

# Imperatives for the Christian Life – Act Like Men

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*1 Corinthians*

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Well, good evening.

If you would, please, turn to the book of 1 Corinthians chapter 16 and we come, again, to the five imperatives that you find in verses 13 and 14. We have dealt with two so far. We have talked about being watchful. We have talked about standing firm in the faith.

Let's read God's Word and see what he says here again in verse 13.

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.<sup>1</sup>

Let's ask God's blessing on his Word and our time in it tonight.

*Father in heaven, I thank you for the time tonight with my brothers and sisters. Thank you, Lord, for the good testimonies that we have heard already and for the faithfulness of my brethren and for the opportunities that you are giving us to share your Son. And, I pray, Lord, that this week if you should tarry and if we should live that, Lord, we would be very sensitive all around us to the opportunities that you give us to give people a reason of the hope that have. We thank you that we belong to you. We thank you that we are in the truth. And we ask, Lord, that tonight as we open your Word, you would speak to our hearts, that your Spirit would take your Word, your sword in hand and deal with us in a way that encourages us, but also corrects us, in a way, Lord, that produces in us that which would be pleasing in your sight.*

*I do ask for anyone here with us this evening who doesn't know you that even tonight, Lord, they might fall under conviction and see their need for Jesus and recognize the emptiness of life lived outside of your fellowship and that thy would run to your Son, recognizing that he is everything and he has done everything and accomplished everything for us to be made right with you. And we ask you for this tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Verse 13 says:

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:13-14.

“Act like men.”<sup>2</sup>

Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a man who behaved like a man. He was a godly man. He was a strong man. He was a courageous man. You have all heard of the downgrade controversy. Charles Spurgeon lived at a time, preached at a time when he recognized that the churches of his time were moving away from confidence in the gospel, moving away from confidence in the sufficiency of Scripture and the authority of Scripture and churches had begun to embrace pragmatic methods instead of biblical methods.

And he wrote about that and he spoke about that and found himself in the midst of a controversy as a result.

And during that time in the midst of one of his sermons he had this to say. He said, “We admire a man who was firm in the faith, say, 400 years ago. But such a man today is a nuisance and must be put down. Call him a narrow minded bigot or give him a worse name if you can think of one. Yet imagine that in those ages past Luther, Zwingli, Calvin and their companions had said, ‘The world is out of order. But if we try to set it right, we shall only make a great controversy and get ourselves into disgrace. Let us go to our chambers, put on our night caps and sleep over the bad times and perhaps when we wake up things will have grown better.’

“Such conduct on their part would have entailed upon us a heritage of error. Age after age would have gone down into the infernal deeps and the pestiferous bogs of error would have swallowed all. These men loved the faith and the name of Jesus too well to see them trampled upon.

“It is today as it was in the reformers’ days. Decisions is needed. Here is the day for the man. Where is the man for the day? We who have had the gospel passed to us by martyr hands dare not trifle with it nor sit by and hear it denied by traitors who pretend to love it, but inwardly abhor every line of it. Look, you sirs, there are ages yet to come. If the Lord does not speedily appear, there will come another generation and another and all these generations will be tainted and injured if we are not faithful to God and to his truth day.

We have come to a turning point in the road. If we turn to the right perhaps our children and our children’s children will go that way, but if we turn to the left, generations yet unborn will curse our names for having been unfaithful to God and to his Word.”

I think you will agree with me that that represents courage, doesn’t it? That represents acting like a man. And that is what Paul is talking about here in 1 Corinthians 16:13. Look at it again with me.

Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:13.

And so tonight I want us to think about this. What does it mean to act like a man in the context of 1 Corinthians 16:13. What does it mean to act like a men?

Now the first thing I want to point out tonight is the basis for the comparison. The Greek word here is a form of the word ανδριζω (an-drid'-zoh) which literally means to make a man of or to make brave. This is an imperative form. It is in the middle voice and so the idea is literally act yourselves, behave yourselves like men. Be brave, be courageous is the idea.

And I am not going to spend a lot of time on it but I think at least it does us good to stop and just acknowledge that for Paul to even make this comparison reminds us that there is a certain kind of strength, a certain kind of courage that is becoming of men, that should characterize men.

Now this is really the sort of thing that someone would say to soldiers. Act like men. Don't be cowards. Don't back away from your responsibilities.

And so the very fact that he could take something that literally has to do with masculinity, because this is acting like a man. This is what the word means. To take something that makes that comparison and bring it over into the spiritual realm and say, "Now this is what a positive walk with God looks like," that recommends to us the idea that men should act like men.

Have you noticed that that kind of distinction between the sexes is under attack among unbelieving people in our day? Have you noticed that people find it troubling when we suggest that men should act like men?

We have an enemy who loves to turn truth on its head. He calls light darkness and darkness light. And Satan delights in the masculine sex acting in a feminine manner and he delights in the feminine sex acting in a masculine manner. And a society is showing the decay of sin when it is not only troubled by the idea that those distinctions are lost. It celebrates the obliteration of those distinctions. It encourages the obliteration of this distinctions.

And so while I would caution us that we ought not to think of masculinity in sinful terms, there are some things that people say have to do with being a man that aren't really having to do with being a man.

But in terms of the example set forth for us in God's Word, both in his written Word and in the incarnate Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, everything that it means to be masculine we should stand for as God's people and we should encourage among our sons and we should also encourage the distinction when it comes to our daughters. Men are to be masculine. Women are to be feminine. So that Paul was able to take something in the

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<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:13-14.

natural realm—“Act like men”<sup>4</sup>—and bring it over into the spiritual realm and make a positive application.

So that is the basis for the comparison, the idea that men should be masculine, that men should have a certain strength and courage about them because they are men.

But why does he use this comparison? What is the meaning of the comparison?

This is the only place in the New Testament where this particular Greek word is used, the only place. But it is used a to in the Greek translations of the Old Testament. In fact you find it over 20 times in the Old Testament. And almost every time you find it in the Old Testament it is a military context. Soldiers are being addressed or leaders of clans are being addressed. And what they are being exhorted to be is courageous. Be a man in the sense of be courageous. Don't be cowardly.

For example, the word is used in Joshua chapter one verse six where the Bible says this:

“Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous.”<sup>5</sup>

And both times that you see the word “courageous” there the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, it is this Greek word that is used. Be courageous.

1 Chronicles 28:20.

“Then David said to his son Solomon, ‘Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the LORD is finished.’”<sup>6</sup>

Be courageous. And it is this word, the form of the word ανδριζω (an-drid'-zoh).

As I said, there are many other examples. That is why many of the English translations, in fact, your translation may actually translate this, “Be courageous.” But it is literally, “Behave like a man. Be manly.” And it is an imperative and it is in the middle voice so that God is calling upon us to take action within our own person. You, yourself act like a man. In order to obey the Lord here, to hear the Lord, to act on what he is telling us, there is something that has to go on with our hearts and we have to take action within ourselves in order to stand up to this commandment and to obey it.

So let's think about the meaning of this in those terms, understanding it is a command, middle voice, acting upon ourselves, be manly.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Joshua 1:6-7.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Chronicles 28:20.

What can we say about this? Well, first of all, we have a responsibility in the Christian life to take action within our own hearts. God commands us in a direct fashion. You see this over and over again in his Word where he tells us, "Do this," right? He doesn't address us as though we live the Christian life in this entirely passive sort of way and wait on God to do in us what he has commanded us to do.

I am afraid too often that is how God's people hear his commands.

God, you have commanded me, for example. You have commanded me to live a pure life, someone might say. So why do I keep stumbling, God? Why do I keep falling? Why don't you help me? How many times have I called out to you? How many times have I asked you to help me? Lord, you know how this grieves me and I don't want to do these things. So, Lord, why aren't you listening to me? Why aren't you helping me?

And then, if you were to talk to that very same individual you would see these pitfalls that they continue to leave in their life, open doors they refuse to close, things they continue to do that make them vulnerable to the temptations they continue to fall into.

You see, if we are going to take action, for example, here, impurity. It is not just asking the Lord to strengthen us. It is also obeying the Lord by doing the things that he would call us to do in order to remove these avenues of temptation from our lives. Obeying the Lord is not just a passive thing. It is also an active thing.

It is trusting him but it is trusting him as we act, as we take action.

Well, we understand action when it has to do with activity. But sometimes we don't understand action when it has to do with attitudes of our heart, when it has to do with things that we think about.

If I am telling you to be courageous, well, where does courage take place? It takes place in your heart. If I tell you not to be afraid, let's go to the opposite of courage. If I tell you not to be cowardly, not to be afraid, well, where is this change going to take place from being cowardly to being courageous? From being cowardly to acting like a man in terms of being courageous? Where is the change going to occur? It has to occur in your mind. It has to occur in your heart. Do we... let's just stop and let this sink in. Do we realize that we have to take action with respect to the way that we think and with respect to the way that we feel?

Martin Lloyd-Jones used to say this was ... he was dealing... in fact, he has written.. he wrote a book. He is with the Lord now, but he wrote a book entitled *Spiritual Depression*. And if you struggle at all with discouragement I would encourage you to get that book. It is thoroughly biblical and it is so sound. But in this book, *Spiritual Depression*, Marty Lloyd-Jones talks about the need that we have to preach to ourselves. That is what we have to do. We have to take God's Word and preach it to ourselves.

Well, he didn't make that up. He gets that from the Bible.

For example, Psalm 42 verse five. Listen to what the psalmist writes.

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?”<sup>7</sup>

Isn't that interesting? The psalmist talking to himself and saying, “Why are you down? Why are you in turmoil?”

And then the psalmist writes:

“Hope in God.”<sup>8</sup>

Who is he talking to? He is talking to himself.

“Hope in God.”<sup>9</sup>

David, why is your heart topsy turvy and it is like the wind is blowing and the waves are crashing inside. Why is it like that? David, hope in God.

And he goes on to write this.

“...for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.”<sup>10</sup>

Further on in the psalm, in the 11<sup>th</sup> verse he says:

“Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.”<sup>11</sup>

He reminds himself of who God is, who God is to him and what God has promised that his future is. So that he tells himself, recognizing the turmoil his heart is in, he doesn't just give in to it. He speaks to himself. He preaches to himself and he chooses within himself to believe God, to put his hope in God and to regard God to be toward him what God has already said that he is. That is taking action.

I want to ask you. When was the last time you preached to yourself? When is the last time you recognized what was going on within your heart? Maybe you were afraid. Maybe you were tempted to be a coward? Maybe you weren't standing up where you knew you should be standing up? When is the last time that you took all of God's

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<sup>7</sup> Psalm 42:5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 42:5-6.

<sup>11</sup> Psalm 42:11.

promises and all of God's commands and you just preached them to your own heart and then you acted on what you were preaching to yourself.

When he says, "Act like a man," he is reminding us. We have a responsibility to take action within our own hearts.

There is another way we could say this. This... we could say it this way. This means we have a responsibility to cooperate with God's work in our hearts.

The Christian life is not entirely passive, but it is not entirely active either. Right? We don't want to err on the side of Quietism, which says let go and let God. But neither do we want to end up in this place called Pietism where you just go do it for God and then give him the credit.

No, we can't take one step without the Lord. Our Savior told us, "For without me you can do nothing."<sup>12</sup>

So it is active dependence. It is walking in the light one step at a time, depending upon the Lord for every step you take so that as we preach to ourselves, as we speak to ourselves within our hearts, we recognize what is going on. It is the Lord who is reminding us to do this, who is ready to help us as we preach to ourselves, who is ready to empower us as we will listen to what we are preaching to ourselves.

So we are not talking about positive thinking. We are not talking about some kind of self, you know, convincing ourselves. We are talking about taking God's holy, powerful, living Word, reminding ourselves of it, choosing to walk in it, knowing that the God who has told us to do this is there to guide us, empower us and walk with us every step of the way as we obey him.

What does it mean to act like a man? It is going to mean that you are going to cooperate with God's Word in your heart to make you courageous. It means you are going to believe his commands. It means you are going to believe in God's ability to enable you to walk in his commands. Right? He has not just commanded you, but he is there to fulfill it.

So I am going to believe what you tell me and I am going to believe in your ability, God, to enable me to walk in what you tell me. And then I am going to actually take action in obedience to those commands.

You can't leave out the third step.

I believe you and I believe that you are able. Therefore, here I go. I believe you. I believe you are able. Therefore I take the next step. I begin to act on what you have told me to do.

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<sup>12</sup> John 15:5.

Let me give you some great biblical examples of this. If you want to look these up with me and look at them quickly we can. If you don't get there in time, I will just read it to you.

2 Timothy chapter one is a great example of this.

Now what I want you to note with me is how often the Lord would tells someone not to be afraid, call upon them to believe him, but then also notice that there was always to be this resulting action.

2 Timothy chapter one. Look at verse six.

Paul write to his young son in the faith.

“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”<sup>13</sup>

Now let's just stop there and recognize quickly what is going on in Timothy's life. Timothy is a called man. He is a gifted man. But for some reason right now his giftedness needs to be stirred up into action. He is not doing what he ought to be doing.

And if you ask why his giftedness needed to be fanned into flame again, the very next statement tells us why.

Verse seven.

“...for God gave us a spirit not of fear...”<sup>14</sup>

And you know if you read about Timothy's life, he struggled with timidity a lot. He struggled with being afraid.

Paul says, “God hasn't given us a spirit of fear...”

“...but of power and love and self-control.”<sup>15</sup>

Don't be afraid, Timothy. That is what he is saying. Don't be afraid. Son, look. Use the gift God has given you. Walk in what he has commanded you to do and to be. Don't be afraid.

But now notice what this is going to require of him.

Verse eight.

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<sup>13</sup> 2 Timothy 1:6.

<sup>14</sup> 2 Timothy 1:7.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord.”<sup>16</sup>

It means you are going to boldly preach the truth.

“...nor of me his prisoner...”<sup>17</sup>

That means you are going to stand with those who preach the truth.

“...but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.”<sup>18</sup>

If Timothy receives this he is going to have to speak to his own heart and say, “Why are you afraid?” He is going to have to receive the words of God he is receiving from Paul and believe them, embrace them and believe them. But then he is also going to have to actually take action by declaring God’s Word, standing with Paul and perhaps even have to suffer for the gospel. And all of it requires the power of God.

Here is another example, Acts chapter 18 verse nine.

And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for I have many in this city who are my people.”<sup>19</sup>

Do you think Paul ever got afraid? I mean that gloriously bold missionary for Christ, do you think he ever got afraid? Well, he did. He did. And the Lord tells him, “Don’t be afraid, but you go on preaching. Don’t be silent. I am with you. I am with you to deliver you.”

So what did Paul do? Verse 11.

“And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.”<sup>20</sup>

Do you know what he did? He obeyed the Lord and he went on preaching there—that was Corinth, by the way—for a year and a half.

1 Peter chapter three verse 14.

But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who

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<sup>16</sup> 2 Timothy 1:8.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Acts 18:9-10.

<sup>20</sup> Acts 18:11.

asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.<sup>21</sup>

Don't be afraid, but rather in your heart recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord. You set him apart as holy in your heart. Your heart completely belongs to Christ. You have been purchased by his blood. You are the possession of the Lord. Don't be afraid. But you honor Christ in your heart and here is what it is going to mean practically. It means you are ready. You stand always ready to give a reason for your hope to anyone who would ask you.

You see, there are decisions we are making within our own hearts, but it always requires of us action as a result.

Revelation 2:10.

“Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”<sup>22</sup>

Don't be afraid. But what is it going to mean if I am not afraid? It is going to mean that you go on faithfully and suffer for it. In fact, it may even mean your death. Be faithful unto death.

When the Lord called me to the ministry he made known to me that he wanted me to be in the ministry one of the verses that he really used to encourage my heart and solidify in my own heart the calling he had for me was from Jeremiah chapter one. And I understand and I know full well I am not Jeremiah. But he used the verses to encourage me. And in Jeremiah chapter one verse five this was the verse that the Lord used in my heart.

He says this to Jeremiah.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
and before you were born I consecrated you;  
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth.”

But the LORD said to me,  
“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;  
for to all to whom I send you, you shall go,  
and whatever I command you, you shall speak.  
Do not be afraid of them,  
for I am with you to deliver you,

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<sup>21</sup> 1 Peter 3:14-16.

<sup>22</sup> Revelation 2:10.

declares the LORD.”<sup>23</sup>

In chapter one verse 17 he says:

But you, dress yourself for work; arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them. And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the LORD, to deliver you.”<sup>24</sup>

What ought to characterize men? Courage. What does it mean to be spiritually courageous? It means that we are going to have to take action within our own hearts. It means we are going to have to preach God’s truth to ourselves. But it also is going to mean that we are ready to take action on the things that we have heard. We believe them. We embrace them. And now we are ready to take action upon them to obey the Lord, trusting every step of the way that he will be to us everything that he promises to be.

Which leads to our third thought tonight and the last one.

Where is courage needed? Why do we need to act like men?

Paul says to the Corinthians:

“Act like men.”<sup>25</sup>

Why do we need to act like men? Well, in the Corinthian context there were two reasons that are very clear. We saw it in the previous imperative when he said:

“Stand firm in the faith.”<sup>26</sup>

You see, they were being moved away through this influence of sort of pre Gnosticism. They were being moved away from the gospel, moved away from the truth. Being influenced by the philosophies of their era, their culture. So that if you were going to stand on the truth, if you were going to stand with Paul because there were many in this church who didn’t, if you were going to stand firm in the gospel, it was going to require courage. So they needed courage in terms of belief.

How many here tonight know that it take courage to believe the truth, to believe the truth, to stand in the truth?

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<sup>23</sup> Jeremiah 1:5-8.

<sup>24</sup> Jeremiah 1:17-19.

<sup>25</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:13.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

But not only was the Corinthian Church being influenced in terms of message, they were being influenced in terms of their behavior. When you think about people getting drunk at the Lord's table, when you think about people suing each other in the courts, when you think about people engaging in sexual immorality on the one hand and not being sexually faithful in terms in terms of being available to one another on the other hand, you know, practicing celibacy within marriage, when you think about the perversion of spiritual gifts and bringing a lot of the pagan practices in the mystery religions into the church, then you recognize they were being moved away from purity not only in terms of their belief they were being moved away from purity in terms of their behavior so that to stand in the truth would mean not only what you believed, it would mean you are going to stand with Paul, stand with Christ, stand with God's Word in terms of how you live.

They needed courage for that.

How many know it takes courage when all your friends are headed one way in terms of behavior for you to say, "I can't go there. I can't do that. This would dishonor Christ"?

What about our own context? Where we do we need courage living in our nation, living... going to our schools, living in our families? Where we do we need courage? Well, the same areas where they did, belief and behavior.

We can make it a little more specific. First of all think about the Christian living in the world. Courage is needed to stand for truth in a world of darkness. And we need to stand the right way. We are going to see this when we get there. The last imperative we must never forget, end of verse 14:

"Let all that you do be done in love."<sup>27</sup>

We have got to stand the right way. We have got to stand in humility. We have got to stand in gentleness. We have got to stand in love.

But, folks, we live in a world full of lies. The world is existing in the lie. Right? The world is under the prince of the power of the air. And so these doctrines of demons, this is the world's system. And we have been delivered out of that and brought into the kingdom of Christ so that we are a people of truth, a people of light, living in the midst of a very dark world and God calls upon us in the midst of that darkness to be shining lights and not to hide that light under a bushel, but to shine in the midst of this world, to be salt in the midst of this society. And that requires courage.

If you are going to stand up and speak up in the midst of situations where no one agrees with you, you are going to have to act like a man.

But let's not just think about the Christian in the world. Let's think about the Christian in the Church.

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<sup>27</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:14.

Courage is needed to remain faithful even in the context of Christendom. Courage is needed to remain faithful in times of unfaithfulness.

I believe we are living in days that are difficult. The Bible warns us that there will be times when people don't want the truth even within the church, when they will gather for themselves teachers who will tickle their ears and tell them what they want to hear. I believe we are living in a day, by and large, where that is the case, where the church is in a sick state in need of awakening, in need of revival. I am talking about the church as it exists externally, as it exists in terms of public identification. So that it is not only out there where people don't profess to know Jesus that we are going to require courage. It is in the realm where people do profess Jesus.

I pray that it is not so here. But it could very well be true to say that some of the greatest temptations you will ever face will be offered to you through the activity of someone who calls themselves a Christian maybe even unknown to the elders here or else we would deal with it, maybe even from a fellow church member.

Are you ready to be faithful even if your professing brother or sister isn't faithful? Courage is needed to remain faithful in days of unfaithfulness.

Then we can think about the Christian in terms of our personal responsibilities, personal relationships and recognize that courage will be needed to take action that would be easier left alone.

It is funny what we do with situations that require courage. We tend to intellectualize them in such a way, intellectualize over them in such way that we convince ourselves we are not really being cowards, not really.

I mean, if I were to do this I would appear to be so narrow minded. If I were to do this, I would appear to be so... and you can just fill in the blank.

And so what we do is we do nothing. Or we even sometimes will excuse our cowardly ways away in the name of being loving. Why haven't I confronted this? Well, because, you know, I am so full of love. Can't you see I am just so full of love?

And so we flatter ourselves and we say to ourselves, "Just because I am so gracious and I am so gentle and I am so loving."

No. Sometimes it is because you are just a coward. And you put a positive face on what is not positive.

Where has God given you a responsibility? Again, I want you to hear me, because whenever we preach a sermon like this, you know, the nuts come out. And there is someone who wants to talk about the weirdest stuff that the Bible doesn't even address. I am not talking about, you know, fighting fundamentalism. I am not talking about that. I

am talking about where there is a clear biblical issue. It is clear. It is not a matter of judgment. And God has put you in a situation where you have a responsibility toward another person. You are God's instrument to speak truth to them in that situation or to draw the line in a situation and to say, "No more."

But you have excused it and you have explained it away when what you need to do is be a man and do what God would require of you.

I want to talk to the men tonight, to the husbands and fathers in this place. Are things going on in your home that should not go on? And you know it and you see it and you recognize it, but you just think it is too costly to do something about it.

Be a man.

If you have a family member in sin, it is clear. It is not maybe they are. It is not, you know, perhaps something needs to be done. But you say nothing to them, not really. Or you say it in such benign terms, nothing is ever really affected.

Are you willing to take the stands you need to take to help them?

Finally, let's think about the Christian and himself. The Christian and the world, the Christian and the Church, the Christian and relationships. What about the Christian and himself?

Do we need courage when it comes to ourselves, the courage to confront what needs to be confronted in your own life, the courage to see yourself the way you really are, the courage to admit what is really wrong, the courage, perhaps, to open your life up to some one who would love you and help you, but you have kept your issue hidden because you are just afraid?

Can we admit the truth about ourselves? Can we admit that we are failing in our marriage? Can we admit that we are failing with our children? Can we admit that we have been stubborn and proud? Can we admit the things we need to admit in order that we might know the help of the Lord?

We know the verse so well, don't we?

God resists... what does the Bible say? The proud. But he gives what? Grace to whom? The humble.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God."<sup>28</sup>

Can we do that? Will we do that?

What does the Lord say to us in verse 13?

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<sup>28</sup> 1 Peter 5:6.

He says, "Play the man. Behave like men. Don't be a coward. Don't be afraid. Act like men."

As Spurgeon said, "This is the day for the man. Where is the man for the day?"

Sir, this is your day. Ma'am, in this way you need to act like a man. Brother and sisters, this is the day for men. Where are the men for the day?

Let's pray together.

*Father in heaven, I pray that we would hear your command to us tonight to be courageous, that we would preach to ourselves the things you have revealed that would give us courage, that we would embrace those things in our hearts and then we would take action upon those things. Lord, even as we have seen tonight in your Word, even knowing that that might lead to suffering or that it might lead even to death in the case of what you have said to some of your saints, Lord, in your Word.*

*I pray that we would recognize that we are living in difficult days and I pray that we would recognize at the same time that you, Lord, will make us equal to the day we are living in, that by your grace, by the power that you supply we can honor you and obey your Son in all things. Help us, Lord, to put away sin in all of its forms beginning, Lord, with the sin of not believing you, being afraid and cowardly when you would call us to boldly trust you. We ask you for this tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.*