

A Philosophy of Men's Ministry: Calling Churchmen to Jesus' Mandate of Manliness

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[0 : 00] Fast Eaters, good to see you. So good morning, my brothers. Thank you for being here. This is so weird looking down on you, you know, elevated position. Man, yeah, it's crazy. So thank you for being here this morning. We have a few fresher faces with us this morning. I want to make sure that everybody recognizes these guys and welcomes them with us. So we have Matt and Bodie, your son Bodie. Bodie's 16 years old. Matt was visiting with us a couple weeks ago, I think, for a couple Sundays. And what kind of connection do you guys have to our church, Matt? How did you find out about us or what's the, I know there's one, so. Yeah, there's a couple of connections, but I would say more currently with the great wife, Margie, sold you from a firehouse here in the church. Oh, yeah. And of course, she was very highly at this church. Praise the Lord. Good. Good to know our fellow pastor's wife is high on our church. Thank you, brother. Good. It was, it was been great to have you guys visiting with us as well. And then we have Kevin and Kevin had a recent wonder happened in his life. Tell us about that, Kevin. Beautiful. Nine pounds. Everybody's doing great.

And so you, you already have a grandson. He's okay. Yeah. Amen. And we can pray for you because you and your wife, Angela, they've been visiting for a couple months now. You guys are getting ready to go on a vacation together, extended vacation. Where are you headed? Wow. Yay. Praise the Lord, brother. Awesome.

That's great. Well, thank you for being with us, Kevin. It's good to have you guys. And then Randy, introduce yourself to us, would you? And tell us where you're from. Hey, guys. I'm in the Town Center. I live in northern LA County, in California, in California.

And locating in and out to work here in South Dallas. And the time you guys do the work here. Amen. And what capacity do you hold in your church, brother?

I serve in many different capacities, but I serve in my work here. Amen. Very like-minded. And he told me that they have a Master's Seminary grad as their teaching pastor. Primary teaching elder in their church. And Randy's been visiting with us the last couple Sundays or so. He'll be in and out, gone and then back again. And so glad you found us, brother, and that you can be here. I think most of the other guys in here are fairly familiar to us, right? Yeah. All right. We're good. Well, you see the topic for this morning. You can pick either screen. Isn't that pretty cool? Oh, yes. Thank you. Fancy schmancy, huh? Yeah, what a blessing.

[3 : 19] We had to wait on these things, and I'm glad we did. We waited on them for a couple of different reasons for them to come in. They were on back order. And they seem to be working fine. Does it look brighter to you? Does it seem more sharp? It did to me, too. Yeah, we're very grateful for what God's doing in our midst as we were able to do the Reno under Doug's leadership and Josiah running all over the place, trying to keep everything coordinated to expand the wall and give us more room. So we're just praying that God will continue to bring people to this pioneering effort. You know, Greg and I like to remind us all, we're six years old as a church. And so the men that we have sitting in this room are pioneers. We are the ones, as it were, going into the territory and clearing the land.

We're chopping down the trees. We're rooting up the stumps by hand. We're tilling the land. We're dealing with the critters. You know, it's down the road somewhere. I hope, I pray that our church will be here long after Greg and I hand the baton off to the next set of elders as, and I'm hoping we're raising those up from within as God brings us men. But as we anticipate that at some point down the road, men will be sitting where you are, Lord willing, or in some place that's Grace Church Williamsburg, and they will be looking back on a history that you help prepare. And that's one of the

reasons that what we're going to talk about this morning is so critical. It's so important to every single one of us. As we think about kingdom building, as we think about being churchmen, we'll explain what that is in a minute. As we think about being faithful to Jesus, at Grace Church, we are men who are endeavoring in a pioneering effort together to lay a foundation for what we hope will go on for decades in this community until the Lord comes again. That's what we're hoping. If you've ever been a part of a church that's been around 50, 75 years, you know what it's like and the history kind of fades and all that kind of thing. But right now it's super fresh, isn't it? We've been praying for God to send us men, send us men who want to serve the Lord Jesus and grow in the grace and knowledge of who he is so that we can be effective kingdom builders in our sphere of influence, in our community. And he's doing that. Many of you guys, let's do a little hand thing for some of the fresher faces in here.

How many of you guys have joined our church or become part of our church or started visiting our church just within the last 18 months or so? Now, look at this.

Isn't that incredible? This is the work God's doing and we are so thankful for it. I think we got about 22 guys here this morning. It's most we've ever had. And we've got several guys out who are traveling. So Greg and I are very thankful to the Lord that he's doing this kind of work in our midst. Now, look, as we talk about this this morning, there are several reasons that Greg and I are going to share with you about why this particular topic at this time. You saw all the hands go up. It's been some time since Greg and I covered this material as we helped launch our church with our little core group, our handful of men who grabbed this responsibility early on. Jeremy was one of those guys. Doug was one of those guys. They've been here from the beginning. Michael's been here. Michael Cochran and Michael Erdly have been here from the beginning. Who else am I missing? Jeff, I don't remember how long you've been here. A while? Yeah. Okay. So we've got several guys here who were at the start of this six year venture so so far. And so they've heard some of this.

[7 : 15] We've tweaked it and added to it. But there are many guys here who need to hear where we stand as we think about. What does it mean to be churchman? What does it mean to be part of a men's ministry in a local church assembly like ours? So I want to share a few insights with you from some other men who have spoken in to this issue that you see here as a subtitle churchman following Jesus's mandate of manliness. What does that mean? Listen to this guy and then I'll tell you who he is.

He says, our days are marked by unprecedented confusion about manhood. Forces in our culture denigrate masculinity as toxic. So for you to be a man's man is toxic. And then they push a false narrative about what it means to be a man. It's not really shocking when you think about our world. Many in our churches. This is the interesting part. Many in our churches have been influenced to these ideas.

And as a result, many Christian men are on the sidelines in their homes and communities.

These are the things that we've learned in our communities. This is said by Lieutenant General, retired Lieutenant General William Boykin. He is the founding member of Delta Force.

[8 : 52] And that's his assessment of our modern times in evangelicalism. Most local churches. Most Christian men, in his opinion, in the churches that he knows about are on the sidelines when it comes to what it means to be churchmen following the mandate of manliness by following Jesus.

I want to share a couple of others with you. Listen, listen to this one. The devil wages war on men because if he can destroy strong men, he can exploit the home, the church, and society.

I believe it is immensely important for Christians to think critically about this subject and to be equipped to stand strong in a culture seeking to emasculate men.

And that's Kosti Hinn. Kosti is the lead pastor or the teaching pastor at Shepherd's House Bible Church in Chandler, Arizona, where my wife is from and where I lived for five years as I attended Grand Canyon University, my alma mater there in the Phoenix area.

And then finally, I want to share this with you from Dr. Strand. He was a professor at Southern Seminary. He's written extensively on these kinds of subjects. And I actually met him, knew him when I was at Southern.

[10 : 24] A great guy. Listen to what he says about today. Strong men are not toxic. If they go away, evil men take their place and weak men offer no resistance.

The idea that masculine men, that is assertive, risk-taking, single-minded, are a problem to be solved threatens our entire society.

The cultural elites cheering the decline of men are trying to erase God's design for half of the human race.

The half that historically provides, protects, and leads for the good of others. The disappearance of the masculine ideal is bad news for men.

And it is terrible news for women. What will happen without men of courage and conviction? Who will do the hard jobs that no one else can do?

[11 : 31] Who will be left to face down evil, strengthen families, build churches, and bolster communities? Grace Church couldn't exist in who we are today without strong men.

And we're going to define this morning together what strong men are and how Grace Church is aiming its sights as being a masculine-led body of believers without apology.

What that means, what that looks like, why it's important, and how biblically centered it is. So this is not about machismo. This has anything to do with the world's definition of manliness.

It's actually a counter to that. This is true manliness. This is the manliness we see in our Lord. And that's who we want to follow. Amen? Well, gentlemen, let's begin this morning in Scripture.

Let's go to Matthew 28 and be reminded about our commission from our Lord. I'm going to ask my fellow pastor and best friend, Greg, to read Matthew 28, 18 through 20.

[12 : 49] And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Now we know the context here. We've looked at this a number of times over the course of this six-year period. And we understand that Jesus is speaking to His disciples.

And what's going to happen to Jesus immediately following these words? What happens to Him? He ascends. That's right. So here is the final call to faithfulness as Jesus offers His commission to the men that He's looking to to carry on kingdom building as He ascends to the right hand of the Father.

This is no small thing. No small thing. Now, what we're seeing in this passage is nothing short of Jesus' authority over us as Lord of the church.

He's the Lord of the church. Greg and I are under rowers, under shepherds, serving among you, alongside of you here at Grace. He and I have a certain function that we perform in this church, but we are not the head of this church, Grace Church.

[14 : 13] We are magnifying Jesus as Lord over Grace Church. And we are all seeking to come together to serve Him. He commands us to carry out His mandate to His glory.

And so what I'm saying to you in short is this. It's all about Jesus. If we miss Jesus in our manliness, we miss the point of being men. We were created by God as male to follow in the example that Jesus leaves us as the ultimate male.

We talk about the alpha male. Well, Jesus is the alpha male, isn't He? How many of you were able to take in everything that's blowing up the news media across the world right now?

How many of you saw men handle themselves in the Oval Office yesterday? How many of you were able to catch that? You saw men at work. That was man's work.

And the world's not used to it. And so all the manbies around the world in the news media, particularly women, I've noticed, want to berate what happened in that Oval Office.

[15 : 23] And they miss the point that they have spent the last four years not seeing man's work done. Now look, guys, I know what I'm doing up here. I'll get off of it in a minute.

Just give me a second for my soapbox. I was so proud of what I saw. I told Greg I had to mute it at one point. I had to mute it at one point. It was like a rally call. It was like somebody blowing the bugle charge, you know.

I wanted to be there so bad and be there going, yes! Yes! That's right! But I wasn't. So I cut it off and I went back to my study. Nevertheless, the world isn't used to seeing men do men's work.

They're not. And that's so sad. It hasn't always been like that. There have been generations in the past that have shown themselves faithful. Faithful in the charge to stand up and be men.

Now, one of the things I want to share with you this morning speaks to the issue then of the priorities that follow on this authoritative mandate that we have from the Lord of glory. This is about Jesus' authority being held up in our lives and nothing short of that.

[16:32] So bucking this commission, bucking this mandate, this charge has everything to do with rebellion in our hearts. This is a spiritual issue. And so let's talk about His priority here.

Jesus' priority on discipleship. This is the point of the passage. And Jesus' authority to prescribe that priority is binding on our lives.

We have to start at that foundation, gentlemen. We have to accept the reality that we have a binding charge committed to us by the Lord Jesus Christ.

To us. To the men of our church. Does this apply to the women of our church making disciples? Absolutely. We lead the way. We set the tone.

We set the tenor. We set the pace. That's what we are charged to do. We're going to be in a passage in a few moments that's going to spell that out for us in very specific terms.

[17:34] And so the question at this point then begs, how should we respond? How should we respond to this mandate as churchmen? Now here's why that question is important framed in that way.

How should we respond? What is our unique role as churchmen? The reason that I'm asking the question in that way, how should we respond, highlighted, to this mandate, is this. We're not making this up.

This is not about Greg and I being clever. Or even smart. This is about being faithful. We are responding to what we've been charged to be and do by our Lord and King.

This has everything to do with whether or not you're going to step up to the spiritual plate and be faithful. And so in part, one of the things that we're doing as we talk about this is we're not simply setting the bar, Greg and I, no.

We're identifying the bar that's already there and calling all of us to it. That's what we're doing. And then we want to hold the bar where it needs to be.

[18:45] We don't want to dumb it down. Step it down. It's not supposed to be easy. The bar that's being set is supposed to be something that we can only strive toward in the power of Jesus.

Anything else, what is it? If I can do it without Him, is it worth doing? Well, I'm talking about life in the local church now. So again, how should we respond to what this mandate is as Jesus levels it on us as our Lord?

What is our unique role as churchmen? We're not women. We're not girls. This isn't about CEOs and corporate lines.

No, this is about serving the Lord of glory. Now, when we talk about churchmen, that may not be a term familiar to you. Churchmen are believing men.

Men who love what the Lord loves. That's a churchman. Church, His bride. You are a man of His church. His bride.

[19:55] And so you love what your Lord loves. And what do we like to say around grace? You guys that have been here for a while, you've heard me say this time and again. Greg's said it to you time and again.

We are to love what the Lord loves. What does the Lord love? Most in this world, what does He love? He loves the Father and? Yeah, Himself.

But I'm thinking, go outside the Godhead now. The Father, the bride, and His Word. The truth. Jesus loves the Father.

Serves the Father. What did He tell us while He was here? I came not to do My own will, but to do the will of Him who sent Me. He said, I don't even speak My own words. I speak the words the Father's given Me to say. That's Jesus, the Lord of glory.

He loves His bride. Who did He die for? He died for His bride. That's what we believe here at Grace Church. We believe in a limited atonement, meaning that when Jesus died on the cross, He died for a specific people.

[20:53] He didn't die to provide potential for salvation. He died to save. He died to save. And He loves His Word. Not a jot or tittle of it will ever pass away.

His Word will stand at the time of eternity. Isn't that something? Churchmen are men, believing men, who love what the Lord loves.

They love His Word. They love His church. They love His bride. They love the Father. So how are we coming, how are we here at Grace Church, coming around her, the church, to show and share that same love here at Grace Church Williamsburg?

How are we doing that? This is the mandate we share in together. Father, the enemy of Jesus fights against God's men.

He fights against you. He fights against me, against Greg. So we need to see our place in what we're calling this bigger picture of spiritual warfare.

[21 : 56] We need to couch this biblically and understand our call as churchmen is lived out in this bigger arena of spiritual warfare. We are drawn into that warfare by faithfulness to Jesus.

We don't have a choice about whether or not we fight or whether or not we're in the fray. We're in it because we're following Christ. We have to be in it.

There's too much at stake for us not to be faithful in it. But one way or the other, we're in it. Satan works his plan to deceive us.

Satan works his plan to draw us away from faithful discipleship. Again, gentlemen, discipleship is the point of the charge, the mandate, that Jesus gives us in Matthew 28.

The main verb in this passage in verse 19 is not go. It isn't go. I know I've heard that teaching before. That is not grammatically true.

[22 : 58] Go therefore and make. Make is the active verb that is holding the passage in its action. Make disciples is the main idea.

Make disciples. We baptize them. We teach them. We instruct them. We come alongside them. We follow up with them. This is all part of what it means to fulfill this mandate.

Now, again, we come to some questions we can ask ourselves. I can't see it as well. I want to make sure I'm tracking here. Yes. So how am I making use of my masculinity?

How am I making use of my maleness? There's several ways we can identify this. But I like this one. How am I making use of my church-man-ness?

My church-man-ness. How am I making use of that and safeguarding and serving Jesus as Lord of my own heart? So that this is personal to me.

[23 : 55] Being a man who follows Jesus, it's personal. How am I doing that? And then this one. Being a churchman then is about submitting to Jesus' authority and ministering His mandate of discipleship in every aspect of my life.

Discipleship is not something that I just do when I show up at a church function on Sunday or Wednesday night or whatever. Discipleship is something that I live and breathe. Discipleship is something happening in my own family.

I'm concerned that my immediate family are disciples, learners, followers of Jesus. My children, my wife, my extended family, if possible for me to have a sphere of influence over them.

My neighbors. And it extends from there. Discipleship is about who we are being expressed as faithfulness to Jesus.

We have got to grasp that. We've got to understand this warfare that God is calling us into. In other words, you follow Jesus by giving yourself to His priority of serving others so that they can grow in Christ-likeness with you.

[25 : 15] Discipleship then becomes God's paradigm for you and I helping another human being become more like Jesus. That is as simple as we can break it down and it's biblical.

That's the main thing, guys. We are keeping the main thing the main thing by helping remind each other on a constant basis that this is about you and I as Christian men coming alongside of each other and helping each other become more like Jesus together.

That's my greatest concern for you before I draw my last breath and pass out of this place. Am I giving my life away to help my fellow brothers? I can't, Randy, I can't.

There's little I can do at your church, brother. That's for you. Unless you invite me or Greg or we'll come and we'll do this there too. But Randy's going to go back and he's got that role in his sphere of influence.

You're my sphere. You're my responsibility. So am I doing that? What am I doing with that mantle? That commission. How am I allowing the Lord to use me to help you become more like his son?

[26 : 21] If we're not doing that at Grace, we're just busy. And we don't want to be just busy. Greg and I could probably think up 50 things to give you to do to just make you busy. But being busy is not equal being spiritual.

You recognize that? And that's the danger. We want to be guarded from that. We don't want to be apathetic or lazy or uninvolved. We want to be invested in what God's called us to.

We need to be careful that we do it Christ's way. Now what we're doing is walking through a philosophy of men's ministry at Grace Church. And I don't want to assume that all of us understand what a philosophy is and how it serves us.

So a philosophy helps us with several things as churchmen doing men's ministry. Now I want to remind us about these. There's four of them. We could get more but here's the way we'll think about it.

It helps us with several things as churchmen doing ministry here in this local assembly. Here's the first one. It helps us understand and to explain why we approach men's ministry the way we do here at Grace.

[27 : 32] In other words, our men's ministry is not built around necessarily activities or programs. And there are some people who might visit our church and they come from a bigger church, a church that's been around longer with more resources, that kind of thing, or a church that isn't as philosophically lined up with where we are as we approach it.

And so they may see men's ministry as we all show up at different areas in different ways and we do projects together. All right, well, we're not against projects. We can do that. We can go rake leaves for people.

We can go cut trees for people. We can go help widows. We have a ministry like that at our church among our deacons. They do that kind of work. Some of you men have done that kind of work. But we're not geared in our men's ministry around doing projects. We're geared around what we're talking about today. We're going to explain that. Another thing that this helps us do, it helps us measure, our philosophy of ministry helps us measure the purity and value of the means and methods of doing what we do.

So we do do things. But our philosophy of ministry keeps us honest. It helps us measure the purity and value, the means of the methods, that kind of thing. It also helps us maintain unity, maintain unity as brothers in Christ and as churchmen.

[28 : 53] And one of the ways that we do that is by keeping ourselves focused on the main thing. We rally to the truth together and the truth keeps us literally on the same page. And it's Jesus' page.

And we're careful about that. Sound doctrine matters. And so we want to be careful students of the Word of God. We have a high view of God's Word in our church.

We keep the bar where it needs to be. It would be very, very tempting and a lot easier for us if we would let that bar slip a little bit. But that's not faithfulness.

Alright? And then finally, number four, a philosophy of ministry helps us safeguard the main thing as the main thing in all that we do.

Once again, what's the main thing, Jeff? The main thing is honoring Jesus Christ by faithfully fulfilling His mandate for discipleship. Our church is about making disciples unapologetically.

[29 : 52] You could tell anybody that asks you that. What's your church about? How would you sum up your church? You could say, well, I know the main thing because we're constantly listening to that from every corner of our church family.

The main thing is being faithful to follow Jesus in fulfilling His mandate for making disciples. Can you get any more simple than that?

I don't know how to be more biblical than that. I don't. If I figure it out with Greg, we'll alter it, won't we, bro? We'll change it and that's as simple and straightforward as I know how to be about the mandate that Jesus gives us in life.

People say, well, Jeff, isn't it true that you guys are committed to the primary mandate of glorifying God? Absolutely. But then you have to ask, well, what does that mean?

How do we do that? When it comes to talking to you and organizing you for what the main thing is all about to fulfill the main thing, we have to help you understand, well, what does it mean for us to glorify God as men here at Grace Church?

[30 : 59] What it means and what it looks like is this, fulfilling Christ's mandate in the Great Commission by faithfully following Him in that mandate to make disciples.

So we want to encourage each of you to be invested and involved in helping your brothers become more like Jesus. What does that look like in any given day of your life, week of your life, month of your life?

Here's what we don't want. We don't want the criticism that I read to you earlier where we've got too many Christian men on the sidelines. They show up at church and they tick the box, but they're not

invested in helping each other grow in Christ's likeness.

We just want to promote that. We want that to be the air we breathe, the lifeblood that pumps through our veins as it were in our church family. We want to create an atmosphere where people can come in here and find spiritual breathing room to make mistakes, to say the wrong thing, to deal with errant doctrine, where they might come in here believing one thing and they stay here long enough for us to teach them and come alongside of them in grace and in kindness and in long-suffering and teach them the truth.

Say, Jeff, why does that pump in your veins so strongly? The reason is because when I was that guy in need of that kind of ministry, I received it from some very kind-hearted brothers in Christ and it changed my life.

[32 : 28] They changed me onto a path of sound doctrine. I didn't realize how theologically bankrupt I was until I met those brothers and they took time to invite me into their lives and sit down cross-legged with me with their Bibles open on the living room floor and teach me the Word of God.

I'd never had that before and I had two seminary degrees by that time. This is what we want to be, guys. It's not just about what we want to do.

It's about who we are. Who we are. Now, in addition to this mandate from Matthew 28, I want to take you to another place in Scripture where Paul speaks to us.

A few of you guys are familiar with this verse. We've kind of adopted this for our men's ministry. It's in 1 Corinthians. And it's chapter 16.

Excuse me. 1 Corinthians 16. And by the way, guys, if I forgot to tell you or mention to you, these slides will be posted online for you to see.

[33 : 33] And Josiah, are we recording this? And we are recording it. We had several guys out. When they told me they would be out, they were really bothered by it, but they couldn't get out of it.

And so they asked me, please, would you tape it? Because I told them the topic and I gave them the title and they were like, oh man, come on. So we're taping it for you guys. And I'm going to tell you on the tape right now, you better be listening.

All right. 1 Corinthians 16, 13, and 14. Mark, you're up here in the front where you can project. So brother, would you read those verses for us?

Be watchful. Stand firm in the face. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Let all that you do be done in love.

Thank you, brother. So here's what we have in this verse. We looked at the commission that Jesus gave us to make disciples. He spoke about His authority because He wanted everybody to understand that this comes straight from heaven.

[34 : 36] This is My authority giving you this commission. Here, we have Jesus' mandate of manliness. Jesus' nothing short of it. Jesus' mandate of manliness. I wanted to read you as well something that John MacArthur said about these verses.

Listen to this. Vigilance, steadfastness, and strength are identified as masculine virtues in 1 Corinthians 16, 13. Radical feminism and postmodern gender theory argue that those qualities and other typically masculine traits are inherently oppressive, overbearing, onerous, or in other ways, toxic.

government, education, and the entertainment industry relentlessly promote that point of view. Indeed, the deliberate, methodical demonization of masculinity is one of the main reasons we are now witnessing the speedy collapse of Western society.

Wow! The demonization of masculinity. He made that comment, MacArthur made that comment about this passage of Scripture. So we can say this, getting started in this, we're going to take this verse apart in just a minute, but look at this.

Our society is lost, it's just lost itself in this emasculating of maleness in our culture. They're so busy emasculating men that they just lost all bearing on wisdom and common sense and what is real.

[36 : 12] Much of the evangelical church is lost in man-centeredness. Actually thinking that it's wise to go out into the community with this idea that we want our church to grow and be a big church and all that kind of thing, we're going to go out in the community and poll unbelievers and ask them what they want in a church.

As if coming to church is a performance so that we need to give the consumer what they demand. That's been going on for decades now. And it has absolutely emasculated the church because men lose their maleness in that process and they become servants of the consumer.

And so what happens? We compromise. We sell out to keep the consumer happy. You can't have a pastor standing up and preaching about sin. And the need to repent.

They don't like that. They don't want to hear that. Make me laugh. Entertain me. If I'm going to show up on a Sunday I want to get something out of it. So if you don't leave them feeling better than when they came in they won't come back.

And so you get captive to that. You become a prisoner of what you're making in that marketing approach to being the church. church. So in order to uphold biblical manliness and its vital role in church life the heartbeat of our church needs to be manifestly masculine.

[37 : 47] Man, if I said that out in our world today if CNN had a mic on me right now they'd crucify me. What a misogynist. Right? What a misogynist.

This is a guy who hates women. That's right. I've been married to one for 41 years and she's the bliss of my life but I hate women. They just don't make any sense.

No, listen. I'm going to say it again. It's up here for you to see. To uphold biblical manliness and its vital vital necessary critical role in our church in this church the heartbeat of our church needs to be manifestly masculine.

Alright? Now look. That heartbeat needs to bear the strength and steadiness of spiritually alert sober minded men loving Jesus loving His people and loving His Word.

Hard to argue with that in light of what we just read in Scripture, isn't it? From 1 Corinthians 16. So we need to care about the distinctiveness and we need to preserve that distinctiveness in terms of our calling and our witness as God's men.

[39 : 09] God's men commissioned by God to lead out in disciple making to set the tone and the tenor and the pace for disciple making starting in our own homes that we have taken up the mantle of the commission to make disciples of our own families our wives and our children and then spread out from there.

We are owning that as a matter of faithfulness to Jesus. Now, you know, Kevin, I'm just looking at you seeing you sit here in the good news. Brother, getting to know your heart, I know you want to see your grandbaby saved.

So I know he's going to do everything he can to offer a testimony and a witness of the love of Christ to his grandchildren. He's already doing that with his son-in-law and his daughter.

It starts there and then it works itself out into these relationships that we have here at Grace with each other as men of God. Now, gentlemen, it's true that non-Christian men can live by basic morals that can and often do make a positive difference in their relationships.

You guys know moral men who are not saved. How many of you guys, let's just see the hands. I say this and I assume. How many of you guys know non-Christian, unbelieving men who live a basically moral life?

[40 : 42] Look at that. Every hand went up. I do too. Right? And they can make a good difference in the lives of the people around them. And you probably see the effects of that, don't you?

Have you seen that in some of these men? Whether they're your friends or co-workers, their families are basically cohesive and they're not beating their wives and cheating on their taxes and running around on people and all that kind of stuff.

Alright? That's true. But listen, gentlemen, something is lacking in that kind of difference which is critical to all relationships.

Now what is it? It's this. What is lacking can be summed up this way. I'm going to put it up here on the screen for you to see it.

Godly men make a good in God difference. That's the difference. Godly men carry the Spirit of God and the testimony of Jesus into everything they say and do.

[41 : 50] And so we shouldn't just be making a difference because we're not good people. We got any good men in here? Because you're not looking at a good man. Any good in me is the good of Christ.

Is that not right? And so we are called to make a good in God difference. And what a difference that is. What a difference that is.

That is the difference between life and death. And so for me to leave you with this message today and keep the bar where it is and make it crystal clear, that's my goal.

we are called to make a good in God difference. And that calls us to faithfulness to Jesus. Faithfulness to Jesus.

Why am I concerned about my personal purity and my personal holiness when none of you are watching my life? Because I want to be faithful to Jesus. Because I don't want to grieve the Spirit. [42 : 50] Because I want it to be about integrity. Do I sin? Yes, I sin. I hope I have learned to be quick to readily identify my sin and willingly confess it before the Lord and seek His grace to overcome it in my life.

Can I be short with my wife? Yes. Can I be unkind in a moment or inconsiderate with my wife in a moment? Yes, I can. I hope I recognize that and quickly circle around. Hon, please forgive me for that.

No excuse, but I know what was going on and I wasn't thinking of you in that moment. Please forgive me. Just being quick to recognize that because we want to put Jesus forward in every area of our lives.

Now look, GCW's men's ministry, Grace Church, Williamsburg men's ministry, we aim all of our efforts at one primary life-defining goal. And I've shared it with you several times already. It can be summed up in our obedience to this command that we just read out of Scripture. Be on the alert. Notice the highlights. Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith.

[44 : 00] Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Now, I made the decision yesterday after I'd pulled all this together previous that I didn't want to just read that verse and make some assumptions about we all understand kind of what that means.

I wanted to unpack it so that you can see the richness of what's being given to us here in the way of a mandate for manliness. I want you to see how richly your Lord and Savior has built into these words instruction and encouragement for your heart.

It's a clarion call to manliness. And I think it comes out as we unpack it. So, at the risk of being technical in a way that is boring, I hope not.

I hope that you get excited about what is revealed to you today through this study. Let me draw you into this with me. And we're going to walk through verses 13 and 14 of 1 Corinthians 16 and take a little bit of a deeper dive into what God is revealing to us through the rich, rich textures and contours of the Greek language.

Alright? So, I hope you'll hang on with me. Now, let's go first of all with this. I'm going to put you to work with me. What is the theme? What is the concern of the near context of verses 13 and 14?

[45 : 32] We want to try to get at what it is that we're being commissioned with as we look at these two verses together, specifically speaking to the issue of an alertness, a firmness, a strength, and a love that all reflect manhood, manliness, masculinity in the church.

Now, if you'll just cast your eyes over a few verses before, maybe starting at verse 10, you can go up to verse 5. Just kind of scan a little bit about what you're seeing here as the near context comes into focus, gentlemen.

Just a quick scan. verse 5. Verse 6. Verse 6. Verse 6.

Verse 6. Verse 6. Verse 6. Verse 6. Verse 6. Verse 6. This is Paul's final, what we call, chapter.

This is his ending section in this first letter that he's writing to the Corinthian church.

Now skip over 13 and 14 and look at a couple of verses after. All right.

[47 : 03] One of the ways that we can help ourselves discern the theme or the concern or the argument or the flow of thought, however you want to phrase it, of the near context of a passage is to do what we just did.

First of all, we want to look at what is the theme or concern just before these verses. So let's see if we can just tease that out. What do you see just before verses 13 and 14 that would be reflected as a concern, a theme, an argument, a flow of thought?

Mitch? Showing proper respect for God's servants. Do y'all see that in the near context? Do you see that? I don't want to assume.

Okay, great. Thank you, brother, for kicking us off. Any other thoughts about that? Yes, Mark? Really, the desire, he can't be there with them. Okay. He is missing that fellowship and he desires to have that fellowship and he bears that out and he's saving others so that they can have this. Is that where you came to the conclusion he couldn't be there is because of the fact he's sending others? He actually says he can't.

[48 : 17] Right. And the point we're making here is let's see what's the obvious, right? Let's not skip over the obvious that helps us understand what's going on.

What is the author telling us here? So, Mark, wonderful. Any other thoughts about what comes before? Does that help us understand what he's coming into? All right? If you do, raise your hand in a minute and you can jump in. I know we're still looking at it. How about afterward? The two or three verses right after verse 14. What's going on there in the way of a theme or a concern? Yeah. Encouragement, Michael. Where'd you get that from? How did you come up with that, Michael? Great. [49 : 15] Great. Anything else? I see something in verse 17. What's Paul saying is going on in verse 17, the beginning of the verse?

Thank you. Rejoicing. So there's some rejoicing here. What's he rejoicing over? Man, look at you. Thank you for tackling that. Amen. That's right. He's rejoicing over some brothers that have come and what have those brothers done for him? Yes, Mitch? Yes. Okay. So these brothers have fulfilled something that Paul was in need of, right? And they've come and they've made good on it. Yeah, so he's rejoicing about that. All right, now, so you've kind of got what's going on before and the flow of thought. What's going on after? [50 : 28] Now put 13 and 14 in the middle. Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love.

Now, I urge you, brothers, I urge you, you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they devoted themselves for ministry to the saints. That's all parenthetical. that you also, so you could read it this way, let all that you do be done in love. Now, I urge you, brothers, verse 16, that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in the work and labors.

So, he's calling these guys out in terms of man's work in the church. You lead out in these ways. This has everything to do with being in subjection to men like this and everyone who helps in the work and labors.

So, he's not skipping over the fact that this is some holy spiritual sweat. And you need to be willing to invest in guys like this and support men like this in the church. This needs to be the standard, the status quo.

[51 : 42] Clyde, were you going to chime in, bro? Amen. Good.

Acknowledge this is the status quo for manliness. This is what we're looking for. This is what we need. And so, you take that and you go back to verse 13 and you see this.

Be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. Look for these kind of men. Be in submission to these kind of men. Share this responsibility with these kind of men as we work and labor together in these ways.

You see? So this is Paul's way of saying this is the normal course of being the church. This is what it looks like to be a man in the church.

To live this out. Their contribution. Their work. Their faithfulness. Can we say it that way?

[52 : 52] Their faithfulness to the Lord. Alright, so now I ask you this last question. How would you summarize the relationship of 13 and 14 to the context? Well, I've given you that. Alright, let's pause there though because it's so important.

Any questions about what we just did? The method, where we came to, any contribution, further contribution? Mitch? Well, there you go.

Okay. Excellent question, Mitch. Thank you.

And give me a few minutes and we'll get there. We're going to take this verse apart. Yep, excellent question. So you guys know where most of you know. NIV, I used to have one.

I got to the point where as I was consulting critical commentaries that deal with the syntax, the grammar, the lexical issues in verses and all, as I was using my reference tools, they constantly, especially those that were based on the NIV, they constantly would say the NIV missed it here.

[54 : 00] The NIV leaves this out here. The NIV took this approach here. It's not the best understanding. And after I did that a few times, I just chucked the whole thing and said, well, I'm not going to do that.

And I went to a translation that was even more robust. So I'm not saying the NIV is in a bad translation or full of heresy. I'm just saying that it's not as good a translation as others.

And so I would encourage you to get a different translation that will do a better job, I think, overall. And we won't go into the way that different, anyway, dynamic equivalence is not the way to go.

And dynamic equivalence is the methodology, the interpretive paradigm that's used to translate the NIV. They're translating the sense or essence, not a literal word-for-word translation, like the NAS, the New King James, the ESV that Greg uses.

All right, Mark, you had a question, comment? I think I Good.

[55 : 19] Good. That were reading this letter. And then he goes into the next 15, 16 where he is showing these men are doing these things.

Good. What do you think? That sounds reasonable in the way of insight? Sounds reasonable to me, especially in 15 where he moves from command, command, command, command, command to now I urge you.

Which is different. Verse 15, he's not commanding. Urge is not the same as what I'm going to show you now. So yeah, there seems to be this mixture of I'm commanding and I'm encouraging, admonishing.

Yeah, I think that's reasonable given the structure. All right, now look, you don't have to be a Greek scholar to do what we're about to do. You just have to have the right tools. I'm not a Greek scholar. All right? Mark at this point probably knows at least as much, if not more, about Greek than I do after taking one class and you're in your second, right? Mark's in seminary right now.

[56 : 24] Pray for Mark. Hebrew almost killed me. So, all right. Here's how we're going to take it apart. And feel free, you jump in as we do this together.

Be on the alert. Be on the alert. Do you have a different translation? Be watchful. Be watchful.

Okay? All right?

So what are we dealing with here? Now, I'm just going to, you're going to have to take my word a little bit on this and then you can go look me up and check me later, all right? But here's what we're dealing with. Remember, the Greek language is a very rich language.

It's just beautiful. The first thing that I want to point out to you about be on the alert is that it is an imperative. It carries the force of a command.

In the Greek language, an imperative, the verb form is an imperative and that means that it is a command. Carrying the force of a command. This is not a suggestion, a warning, an encouragement.

[57 : 24] It's more than that. It is a binding element of command. All right? Now, the question. Who or what is the subject of this command?

Now, I'm tasking you a little bit here for your English grammar ability and some of us are more adept at that than others. That's okay.

If you're not, if you're feeling like, man, I'm lost, I don't even know how to answer that question.

Well, this is where you need to be then because this is how you'll learn how to do it. All right? What or who is the subject of this command?

The reason that's important is because we need to know who's being commanded. Then we've got to ask, well, what are they being commanded? Who and what? You start asking questions of the text.

That's how you learn and grow and dig in. So, who or what is the subject of this command? In other words, who's being commanded? And then we'll talk about being commanded to do what?

[58 : 25] Well, I'll give you a hint. It's not categorically stated. It's implied. There is an implication in the subject. The subject is implied. And here's the subject. Did I put that up there?

You. The subject of the sentence is the reader. You. So, it could read this way. You be on the alert. That's what it's referring to grammatically.

So, we're talking about the reader. You. So, as you read this, you're being commanded by the Lord. You be on the alert. Very important. This is also a verb form that takes on the present active.

It's a present tense and active voice. Alright? So, that's the verb form. Here's what it means. The present tense means that it's a continuing action on the part of the subject.

You. You. It's in the active voice, which means the subject, or you, is performing the action. So, you.

[59 : 35] Bring that together. You. Act on this command continually. Really. This is something you're being commanded to make part of your life on an ongoing basis.

It shouldn't be a spit and sputter kind of thing, or whenever I feel like it. You are to be in a constant state of alertness. Now, we haven't defined alert yet, so let's do that, and then we'll stop and ask a question or two if we need to.

So, be on the alert. Can you see this at the bottom of the screen? Be on the alert is one word in the Greek. The word alert is just one word, and it means to arouse to action, to be in strict awareness of, or to be awake and watchful, which is why Doug said, his translation says, watchful, be watchful. So, here's what we come to. To be on the alert means that we are in a constant state of vigilance. We are in a constant state of vigilance to danger for the purpose of readiness to action.

We're not just in an alert state to recognize danger. We're in an alert state because that's the first step in what we're going to do next. We are alert to it, to identify it, because we are ready then.

[60 : 56] We have readied ourselves and prepared ourselves to move into action. We've got a couple of men in our church right now, sitting in this room, who've seen combat. I wonder how, if these men would even be sitting here today, if all our government taught them to do was recognize the enemy, and then leave them out there to figure out, now what do I do?

I'd venture to say you guys wouldn't be sitting here right now. The government taught them how to bring deadly force into the situation, and they're here with us today. In spiritual warfare, it's not enough just to have situational awareness.

That's a great first step. But we've got to move beyond that situational awareness, and when I put it in terms of you men in the local church, now we've got to move into a spiritual awareness.

A spiritual awareness. It's one thing for us to identify physical threats. We have a security team in place at our church to identify physical threats before they can become dangerous.

Those men are trained and ready and skilled to handle that for us, to take care of us. In spiritual life, the men of our church are the men who are on alert. They are spiritually alert.

[62 : 11] After all, who are we protecting? Our wives, our kids, our grandbabies. The people we love. And we're charged with that. But the purpose of alertness is for the readiness of action that will follow that recognition.

Alright? You with me? Any questions or comments about that? Do we need to do anything more with that? It is a state of vigilance, spiritual vigilance, spiritual awareness, spiritual discernment to spiritual threats in our lives for the purpose of being ready to act.

That's going to come in a minute. Alright? Any questions or comments about that? I'm wondering what you're thinking as you hear that roll out. Whoa, that's a good one, Doug.

Let's talk about that for a minute. What would that look like on a spiritual level? We can understand that, you know, somebody walks in out here and they're walking up to the door and they got a backpack and three guys from our church tackle them in the grass and put them in a submission hold and, you know, the guy's like, it's just my Bible in my backpack.

Okay? Yeah. What does it look like spiritually, Doug? Or help us out. Yeah. Read the room.

[63 : 52] Good. What would be some of the heart issues behind overreacting in relational context?

What would be a heart issue that you would have that would bring out an overreaction toward another person? Okay. A lack of love, which is where we're going to go.

That's how he's going to end this whole thing. Very good, brother. Thank you. A lack of love. What else? What about pride? A heart issue of pride bring you to an over...

When you think about you, what do you look like overreacting? Does it look like anger? A temper? Does it look like a demeaning issue of speech where you demean?

What about selfishness? We overreact out of selfishness? Impatience. Impatience. That's a huge one. So that was probably my number one raising my kids.

[64 : 50] I had to learn to let my kids be kids. My dad didn't let us be kids. My dad was a career military guy, burr haircut, security police officer, big old guy strapping, take you down in a heartbeat.

And so it was, you know, I answered the phone, Jackson residence, Jeff speaking, how can I help you? No kidding. You know why? Yes. Because people would call my dad.

This is no cell phones. This is hard lines. People would call my dad from his work and he wanted them to hear discipline on the other end of the phone. Yeah.

Michael? Ignorance. A lack of. Yeah. Yeah. good one.

So what is, what does Peter tell us? Live with our wives in an understanding way. You know, we'll unpack this another time, but understanding way there in the Greek, it tells us that we're to live with them in a knowing way.

[65 : 58] In other words, make a study of your wife. That's a command. That's a command. Make a study of your wife. Your wife. Not my wife. You don't have to study my wife. That's my responsibility. I'm not going to study your wife.

I'm going to study mine. I live with my wife. I leave your wife, go home to mine. I got enough. You study your wife. You make a study of her. You know her weaknesses, her strengths, you know the kinds of things that trip her up.

Because why? Because you want to be alert to action. You want to be proactive. We don't want to have a bunch of guys in here who are constantly reactive.

We want to be proactive. Spiritually proactive. That takes discipline. It takes wisdom. It takes maturity. It takes self-control. This is good, guys.

You guys are doing great. Now, look. You could... Now, how about that? We're just on the first phrase. How about that? Isn't God's Word wonderful? I hope what this does is just give you such a hunger for this, for more of this.

[67 : 02] You know, let's get together and do more of this. This is what helps us just look to our Lord in awe and worship. Wow. Jesus is big.

His Word is big. And I need to get out of my little box here. Wonderful. Alright? Now, that's the first command. There are five commands here.

That's the first one. Look at the next one. Stand. Be on the alert. Stand. Alright? Stand here is the Greek word steko.

So, it means to stand firm. To hold one's ground. To be steadfast. To persist. So, the word firm in the New American Standard here, stand firm, is inserted by the NSB because it gives the meaning of stand.

So, they're just fleshing it out more. He could have just left it this way. Be on the alert. Stand. In the faith. But stand firm captures the essence of what is being taught.

[68 : 08] Stand firm. Stand firm. Do I have present active up here? I can't see it. There it is. So, this again is a present active imperative verb form.

And so, grammatically, it's the same as be on the alert. Same grammatical structure. So, this is a command. A command with continuing action.

You are commanded to stand firm in an ongoing way of life. This is a thing that comes to define you.

This is a lifestyle. It's not something you put on and then for a while you let it lay around and then when you need it you put it on again. This is something you're cultivating.

You're practiced at this. This is part of who you are. It's a response to life but more importantly it's a response of faithfulness to Jesus. You're cultivating this.

[69 : 11] Alright? And so, now the question what are we to stand firm in? To persist in? To hold our ground with regard to? What do you think? The faith.

The faith. The faith equals this. It equals the content of biblical teaching. So, this is not talking about the saving faith that is the gift of the Lord.

No. It's talking about particularly the gospel. The faith. Definite article. Stand firm then in sound doctrine.

That is in the truth of God's Word. Be on the alert. Be vigilant to identify the threat. Spiritual threat. So that you can be ready for action.

You've prepared yourself to be ready for action. And in that action stand firm. Hold your ground. Make up your mind that this is a defense to the death.

[70 : 10] There's no retreat. This is worthy of whatever it costs me. I'm committed to this station of action.

Stand firm in the doctrine. Stand firm in the truth of God's Word. The faith. So we will not compromise on sound doctrine. We won't apologize for sound doctrine.

We'll teach it with compassion. We'll minister it with much grace and long-suffering and kindness to each other. You heard me say a minute ago. We want to create spiritual breathing room here at Grace for people to come in and work this out over time.

We're all growing. None of us have arrived. And we want people to come in and feel that freedom within the bounds of learning sound doctrine.

Because God is going to bring us people who are not going to be as like-minded with us when they come in the door. What are we going to do with that? We don't want to make them feel like we're looking down our nose at them and maybe one day you'll be where we are.

[71 : 15] It's nothing like that. We stand firm in the faith because we believe the truth is worth fighting for. All right, now look. What do these two commands call you to be?

Always on the alert. Continual. So it calls you to a strength. It calls you to an alertness. Remember, I'm asking to be now, not just to do. Guys struggle with this. Guys struggle with thinking about what is it calling you to be? To be in yourself.

To be as a part of who you are. I mean, if you look at, it's basically calling you to be a man. I think that, I haven't looked at it in Greek, but that acting like a man would be related to the previous commandments.

Okay? Yeah. And put those together. So again, I just don't want to get ahead of ourselves. It is calling us to be something in who we are.

[72 : 34] Be committed. Be a Christian. That's the first one, isn't it? To be a follower of Jesus. In other words, this is standard fare for Christian living as we follow Jesus.

This is not some high and mighty thing that's reserved for elders. This is what it means to be a man in the Lord. You're alert. You're continually spiritually alert.

You're sharpening your ability to be alert spiritually, to help safeguard the sheep, to protect your family spiritually, to extend that into the church family.

You're just cultivating that as a man. People know this about you. They recognize the sober-mindedness, the way you carry yourself. You know how to take life seriously and you know how to laugh at yourself.

But you're a man who's alert. You're ready for action. The situation calls for it. You've prepared yourself to be useful to the Savior in those spiritually protective ways.

[73 : 39] So this is something you are called to be a person in love with Jesus and the Word. You have to be a man of the Word. That's the point. Now, I've got this other one.

How does this reflect on how you need to behave? So be, behave. Who we are is what we'll act like. So it calls us to behave in a certain way.

Now what changes do you need to make in your attitude, your actions, your lifestyle, your habits, your priorities? You already need to be thinking in terms of, what needs to change in my life where I can begin to cultivate and be defined more as this kind of person in the Lord's service.

All right, let's just move on. We just got a couple more. Act like men. Act like men. Mitch had to leave. He had told me earlier he had an appointment, so I have to get back with him on this one. Act like men.

All right, one of the ways we may say this in the modern day vernacular is this, man up. Man up, right? That's what this is. So Paul actually coined a word just for this occasion in teaching.

[74 : 52] He actually coined the word himself for this. Now this is another imperative or command with an ongoing continual action. It's the present tense, which means it's ongoing, continuing.

It's actually one word in the Greek, one word that Paul coined. The word is andrisomai. Andrisomai. And Paul came up with that to describe this particular characteristic. And literally, we can render it this way. Act courageously. Act courageously.

That is the defining characteristic of this. Show yourself a man. MacArthur defined it this way.

Mature courage. Mature courage. So there's nothing shallow about this. There's nothing insipid about this. This is a man who is growing in grace and has a bearing of spiritual maturity about him.

[76 : 02] He's grounded in his love for his Savior and he's grounded in the truth that his Savior tells us to live by. And we're to lead out in being courageous for Christ and his truth.

Any questions, comments about that one? What act like? So this isn't machismo, is it? This isn't the world telling us to throw our chest out and be the alpha dog in the room.

That was the problem that you saw the other day, yesterday, in the Oval Office when three alphas, three alpha dogs were sitting in the Oval Office.

The problem was one of those alphas didn't take into consideration that he was in the room with two other alphas whose home it was. This is my yard. So you don't come into my yard and begin marking territory right here where I'm sitting because that ain't going to work.

And the other two alphas let that alpha know you can still be an alpha, but we're the alpha over the alphas right now kind of thing. And he did not read that. And so they helped him with it and sent him packing.

[77 : 10] This is not a call for us to be men who lorded over people or use our masculinity at our advantage over people. It's not that at all.

We're following Jesus. Remember, this is spiritual warfare. Questions, insights, comments about that one? You good? Are you tracking with me guys?

The NIV? Can y'all remember? Did he read it? The NIV? Some of these guys have phones they can look it up.

While we're looking it up. I love the definition of those days with courage, bravery. Yeah. I love that, right? Hmm. Sometimes I think in the private moments of our lives we can be fearful.

Yeah. Courage over our fear. Amen. Dave? I was just going to say I think what allows us to see that one is having a strong foundation of the word.

[78 : 20] Yeah. Absolutely. That's certainly the context going in. Jeremy? Be on guard. Okay. Okay.

Be courageous. Yeah. Good. Okay. And that's that they're grabbing the sense instead of a word for word kind of thing. Ben and Matt, I think you guys? Okay. If it helps, the root starts to turn the mark that I've seen in it.

The root of that word is just a man or man who doesn't come across. Yeah. Where they get that where they get that from. Good. Typically what we're going to do is to make a word and do words that are the military for the people.

Yeah. Yeah. Building on a man building on the form of the word for man. Great. Great. So you see what he did there then in coin in this phrase. Excellent.

Thank you. Ben? Be courageous. So they grab the sense. Ben? This is very great to learn because fortunately let's see when unbelievers act like a man.

[79 : 29] What does that action mean? Oh boy. You watch all the action pictures. Great beer. Yes. Do you, you know, have you, have you had that? Yeah. How many women did you have last week?

What does that mean? Yeah. A lot of men, a lot of parents struggle with that. Yes. And Matt, Bodie, you're going to face this if you haven't already as you get out into your life and if you go to school in different places.

You're going to find that the culture wants to define manhood in some crazy ways that have nothing to do with this. This calling, right? I know raising my boys trying to help them understand biblical manhood was a challenge because they were not being reinforced in that out in the world at all.

Michael? Michael? Michael? Michael? Yeah. Yeah, I was one of those guys that looked for the eject handle as I became a Christian.

Where's the out clause? Where's the exception? Yeah. Thank you, Doug.

[80 : 48] Thank you, Doug. That's excellent, brother. Yeah. How many of you guys have daughters? All of you. Okay, well, we need to know we're well-stocked and well-armed.

We'd be happy to loan you anything you need. Have you guys seen the thing? So when I had a young daughter, Jared, my youngest son, his idea, he told me, he said, Dad, this is, because he listened to me joke about this from the pulpit and as a young boy, he took it, right?

Dad, because Dad's his hero right now. That changed later, but nevertheless. Jared's idea was we'll build a turret out in the backyard and put a .50 cal on the top of it and he said, Dad, I just don't know where to get the ammo.

That was Jared to protect Anikate, to keep Anikate safe. I came across this sheet one time about, I forget the title of it, but it was a Christian dad that was telling any young man who wanted to date his daughter the requirements that were involved and you get to the last one and he said something to the effect of, and in the very unlikely event, see numbers 1 through 11, that you do do something that violates numbers 1 through 11.

You better be very practiced at running in a serpentine fashion very quickly because I'm an excellent shot. You know, that's the ending. That's it. And I thought, okay, I can get behind that.

[82 : 22] Daddies and daughters, so thank you. Thank you, brother. But being spiritually ready to deal with these things, all joking aside, being spiritually ready to deal with these things, knowing that your daughters may encounter guys who are being guys in the world or even under Christian auspices, you know.

It's the reality, isn't it? So we want to raise godly young men who know Jesus' calling on their hearts to treat young women in a way that honors Jesus.

The way that we are able to stay away from the things that are going to dishonor the girls in our life is to make it an issue about pleasing Jesus in all respects. I wish I'd known that.

I wasn't saved until I was 20. So I had plenty of time to act on my impulses. All right. And then finally, guys, before we get to the very last one and then we'll close out, be strong.

We'll just go through this kind of quickly because it's just basically a repeat. It's a command with continuing action. Surprise. So it's the same grammatical structure save that it's in a different voice. [83 : 32] It's in the middle voice instead of an active voice. That's okay. It's still a command with continuing action. So it means to become strong or powerful or to prevail.

It has the idea of a masculinity that prevails. It's strict. The masculinity itself is strenuous enough to carry you as a man through whatever it is that's taxing you.

Through whatever it is that's threatening. You can prevail in it. You're committed to prevail in it. So here's the sense. To be or to become strong or powerful beyond the average or expected.

Now, we define that as grace. We define that as grace. And so I have to hasten to add this right away. This is not bootstrap strength. This is not you pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps.

That is not what this is. This is an inner man spiritual strength that is formed through submission to the Holy Spirit. And that's why I put this Galatians phrase in here from Galatians 5.

[84 : 42] Walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the deeds of the flesh. This is walking by the Spirit. In other words, this is submitting to the Holy Spirit. In every aspect of your life and allowing the Spirit to lead, define, and convict you about sin in your life and about what it means to pursue truth.

Alright? So look. Be alert. Stand firm. Be manly. Be spiritually strong. Do these four imperatives have anything in common based on what you've seen in the study so far?

What do you think? What's the short answer? They require work. They require work. Action. What else? Diligence. Continual action.

Discipline. Very good. I thought about Ben and Matt as a couple of our military guys. Jeremy, you're former military, right? How many others former military?

Yeah, Dave. Okay. Derek, you're current. You came in in your uniform the other day. I thought about you guys because as we went through these terms, really all of these terms are somewhat militaristic.

[85 : 54] You hear that come out in some of the analogies I gave. Right? They reflect on a preparedness of a warrior. And you are spiritual warriors, are you not?

We're spiritual warriors. Have to be a leader, you said. Yes, he did. Praise the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. All right.

Well, it's capped off with verse 14. Let all that you do be done in love. And here's the surprise in this final command. It's a command with continuing action.

It's another imperative that mimics the grammatical structure of be strong. It's also in the middle voice. So, inclusive of your entire lifestyle as being lived for love for Christ, let all that you do be done in love.

Your entire lifestyle is lived in love for Jesus. The primary reason you do the things you do is out of love for Jesus.

[87 : 01] Love for the Lord. And so, let be done. Let be done is one word in the Greek.

And that's the main verb here. And so, it means to come into being or to bring to exist. Let all that you are bringing into the situation be about your love for Jesus.

Let that define what you do. Let it define the attitude of your heart as you move into that context. Let love for Jesus be your deepest motivation and most defining aspect.

And of course, love is agape. It's that sacrificial, selfless, surrendered love. Now, the question that begs at this point then is what hinders you and works against your obedience to these commands?

That's where we are, right? We want to make application. What's going on in your life that would hinder you and your obedience? So, to fulfill the full force of these commands in our daily lives as churchmen, what does faithfulness to Jesus look like for us?

[88 : 16] That's the question as we think about Matthew 28 and this passage. What will it take for you to be faithful to Jesus in being defined by and in keeping these commands?

I want to end with something that Dr. MacArthur said. Love complements and balances everything else.

It is the beautiful, softening principle. It keeps our firmness from being hardened, our strength from becoming domineering. It keeps our maturity gentle and considerate.

It keeps our right doctrine from becoming obstinate dogmatism and our right living from becoming smug self-righteousness. That's good, isn't it? Love, Dave, to your point.

Love. Let everything that you do be done in love. Gentlemen, that's what we're called to. I know that in our day and time, the feminist movement wants to make loving men more feminine.

[89 : 17] Nothing could be further from the truth. The most manly thing we can do is love like Jesus. that is the characteristic that must define our hearts and our ministry.

Any questions or comments before we pray and dismiss? You've been very attentive. Yes, Ben. More of a question as we all go out and begin to study our Bible.

I just had a question on the purpose of the study Bible and kind of the imperative and how they want to see their own and the literature that we've gone in the partner's mode.

Yeah. That's important that all this is final commandments to the Corinthians that could be a way to turn that they're strong and loving. Would it be safe to kind of replace Corinthians with great church and not be right away and then be in the church and we can do that.

Absolutely. What do you guys think? We are the reader. Would this include women in our church?

[90 : 23] What do you think? I would want my daughter to marry and let a man to live. Okay. So teaching this to our women would be perfectly fine. And in fact, in the context of this, because this is being sent to the church in Corinth and not just to the men in Corinth, there are aspects of this verse that we would want to see our women adopt as well.

Obviously, when it comes to act like men, logic is going to help us say that is exactly not the point for you women. That is the point for us.

But yeah, look, I want an alert wife. I want a wife that will stand firm in the faith. I want a wife that's strong and I have that. And I want a wife that does all that she does in love. Suzanne's very courageous.

She stood beside me in some tough stuff. Kevin? Be that. For those of us who are married, it's critical, isn't it? Critical.

Yeah. Who else? Michael? I was going to say that you read that word and you begin to understand that somewhere that's in a sense that you can read that in a way that's in that and where you're also reading that's all that you're understanding that's purpose.

[91 : 37] Good. And the more that you walk and you're right, the more you're able to write it to it.

Yeah. Understand the difference in the life. Yep.

And the longer you do it, the more adept you can become. I mean, what you don't want to do is practice bad stuff because then you just get practiced at bad stuff. You get better and better at the bad hermeneutic which is what was my life.

But as you learn to do this the way we're doing it and we provide you with the tools to do what I just did, I can give you the tools to do what I just did. You don't have to be a Greek scholar. I can show you how to do this in 10 minutes and you can get every bit of that made for you.

When I went to seminary and we were studying this, we had to do the paradigms out by hand. We had to go in and parse all this and come up with all of this by hand because we were learning how to pull it out.

Now, bick, bick, present tense, active voice, bick, bick, bick, bick, bick, bick, wow. They don't let you do that at seminary right now, do they? When you get out, get logos and you're done.

[92 : 39] Click, click and it's done. Yeah. Yeah. Yes.

Yes. We need to lead the way. So this needs to be a sober-minded effort that our men are leading the way in. We need to have this bar set for a high and holy reverence for God as we approach His Word and people will know that.

They will come in here and say, boy, these people are really sober-minded about God's Word.

They're not overbearing. They're not using it to beat us up. When we say something that's a little off, they don't go, shun the unbeliever.

We don't do that. Tomorrow, God willing, the sermon that I'm going to be preaching, interestingly enough, out of Genesis, I think I titled it something like Walking with God in a Wicked World.

And so I'm going to be talking right out of this idea of faithfulness and followership from the life of Noah and what that looked like for him as he lived in a very, very wicked world.

[93 : 48] Very wicked. And it was coming at him from all sides. He was surrounded and outnumbered greatly. And yet, that man of God stood firm. He is a great example of what we're talking about right now.

And that's tomorrow. It just so happens. Alright, one more comment and we'll pray. I think I want you to Amen.

Amen. Thank you, Clyde. So make it about following Jesus. Remember, what's the main thing? Following Jesus and being faithful to help others around us become more like Christ.

That's the main thing. That's discipleship. So we win them. We win them to Jesus. And then we help them grow up in Jesus. That's why in our services on Sunday morning, I'm preaching the gospel and I'm preaching it to people who are believing and need a word of edification and encouragement to build them up in the faith to be about disciple making.

In that process, I share the gospel with people in the hope that there's anybody out here who doesn't know Christ will come to know Christ. Trust Him. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[95 : 24] Amen. Amen. Well, thank you guys. I don't want to go over here. Thank you for your time. We try to make it a hard cut off at 11 o'clock and respect your time.

Feel free to hang around, fellowship, ask questions. If there's more stuff in there, you're welcome to take it, eat it. We don't have to take it home then. Thank you all. Thank you all for being here. It's a joy to have you.

These fresh faces come in to hear the word. Let's pray together. Father, thank you for these men, my brothers and my friends. They sharpen me and help me. They sharpen Greg and help Greg. As their pastors, it is our joy and great privilege. It is truly an honor that we are allowed, in your grace, to serve them and to serve alongside of them.

And so I pray that your word will build us up this morning, that we will take our cues from you as our Lord and Savior, Jesus. Father, that we will honor you as the God of all creation.

[96 : 20] And Holy Spirit, that we will not quench you or grieve you, but we will walk with you, walk with you in a way that sees us submitting to everything that you're doing in the way of teaching us the truth and helping us to obey it.

Thank you for the insights, the wisdom and the discernment of my brothers today as they've looked into this passage alongside each other. God, may you grow us up and raise us up to be men who love Jesus supremely and then turn to bring that love to those around us.

It's in his name and for his glory we pray. Amen.