



**Sermon Title:** Act Like Men

**Scripture:** 1 Cor 16.13,14; Deut 31. 1-8 (LSB)

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### **1 Corinthians 16:13–14 LSB**

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

### **The 5 instructions:**

1. Be watchful - Alert to the danger that the culture presents

2. Stand Firm (in the faith) - Stand firm in the gospel.

3. Act like men - Be Courageous

4. Be Strong - A strength that helps fight through sin, persecution, and complacency

5. All that we do is done in love. - Strength wrapped in love

**Men are called to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.**

### **Deuteronomy 31:1–8 (LSB)**

So Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel.

And he said to them, “I am 120 years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and Yahweh has said to me, ‘You shall not cross this Jordan.’”

“It is Yahweh your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as Yahweh has spoken.

“And Yahweh will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them.

“And Yahweh will give them over before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you.

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or be in dread of them, for Yahweh your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.”

Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, “Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which Yahweh has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance.

“And Yahweh is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

**Men are to \_\_\_\_\_ with courage.**

## Application:

So how do we lead?

Be a \_\_\_\_\_ Christian.

Learn to \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Learn how to show \_\_\_\_\_.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ your family.

**Courage; Courageous** In the OT the main words for “be courageous,” “be of good courage,” etc., are Heb. *ḥāzaq* and *’āmaṣ*, both of which have the basic meaning “be strong (firm, hard).” For *ḥāzaq* the AV has “encouraged themselves” (Jgs. 20:22), “be strong” (1 S. 4:9; 2 Ch. 15:7; Dnl. 10:19; Hag. 2:4), “strengthened himself” (2 Ch. 23:1; 25:11), and “was strengthened” (Ezr. 7:28). For *’āmaṣ* the NEB has “be resolute” (e.g., Dt. 31:6f; Josh. 1:6, 9, 18; 1 Ch. 22:13); *ḥāzaq* is rendered “take heart” (2 Ch. 25:11; Hag. 2:4), and “felt himself strong enough” (2 Ch. 23:1). OT words for “courage” include *lēb* or *lēbāb* (“heart,” 2 S. 7:27; Jer. 4:9; Ezk. 22:14; Dnl. 11:25), *nepeš* (“soul,” Ps. 107:26; Lam. 1:16), *rû (a)ḥ* (“spirit,” Josh. 2:11), and *yādôṭ* (“hands,” 2 S. 4:1); the AV translates most of these terms literally. In 2 Ch. 17:6 “courageous” translates *gābah* (AV “lifted up”; NEB “he took pride”). In the NT “take courage” and “be of good courage” translate Gk. *tharrhéō* (2 Cor. 5:6, 8, AV and NEB “confident”), *tharséō* (Acts 23:11, AV “be of good

cheer”), and *tolmáō* (Mk. 15:43, AV “boldly”; NEB “bravely”). In 1 Cor. 16:13 “be courageous” renders *andrízomai* (AV “quit you like men”; NEB “be valiant”). Other words are *thársos* (Acts 28:15), *parrhēsia* (Phil. 1:20, AV “boldness”; NEB “boldly”), and *parrhēsiázomai* (1 Thess. 2:2, AV “were bold”; NEB “frankly and fearlessly”). “Lose courage” in He. 12:5 renders *eklýō* (AV “faint”; NEB “lose heart”).

In Wisd. 8:7 courage (Gk. *andria*, NEB “fortitude”) is one of the four cardinal virtues; and cowardice ranks as one of the mortal sins (Rev. 21:8; cf. Sir. 2:12f).

See also Bold; Confidence.

J. W. DeHoog, “Courage; Courageous,” ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised* (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1979–1988), 788.

### **Commentary:**

Having prepared the Corinthians for his own coming as well as that of Timothy and informing them that Apollos would not be coming at this time, and before going on to commend those Corinthians who had served their church by coming to Paul and ministering to him, Paul provides a series of crisp exhortations summarizing much of the message of the rest of the letter. Hortatory material appears in the closing sections of most of Paul’s letters. It does not always have a clear relationship with the specific situation or themes of the body of the letter but it often does.<sup>41</sup> In this case the final exhortation of the series clearly reprises an important theme of the letter, while the ones preceding it provide a call for vigilance which would naturally be understood in light of the various challenges to the Corinthians’ well-being that were described in earlier parts of the letter.

<sup>13</sup> *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.* <sup>14</sup> *Do everything in love.*

**16:13** The first four of Paul’s five exhortations in a row all reflect the kinds of things a general might say to his troops before they enter into battle (although they would not add “in the faith” after “stand firm”): *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.* What did the Corinthians need to be on guard about? The contents of this letter have suggested that they needed to be more vigilant about the negative leavening influence of certain Roman and Corinthian values and moral standards or expectations. They needed to guard themselves against the temptation to judge each other and

treat each other on the basis of their secular social status rather than their shared status as brothers and sisters in Christ (chs. 1–4; 11:21–22). They needed to be on the alert for the corrupting influence of bad company and bad theology (5:1–7; 15:33). They needed to make sure that they did not continue in or fall into sexual morality (chs. 5–7) or become complacent about the dangers of greed (6:1–11), idolatry, and self-centered religion (chs. 8–14). As Nützel suggests, Paul’s “[e]xhortation to vigilance presupposes that Christians are always in danger of reducing their full commitment to God through Christ and of allowing themselves to be seized by things of lesser value.”

Paul exhorts the Corinthians to *stand firm in the faith*. To *stand firm* is to hold one’s ground in a battle rather than to surrender or run away in the face of fearful opposition. To *stand firm in the faith* is not merely to hold strongly to doctrinal convictions but also, and perhaps especially, to persist in acting in a way that is consistent with faith in Christ. The Corinthians had shown some particular weaknesses in this area. They were prone to give in to the lax moral standards of their environment. Rather than “taking every thought captive to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5), they were more likely to allow their thoughts (and actions) to be taken captive by Roman or Corinthian values and perspectives. Paradoxically, of course, standing firm sometimes requires fleeing (cf. 6:18; 10:14).

Paul’s exhortation, *be courageous; be strong*, reflects an Old Testament motif of a call to “be strong and courageous” under extremely challenging circumstances (Deut. 31:6–7, 23; Josh. 1:6, 9, 18; 10:25; 2 Sam. 10:12; 1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20; 2 Chr. 32:7; Pss. 26:14; 30:25). Paul’s own experience showed why it would be necessary for faithful followers of Christ to be courageous. To be courageous is to faithfully carry out one’s responsibilities even in the face of extreme danger and frightening circumstances. To be courageous is not to give in to fear or hopelessness or to let them interfere with one’s duty (see LXX Deut. 31:6–7; Josh. 1:9; 10:25; 2 Sam. 13:28; 1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20; 2 Chr. 32:7; Dan. 10:19). In 4:10–14 Paul warned the Corinthians by highlighting the contrast between their attitude and experience and his own experience as a faithful disciple of Christ: “You are honored, we are dishonored! To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the garbage of the world—right up to this moment.” As pointed out above, he was experiencing opposition in Ephesus even as he wrote this letter (v. 9), and had already “fought wild beasts” in that city,

constantly finding himself in mortal danger (15:30–32). Following Christ is not for cowards. And that was not only true in the first century. It appears that there were more Christian martyrs in the last century than in all of the previous centuries combined.

**16:14** The final exhortation in Paul’s punchy list reprises the key motif of love which undergirds all of Paul’s moral teaching in this letter. Love comes to the surface in 8:1 and reaches the heights of praise in the paean found in the center of chapters 12–14: *Do everything in love*. This was the point of 13:1–3—that even the most wonderful acts, if not done out of love, are worthless in the eyes of God. Elsewhere in this letter Paul has said that all things are to be done for the glory of God (10:31). Furthermore, all things should be done for the sake of the building up of others (14:26), and they should be done “in a fitting and orderly way” (14:40). Ultimately all things will be subjected to Christ and God the Father “so that God may be all in all” (15:28). God is glorified when people act in love, when they put the welfare of others first and worship God in a way that is consistent with his own character. Self-sacrificing love is the model given to us by Christ and the key to the health and growth of his church and to the maturing of both individuals and the communities to which they belong. Christ-like love is a principal manifestation of God’s renewed humanity, the sign that God’s work in us—the work which will ultimately result in the resurrection of the dead and our complete renewal—has already begun to manifest itself. This, the fifth of five crisp exhortations in a row, is the clearest of them all and the one which most clearly reinforces the themes of the letter as a whole. It is not surprising that when Paul writes his own final greeting in his own hand, the final thought he will leave with the Corinthians is of his own love for them (v. 24).

Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 854–857.