christ and the confidence his presence gives us.

We often mistake boldness as a character trait that we either possess or lack. But boldness is something we receive as a gift that takes root within us as God unearths the places that feel hesitant and unsure. The Holy Spirit strengthens us from within so that boldness grows to be part of who we are in Christ. God has already placed gifts and callings within each of us and boldness often grows in the places where he has equipped us to serve. This is boldness shaped by Christ and formed for his purposes.

Two major barriers to living out our God-given boldness are insecurity and conformity.

- **Pause & Reflect:** In what ways does insecurity stop you from being bold or cloud your sense of identity in Christ?
- **Pray:** Welcome the Holy Spirit into these areas of struggle in your hearts. Invite the presence of God to renew boldness in you throughout this session.
- **Read: Ephesians 4:1–16**
- **Study:** From this passage, what makes for a secure faith community?
- **Apply:** How then can we strengthen our assurance in our God-given gifts and awareness of sound teachings, to avoid being 'tossed back and forth... blown here and there'?



Activity: Send out a free APEST test (fivefoldministry.com) before meeting together and discuss your findings as a group, or complete it together. The APEST test can help to identify our gifts from the Ephesians 4 list of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors (or shepherds) and teachers. Growing in confidence of our place in the body of Christ and how we can best contribute can help assure us and cultivate boldness as we live in the fullness of Christ, emboldened by his Spirit.

BOLDNESS



Just as the Ephesian believers were surrounded by strong cultural influences, we too can feel the pull to blend in rather than stand apart. **Conformity can feel safer than conviction.** Over time, this gradual shrinking back can cause the boldness God has placed within us to settle beneath the surface.

Pause & Reflect:

- Where have you given in to cultural norms / social pressures, preventing you from stepping beyond your comfort zone with God?
- Are there any convictions you've ignored, that God is asking you to be obedient to?



'Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.'

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Into these hidden places, God offers a gentle invitation. He sees where boldness has been stifled or silenced and calls us to bring these tender places before him so that he can renew boldness in us afresh. Ephesians 3:11–12 (ESV) reminds us that boldness begins not with us but with Jesus, 'This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realised in Christ Jesus our Lord, **in whom we have boldness** and access with confidence through our faith in him.'

Spiritual Practice – Meditation

Use the journal provided to support in facilitating this time.

'What happens in meditation is that we create the emotional and spiritual space which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart.'

**— Richard J Foster,
Celebration of Discipline**

Background Music

Play this acoustic version of Oceans by Hillsong United, for the duration. The journal allows space to meditate upon the lyrics of the Bridge.

If you would like more time, play Here as in Heaven, Acoustic, by Elevation Worship.

Create space for personal prayer and meditation, dwell in his renewing presence. Encourage people to ask God the brave questions of what areas he is calling them to be bold in and what areas of conformity he needs them to leave behind.

Spirit-empowered boldness leads us into a holy unknown. God often calls us to what feels 'too big' for us to accomplish so that we must rely on his strength and empowerment. It is in our obedience and security in God that we can step into his will, which takes us to a place of sweet dependency. It is in this holy unknown that we truly encounter the God who can do it all.





SESSION 2 - HIDDEN BOLDNESS

JOURNAL



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Pray: Welcome the Holy Spirit into these areas of struggle in your hearts. Invite the presence of God to renew boldness in you throughout this session.

Read: Ephesians 4:1-16

Study: From this passage, what makes for a secure faith community?

Apply: How then can we strengthen our assurance in our God-given gifts and awareness of sound teachings, to avoid being 'tossed back and forth... blown here and there'? What has your APEST result helped you understand about your giftings?

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Romans 12:2 (NIV)



Where have you given in to cultural norms / social pressures, preventing you from stepping beyond your comfort zone with God?

Spiritual Practice - Meditation

'What happens in meditation is that we create the emotional and spiritual space which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart.'

— **Richard J Foster, Celebration of Discipline**



Song: 'Oceans' by Hillsong

Bridge Lyrics

Spirit lead me where my trust is
without borders.
Let me walk upon the waters,
wherever you would call me.
Take me deeper than my feet
could ever wander,
and my faith will be made
stronger,
in the presence of my Saviour.

Spirit-empowered boldness
leads us into a holy unknown.
God often calls us to what
feels 'too big' for us to
accomplish so that we must
rely on his strength and
empowerment. It is in our
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will, which takes us to a place
of sweet dependency. It is in
this holy unknown that we
truly encounter the God who
can do it all.

God,

Where are you leading me to trust you?
Where are you calling me to act with boldness?
What comfortable areas are you asking me to move out of?
Where do you need to convict me?

