

Sunday, August 26, 2018—I Corinthians 16:13-14 Parting Imperatives for the Corinthians

I Corinthians 16:13

- As Paul brings the book of Corinthians to a close he issues five commands, four of which are found in verse 13. Verse 13 contains four verbs all of which are in the imperative mood. In other words, these are not just suggestions or recommendations rather they are declarations of how Paul wants the Corinthians to conduct themselves.
 - Watch
 - Stand fast
 - Quit
 - Be strong
- *Watch ye*—the English word “watch” carries the following relevant, according to Noah Webster’s’ American Dictionary of the English Language (1828):
 - Attention; close observation. Keep watch of the suspicious man.
 - Guard; vigilance for keeping or protecting against danger.
 - A watchman, or watchmen; men set for a guard, either one person or more, set to espy the approach of an enemy or other danger, and to give an alarm or notice of such danger; a sentinel; a guard. He kept a watch at the gate.
 - To be attentive; to look with attention or steadiness.
 - To keep guard; to act as sentinel; to look for danger.
 - To be attentive; to be vigilant in preparation for an event or trial, the time of whose arrival is uncertain.
- Acts 20:31—“Watch” is the same word that Paul uses when he warns the Ephesians elders of those who would arise speaking perverse things.
 - I Peter 5:8—the same Greek word is translated “vigilant” or “watchful; circumspect; attentive to discover and avoid danger, or to provide for safety,” according to Webster’s 1828 dictionary.
- I Corinthians 16:13—Paul wants the Corinthians to watch for danger knowing full well that it will come.

- *Stand fast in the faith*—when the danger does come, Paul wants the Corinthians to “stand fast” and not yield any ground. Paul tells many of the assemblies that he addressed to “stand fast” in one form or another.
 - Galatians 5:1—“Stand fast there in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free”
 - Philippians 1:27—“stand fast in one spirit”
 - Philippians 4:1—“stand fast in the Lord”
 - I Thessalonians 3:8
 - II Thessalonians 2:15
 - Ephesians 6:10-13—our instructions are to hold the line in the face of opposition.
- I Corinthians 16:13—Paul wants the Corinthians to “stand fast in the faith.” “The faith” in this case is referring to body of doctrine committed to the apostle Paul and imparted to the Corinthians. In other words, Paul wants the Corinthians to not depart from what he has taught them via this epistle.
 - Ephesians 4:13
 - Colossians 1:23
 - Colossians 2:7
 - I Timothy 4:1
 - I Timothy 5:8
- *Quit you like men*—this is the only time the Greek verb appears in the New Testament. According to Strong’s Concordance the verb means: “to make a man of or make brave” or “to show one's self a man, be brave.”
 - I Samuel 4:1-9—in this verse the phrase is clearly referring to a call for bravery in the camp of the Philistines.
- The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) offers 15 different definition for the English word “quit.” Only one is relevant for our purposes this morning. The 8th definition reads as follows, “To behave or conduct oneself, esp. satisfactorily or in a specified way; to play one's part.” It then offers I Sam. 4:9 as an example of this usage.

- I Corinthians 16:13—Paul wants the Corinthians to man up. He wants them to be brave in terms of standing fast in the faith. He doesn't want them to yield any ground in terms of their spiritual warfare.
 - The body of Christ needs some men to man up in terms of ministry. The saints are in need of a few good men who are going to count the cost in favor of laboring in the work of the ministry. The body of Christ needs women who are going to be supportive and encouraging to their husbands in these endeavors.
- *Be strong*—Paul wants them to function with some inner man might.
 - Ephesians 3:16

I Corinthians 16:14

- Our fifth improve is found in verse 14, all the watching, standing fast, manning up, and being strong in verse 13 is to be done with the heart attitude of “charity” in verse 14.
- Recall from our previous study of chapter 13 that we discussed the issue and definition of charity in detail. In doing so we concluded that “charity” was:
 - **That disposition of heart** which inclines men to think favorably of their fellow men. The Christian love of one's fellow human beings; expressing itself in Christ-like conduct.
- All the manly stuff in verse 13 is to be accompanied by a disposition of heart that values and esteems others as better than oneself.
- Verse 14 serves as the reminder the knowledge puffeth up but charity edifies.
 - I Corinthians 8:1
- Taken together, verse 13 and 14 instruct the Corinthians and by extension us, that we are to be serious about defending and standing for the truth but in a charitable way.