

The Tower of Babel (Gen 11:4)

“...Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

The Call of Abram (Gen 12:1-4)

¹ The Lord had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” ⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him....

Acts 3:16 Healing in Jesus’ Name

By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through Him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

Acts 4:18 Sanhedrin’s Command

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:29 Corporate Prayer after Threats

Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.

Acts 5:29 Apostles’ Response to Be Silent

Peter and the other apostles replied: We must obey God rather than human beings!

Acts 5:38-39 Wisdom from Gamaliel

³⁸ “Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. ³⁹ But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.”

Acts 5:41-42 Apostles Rejoice after Beating

⁴¹ The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. ⁴² Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Key Point: Be Bold in Proclaiming the Name of Jesus. His Name is Great!

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- If you know the meaning of your name and/or why your name was chosen for you share it with the group. Feel free to share funny nicknames too.
- If you are a parent or grandparent, share a moment of joy you felt while watching your child achieve something great. (Try to keep it to one moment so everyone has an opportunity to share)

Start thinking:

- Have you ever prioritized making a name for yourself? Why do you think that was important to you?
- Do you think God desires you to be great?
- Does God measure greatness differently than we do? If so, how?
- What are the key differences between the Babel account (Genesis 11:1-9) and God’s encounter with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4)?

Start sharing:

- Observe the key differences between the Babel account (Genesis 11:1-9) and God’s encounter with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-4)?

- Pastor Brendon suggested that his opinion on why Christians can be shy about desiring greatness is because functionally, the gap between our new nature in Christ and our old sin nature in our flesh is razor thin. Do you agree with this? What other reasons might cause us to shy away from greatness?
- In Acts 3-5 the Apostles demonstrate several wonderful lessons. (1) they immediately point to Christ for the achievement of healing the lame beggar, (2) they are held in high regard by the unbelieving community, (3) they corporately pray for great boldness, and (4) they rejoice for being worthy of suffering for the Name and continue to proclaim Jesus as the Messiah even under intensifying persecution.

Of these lessons (and there are more) which one do you think you might need to focus on more as you live out your faith in Christ?

- In what environment do you find the most resistance to proclaiming Jesus or an effort to silence speaking in His name? Why do you think people are so threatened or offended by the name of Jesus?

Start doing: Consider your spiritual journey for the year 2025 and consider a word or a verse that might be a banner for the year. Pray to be intentionally bold in what God would have you do and that He clearly shows you the great role He has for you.

Prayer Requests: Spend time praying together about what you shared tonight. It may be helpful to pray the scriptures back to God.

Philippians 2:9-11

***⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.***