

## BOLDNESS AND ARROGANCE

Boldness is good. Solomon said the righteous are bold as a lion (Prov. 28:1). David was bold. He said to Goliath: **“You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”** (1 Sam 17:45)

Arrogance is bad. Peter described those with corrupt desires as “bold and arrogant” (2 Pet. 2:10). Goliath was arrogant. He said to David: **“Come here, he said, and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!”** (1 Sam 17:44)

“Tolmao” is a Greek word. In the Bible it is translated both as “bold” and “arrogant”. It is used by Mark to describe the courage of Joseph of Arimathea who **“went boldly to Pilate and ask for Jesus' body”** (Mk. 15:43). This is the same word, however, used by Peter, as mentioned above. It describes those who “arrogantly” follow the corrupt desires of the sinful nature (2 Pet. 2:10).

How can we tell the difference in our own lives? How can we be bold in our obedience to Christ without being arrogant?

The answer is not simple. The book of Hebrews points out: **“solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”** (Heb 5:14) Those who distinguish good from evil work hard to do so. The word translated as “distinguish” is “aistheterion” from which we get our English word “esthesia”. It refers to the ability to “feel” or “perceive”. An “anesthesia” is given by doctors to keep us from feeling. The Greek word translated as “trained” is “gumnazo” from which we get our English word “gymnasium”. The point is that those who are able to distinguish good from evil have spent many hours training their feelings.

In general, it is wise to use common sense and do what is reasonable. If God commands us to do something unreasonable, He often provides evidence to make our mission rational. God knows our form and remembers that we are dust (Ps. 103:14). He does not tempt us with evil (Ja. 1:13). Moses, for example, was commanded to deliver God's people from Egyptian bondage. At first it seemed irrational, but God gave evidence to convince Moses that he would not be arrogant to stand before the Pharaoh. Gideon also was commanded to do something that first seemed irrational. He was to attack 135,000 enemy soldiers with only 300 men. Again, the signs God gave to Gideon convinced him that he could be bold and victorious in battle without being arrogant.

Remember! **“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall”** (Prov 16:18). Moses and Gideon were not proud, and we should not be proud either. The constant training of our senses should never make us arrogant. If a perfect man and a perfect woman in a perfect environment could be deceived by the serpent's cunning, we too can be led away from a pure devotion to Christ (2 Cor. 11:3).

The devil himself provides insight into how we can discern the will of God. Isaiah 14:12 - 15, and Ezekiel 28:14 - 17) describe his arrogance and rebellion. He knew precisely what God wanted but deliberately chose to do his own will. What about you and me? Do we actually want to do the will of God or not? John wrote by inspiration: **“If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.”** (John 7:17)

Ay! There's the rub! Many, like Satan, know exactly what God wants them to do and “choose” to do their own will instead. Somehow, when we want to do God's will we know! Jesus was bold because He always chose to do what pleased God, and we can be bold in the same way (Jn. 8:29). If we choose to do God's will, we will not only have boldness on earth, but also at the Judgement. Because as He is, so are we in this world (1 Jn. 4:17).

Please be like Jesus. Choose to do God's will. Then you can be bold and not arrogant!