



No Plan B: Spiritual Boldness in 2024

Daily Devotional Guide/Notes: Dec 31, 2023

QUESTION #1: On a scale of 1 to 10, how bold are you? Circle your answer below. (1 is low, 10 is high)

1 -- 2 -- 3 -- 4 -- 5 -- 6 -- 7 -- 8 -- 9 -- 10

Why did you answer the way that you did? What makes you bold or keeps you more on the timid side? Write your answer below:

QUESTION # 2: If you woke up tomorrow with no fear, absolutely zero, what would you attempt to do in life? What have you always wanted to do, but been afraid of? What changes would you make? What chances would you take? Jot your answer down below:

QUESTION #3: Slightly different – if you woke up tomorrow with zero fear, what would you attempt to do *FOR THE LORD*? Again, write a thought or two below:

As we head into the new year of 2024, many of us might be tempted to make resolutions, because we think it's what we're supposed to do or because we

feel like slackers if we don't. But according to a recent article by Forbes magazine, for those who make resolutions:

- 8% last one month
- 22% last two months
- 22% last three months
- 13% last four months
- 43% of people acutally EXPECT to give up in the first month

WHAT IF: What if, instead of making resolutions, we prayed over and chose a WORD to live by as a “guiding principle” for the year. What if that word was “boldness?”

BACKUP PLANS HOLD US BACK:

So often, we live life with a backup plan, a “**PLAN B**,” if you will, that keeps us from living fully for the Lord. We are scared of what might happen if we really lean into what He asks us to do, or if we actually make good on our plans and promises to Him.

Someone in the Bible who DID NOT have a Plan B was Elisha. Let's look at his story: Read 1 Kings 19:15-21.

- Elisha was wealthy. He was driving the last of twelve pair of oxen for his family's farmland. This would have signified he came from money, and possibly prestige.
- Elijah came and tapped Elisha as his successor, which gave Elisha two choices: make excuses, or follow God's plan.
- Elisha marked his choice to follow God's plan with boldness: he slaughtered his oxen and burned them on the farm equipment they were attached to. *In short:* he killed the cows and burned the plows. Elisha didn't want *anything* to hold him back from what God was calling him to do.

WHAT KEEPS US FROM BOLDNESS: Four Barriers In his 2009 book Counterfeit Gods, pastor and author Tim Keller identifies four “source idols” – the root idols we put in front of God. These are NOT the “surface idols”

of money or pornography or alcohol, but rather the root of the problem – the TRUE desire behind the visible issue. For our causes today, I am going to call these the “Four Barriers to Boldness.” These are the main things that keep us from living boldly. They are the human desires we MUST give up if we are to live boldly for Christ's “Plan A” for our lives!

1. **Approval** – I only have value and my life only has worth if other people approve of me, so I will do the things that gain me their approval. You are a people-pleaser, you will put aside what you know is good or right or beneficial so that other people in your life give you their stamp of approval. Your greatest fear is not being needed. You don't take bold steps because people might think you're weird.
 - a. How to tell if you're stuck behind the APPROVAL barrier:
 - i. You're always worried if everyone is happy.
 - ii. You are worried about what everyone around you thinks.
 - iii. If someone around you needs help, but doesn't ask you, you feel insulted or worried that they don't like you anymore.
 - iv. You have a lot of trouble saying, “no,” and setting boundaries
2. **Control** – This is a big one. Who will be brave enough to come out and say that you're a “control freak?” People who are caught in this trap have to have everything their way. You need the reassurance that things will go “just so,” or else everything will fall apart. It boils down to a fear that things won't go the right way or the way that you feel would be best for everyone involved. Uncertainty is your worst nightmare. A lack of control leads to worry, which makes you double down and try to control

things even more. People stuck in this trap try to manage every aspect of not just their own lives, but also the lives of everyone around them. You don't take bold steps because there's too much uncertainty involved.

- a. How to know if you are stuck behind the CONTROL barrier:
 - i. You always have to drive
 - ii. You always have to be in charge of the remote control
 - iii. You have to do things yourself because "everyone around you is an idiot!"
 - iv. Your greatest fear is not having a plan.
3. **Comfort** – I think, after control, this is the next big one for most of us. People stuck behind the Comfort barrier seek safety and comfort above all else. Life will only be good if you have a certain amount of money in the bank, if you have a certain size house, if your kids have everything they want. You want a life free of stress and expectations from other people. You don't get to know people because people are a lot of work. People around you get frustrated because you often try to put in the least amount of work possible, either physically or relationally. You don't take bold steps because it causes personal risk and effort.
 - a. How to know if you're stuck behind the
4. **Power** – This is the cousin to the Control barrier. My life only has meaning if I have authority, if I have power over others, if I have the upper hand, if I can make much of myself. These people always have to be the leader. They don't know how to follow. EVERYTHING IS A COMPETITION to them. Their theme song is (young people help me out, here), "All I do is win, win, win, no matter what, what, what..." (thanks, DJ Khaled). If this is you, your greatest fear is humiliation. One pastor put it like this, "If

you worship the Power Idol, for you, it's not just about winning, it's about NOT LOSING."

- a. How to know if you are stuck behind the POWER barrier:
 - i. You find yourself angry often. Not righteous anger, but rather, a "how dare this person do that to me," kind of anger. You're not worried about injustice in the world, you're worried about injustice towards YOU.
 - ii. You have an addiction to the high that comes with things like gambling, but feel absolutely crushed when you lose.
 - iii. You will make your own child WEEP to win a game of UNO. "That's just life. No one's gonna hand them anything in life." No, maybe you're just a jerk.

WHICH BARRIER HOLDS YOU BACK MOST OFTEN?
Circle it.

NOW THAT WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THESE BARRIERS TO BOLDNESS, LET'S LOOK AT HOW TO OVERCOME THEM!

1. **ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR BARRIER.** Which one of those four barriers seems like it resonates with you the most? Acknowledge it. Name it. Write it down. Ask the Lord to remove that need, that idol, that barrier, and change your heart so you desire HIM and HIS WILL more than that other thing. What is the PLAN B you've been holding onto?
2. **PRAY BOLD PRAYERS.** I think the thing that holds us back the most is that our prayers are safe. "God, keep me safe. God, bless me with things. God, remove any obstacles in my path." What if our prayers were more DANGEROUS? That sounds weird, I know. But what if, WHAT IF, our prayers were more like, "God, take MY BARRIER out of the equation. Show me what YOU want

me to accomplish for you and give me the BOLDNESS to go after it!"

PARENTS, what if instead of, "Lord, protect my child," we started praying "Lord, make my child dangerous to the devil. Make them fearless for you. Help me steer them towards YOUR plan for their life, and not my own." Do we TRUST the Lord enough to pray those kinds of prayers?

3. **LOOK FOR EVERYDAY MOMENTS TO LEAN IN.** If we pray these prayers, God WILL bring the opportunities for us. Look for those moments when God answers your BOLD PRAYERS, and LEAN IN TO THEM.

Let's revisit that question from earlier: If you woke up with ZERO fear tomorrow, what would attempt FOR THE LORD?

What can you do to live out God's "Plan A" with boldness?

Items of Note:

New January Series - Revelation Resolution: Begin with the End in Mind! We invite you to start the new year on the right foot and join us for an expositional study on the book of Revelation and end times prophecy, beginning January 14th.

Discipleship Pathways - We will be holding Discipleship Pathways sessions in the new year, Jan 14th - Feb 4th on Sundays 9:30-10:30 am. Whether you're exploring a relationship with God or a long-time believer, this is an excellent resource to grow your faith.

We hope everyone at LP will take these classes at least 1x, as what is covered is absolutely essential to understand if you want to have a meaningful, powerful personal walk with the Lord. Registration is open now through January 1st. Space is limited so sign up today via the church website on the events page or contact James Coffman for more information (james@lifepointfellowship.com).

Sunday Prayer Group - Every Sunday, 9-9:15, in the 4-5 grade classroom. New faces always welcome. Led by Carole Sisterson. Contact Mary Anne Collins for details, corriendo01@gmail.com.

Get Connected in a LifeGroup, get Faith Mentor, learn about Discipleship Pathways. Contact James@LifePointFellowship.com

Coffee with the Pastor for God questions, baptism questions, discipleship questions. Email Pastor@LifePointFellowship.com

Counseling Scholarships to the Hope and Growth Center always available. If interested, email Pastor@LifePointFellowship.com

- Name the "Good" around you (Gen 1:31, "And God saw that it was good.")

a. What do you see that God has made that is good today in the creation?

- Participate: Lift Up the "Good in You" with the "Good In Creation" in worship

3 - Confess Your Sins

a. What have you done that is wrong? (From works to 7 Deadly sins)

b. What have you left undone that would have been right?

4 - Give Thanks to God for your Blessings (name them)

5 - Make Your Requests to God

a. for other people who are on your heart

- include your church leadership and family

- include people you know who need to accept

Christ/get right with Him

b. Make requests to God for yourself

2. Time of Listening to God through His Words

Read through the daily scripture passages, with the goal to "hear from God" on any point you feel relates to you. Stop and reflect on those truths.

Jan 1 Mon – 1 Kings 19 **Jan 2 Tues** – Col 1 **Jan 3 Wed** – 2 Pet 1:1-15

Jan 4 Thur – Eph 2 **Jan 5 Fri** – Col 3:1-17 **Jan 6 Sat** – Joshua 1

3. Closing Prayer + The Lord's Prayer

DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

HABIT 1 of Faithful Discipleship: Have a daily devotional.

How? 3 Steps:

I. Work through the 5 Prayer Forms

1 - Begin w/Centering Prayer

- Mt 11:28-30, Name and Release your burdens/distractions to Christ

- Psalm 46:10, Consciously seek to clear your mind and "Be Still"

2 - Intentionally Glorify (worship) the Lord

- involves your participation by glorifying God, adoration, praise and worship

- Name the "Good" within you (the specific "fruit" you are experiencing

today, like peace, or love, or joy, or hope, faithfulness, goodness, etc.)