FIVE IMPERATIVES FOR CHRISTIANS

I Cor. 16: 13 - 14

Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. Paul, in the last chapter of I Corinthians, gives these FIVE IMPERATIVES -- an imperative is not to be avoided or evaded; it is that which MUST BE OBEYED; it is binding.
2. *McGarvey* declared: *"In these brief phrases, Paul sums up the burden of this entire epistle".*
3. We all need to realize that these are imperatives from heaven, and any indifference toward them, jeopardizes the soul.
4. Let us study them in the order they appear in the text:

I. *"WATCH YE"*

1. This means to "be awake"; "vigilant"; "to keep awake"; "be watchful"; "not careless"; "not easily deceived".
2. A person that is <u>not watchful</u> is <u>not qualified to stand fast in the faith</u>, behave like a man, and be strong and exercise love.
3. We are to watch that NO ADVANTAGE may be gained over us by Satan -- II Cor. 2:11; I Pet. 5:8
4. We are to grow so we can discern good and evil -- Heb. 5: 13 - 14
5. We are to watch for temptation -- Mat. 26:41; I Cor. 10:13
6. Souls are lost and churches apostatize when brethren go to sleep.
7. Elders are to watch -- Acts 20:31
8. Preachers are to watch -- II Tim. 4:5
9. Things Christians are to watch against:
   (1) The danger of division -- I Cor. 1:10; I Cor. 11:19
   (2) The deception of false teachers -- Acts 20: 28 - 31; Matt. 7:15; II John 9 - 11; II Pet. 2: 1 - 3; Tit. 1:11
   (3) The failure to love the brethren -- I Cor. 16:14; Heb. 13:1
   (4) The failure to watch the mouth -- Psa. 39: 1; James 1: 26; Eph. 4:29
   (5) Watch to AVOID temptations -- Mark 14:38
   (6) We should watch to avoid doctrinal error -- Rom. 16: 17 - 18
   (7) We have to watch our own lives -- I Cor. 9:27; Phil. 1:27; Acts 20:28
9. We are to watch for opportunities of USEFULNESS -- Gal. 6:10

II. "*STAND FAST IN THE FAITH"*

1. We are to stand FAST in the gospel -- I Cor. 15:1; Gal. 1 :6 - 9
2. We are to have convictions -- II Cor. 4:13
3. What it means to stand fast in the faith:
   (1) It means to contend for the faith -- Jude 5; Phil. 1:17

(2) To stand for the church of the New Testament -- Matt. 16:18

(3) To stand for New Testament worship -- John 4:24; Acts 2:42; Eph. 5:19

(4) Stand for the organization of the church -- Acts 14:23

(5) Stand for purity of life -- Tit. 2: 11 - 12; James 1:27; I John 2 :15 - 16

(6) We stand against all error -- Eph. 5:11; Rom. 12:9; Gal. 2:5

III. *"QUIT (BEHAVE) YOU LIKE MEN"* -- I Tim. 3:15

1. Childish fear must be subdued and the strength of manhood must be developed.
2. Christians are to be MANLY:

   (1) To <u>contend</u> with <u>difficulties</u> -- James 1:2

   (2) To bear up under <u>opposition</u> -- Matt. 5: 10 - 12; Rom. 5: 3 - 5

   (3) To endure <u>temporary defeat</u> -- I Thess. 2:18
3. Christians are to be MEN:

   (1) In Courage -- Phil. 1: 28; Josh. 1:9 "*Be strong and of good courage*"

   (2) In Understanding -- I Cor. 14:20

   (3) In Usefulness -- I Cor. 15:58
4. Those who behave like men do not stoop to childishness.
5. The Childish are:

   (1) Contentious

   (2) Filled with pettishness

   (3) Spitefulness -- Matt. 5:44
6. Many congregations are crippled because they are not made up of MEN.

IV. *"BE STRONG"*

1. How can one be strong?

   (1) One becomes strong by FAITH -- Heb. 11: 33 -34; Rom. 10:17

   (2) Col. 3:16; Eph. 6: 10 - 18
2. How STRENGTH is manifested:

   (1) By loyalty to the Word of God -- I Cor. 4:6; I Pet. 4:11

   (2) By the resistance of temptation.

   (3) By faithful attendance

   (4) By liberal giving

   (5) By loving consideration of the rights and needs of others.

   (6) By the repudiation of the world's value judgments.

   (7) By striving against sin -- Heb. 12: 4

V. *"LET ALL YOUR THINGS BE DONE WITH CHARITY (LOVE)"*

1. Our text requires that ALL we do be done in LOVE.
2. No single act motivated by:
   (1) Malice -- takes delight in inflicting hurt or injury
   (2) Spite
   (3) Bitterness -- long-standing resentment
   (4) Hatred
   (5) Pettishness
   (6) Vain glory -- Phil. 2: 3; petty striving; ambition to gain position
   (7) Selfishness
   (8) Envy -- "*But envy the rottenness of the bones"* -- Prov. 14:30; strives to degrade others
   (9) Jealousy
3. "*Love worketh no ill to his neighbor"* -- Rom. 13:10
4. Love "*is the bond of perfectness"* -- Col. 3:14
   (1) Love is the cement that holds everything else in place.
5. We are to love in DEED and TRUTH -- I John 3: 17 - 18
6. Love fervently -- I Pet. 1:22
7. We are to love God with all our being -- Matt. 22: 37 - 39
8. I Cor. 13: 1 - 8

CONCLUSION

1. Can you honestly say these FIVE IMPERATIVES are PART OF YOUR LIFE?

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