

## Father's Day 2016

D. L. Moody said, "A man ought to live so that everybody knows he is a Christian... and most of all, his family ought to know."

1 Cor. 15:57-58

But thanks be to God,

who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren,

be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,  
knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Cor. 16:13-14

Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong, let all that you do be done in love.

The Bible shows us how to live. Today as we think of fathers on this Father's Day, we see three elements of greatness for every man:

- I. Great Thanksgiving – Promises for victorious living.
- II. Great Exhortations – Priorities for victorious living.
- III. Great Admonitions – Principles of victorious living.

### **I. The Great Thanksgiving.**

Promise: Christ's victory is our hope for victory.

<sup>57</sup>But thanks be to God,  
who gives us the victory  
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. A Grateful Attitude to God
2. A Confident Victory
3. Through Jesus' Victory

Gratefulness is an attitude where we acknowledge something that someone else has done for us. It is expressed in gracious praise for another's generosity.

The needier and undeserving, the more intense our sense of gratefulness is. When Jesus rose from the dead He conquered sin and death.

His victory has become our victory.

Someone has written,

There is a preacher of the old school but he speaks as boldly as ever. He is not popular, though the world is his parish and he travels every part of the globe and speaks in every language. He visits the poor, calls upon the rich, preaches to people of every religion, and the subject of his sermon is always the same. He is an eloquent preacher, often stirring feelings which no other preacher could, and bringing tears to eyes that never weep. His arguments none are able to refute, nor is there any heart that has remained unmoved by the force of this appeals. He shatters life with his message. Most people hate him; everyone fears him. His name? Death. Every tombstone is his pulpit, every newspaper prints his text, and someday every one of you will be his sermon.

Paul writes,

Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

When a believer dies he will live again. He will be raised '*imperishable*' – with new bodies. Those who are alive at the time of this resurrection will be caught up to meet the Lord as He returns for them. They will also receive glorified bodies. Christ's victorious resurrection has been applied to all believers.

We have all been given Christ's resurrection victory.

John writes,

“And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:11-13).

## II. The Great Exhortation

An exhortation is an emphatic urging to **do something**.

### Priorities of victorious living...

<sup>58</sup>Therefore, my beloved brethren,  
be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,  
knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

(1 Cor. 15:58)

#### 1. Be Dedicated.

**steadfast** – Hedraios – literally refers to being seated,  
and therefore to being settled and firmly situated.

- Committed, Devoted, faithful
- I know this is true and I am firm in my commitment.

#### 2. Be Definite

**Immovable** – Ametakinetos – carries the same basic idea but with more intensity.  
Totally immobile and motionless

- Unbending, permanent, set, steady
- I'm a permanent fixture in God's kingdom.

This is about being convinced and committed to doing the will of God.

When our hope in the resurrection is unwavering we have a determination to carry on the work of the kingdom.

#### 3. Be Diligent

...always abounding in the work of the Lord

**Abounding** – perisseuo – carries the idea of exceeding the requirements, of overflowing or overdoing.

--Used of God's lavishing on us "the riches of His grace." (Eph. 1:7-8)

Because God has so abundantly overdone Himself for us who deserve nothing from Him, we should determine to overdo

ourselves (if that were possible) in service to Him, to whom we owe everything.

When Christ returns what do you want Him to find you doing?

...knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.

During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War many Jews were interned in death camps. One of the survivors wrote of a deadly exercise in futility. They spent an entire day digging a large ditch. The next day they spent their time filling in the same ditch. After a while doing meaningless labor took its toll on many men who gave up hope and died.

Paul is saying that the Lord's work is not meaningless – in vain.

### **He records, He remembers, He rewards.**

At the end of the Revelation Jesus says,

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me,  
to render to every man according to what he has done”  
(Rev. 22:12).

- I. Great Thanksgiving - Promises
- II. Great Exhortation – Priorities to put in motion
- III. **Great Admonition – principles to personally live out.**

An admonition is authoritative counsel or warning.

Based on what Paul has told the Corinthians his final advice is to...

“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong,  
let all that you do be done in love” (1 Cor. 16:13-14)

This strong admonition seems to parallel the preceding verses (15:58).

Emphasize five strong principles to live by:

---Be alert, firm, mature, strong, and loving.

Five Stepping Stones on the Path to Victorious Living:

#### **1. Be Alert**

Alert – gregoreo – “to watch,” “be awake,” “be vigilant,” and figuratively, “be alive” – often refers to Christians being spiritually awake and alert, as opposed to being spiritually indifferent and listless.

Told to be alert

- Against Satan who prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8-9).
- Temptation – “Keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation” (Mark 14:38)
- Apathy and indifference (Ch. at Sardis – didn’t know it was dead.)
- False Teachers
- The Lord’s return – “Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming” (Matt. 24:42; 25:13).

As wonderful as gardens are, there are many dangers to be alert to:

Slugs, birds, deer, lack of water, too much water, soil Ph. factors, adequate sunshine, and weeds. There are other bugs, diseases, temperature factors, not to mention soil preparation. Simply said, some people thrive on gardening and have beautiful and productive gardens, but not without a lot of work.

There is more to gardening than putting seeds in the ground and watching them grow. So it is with Christian fellowship.

Paul wrote these final words to the church elders at Ephesus,

“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears...”

(Acts 20:28-31).

In order to enjoy the fruit of a fellowship we must labor and ***be on the alert.***

## 2. Be Firm

...stand firm in the faith

This seems to go well with *being steadfast* and *immovable*.

Not everything in the Christian life and doctrine is open to question.

Some things are absolute: "The Faith."

- "The faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).
- "...the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand" (1 Cor. 15:1)
- Concerning the faith, we are to "fight the good fight" (1 Tim. 6:12).
- "...standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27).

When Martin Luther was told to renounce what he had written, or be condemned as a heretic, he said, *"Here I stand! I can do nothing else. God help me."*

### 3. Be Mature

...act like men

Lit. "Be the man" "play the man" – "Man up!"

- Sense of mature courage – control, confidence, and courage

"And He [Uzziah] did right in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God prospered him." (2 Chron. 26:4-5)

"Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature" (1 Cor. 14:20).

Maturity means to grow up.

Become a mature man who takes responsibility.

*Peter Pan Syndrome* by Dan Kiley- Many young men want to stay children.

A serious social-psychological phenomenon is besetting American males: hundreds of thousands of boys are refusing to become men.

Though they have reached adult age, they are unable to face adult feelings and responsibilities.

As men we become men as we 'Man Up' and take the responsibility that God planned for us. Manhood is a willingness to live up to God's call to responsibility.

#### 4. Be Strong

Krataioo – frequently used to denote **inner, spiritual growth**.

Passive voice – “be strengthened”

We cannot strengthen ourselves; that is the Lord's work.

Our part is to submit to Him in order that He can strengthen us. We can only 'be strong in the Lord in the strength of His might.' (Eph. 6:10)

“Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1).

#### Key to strength is self discipline –

Spiritual strength comes from self-sacrifice, self-denial, and self-discipline.

“Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage, yes, wait for the Lord.” (Ps. 27:14)

#### 5. Be loving

...let all that you do be done in love

Without this final quality we would be abrasive and hard.

The key to fathering is to be loving to our families.

Love compliments and balances everything else.

#### Without love...

Firm – becomes hard

Strength – becomes domineering

Maturity – becomes insensitive

Truth – becomes dogmatic  
 Righteousness – becomes self-righteousness

Love is the perfect lubricant to all the machinery of life.

“Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another,  
 because love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8).

Gratefulness: Christ gave His life to give us life. Now we live by His life in us.

Exhortation: Priorities that give us inner strength: Dedicated, Definite, & Diligent.

Admonition: Five Stepping Stones on the Path to Victorious Living

Become what we want our families to become.

This message wasn't about what to do with our families, but what to be.

39 years ago I experienced a miracle: the birth of our first baby, Stephanie Joy. I was elated and caught up in the amazement of God's blessing. Then nearly a year ago I was at the hospital when our first grandson arrived and the miracle visited us again, and I was so amazed at the new joy every aspect of Seph's development gives to us as well. What kind of grandpa will I be for him?

Kent Hughes writes,

“Men, time is the chrysalis of eternity - there is no other time but the present. I realize we all go through periods in our lives when we have little time for our families – it is part of the natural rhythm of life. But excessive “busyness” must not be by choice – as it so often is! We must beware of packing our schedules by saying “yes” to things which mean “no” to our families. Now is the time to take time. There is no other! Will you do it? Will I?”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Disciplines of a Godly Man*, (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1991), p. 54.