

right where He wants us

The People of God in Times Like These

Boldly Unafraid

Joel Osteen in interview with Larry King in June 2005 ... When King asked him whether people of other faiths who don't believe in Christ would go to heaven, Osteen replied,

"You know, I'm very careful about saying who would and wouldn't go to heaven. I don't know. . . . Well, I don't know if I believe they're wrong. I believe here's what the Bible teaches and from the Christian faith this is what I believe." Later when asked about atheists going to heaven, he added, "I'm going to let God be the judge of who goes to heaven and hell. I just—again, I present the truth, and I say it every week. You know, I believe it's a relationship with Jesus. But you know what? I'm not going to go around telling everybody else if they don't want to believe that that's going to be their choice. God's got to look at your own heart. God's got to look at your heart, and only God knows that."

Contemporary Christian recording artist **Lauren Daigle** ... During a radio interview, she was asked, "Do you feel that homosexuality is a sin?" Here's how she replied:

"You know what, I can't honestly answer on that, in the sense of, I have too many people that I love that, they are homosexual. I don't know. I actually had a conversation with someone last night about it, and I was like, "I can't say one way or the other. I'm not God." So when people ask questions like that, that's what my go-to is. Like, I just say, read the Bible and find out for yourself. And when you find out, let me know, because I'm learning too."

Carl Lentz, formerly of Hillsong NYC appeared on The View in 2017 where he utterly failed to give a direct answer to Joy Behar's direct question about abortion:

"That's the kind of conversation we would have finding out your story, where you're from, what you believe ... God's the judge. People have to live to their own convictions. That's such a broad question, to me, I'm going higher. I want to sit with somebody and say, 'What do you believe?'"

"So it's not an open and shut case to you?" Joy Behar, one of The View's hosts, asked.

"Some people would say it is," Lentz responded. *"I'm trying to teach people who Jesus is first, and find out their story. Before I start picking and choosing what I think is sin in your life, I'd like to know your name."*

Chris Pratt after being called out in a tweet by actor Ellen Page for belonging to an evangelical church:

"It has recently been suggested that I belong to a church which hates a certain group of people and is infamously anti LGBTQ. Nothing could be further from the truth. I go to a church that opens their doors to absolutely everyone. Despite what the Bible says about my divorce, my church community was there for me every step of the way, never judging, just gracefully accompanying me on my walk. They helped me tremendously, offering their love and support. It is what I have seen them do for others on countless occasions, regardless of sexual orientation, race, or gender. My faith is important to me, but no church defines me or my life, and I'm not a spokesman for any church or any group of people. My values define who I am. We need less hate in this world, not more. I am a man who believes that everyone is entitled to love who they want free from the judgment of their fellow man."

Martin Luther, Quoted in Parker T. Williamson, *Standing Firm: Reclaiming Christian Faith in Times of Controversy*:

"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all the battlefield besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point."

4 And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ² greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. ⁵ On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, ⁶ with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. ¹⁴ But seeing the man who was healed standing beside them, they had nothing to say in opposition. ¹⁵ But when they had commanded them to leave the council, they conferred with one another, ¹⁶ saying, "What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign has been performed through them is evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ But in order that it may spread no further among the people, let us warn them to speak no more to anyone in this name." ¹⁸ So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

¹⁹ But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, ²⁰ for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."

²¹ And when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way to punish them, because of the people, for all were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man on whom this sign of healing was performed was more than forty years old.

²³ When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ 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, ²⁵ who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

" 'Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed'—

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, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

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 with boldness.

Acts 4:1-31

BOLDNESS

Confidence that what I have to say or do is true and right and just in the sight of God

Boldness ...

... comes from an immovable conviction regarding the _____:

He is who He _____ to be

He did what he _____ to do

His is able to _____ and _____

He has _____ ME.

He _____ is King.

... is an _____ of a Christian in a _____:

That doesn't believe God or often *in* God

That opposes our _____, our _____, and our _____

That wants us to go _____

... is reinforced by unflinching confidence in _____, who is _____:

Who has us right where He wants us, even if we are _____ or _____

Who is orchestrating _____ and _____

Who has a _____ to be His _____

Who is still _____

... is the result of living under the influence and in the power of _____:

Who does not give us a spirit of _____

Who fills us with right _____

Who enables our _____

Who empowers our _____

Our boldness needs to include ...

Our _____

Our _____

Our _____

Boldness has but one opposite: _____.

It is utterly compatible with *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.* (Galatians 5:22-23)