

QUIET NO MORE

DEALING WITH THE
SPIRIT OF INTIMIDATION

PS CHRIS HAYWARD - 26 AUG 2018



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Firstly, you will notice that at the start of each lesson there are three important bits of information. These will be the basic tools you need to lead the study.

All Scripture will appear in this BLUE colour. All Scripture references are taken from the NIV version of the Bible unless otherwise stated.

All discussion questions are in this GREEN colour. These discussion questions are meant to help open up times of sharing in your group.

Occasionally you will see text in RED. Red text are some ideas and thoughts that you may want to use for your group.

The bulk of the text will be in BLACK. This is the script and information for your lesson. However, please do not stick to the script word for word. The information is there just to serve as a guideline. Please feel free to lead or facilitate the discussion in the way which GOD is leading you.

Pastor Chris Hayward
26 August 2018

Getting-to-Know-One-Another Questions:

- What song do you sing or dance to when no one is around?
- What does a dream vacation look like for you?

Opening Discussion Question:

- Think of a time when you had courage and said and did what was right? Share your experience with the group.

In this Sunday's message, Pastor Chris Hayward spoke to us about how we can move from being intimidated and quiet to regaining our voice and being bold and courageous. He started off with a story about the USA gymnastics doctor who sexually assaulted teenagers and young women while he was supposed to be providing medical care. After a long period of silence, one of the women spoke up about the abuse and brought to light what had happened.

The courage of the gymnast who spoke up, but also the initial silence of many of the victims, led Ps Chris to reflect on what leads us to be silent in the first place? According to Ps Chris we hear messages throughout our lives "Just shut up! Be quiet! You don't have anything valuable to say!" Often over time we lose our voice and learn to be quiet.

- How have you been told directly, or indirectly to be quiet?

Ps Chris defined the spirit of intimidation as follows:

"This spirit always attempts to silence the believer through words and actions of intimidation by those who feel threatened by your actions. The 'spirit of intimidation' partners with fear in order for you to 'back off,' and not 'rock the boat.'"

We are intimidated because there is something to lose. We fear losing our ...

1. Reputation
2. Position
3. Finances and / or
4. Relationships

- Which one of those fears do you resonate with and why?
- What are areas in your life where you are being intimidated to be quiet?

Ps Chris went on to explain, "The devil works to make sure we know what we will lose." Why is that?

1. To prevent or delay the purposes of God.
2. To keep others in bondage.
3. To stop or hinder your prophetic destiny.

- Do you believe that you find yourself in a spiritual battle regarding keeping your voice?

God will put you at a crossroad. You are at a crossroads today, you can survive, but what God has for you can also thrive. If you have the courage to claim or reclaim your voice, God will take you to another place.

If your voice has been stolen, where do you find it and how do you get your voice back? There is something important that you are uniquely positioned to say.

Consider the following scripture references and how they can be an encouragement to claim or reclaim your voice and to live into the purposes that God has prepared for you.

The Story of David

Israel and the Philistines are facing each other in battle. The Philistines send a champion named Goliath who challenges the Israelites to send someone out to fight him. Goliath is intimidating to say the least and no one wants to fight him.

While bringing food to his older brothers in battle, David hears Goliath taunt Israel. Unlike others who are scared and run off, he courageously proclaims “Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?” It’s at this point that we pick up the story. Read 1 Samuel 17:28-29:

“²⁸ When Eliab, David’s eldest brother, heard him speaking with the men, he burned with anger at him and asked, ‘Why have you come down here? And with whom did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness? I know how conceited you are and how wicked your heart is; you came down only to watch the battle.’

²⁹ ‘Now what have I done?’ said David. ‘Can’t I even speak?’”

- Put yourself in David’s shoes. How would you feel if your immediate family is angry with you for speaking up?
- How do you deal with being accused of being prideful and of having impure motives as a result of you speaking up?
- When your speaking up is challenged, do you quiet down or do you have the resolve to keep going?

The brothers wanted David to shut up and accused him of being full of pride. But David keeps at it. David eventually faces Goliath in a showdown and God used him to bring victory that day. David had a confidence in his voice and what needed to be said and done.

- What do you think gave David the conviction and strength to keep going and not to shut up?
- What do you think helps a person to have confidence in their God given voice?

The Story of Peter and John

Peter and John are arrested by the religious leaders of Israel for proclaiming Jesus’ resurrection from the dead and for healing a crippled man. Before releasing Peter and John from imprisonment the religious leaders commanded them to stop talking about Jesus.

Read Acts 4:18-29

“¹⁸ Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John replied, ‘Which is right in God’s eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰ As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.’

²¹ After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²² For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. ‘Sovereign Lord,’ they said, ‘you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

“Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one.”

²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.”

- How do you typically pray when faced with opposition?
- Have you considered praying like the disciples for courage to speak boldly (see verse 29)?

Paul’s Story

Through a vision, Jesus encouraged the apostle Paul to keep speaking boldly and continue the mission he was on.

Read Acts 18:9:

“⁹ One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: ‘Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.’”

- How might this be encouraging to you that the apostle Paul needed Jesus’ encouragement to keep on speaking boldly? Why or why not is that encouraging to you?

The Effects of Keeping Silent

Ps Chris also noted how keeping silent impacts us. Read Psalm 32:3 and Jeremiah 4:19:

Psalm 32:3

“³ When I kept silent,
my bones wasted away
through my groaning all day long.”

Jeremiah 4:19

“¹⁹ Oh, my anguish, my anguish!
I writhe in pain.
Oh, the agony of my heart!
My heart pounds within me,
I cannot keep silent.
For I have heard the sound of the trumpet;
I have heard the battle cry.”

- Has there ever been a time when you felt like you should speak up but you remained silent? How did your silence impact you? Share your experience with each other.
- Do you feel as though you had a journey in losing your voice? If yes, tell us about it.

Prayer:

One of the ways we move from being quiet/silent to finding our voice and being courageous/bold is through prayer. Ps Chris shared with us a prayer that we can pray to start recovering our voice today and to start seizing those moments in which God has uniquely placed us to speak into. Read the prayer to the group and ask if anyone wants to make this their prayer. If they say yes, then lead them through this prayer.

Lord, I repent of giving in to fear and the spirit of intimidation, causing me to have my voice stolen, compromising your will.

Spirit of intimidation and fear, I renounce your threats and lies and shut the door on you and seal that door closed in the name of Jesus. I will no longer bow to you or your lies. In the name of Jesus, I break your hold on my life and command you to leave me now!

Take some time to pray with each other. Here are some ideas for how you can pray for each other:

1. Pray for courage to speak up.
2. Hand over the fears that are keeping you from speaking up.
3. Ask God to help you not miss the opportunities in which He wants you to speak up.

End