

## The Audacious Nature of the Gospel in the Believer

1 Corinthians 16:13 (NIV) “Be on Guard, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.”

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 (ESV) <sup>13</sup> Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. <sup>14</sup> Let all that you do be done in love.

### ❖ Introduction

#### ➤ Our Week at Camp

- Lot of Fun... and filled with pain

#### ➤ Theme: Be Audacious (sometimes said wrong)

- 1) Be on Guard
- 2) Stand Firm
- 3) Be Courageous
- 4) Be Strong

#### ➤ Title of Sermon:

- **Gospel Definition:** Dead in Our Sins, Offensive to God, On Our Way to Hell, Jesus Humbles Himself as a Man, Lives Perfectly, Dies on Our Behalf, Takes the wrath from God that was for us, Substitutes Himself for us, Offers His Righteousness as a free Gift for us, Will give us a new nature, We must Repent and Believe (have faith or trust in Christ)

### ❖ Background

#### ➤ Much of this many of you went over when we looked at Corinth a few years back...

- So I will give a brief overview...

#### ➤ Some Final Instructions

##### ▪ Has Written this lengthy letter to the church at Corinth

- A Church that he has planted years ago...
- And He has given them all these things to think about
- And He now leaves them with great direction on how to live out the Christian Faith

##### ▪ Paul's Church Plant

- Paul had spent over a year and a half here in Corinth...
- We see this played out in Acts 18
- Many people got saved under His teaching and preaching
- And the Jewish opposition to Him grew greatly as well...
- Eventually He leaves and the church is left to be a witness in Corinth...

##### ▪ A struggling Church

- They Struggled in many ways...
- So Paul had to send a letter to them to help correct their actions

##### ▪ Paul's Chastising Letter

- Chastised them for their division
  - ◆ Paul, Apollos, Peter, Jesus

- Chastised them for the lack of Holy living
  - ◆ They were sexually corrupt, covetous, swindling, and idolatrous
  - ◆ They were not supposed to associate themselves with such people He said...
  - ◆ Mainly He meant those within the church that claimed to be a Believer, but lived like the devil
  - ◆ They thought it meant unbelievers.... It did not
- **Paul's Instructing**
  - Unity, Being Servants, Morality, Marriage, Freedom, Order in the Church, Lord's Supper, Spiritual Gifts, The Resurrection, and Giving...
  - And He leaves them with this great verse for living....

#### ❖ **Why is this verse so Important to You?**

- Look at this Corinth Church
- Look at Your Own Life
- Look at Your Struggles
- Look at Your Desires to be Like Christ
- Look to the Word for Help...
  - And you will find it...
- Take this verse to heart

#### ❖ **Our Battle is a Spiritual Battle**

#### ❖ **What Exactly Does He Mean? + Practicality**

##### ➤ **1) Be on Guard**

- To Be Awake, To Be on Watch
  - The opposite means to be dead, or asleep
- **Same Word** used by Jesus when He was praying in the Garden in **Matt 26.38**
  - and asked the disciples to stay awake and watch
  - Yet... they, like I would have... Went to sleep
- **Has the meaning of paying special attention to God's Word and Instructions**
  - **1 Thessalonians 5:6<sup>6</sup> So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.**
- **Example:**
  - **In the Odyssey by Homer**
    - ◆ Odysseus is trying to get home to his wife and children...
    - ◆ He is warned about the mythical Sirens and how they can lure you away with their singing...
  - **Maybe you are more familiar with "O Brother where art thou"**
    - ◆ That story is an adaptation of Homer's Odyssey
    - ◆ And the three men are sung to sleep...
    - ◆ They wake up and think one of them has been turned into a frog
  - **In the Odyssey, Odysseus is warned about the Sirens**
    - ◆ *"You will come first of all to the Sirens, who are enchanters of all mankind and whoever comes their way; and that man*

*who unsuspecting approaches them, and listens to the Sirens singing, has no prospect of coming home and delighting his wife and little children as they stand about him in greeting, but the Sirens by the melody of their singing enchant him. They sit in their meadow, but the beach before it is piled with boneheaps of men now rotted away, and the skins shrivel upon them. You must drive straight on past, but melt down sweet wax of honey and with it stop your companions' ears, so none can listen;*

- In the Same Way that He needed to be prepared, so do we, even more so...
  - In two ways....
- **1) Be Awake to God's Word**
  - To be Alert and Ready, you need to know God's Word well enough so you know what to expect
  - You cannot be awake and alert, or on guard, unless you are trained and prepped
- **2) Be on Guard against Danger**
  - **1 Peter 5:8<sup>8</sup> Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**
- **Application:**
  - Satan is Ready to throw everything He can at you...
  - And He is relentless...
  - He wants you at odd with your friends, so you will be of no use in bringing them to Jesus
  - He wants you loose your temper so you will loose your effectiveness as a believer
  - He wants to lure you away into pleasures and in a sense put you to sleep so you will be unprepared
  - You will be unprepared to answer the call when Jesus gives you opportunities...
  - Satan would do the same with you:
    - ◆ *They sit in their meadow, but the beach before it is piled with boneheaps of men now rotted away, and the skins shrivel upon them.*

## ➤ 2) Stand Firm

- The original word literally means to stand... in a physical sense to stand...
  - But the meaning is figurative for the spiritual walk of man...
  - The opposite would be to wobble, or to fall...
  - It is like standing on two strong legs on top of a very sturdy foundation...
- **2 Aspects of Standing Firm in the Faith**
  - 1) Your Faith Should Be Sturdy
    - ◆ Your trust should be unwavering....
    - ◆ Strong legs...
  - 2) What Your Faith is in Must Be Sturdy
    - ◆ Does no good to have strong Faith in a weak half-truth
    - ◆ Strong Foundation

- **Example from the Bible:**

- Shadrach, Meshac and Abdnego
- They stood firm in their Faith, in the face of Immediate Death
  - ◆ Dan 3:12 “These men, Oh King, Pay no attention to you!
    - I love that verse
  - ◆ The King Becomes Enraged
    - Heats the Furnace as hot as they can get it... they answer him...
  - ◆ Daniel 3:16-18 <sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. <sup>17</sup> If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. <sup>18</sup> But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.”
- **Look at Heb 11-12.2**
  - Abel gave a great offering... cost him his life
  - Enoch walked with God when many did not, and God just took him up
  - Abraham leaving his home
    - ◆ Believing God would provide him with a child when He was close to 100 years old
  - Moses took on the greatest and most powerful empire of his day
  - Hebrews 11:33-38 <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. <sup>35</sup> Women received back their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. <sup>36</sup> Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. <sup>37</sup> They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated— <sup>38</sup> of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.
- **In Their Faith We See**
  - 1) They trusted in the God whom they could not see
    - ◆ Hebrews 11:6 <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.
  - 2) Ordinary imperfect men
  - 3) They trusted a Trustworthy God wholeheartedly
  - 4) They never saw this world as their home....
    - ◆ Hebrews 11:13b ... having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth
    - ◆ Hebrews 11:16 <sup>16</sup> But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.
- **Therefore we are told...**
  - Hebrews 12:1-2 <sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the

joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

- **If We want to stand firm...**
  - ◆ Remember those that went before us...
  - ◆ Get rid of our sin
  - ◆ Run the race before you with endurance... (lasting until the end...)

➤ **Application:**

- These men trusted in God with their lives, instead of holding on to their lives...
- They went into the fire...
  - And we can not even turn the channel to flee from sin...
  - Or walk away from that ungodly conversation...
  - Or stop buying junk that we will throw away instead of giving to the Lord
- If We can not do the lesser.... Let us not think we can stand when faced with greater Opposition

➤ **3) Be Courageous**

- To Behave like a man, to be brave... to act courageously...
    - ◆ Many of your versions will even say, "act like a man"
  - **Please do not get offended women... In the context of Paul's Day, and even our day**
    - ◆ Most often times men were thought of as doing courageous things...
    - ◆ And this is how Paul is calling all believers to live...
      - Until very recently women were not even allowed to fight in combat...
      - So the stories of courage were often of men...
  - **That is not to say anything disparaging against women...**
    - ◆ He is calling the men and women of this church to be courageous...
    - ◆ In Heb 11 It mentions the woman prostitute Rahab who acted in faith...
  - In Conquering the Promise Land... God tells Israel
    - **Deuteronomy 31:6<sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you."**
  - **The Opposite: The antonym... this is funny...**
    - ◆ To be or act like a baby...
  - Little babies are afraid so often... everything scares them...
  - The slightest noise... or the weirdest face, or even our puppets...
- **Application**
- The Corinthian Church has been acting like babies...
    - ◆ They had yet to grow up in their faith...
    - ◆ He had already told them that He could not even speak to them as if they were mature...
    - ◆ But rather as if they were babes...
    - ◆ He had to continue to give them milk because they had not grown up in maturity...
  - **There may be some in here... No, there are some in here...**
    - ◆ That are still wanting to be bottle fed...
    - ◆ They are taking no initiative to grow up in their faith and act like courageous men

- ◆ They want to be seen as mature on the outside in a wordly way...
- ◆ But spiritually they could not explain the gospel clearly to anyone...
- We are Called to be Courageous....
- In our Faith, in sharing it, and living it out...

#### ➤ 4) Be Strong

- To make strong, or to strengthen, to grow in strength
  - It is in the passive voice... meaning that God is the ultimate source of our strength
- Ephesians 3:16<sup>16</sup> that according to the riches of his glory **he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,**
- **An Earthly Example:**
  - **Getting into shape** requires a lot of effort on the part of the person.....
    - ◆ You build muscle you have to lift weights, run, do some sort of physical activity...
  - **During this time** your muscles fibers are torn depending on how hard you work...
    - ◆ The harder your work the more they are broken down
    - ◆ And the more potential they have of being larger and stronger...
  - **It is also dependent on how you fuel your body...**
    - ◆ The building block of muscle in your body is protein...
    - ◆ You find protein in the foods you eat...
    - ◆ Meat is loaded with protein, and so is dairy and some other foods plus supplements
  - **For your muscles to grow after you have worked them out, they must be fed.**
    - ◆ Many dieticians and fitness gurus suggest somewhere between ¾ and 1.5 grams of protein per lb the person weighs.... Per day...
    - ◆ That would mean that a person weighing 200 lbs should get approximately 200 grams of protein per day if he or she wants to see muscle gains...
  - **Then your body takes over...**
    - ◆ Your body takes those proteins straight to where they need to go
    - ◆ And your body begins to repair your broken down muscle fibers...
    - ◆ And not just back to the way they were...
    - ◆ But into a stronger and often times bigger muscle
  - **Pay Attention here:**
    - ◆ You put in the effort to work out the muscles and to put the proper food in your mouth
    - ◆ But without your body working, all of your work is for nothing...
    - ◆ The amazing body God has given you does the real work
- **A Spiritual Example...**
  - We are called to feast on the Word of God, and to do His Will
  - And to spend time in prayer...
  - But God is the one that gives us the strength and grows us as we come to Him in His Word...
- Paul Encourages us in Ephesians
  - Ephesians 6:10-13<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we

do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

- Strong in the Lord...
- By Putting on the Armor of God
- Our Battle is Spiritual
- Take on the Whole Armor
- **The Armor**
  - Belt of Truth
  - Breastplate of Righteousness
  - Feet shod with gospel of peace
  - Helmet of Salvation
  - Shield of Faith
  - Sword of Spirit
  - Praying at all Times...
- **Our Strength is in the Lord... and we must remember it**
  - Just like Paul in His weaknesses learned that God was His strength...
  - He let God be His strength

#### ❖ **How The Nature of the Gospel Leads Us**

- **Gospel Definition** : Dead in Our Sins, Offensive to God, On Our Way to Hell, Jesus Humbles Himself as a Man, Lives Perfectly, Dies on Our Behalf, Takes the wrath from God that was for us, Substitutes Himself for us, Offers His Righteousness as a free Gift for us, Will give us a new nature, We must Repent and Believe (have faith or trust in Christ)
  - You should be overly Familiar with the word Gospel... and how you live it out...
    - You should be able to define it with ease
- **The Gospel has brought us out of Darkness into His Marvelous light**
  - God gives us a new nature...
- **Therefore through its work:**
  - We are on Guard that we not fall... It has opened our eyes to the true battle
  - We stand firm in the Faith that the Gospel has created in us
  - The Good news of the Gospel compels us to act courageously in giving it out
  - And We are strengthen in God and by God through our understanding of and living out the Gospel

#### ❖ **All That You Do Be Done in Love**

- What a way to follow up vs 13
- Love – The Greatest and Hardest of all we can do
- 1 Cor 13 – The Greatest of all is love
- 1 John... We are to love like Christ
- 1 Peter 4:8 <sup>8</sup> Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins