

Be A Brave Adventurer by Jeff Strite

1 Peter 3:8-3:17

(We opened with a video by our children's minister which integrated Stephen Curtis Chapman's "The Great Adventure" with clips from the Indiana Jones movies - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ag4MXV8yqb4> till time stamp: 2:58)

As Christians, God saved us to go on a great adventure.
God has called us to be bold and brave adventurers.

According to one of the dictionaries I read, an adventurer is:

"Someone who likes dangerous or exciting experiences.

"A person who seeks adventure."

"A person willing to take risks."

Synonyms you might use for "adventurers" are:

- Swashbuckler,
- Hero/heroine,
- Traveler,
- Voyager,
- Explorer,
- Pathfinder,
- Pioneer.

ILLUS: Back when I was in the Purdue Glee Club I had the opportunity to go overseas to Europe - and for many of us in the Glee Club THAT was a great adventure. The first night, we sang in Vienna in a concert hall where one of the great composers of the Middle Ages had performed. After the concert a few of us decided to walk back to the hotel... and we promptly got lost. But we had so much fun getting lost we decided to get lost in every other city we visited. One of the cities we explored was while in Europe was Budapest – a city still behind the Iron Curtain at the time, and firmly inside the Soviet Union's control.

At one time Budapest was actually two cities: Buda... and Pest (seriously). And those cities were divided by the river Danube. In the middle of the Danube was an island called "Elizabeth's Island", and one day some of my friends and I went to the island sight-seeing (complete with cameras and binoculars).

On that island there was a city park... and in the park was a track where several young

men were practicing for a race. We were told they were practicing for a track meet with Austria the next week. From a distance I could tell that these men were carrying odd batons, so I asked a friend for binoculars and focused in on them. What I saw shocked me. The batons the racers were carrying were machine guns (apparently they had no intention of letting the competition get ahead).

Later that day we ventured into the main city and were admiring the beautiful buildings. At one point we were walking along the sidewalk beside an imposing building on our left. One of the things that puzzled us was a plastic chain link fence along sidewalk. We had no idea why it was there until we heard a man shout "NYET!" We were so startled we jumped over the fence and turned to face a stern Russian soldier with a machine gun. Unknowingly we had been walking beside a prison... and the soldier was not happy about it.

For the college students in the Glee Club, going to Europe was an adventure. An adventure in a foreign and exotic land. But were we "Brave adventurers"???

Nah.

We were nowhere near being brave.

And were just sight seers. And we were shocked to find a dangerous and forbidding land where soldiers and track stars all seemed to carry weapons. We were nowhere near being "bold". In fact, we were so obviously "just kids" that the soldier was probably having a little fun with us.

But now, as Christians, God has called us to be bold adventurers.

He's called us to face certain danger.

He's called us to go on a mission... a mission to show this world exactly what Christianity is all about.

Jesus described us this way: "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:13-16

I used salt to season my food. And I turn on lights to light up a room.

But if salt and light don't fulfil their purpose - if they're hidden away and not used - they are literally USELESS to me.

And that's what Jesus was saying to us in the Sermon on the Mount: We've been called to fulfill a purpose. We've been called to be more than just a bunch of folks who sit inside the 4 walls of a church building and just sit there. We've been called to be bold in our faith and to share that faith in Jesus with others.

We have a mission.

We have a bold adventure set before us.

Ephesians 2:10 says it this way: "we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

So what is this that God has called us to do?

What is the bold adventure He's set before us?

As I studied our text for this morning I came to the conclusion that it consists of 3 basic parts:

- To LIVE our faith
- To be BOLD in our faith.
- And to be prepared to give an ANSWER for our faith.

First God calls us to EAGERLY LIVE our faith.

1 Peter 3:13 implies that God looks for us to be "... eager to do good" and 1 Peter 3:8-11 tells us what that eagerness should look like "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. etc."

This is the listing of the kind of things we should be known for. We should:

- Live in harmony
- Be sympathetic
- Love as brothers
- Be compassionate
- Be humble
- Don't repay evil for evil, but with blessing
- Keep our tongues from evil and deceitful speech
- Turn from evil and do good
- Seek peace and pursue it.

In other words: God calls us to be a people who show respect and love to others.

Now, many of you have been Christians for a number of years. Do Christians always live

up to those criteria? No, they don't, do they? God knows that so He had Peter repeat this command a couple more times in his letters.

1 Peter 2:17 declares: "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers..."

And then in his 2nd letter, Peter repeats this command:

"... make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love." 2 Peter 1:5

Why stress this?

Because it isn't always easy for us to be "good" and "kind" and "loving"

What Peter is telling us is this: You and I need to deliberately decide that this is what our adventure is all about. We should be "...eager to do good" 1 Peter 3:13

ILLUS: A few months back Chick-fil-A's founder made people upset when he claimed: "I think we are inviting God's judgment on our nation when we shake our fist at him and say, 'We know better than you as to what constitutes a marriage.'" And said that his company was "very much supportive of the family—the biblical definition of the family unit."

That created a firestorm.

- A Chicago alderman announced he would block a Chick-fil-A location in his ward
- Mayor Rahm Emanuel declared "Chick-fil-A's values are not Chicago's values."
- On Twitter, San Francisco Mayor Edwin Lee declared that Chick-fil-A wasn't welcome in San Francisco, even though the restaurant hadn't announced any plans to open a location there
- and Washington mayor Vincent Gray called the chain "hate chicken."

Now, we'd totally agree with Chick-fil-A. Our nation IS inviting God's judgment because of the acceptance of gay marriage and homosexual unions. But that's not all Chick-fil-A should be known for.

When the winter storm buried Birmingham, Alabama in snow last month – stranding 100s of motorists - the store manager of one of the local Chick-fil-A restaurants said "Our store is about a mile and a half from the interstate and it took me 2 hours to get there. It was a parking lot as far as I could see."

She saw people stranded on both sides of the interstate, many of whom had been there for 7 hours. She went back to the restaurant and she and the other stranded employees cooked several 100 sandwiches and stood out on both sides of Highway 280 handing out the sandwiches to anyone they could get to, AND refused to take a single penny for the sandwiches.

After delivering the food and even helping drivers maneuver along the icy road the owner and staff took it one step further and opened up their dining room to anyone who wanted to sleep on a bench or a booth. Then, in the morning, they fired up their ovens once again and gave stranded motorists another free meal.

Why?

Why would they do this?

When asked, the manager Audrey Pitt said this: "This Company is based on taking care of people and loving people before you're worried about money or profit. We were just trying to follow the model that we've all worked under for so long and the model that we've come to love. There was really nothing else we could have done but try to help people any way we could."

The employees of Chick-fil-A eagerly lived their mission.

They knew what they had to do when people were hurting:

They knew their mission was to take care of people... to love people ...

Why? Because their company was built on Christian principles.

In the same way, WE should eagerly live our faith in such a way that people know that we not only stand for purity and good doctrine... but that we LIVE our faith in a mission to love others.

So, first – as Bold Adventurers - we are called to LIVE our faith

And... 2ndly – God calls us to be BOLD in our faith.

I Peter 3:14 commands us "Do not fear what they fear; do not be frightened."

This is a repeated command to God's people. Someone once went through Scripture and found that the command "Do not fear" showed up (in one form or other) a total of 365 times. That's one command for every day of the year.

As I was preparing for this sermon, I did a cross reference search on this verse and found:

Several times David wrote something like this: "The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?"

Psalm 27:1

Isaiah 41:10 declared: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

And Jesus said "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." John 14:27

It's hard to be a BOLD adventurer if you're conquered by fear. Fear and boldness just don't go together. In fact, Max Lucado says that fear crowds out a lot of good things in life:

- "Can one be happy and afraid at the same time?"
- Clear thinking and afraid?
- Confident and afraid?
- Merciful and afraid?

"No. Fear is the big bully in the high school hallway: brash, loud, and unproductive. For all the noise fear makes and room it takes, fear does little good."

- Fear never wrote a symphony or poem,
- Fear never negotiated a peace treaty, or cured a disease.
- Fear never pulled a family out of poverty or a country out of bigotry.
- Fear never saved a marriage or a business.

Courage did that.

Faith did that.

People who refused to con-sult or cower to their timidities did that.

But fear itself?

Fear herds us into a prison and slams the doors."

(Max Lucado, *Imagine Your life Without Fear* p. 10-11)

Now God knows that most of us struggle with fear once in a while. But He repeatedly tells us DO NOT BE AFRAID.

Why? Why shouldn't I be afraid? Well, just from the verses I just cited a few moments ago:

- "The LORD is my light and my salvation."
- "The LORD is the stronghold of my life."
- "Because God declared "I am your God. "
- "I will strengthen you and help you;"
- "I will uphold you with my righteous right hand"

And as Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you"

We can be bold adventurers because God has promised never to leave us/ forsake us. And God told us stories throughout the Bible of great men and women who struggled with fear but overcame by faith. Folks like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, Esther, David, Abraham and many more. They are our examples of bold adventurers.

So 1st – if we’re going to be bold adventurers we need to LIVE our faith

2nd - we need to be BOLD in our faith

And 3rd – we become bold adventurers we must be prepared to give an ANSWER for our faith

Peter wrote “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.” 1 Peter 3:15-16

Some of you may know that there was a huge debate in Kentucky this week. Ken Ham, the founder of the Creation Museum challenged Bill Nye (the Science Guy) to a debate over whether the Bible’s story of creation was correct.

A few months earlier Nye had declared: “I say to the grownups, if you want to deny evolution and live in your world, in your world that's completely inconsistent with everything we observe in the universe, that's fine, but don't make your kids do it because we need them. We need scientifically literate voters and taxpayers for the future. We need people that can—we need engineers that can build stuff, solve problems.”

In other words: You can’t be an intelligent if you don’t believe in evolution. You cannot be a smart voter, or taxpayer or engineer or contribute anything significant to society if you believe in creation

The Bill Nye video went viral, so Ken Ham decided to take Nye to task and he challenged him to a public debate on the topic. Nye accepted. The premise of the debate was “Is creation a viable model of origins in today’s modern scientific era?”

The tickets to the event sold out in less than an hour.

Millions of people watched the event being streamed live on the internet.

After the debate was finished, everyone agreed that Ham and Nye were very respectful of each other, and that the audience was polite and attentive. Afterwards I surfed through Facebook comments made by believers on the Creation Research page and was pleased to see that none of the comments I read from believers insulted Nye.

And what was the result of this debate?

Who won???

According to Michael Schulson of the Daily Beast (who is an avowed liberal/evolutionist) said: “Nye never had a chance... (He) spent three-quarters of the debate sounding like a clueless geek... He spent 10 minutes delivering a dry lecture on geological sediments and biogeography, using the kind of PowerPoint slides that a high school junior might make for his... Biology class” (<http://news.yahoo.com/bill-nye-debate-nightmare-125400404--politics.html>)

To say the least, Schulson was not pleased.

Nye had been the champion of his ideals... and he had failed.

To show his displeasure Schulson spent several sentences attacking Nye as a has-been trying to regain his glory years by standing in an undeserved limelight.

Of course, Schulson had a few negative things to say about Ken Ham as well (he virulently disagreed with him to begin with, so that's what you'd expect). But one of his comments (part of an insult aimed at Ham) was interesting: Ham "presented testimonial videos from engineers and biology PhDs who hold creationist views."

In other words: Ken Ham proved that there were many credible scientists who believe that God created the world... not by evolution, but by miracle. In other words, YOU CAN believe in creation and still be intelligent. You can be an engineer or a scientist. The fact of the matter is, evolution is not science fact... it's science theory. It's never been observed in the real world nor repeated in the lab.

So, Ham won the debate.
But that wasn't his major purpose.

According to a creationist commentator: Throughout the debate, "Ham was **CONSISTENTLY BOLD** in citing his confidence in God, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and in the full authority and divine inspiration of the Bible."
(<http://www.albertmohler.com/2014/02/05/bill-nyes-reasonable-man-the-central-worldview-clash-of-the-ham-nye-debate/>)

Ken Ham's main focus was to present Jesus to the world.

VIDEO CLIP (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5X5liH-hM80#t=74> show through 2:17)

The reason I showed you that clip was that it illustrated the 3 points of the message

1. Was Ken Ham respectful and polite in this clip? (Yes). He was literally living out his faith in front of the world, showing a humble gracious spirit as he made his points.
2. Notice also that Ham was bold in his statements. He made no excuse for the fact that he was a Christian and that the Bible was the basis of his faith and his research.
3. 3rd, notice that Ham knew what he was talking about. He'd spent decades researching the information he shared that night.

But even if he'd lost the debate... that mattered less to him than sharing the fact that Jesus was the Christ the Son of the living God. If all he managed to communicate that night was his faith in Christ, he would have considered that a success.

CLOSE: Now you and I may not be able to stand on a stage and debate an evolutionist. Especially someone as likable as Bill Nye, the Science Guy. But that probably isn't what God has called YOU to do. All God wants of us is that we LIVE our faith, and live it BOLDLY. And that when the time comes that we'll boldly share what Jesus means to us be able to ANSWER those who question about us why we believe Jesus is our Lord and Master.