

New Caney
Church of Christ

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Assembly Times

Sundays
Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
Worship 10:30 a.m.

Wednesdays
Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Retaining The Standard
Of Sound Doctrine

Evangelist: Charles Willis
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- Know Your Bible: Answers
1. Aaron (High Priest) - Ex. 28:9–12

2. Wisdom (Proverbs 3:15)

3. The New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:21)

4. Jesus (Ephesians 2:20)

5. Christians (1 Peter 2:5)

This Week's Assignments & Events			
Sunday Worship		Sunday Afternoons	
Greeter:	Casey Thomas	July 20	Nothing
Announcements:	John Van Baale		
Encouragement Talk:	Eddie Bowen	July 27	3PM Classroom Quarter Change
Opening Prayer:	Sandon Spyker		
Scripture Reading:	Corwin Richardson	Aug 3	Nothing
	Luke 10:25–37		
Song Leader:	John Franks	Aug 10	Nothing
Table Talk:	Tyler Blazek		
Contribution:	Kevin Buckner		
Helper:	Truett Blazek		
Fruit of Vine:	Josh Emerson		
Helper:	Gary Tuttle		
Helper:	Verline Wilson		
Closing Prayer:	Arturo Orozco		
		Wednesday Evening	
		Song Leader:	Truett Blazek
		Speaker:	Tyler Blazek



Standing Firm

“Take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm”
Ephesians 6:13

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Fight The Good Fight

I am confident that most readers are familiar with the general tenor of Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. Throughout many of its chapters we find the apostle seeking to deal with a variety of errant behaviors. The brethren in Corinth were guilty of dividing the body and were giving approval to blatant immorality. They had been involved in taking one another to court and had misunderstood aspects of the marriage relationship. They had abused the Lord’s Supper and misused spiritual gifts. Paul was even compelled to deal with the misconceptions about the resurrection of Jesus and its application to themselves.

However, with the exception of the first couple of verses (where the apostle supplies instruction regarding the collection for the poor saints in Jerusalem), the final chapter may well be the most neglected portion of the letter. Where much of the letter had focused on how the Corinthians were not to behave, in 16:13–14 we find five important—and very specific commands—as to how they WERE to behave.

In today’s religious world we find a great deal of emphasis placed on the local church as a spiritual family. Many churches advertise themselves to their communities as places where people can belong and connect; where people can enjoy both fellowship and relationships. Certainly all of these are biblical concepts and therefore can be used to reach others for Christ. But the metaphor that comes to the forefront in these two verses is one that is not discussed as readily these days, yet it is one that is just as biblical. Christians aren’t just children in God’s family: they’re also called to be soldiers in the Lord’s army.

Paul frequently employed military images to convey specific principles to first century saints (Eph. 6:10–17; 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Tim. 2:4). Whether his readers were Jews or Gentiles, they were well acquainted with the practices and paraphernalia of the Roman soldier. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that as he moves to the conclusion of his epistle to the Corinthians, the military metaphor once again comes to the surface. Of the five commands listed in the text, four of them carry a military connotation. Make no mistake about it—Christians are at war! It’s not a physical battle with earthly weapons, but a spiritual conflict with the forces of sin and Satan. In this war there are real objectives, real casualties, real defeats, and real victories.

Like a commander issuing marching order to his troops, Paul supplies us with a list of challenges to equip us to effectively fight the good fight in our allegiance to Christ.

Be Vigilant Paul’s first command is a common one in the New Testament. Christians are frequently called upon to be alert, awake and attentive. The disciple of Jesus is often reminded that he cannot afford to drop his guard, to become careless or indifferent, lest some spiritual calamity overtake him. Sadly, it appears that at least some of the Corinthians had allowed themselves to be lulled into a moral stupor, allowing previous habits to resurface and erode their faith. They allowed themselves to forget that they were living in enemy territory, that this world is a spiritually hostile environment.

We must heed the truth that they neglected. To fight the good fight means we cannot afford to become careless, to fall asleep or become distracted. God has warned us that this world is not our friend (James 4:4; 1 John 2:15–17) and that our enemy is constantly in search of someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8). Be vigilant!

Dig In To “stand firm in the faith” speaks of holding our ground, a common piece of instruction when an army is under attack. As soldiers of Christ we must cling to divine truth rather than surrendering our convictions or embracing elements antithetical to biblical teaching. When the bullets are flying, compromise is often easier than combat; conformity can appear more comfortable than conviction. And so, like the Corinthians, we can find the world influencing us more than us influencing it.

For many today, truth is perceived as relative and subjective. For a growing number, there is no such thing as absolute truth. Instead the concept of truth becomes a moving target connected to people’s changing moods and desires. Even in religious circles there are a growing number who approach the Bible as merely a book of suggestions and opinions instead of a record of binding directives. Paul tells us not to vacillate along with the world, but stand and stay there! In the midst of our fickle environment, fighting the good fight is a matter of holding our ground on what’s true and right.

**Know
Your
Bible**

Stones

- 1. Who had a garment with 2 onyx stones engraved with the names of the children of Israel?
- 2. According to Proverbs, what is more precious than rubies?
- 3. What city has gates made of pearls?
- 4. Who is called a corner stone?
- 5. Who is called a living stone?

Answers On Back

Sunday Sermon

Point your phone camera at the square below, then click on the link to hear the sermon. Recordings will change mid-week.



Pursue Maturity His charge to “act like men” is not a call to be masculine, but to be courageous and to act our spiritual age! Once again, it is a common piece of biblical instruction (Eph. 4:11ff; Heb. 5:11–14). Mature saints exercise self-control, common sense, cool-headedness, and consideration. They walk cautiously, work vigorously, and take responsibility for their own actions. “Grown up” Christians don’t allow peer pressure to manipulate them or the vain things of this world to seduce them. Again, we find Paul’s exhortation to be the exact opposite of what the Corinthians had previously demonstrated (3:1–4; 4:21; 13:11; 14:20). He’s not advocating a form of spiritual chauvinism, but is telling us to grow up and act like spiritual adults, not little kids!

Be Strong Ironically, the Corinthians despised weakness (especially as they mistakenly perceived it in Paul, 1 Cor. 4:10) and believed themselves to be strong. Yet, as 1 Corinthians reveals, their strength wasn’t in the things that truly matter. Christianity is no place to be satisfied with intellectual, moral, or spiritual weakness. Instead, strength demands resolve and determination (1 Cor. 9:25).

Fighting the good fight depends upon building spiritual muscle through regular exercise (1 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 2:2), not drawing upon the foolish things of this world for nourishment.

Let Love Rule Love is the primary difference between worldly militancy and biblical militancy. For physical armies, winning is the only thing that matters. The objective therefore often gives rise to hatred and the employment of cruel methods. But in the Lord’s army, we are to “let all that you do be done in love.” Love provides both a balance and a complement to the previous four imperatives.

Without love...alertness can result in suspicion and narrow-mindedness.

Without love...standing firm can seem cold and intolerant.

Without love...the pursuit of maturity can result in a person becoming self-focused or hypercritical.

Without love...strength can lead to dominance and arrogance.

Leon Morris writes: “Love is more than an accompaniment of Christian actions. It is the very atmosphere in which the Christian lives and loves and has his being.” Love was what the Corinthians needed most—and what we need most as well (John 13:34–35; 1 John 4:7). No one can fight the good fight without it.

1 Corinthians 16:13–14—two powerful verses in an overlooked chapter with five direct commands relevant to saints in every age. These are God’s marching orders to those in His army. Paul is clear: If you want to fight the good fight, then here’s how you must live.

by Terry Slack
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