

I. INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **1Cor. 16:13,14**. From Roy H. Enoch.
Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. [14] Let all that you do be done in love.
-  B. This fine text gives us another opportunity to evaluate ourselves.
1. We have a tendency to overvalue ourselves.
 2. When we objectively examine our obligations, we see ourselves more realistically.
- C. We are like the expression: "If I could buy that man for what he is worth and sell him for what he thinks he is worth, I could make a fortune at a single trade."
- D. Let us study carefully the five duties listed in this text; each one is full of meat.

II. OUR FIRST DUTY -- "BE WATCHFUL."

-  A. Read 1Th. 5:6.
so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober.
- B. Xians are to be wide awake; sinners are represented as being asleep (1Pet. 5:8).
- C. Go out to the zoo, to the lion's cages; the big animals may be sleeping; they seem so quite and gentle. Go back a few minutes before feeding time; they will be pacing back and forth, growling, tails lashing--now and then a roar heard for miles.
The keeper comes with a basket of meat; he stands back and throws it to the lions and they catch it before it touches the ground. This is the picture that Peter is describing to us concerning Satan. Do not ignore this warning!
- D. Jesus said to the apostles in the garden of Gethsemane: Mt. 26:41.
"Keep watching and praying, that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
1. Why watch? "That you enter not into temptation." (Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:4).
(Ezek 18:4) "Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die."
(Rom 6:23) For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 2. But a servant of God must do more than watch against evil. How much would you pay an employee if he did nothing but stay out of trouble?
 3. But ask some Xians about their lives and they say, "I don't lie, steal or get drunk," as if a Xian's whole duty was to keep out of mischief.
- E. A good servant must look for opportunities to do good.
1. What blessing are we to the Lord?
 2. The Lord wants "servants to WORK in his vineyard" (1Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:10).
(1Cor 15:58) 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.
(Gal 6:10) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- F. If we do not WATCH for opportunities, we probably will not see them, like two farmers discussing who had the most rats:
"Each contended that he had more rats than the other. They agreed to try to find out. One took a pole and rattled under his crib while the other watched the rats come out on the other side. 'You have a good many--but I have more,' said the one who was watching. They went to the other farmer's crib; this farmer rattled with the pole and the rats ran out. 'See any rats?' 'Not a one.' The farmer rattling the pole looked around the corner and the first farmer had his eyes shut. He didn't want to see any rats."
1. Some don't want to see anything to do in the Lord's work. Some of the deepest regrets of some lost souls will be in remembering neglected opportunities.

III. OUR SECOND DUTY -- “STAND FAST IN THE FAITH.”

-  A. This means to stay under the banner of X--not in and out; hot and cold.
- B. Be committed to your congregation, involved in the work, and support the Elders--be dependable as a servant of God.
 1. Take the finest fruit tree a nursery has and set it out in a fertile place, then move it about once a month.
 2. It will never bear fruit if it is not allowed to take root. Constantly moved, it will die.
 3. The same is true of Xians who go from one congregation to another.
 4. Some are social butterflies, who seldom light.
 5. Some are buzzards looking for something rotten.
 6. In religion as in business, success comes to those who stand fast and work hard.

III. OUR THIRD DUTY -- “BE BRAVE.” (QUIT YOU LIKE MEN)

-  A. There are few qualities of “manliness” more admired than bravery.
 1. In battle, or on the job, the courage to face difficult situations is referred to as “being a man.”
 2. Children want their way, have to be coddled, and are afraid of the unfamiliar/difficult.
 3. “Men” look at what needs to be done, and focuses on the need, rather than their “likes” or “wants.”
- B. The work and harmony of the church is often disrupted by those old enough to be men, but still immature and childish who have to have what they want.
 1. They are more interested in being popular than being right.
 2. They would rather ignore a difficult situation than face it.
- C. Jesus revealed to John that being afraid will cause one to be lost (Rev. 21:8).
“But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”
- D. God has difficult work for Xians-- “Quit you like men,” or “Behave like men”--be brave.

V. OUR FOURTH DUTY -- “BE STRONG.”

-  A. God has heavy burdens for the strong, as Paul says in Galatians 6:2,5,10.
(Gal 6:2) Bear one another’s burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.
(Gal 6:5) For each one shall bear his own load.
(Gal 6:10) So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.
- B. We can be about as strong physically or spiritually as we are willing to prepare to be.
See 1Tim. 4:8; Heb. 5:12-14.
(1Tim 4:8) for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.
(Heb 5:12-14) For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. [13] For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. [14] But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.
- C. Sometimes a small man who eats right, exercises and keeps himself free from disease and injury is stronger than those who are careless about their health but twice as large.
- D. Sometimes a Xian who feeds on spiritual food, exercises himself in God’s service and keeps his life pure is much stronger and a better worker than others who have more education, more money but negligent in God’s work.

VI. OUR FIFTH DUTY -- “LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE WITH LOVE.”

-  A. “Love” is the most Xian characteristic (Jn. 13:35; 15:10-12).
(Jn. 13:35) “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

(Jn 15:10-12) “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. [11] “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full. [12] “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

B. The greatest virtue is love (1Cor. 13:13).

But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

VII. CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.



A. In review the five duties are:

1. Be watchful.
2. Stand fast in the faith.
3. Be brave.
4. Be strong.
5. Do everything with love.



B. If you do these things, you do well.

C. These five things are simple to understand, but sometimes hard to do; must be done.

C. Which one(s) are you going to try to work on first?

D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians.