

**THE MANLY CHURCH**  
**1 Cor. 16:13-14**

1 Dec. 2013

Turn to 1 Cor. 16. – We'll look at only 2 vss this morning, vv. 13-14, because they are packed with instruction that we need spiritual battle. – And at the heart of this passage is this command, “act like men”. –

NB, Paul isn't just speaking to men. – He's talking here to the whole church, e.g., v. 24... That means the women & children present also. – He tells ALL of us to “act like men, be manly, man up” with the necessary courage for spiritual battle.

This was a common command in the ancient world, and would not have surprised anyone at Corinth. – Nor would it have sounded strange to our forefathers in the faith for the first 1900 years of church history, until about 50 years ago. –

YET to our modern ears, Paul's words sound very strange: a call for the church to be manly, for Christians to “act like men”?

Society today is shocked at such an insensitive, gender-biased, discriminating, chauvinistic comment! – That's because for the past 50 yrs, we've been breathing in the air of a feminised world – a world at war with masculinity. –

We who are complimentarians, believing in God-ordained differences in men & women – we are seen as Neanderthals & cavemen. – Egalitarians, believing that men & women are basically the same, now rule the day.

~ As one writer puts it: *Our culture is inundated with the lie that there is no difference between male and female. Everything is rapidly becoming gender-neutral. Actually it is more than being gender-neutral; plain and simple our culture is striving to become genderless. And one of the best ways to become genderless is to remove the very trait that has the courage to fight against it, masculinity.*

*Boys are expected to act like girls at school, and when they don't, they get medicine shoved down their throats until they do. Homosexuality is glorified through media, academia, and legislation while any voice of resistance is slandered as hatred, intolerant, backwards and stupid. Feminism has practically stated that their goal is the eradication of masculinity. (www.sounddology.com)*

Before our very eyes, the Western world is being castrated. – You've probably heard of the new kind of man on the street: Metrosexual = a sophisticated urban male who spends significant time and money on grooming, appearance, clothing and shopping – things that have historically been more feminine concerns.

Mr. Metrosexual owns 20 pairs of shoes, half a dozen pair of sunglasses and as many watches. – Instead of going to a barber, he goes to a stylist. – Instead of just shaving, he exfoliates & moisturises.

~ Robert Morrel, of the University of KZN, writes of the New SA Man:  
*...introspective, caring, anxious, outspoken on woman's rights, domestically responsible. The new man also turned his back on*

*competitive sport ...violent outdoor pursuits.* (Morrell, 1998) – This is in contrast, he says, to the traditional view that “men must ...be decisive, take charge”.

Imagine with me for a moment a very realistic scenario for a typical boy today:

He grows up without a father. – He is raised only by a woman or women. – Then he goes to school and is taught only by women. Then he gets a job where his boss is a woman. –

Then he gets stopped on the road by a police-woman, assuring him that she is his protector and keeper of the peace. – This young man is also assured that the military will defend his nation, with women now on the front lines of combat.

That young man then goes to church and guess what? – The preacher is also a woman, and there are women pastors and elders. –

OR, the pastor or worship leader is effeminate and soft. – He speaks with no authority or conviction, but he sure is transparent & real. – He leads the church in singing warm & fuzzy love songs to Jesus, or he gives inspiring & harmless little spiritual talks. –

Then that young man asks what Bible that church uses? – And he is told they use a wonderful new gender-inclusive, gender-neutral translation.

+ *Beloved, do you know what has happened to the new NIV?* – By far the most popular & available Bible in the English-speaking world, used 4x more than any other translation (40% vs. 9% for ESV). – Yet, after my research this week, I can no longer recommend the NIV to you (unless you still use your old 1984 NIV, which is ok). –

As of last year (2012), the only version now for sale is the new, updated, gender-neutral & gender-inclusive NIV, the politically correct version. – E.G.:

They’ve reworked 1 Tim. 2:11 to be more suitable to the egalitarian agenda for women to be ordained as pastors & elders. – In Proverbs, they’ve changed the original Hebrew from “father” to “parent”, and from “son” to “children”. –

Anything that reflects the God-given, good & wise patriarchy of the Jewish world has been altered. – Anything that hints of the God-given principle of male headship in this human race of *man-kind*, where we are all sons of Adam – all of that has been erased in the new NIV.

E.g., Prov. 27:17...

Instead of “son of man”, now “human beings” (Ps. 8:4, etc.). – 63x they change “brother/brethren” to brothers & sisters” – e.g., next week’s text, 1 Cor 16:15, now “Brothers & sisters”. –

Even though biblical terms like “brethren” and “adoption as sons” always included women (As female metaphors in Scripture can also do, e.g., the importunate widow in Lk. 18, or “bride of Christ”; must we gender-neutralise those also as discrimination?!). That’s not the translator’s job to fix; that’s the preacher’s job to explain.

Over 2,000x the new NIV changes references from “he/him” to “they/them” – that’s violating the God-given gender (from male to neuter) and number (from singular to plural). – “Forefather” is now “ancestor”. – David’s “mighty men” are now just “mighty warriors”. –

The warning 4x in OT (Nah. 3:13; Isa. 19:16; Jer. 50:37; 51:30) about the people becoming “women” and afraid when judgment comes – those are all changed from “women” to “weakling”, a totally different word.

Scripture is very clear: Prov. 30:6, “Do not add to His words or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar.” – Same in Deut. 4 & 12 & Rev. 22 – ‘Never add to or take away anything from God’s Holy Word.’ – As Jesus said in Matt. 5, “every jot & tittle”, every syllable is inspired by God and not to be tampered with.

YET that is exactly what the new NIV has done. – This is why the entire Southern Baptist denomination has denounced the NIV, saying: “We believe that this translation alters the meaning of hundreds of verses, most significantly by erasing gender-specific details which appear in the original language.” –

And the Council on Biblical Manhood & Womanhood (Ligon Duncan, president) have declared, “the 2011 NIV ...[has] gender-neutral translations that we consider unnecessarily inaccurate at over 2,700 places.”

Beloved, there is a war against masculinity. – Which means a war against the Bible itself, which honours both masculinity and femininity. – And it’s ultimately a war against God Himself, who is not Mother but Father. –

Sadly, the greatest victims of this war are not men, but the women and children that men should be leading & protecting.

In light of all I’ve just shown you, is it any surprise that men today aren’t as masculine and manly as before? – NOT that history hasn’t been full of abuses of masculinity, for which there is *no* excuse.

But society today is rejecting the whole idea of masculinity, rejecting any notion of true manliness. – And the church is following, conforming to the world instead of confronting it. – The Christian church has perhaps never been more effeminate & emasculated.

Into this confused world, the Word of God speaks with power and clarity. – The gospel of Christ is our only hope! – We need Paul’s charge here now more than ever!

Stand & Read text & Pray:

Give title...

First 4 commands here are all military terms in the Grk, commonly used in battles & war-time in the ancient world. – Paul uses these terms b/c he knew a spiritual battle was raging. – From Gen. 3-Rev. 20, from the fall of Adam, until Christ returns, it’s warfare. – Whether in the Corinthian Church or our church today – it is not peace-time, it is all out war.

See, Paul is not just chatting to us here over tea/coffee or on the couch. – Paul is commanding us on the battlefield, in the trenches, bombarded by enemy fire, shouting out orders: v. 13...!

God gives us here...

***\*FIVE BATTLE CRIES for turning sissies into soldiers of Christ, for waging spiritual warfare with a manly faith:***

+ One of my favourite battle scenes in history is when William Wallace, “Braveheart”, charges his men just before the Battle of Stirling. – He rides back & forth in front of them on his stallion and says:

*I am William Wallace, and I see a whole army of my countrymen here in defiance of tyranny. You have come to fight as free men, and free men you are. What will you do with that freedom? Will you fight? Aye, fight and you may die. Run and you'll live.*

*At least a while. And dying in your beds many years from now, would you be willing to trade all the days from this day to that for one chance, just one chance to come back here and tell our enemies that they may take our lives, but they'll never take our freedom?! Scotland forever!*

YET that battle was only for an earthly king, a political freedom, and a temporary victory that would not last forever. – But Paul’s battle cries here (in 1 Cor. 16) come from Christ Himself, the King of all kings, who will return riding on a white horse and will judge & rule all the kingdoms of this world.

FAR MORE is at stake in Paul’s 5 battle cries here than was ever at stake in any earthly war. – Not only do we fight for a far greater & more glorious King, but we also fight against a far worse, more formidable foe: Satan himself, and his legions of demons.

They are fallen angels – spirit beings that are of a higher order than us as mere humans. – They are way smarter, stronger, and more experienced than we are. – Left to ourselves, there would be no spiritual battle. – Satan and his forces would crush us every time, before the battle even began.

*But still our ancient Foe  
Doth seek to work us woe,  
His craft & power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate;  
On earth is not his equal.*

There is only one explanation for how Christ’s Church has survived up to this day. – One reason not only survive, but also overcome & conquer: Only Christ can grant us such a victory. –

And He has already won that victory at Calvary by His death & resurrection. – Not by taking life, but first by laying down His life. –

Christ allowed the Serpent to bruise His heel as He died for our sins. – Then Christ has crushed the Serpent’s head by rising again and proving that the Father had accepted Jesus’ full payment for our sin (Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14; 1 Jn. 3:8).

→GOSPEL: You can never win the spiritual battle if you are not joined to the Victor, if you do not know Christ....

→My fellow soldiers of Christ, remember: As the battle rages on and we grow weary at times of fighting against sin & temptation & Satan's schemes. – *Remember, we don't just fight FOR victory; we fight FROM victory.* –

See, Christ has already won the war; D-day happened at Calvary, Satan is defeated. – But in our daily Christian life and as the Church, we must still fight some final clean-up battles until Christ returns to publicise His victory to the world.

So Paul shows us here how to do that:

## 1. v. 13a, WATCH!

v. 13a – What takes 4 words here in Engl is one word in the Grk: 'Watch, Alert, Vigilance!' – It's a word that appears 22x in NT, b/c it is *that* important. –

→Christian, do you realise, you are being HUNTED. – You are prey, the food of choice, for Satan. – And WE corporately as a church are being hunted. – 1 Pet. 5:8...

→Tell me: If the warfare is unceasing, can our watching ever end? Until the battle is over, how can our vigilance stop?

+ As Christ commanded His drowsy disciples 3x in Gethsemane, "Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation."

YET each time, what did He find them doing? – Sleeping. – And so they all fell away for a time, caught unprepared, spiritually naked with no armour on, defeated by Satan's assault.

Repeat: v. 13a...

+ As the Puritan Gurnall writes: *The saint's sleeping time is Satan's tempting time; every fly dares venture to creep on a sleeping lion.* –

When was Samson's hair cut by Delilah? While sleeping. – When was King Saul's spear stolen by David? While sleeping. When was Noah shamed? While in a drunken sleep. – When did Eutychus fall out of the window as Paul was preaching? While sleeping.

Repeat: v. 13a...

→As many of you go away on holiday, more than ever you must: v. 13a...

Satan has certain temptations that are tailor-made for holidays & leisure times. – Be vigilant against laziness, against selfishness, against compromising your testimony with ungodly family & friends, against slacking in your daily devotional habits in Scripture & prayer, against failing to have fellowship with other believers, etc.

Repeat: v. 13a...

## 2. v. 13b, STAND!

v. 13b, “Stand firm in the faith” – Another frequent command of Paul in his epistles. – This is how God spells victory in battle, success in spiritual warfare: S-T-A-N-D. –

When it comes to “the faith”, Christian doctrine, the truth of the Bible & the gospel: Don’t fall or falter, don’t waver or move, don’t run or flee. – Don’t worry about attacking or rebuking Satan, shouting or advancing. – Just “stand firm”.

We just camped on this back in chp. 15. – That great chp began & ended with standing: 15:1, 58...!

→Everything is not up for discussion. – Dialogue is not always necessary. – The fundamentals of our faith are fixed & certain. – You don’t need an open mind about Christian truth; you need a firm stand. – Sure footing, deep roots – again, 15:58, “steadfast, immovable”. – Repeat: v. 13b...

+ Another of my favourite battle scenes is in Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*. – King Theoden’s speech to the soldiers before the Battle of Minas Tirith:

*...A day may come when the courage of Men fails, when we forsake our friends and break all bonds of fellowship, but it is not this day. An hour of wolves and shattered shields, when the Age of Men comes crashing down, but it is not this day! This day we fight! By all that you hold dear on this good earth, I bid you stand, Men of the West!*

Repeat: v. 13b...!

### 3. v. 13c, MAN UP!

v. 13c – One word in the Greek, ‘*Andrizoma*’, “Man up, be manly, play the man!” – KJV, “Quit you like men!” – The old NIV said, “be men of courage”. – But of course now that’s not politically correct, :

New NIV, “be courageous”. – NKJV, “be brave”. – Another, “show courage”.

+ YET even the Philistines knew better. – When going into battle against Israel, they said to their troops: 1 Sam. 4:9, “Take courage and be men, O Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews, as they have been slaves to you; therefore, be men & fight.” –

Or as King David on his deathbed charged Solomon, 1 Kgs 2:2, “I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man.”

The Reformers & Puritans knew better too:

~ Calvin: Here in v. 13c, Paul “stirs them up to manly fortitude” .

~ M. Henry’s comments on v. 13c: *Act the manly, firm, and resolved part: behave strenuously, in opposition to the bad men who would divide and corrupt you, those who would split you into factions or seduce you from the faith; be not terrified...by them; but show yourselves men in Christ, by your steadfastness, by your sound judgment, and firm resolution.*

*Note: Christians should be manly and firm in all their contests with their enemies, in defending the faith, and maintaining their integrity.*

~ Here is what John Milton, author of *Paradise Lost*, called Adam's failure to lead Eve in the Garden when under assault from Satan. – He called it Adam's "effeminate slackness".  
– For which cowardly Adam was then rebuked by God.

I.e., Paul is saying: 'When it comes to the spiritual battle, don't act like women! E.g., v. 13a, Be watchful like men! v. 13b, Stand firm like men! v. 13d, Be strong like men! Act like men!'

→Beloved, the world tells you the opposite: 'Don't be watchful, be open-minded. Stand firm in...whatever is true for you. Don't be strong, be sensitive. I.e., when it comes to the spiritual battle, act like women!'

But God's charge still rings out: v. 13c...!

+ Historically, it was believed that manliness was NOT an automatic trait of biology. – It was something earned by virtue. – One writer describes:

*In the 19<sup>th</sup> c. , our forbearers used [the word] "manly" to modify a whole host of virtues & traits: An admirable man might be said to possess "manly courage," which was shown by exhibiting "manly conduct," making a "manly stand," and holding on to his "manly independence."*

*...If others did not respect your desire for "manly liberty," you had to resort to wielding a "manly sword." Correspondence that was frank in its contents was held up as a "manly letter."*

*[Clothing] that made a young man seem more mature was advertised as a "manly suit." Keeping things "simple and on point" might get you complimented for your "manly speech," while being "candid," "unaffected," and "forcible" would earn you praise for a "manly delivery."*

*How you carried yourself mattered too; George Washington, for one, was described as having "a fine, manly bearing" and men talked about the elements of a "manly handshake" long before we did. And a boy who precociously sought to embody the traits of manliness was considered a "manly boy." (From [www.theartofmanliness.com](http://www.theartofmanliness.com) )*

And when a man went soft or lost control of himself or his emotions, they would say he was "unmanned" at that moment. When's the last time you heard that word used?

→YET that is Paul's plea here to the Corinthian church & to us: 'Don't be unmanned. Don't crack under the spiritual pressure, don't yield to false doctrine or impurity or worldliness in the church.' – v. 13...

+ What could this kind of rugged, manly faith look like for ladies in the church? – *Gen. David Baird (1757-1829) served in the 73<sup>rd</sup> Highlanders in India and was captured as prisoner of war in 1780. Hearing the bad news back home in Scotland, his mother bravely replied, "God pity the [youngster] who's chained to our Davie!" (Ortlund)*

→There is a male version of PMS that is killing our churches today. I call it, 'Passive Male Syndrome'. – Men not leading in their homes; not doing all they can to provide for their family. –

His wife is the breadwinner and bears a crushing burden. – He is great at video games or other hobbies, but does little good in the home, church, or society. – He is still a boy and needs to grow up. – He has male PMS: ‘Passive Male Syndrome’. – To such a man, God says:

v. 13c...!

~ John Wayne, “Courage is being scared to death, but saddling up anyway.”

+ Bishop Latimer to Ridley, as they were about to be burned at the stake by the church authorities of the day, because of their preaching the true gospel: ‘Play the man, Master Ridley. We shall this day light such a candle as all England cannot put out!’

Repeat: v. 13abc...

#### **4. v. 13d, STRENGTH!**

v. 13d, “Be strong” – Also one word in the Grk, as in Afrikaans: ‘Sterkte!’ – Yet here in the Grk, it is in the passive. – Lit., “Be strengthened” – By WHO?!...

...Beloved, we must admit: When it comes to spiritual battle, we are impotent, we are vulnerable, we are weak.

...nothing. – But we are not alone:

Deut. 31, 3x!; Josh. 1, 4x! – “Be strong & courageous, FOR...the Lord your God is with you! He will not fail you or forsake you. He goes ahead of you! Be strong & courageous.” (actually in LXX it is *andridzomai*, as in v. 13c here)

Jer. 12:5, “If you have raced with men on foot, and they have wearied you, how will you compete with horses?”

→Beloved: We have a spiritual strength that cannot come from within, that is not inherent to any of us. – Doesn’t matter all the natural strengths or weaknesses of your personality, gender, culture, background or experience. –

We need a strength from outside ourselves, a strength that God alone can supply. – Isa. 40:30-31; Php. 4:13; 2 Cor. 12:9-10...

→I.e., ‘Be level-headed, unflappable and tough. Do the hard things. Take risks. Don’t just play it safe. Expect pain. Pay a price. Cultivate thick skin. Do the heavy lifting in the Lord’s work. Show up faithfully at church. Respond when needed. Don’t join the ranks of the flakey & the touchy.’ – I.e., v. 13d...

~ J. Oswald Sanders, “The world is run by tired men.” – Not by men looking for Easy Street or Mediocrity Road. – But by men willing to be exhausted in the Lord’s work. – All by HIS strength!...

#### **5. v.14, LOVE!**

v. 14 – Here is a whole sermon in itself, a whole series of sermons! In fact, I did that already – it’s called 1 Cor. 13, which I spent many weeks expounding & applying to our hearts & our church. (Cf. 8:1; 12:31; chp. 13!; 14:1; Jn. 13:34-35; 15:17; Rom. 13:8-10; 14:15; Ga. 5:13-14,22; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Pet. 4:8; 1 Jn. 4:7-8, etc.)

~ Says one writer: *Love complements and balances everything else. ...Love keeps our firmness from being hardness, and our strength from being domineering. ...Love keeps our right doctrine from becoming obstinate dogmatism and our right living from becoming smug self-righteousness.* (MacArthur)

Repeat: v. 14...

~ Another, especially applying this to men: *[Here in vv. 13-14, God is calling] us to grit & to grace. This keeps men from the extremes of either abdicating or abusing leadership. It galvinizes men to be strong and humble leaders. [It turns our leadership from being hard and abrasive into being gracious & compassionate.]* (Dumas)

→Church family, let these 5 commands sink in (vv. 13-14), this call to grit & to grace: Are we marked by a manly love, a strong kindness, a compassionate courage, a watchful affection?

+ It was said of the great American president, Abraham Lincoln, who led the nation through the civil war and ended slavery in the States. – It was said of Lincoln that he was a man of “velvet steel”.

+ J.C. Ryle, the great bishop of Liverpool and staunch defender of the gospel against many enemies of his day (once introduced as “the frank & manly Mr. Ryle”) – Ryle was called, “That man of granite...with the heart of a child.”

~ It’s been said, ‘Be hard on principles, soft on people. Have thick skin and a soft heart.’

+ WHO is the supreme example of this blend of tough & tender (grit & grace, vv. 13-14)? – Christ Himself. – God incarnate, the personification of strength & love: Lion of Judah & Lamb of God. – Rebuking the storm & the demons, then gently touching the bleeding woman and raising Jairus’ daughter. –

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd. – Tender with us His flock, tough against all our foes. – Gentle when we’re hurting, firm when we stray.

In SUMMARY, do you SEE? – vv. 13-14 is ALL of 1 Cor. in a nutshell! –

Think about this epistle we’ve studied (since Mar. 2012, for almost 2 yrs. now). – Every chapter of this epistle as been a lesson on grit & on grace, on how to be both tough & tender:

...with divisions in the church, with immorality & lawsuits & discipline, with troubled marriages, with abuse of Christian liberty, with approaching the Lord’s table, with abuse of spiritual gifts, with those denying the resurrection of the body –

Every kind of worldliness that infects the church requires this kind of godly, manly response: vv. 13-14....

[CONCL.]

~ Listen to these crucial insights from Piper on what it means to be a manly church & why it matters:

*...God has revealed himself to us in the Bible pervasively as King, not Queen, and as Father, not Mother. The second person of the Trinity is revealed as the eternal Son. The Father and the Son created man and woman in his image, and gave them together the name of the man, Adam (Genesis 5:2). God appoints all the priests in Israel to be men.*

*The Son of God comes into the world as a man, not a woman. He chooses twelve men to be his apostles. The apostles tell the churches that all the overseers—the pastor/elders who teach and have authority (1 Timothy 2:12)—should be men; and that in the home, the head who bears special responsibility to lead, protect, and provide should be the husband (Ephesians 5:22–33).*

*From all of this, I conclude that God has given Christianity a masculine feel. And, being a God of love, he has done it for the maximum flourishing of men and women.*

*He did not create women to languish, or be frustrated, or in any way to suffer or fall short of full and lasting joy, in a masculine Christianity. She is a fellow heir of the grace of life (1 Peter 3:7).*

*From which I infer that the fullest flourishing of women and men takes place in churches and families where Christianity has this God-ordained, masculine feel. For the sake of the glory of women, and for the sake of the security and joy of children, God has made Christianity to have a masculine feel. He has ordained for the church a masculine ministry.*

*...[What this means is that] Theology and church and mission are marked by overarching godly male leadership in the spirit of Christ, with an ethos of tender-hearted strength, and contrite courage, and risk-taking decisiveness, and readiness to sacrifice for the sake of leading, protecting, and providing for the community—all of which is possible only through the death and resurrection of Jesus.*

*It's the feel of a great, majestic God, who by his redeeming work in Jesus Christ, inclines men to take humble, Christ-exalting initiative, and inclines women to come alongside the men with joyful support, intelligent helpfulness, and fruitful partnership in the work.*

→WHAT will it look like practically to have a manly church with a masculine ethos? – Just a few closing specifics:

- A courageous church unafraid to confront the issues & idols of the day, that does not shrink back from teaching the hard doctrines about judgment, wrath, Satan, Hell, and apostasy.
- A doctrinal & confessional church that knows what it believes and seeks doctrinal clarity, that draws lines & takes stands & teaches the Bible with conviction & authority.
- A pure church not afraid to practice church discipline & excommunication when necessary
- A male-led church – where it's not the wives behind the scenes who actually pull the strings and wear the pants, as is too often the case in churches and homes.
- A complementarian church that is training its sons to be masculine & its daughters to be feminine. (Stay tuned in new year...)

- A chivalrous church full of true gentlemen who lay their lives down for a wife & children and who have holy & happy marriages.

[+ Shakespeare dramatized the famous speech of Henry V in 1415 on St. Crispin's Day, as the English troops were vastly outnumbered by the French. – Henry rallied the soldiers by declaring:

*...The day will come, men, when you will strip your sleeve and show your scars to your sons and grandsons and say, 'These wounds I had on St. Crispin's Day.' And gentlemen in England now asleep shall think themselves accursed they were not here, And they will hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks who fought with us upon St. Crispin's day.]*

PRAY: ...O Father, what a threat to the kingdom of darkness – to be a church full of watching, standing, manly, strong & loving Christians – what a weapon in Your mighty hands!...

Closing hymn, “Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus” – One of the great Christian battle songs. – Many recent versions have tried to edit out the biblical language that says, “ye that are men now serve Him”. – But we will sing the original.

It was written after a certain preacher gave a famous sermon at a large men's rally, and then was killed shortly after that. – So another preacher, Duffield, wrote this hymn as a tribute & war cry.