

Fighting for our Family
Stand Up O Man!

Introduction: Today we conclude our family series as we salute and honor our fathers.

NOTE: One of the sad realities in the life of the church is the fact that too often men are woefully absent from the church.

— If not for women, many churches would not survive.

(ILL)—Morocco—David Jones

— Apparently not unusual in early church either

I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, 4 greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, 5 when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. 2 Timothy 1:3-5 NKJV

— Thankful we have many godly men who will lead—but not always the case

Before we address the spiritual side of manhood, let's have a little fun:

Top Ten Reasons it's Great to Be a Guy

10. Phone conversations are over in 30 seconds flat!
9. You can "do" your nails with a pocketknife.
8. You can leave the hotel bed unmade without feeling guilty.
7. You can buy underwear for \$10 for a 3-pack.
6. Three pair of shoes are more than enough.
5. You don't feel a need to mooch-off of other people's desserts.
4. You are unable to see wrinkles in your clothing.
3. One wallet and one pair of shoes, one color, all seasons, enough said!
2. You can do Christmas shopping for 23 relatives on December 24th in 45 minutes.
1. You can go to the bathroom without a support group.

Background to Text

***Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.¹⁴ Do everything in love.
1 Corinthians 16:13, 14 NIV***

- Series of imperatives or commands
- Final chapter of a letter addressed to a church wrestling with a ton of problems (doctrinal confusion, moral uncertainty, all kinds of dysfunction)
- Paralyzed by quarrels and arguments
- Church was in crisis—threatened by a future of non-existence
- These 2 verses are a kind of call to arms, a challenge to stand up and deal with the trouble at home
- Many of the words are military words—everyone understood them—men did in their bones—(still true today)
- Five commands—especially for men
- In a troubled words—family under attack—this is the response we need!

Rise Up, O Men of God!

Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things; give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings!

Five Charges to Men

I. Be on your guard. (13)

- A. Picture military sentry guarding camp at night
 - 1. Watch so they can sleep in peace and safety.
 - 2. One of the things dads do physically.
- B. There is a sense in what every father instinctively wants to protect and guard their family.

(ILL) Harmon Killebrew (autobiography)

Four boys his father—had ball games on front lawn—no grass left. I'm not raising grass, I'm raising boys.

- C. Guard our children
 - 1. Physical danger
 - 2. Bad influences
 - 3. Cultural expectations (priority of God)
 - 4. Spiritual counterfeits—relationship with Jesus must be owned

II. **Stand firm in your faith.** (13)

- A. Also a military term—don't give up ground
- B. Standing firm requires you know what you believe
 - 1. Don't have to be a Bible scholar (I was blessed)
 - 2. Do need to be willing to learn, find out

(ILL) Big Red Machine lineup—whiffle ball

- C. Standing firm requires inner strength and conviction
 - 1. Kids want parameters
 - 2. It makes them feel safe

(ILL) SS, Movies, BB, Softball

- No choices at 12, maybe 16
- Curfew—yes!

TRUTH: You are not called to be their best friend, you are their dad!

III. **Be men of courage.** (13)

NIV—“be men of good courage”

KJV—“quit ye like men”

RSV—“the courageous”

TLB—“act like men”

NOTE: Describes a smart warrior who knows when to be afraid.

- A. To know no fear is to risk recklessness
- B. To be gripped by fear is to be paralyzed
- C. See progression—God's solidiers
 - 1. Stands guard
 - 2. Stays alert
 - 3. Remains courageous

D. Two aspects of the courage called for

1. **Bold courage** (in the midst of spiritual attack)—stand up! Be counted! Don't hide!

NOTE: Not afraid to confront Satan, evil, quarreling

2. **Mature courage**—be a man, not a child

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? 1 Corinthians 3:3 NIV

- a. Not flippant
- b. Not childish
- c. Not drama-ridden

(ILL) Courage to stand against culture and say as for me and my house!

- Stand up
- Quit ye like men “andridzomai”
- Never quit praying, believing, pray for prodigal

(ILL) Prodigal

(ILL) Roman Sentinel

When the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius destroyed the city [of Pompeii in A.D. 79], many people were buried in the ruins. Some took cover underground, and the place became their burial chamber. Those who chose a high hiding place were also unable to escape destruction. But a Roman sentinel was found at the city gate, his hands still grasping his weapon. That was where he had been placed by the captain. While the earth shook beneath him, while the flood of ashes and cinders overwhelmed him, he stood at his post; and it was there he was found a thousand years later.

IV. Be strong in Christ. (14)

- A. About perseverance—staying the course
- B. Only command in passive voice

1. Strength we do not generate
2. It is something we receive from the outside
3. It is the strength of Christ

- C. Our children need more than our bravery and masculine strength—they need the strength of Christ

(ILL) My dad

Be On Guard
Stand Firm
Be Courageous
Be Strong

V. **Do everything in love.**

A. Our children (boys especially) need to see men who love.

1. When men become savages
2. Hard and cold, no sensitivity

(ILL)

A few years ago CBS's 60 Minutes (1.20.99) ran a story that provides a good parable of the importance of men in the home and society. The segment was actually about a problem at the Kruger National Wildlife Park in South Africa. The elephant herd at the game preserve had become over populated. The game wardens decided to transport some of the younger bull elephants to a different game park.

All went well for a dozen or so years. Eventually, however, several of the young male elephants (now teenagers) that had been transported to the new game park began attacking the park's herd of white rhinos, an endangered species. Nothing the Park managers did changed the out of control behavior of the young elephants. Finally, someone came up with an idea. They brought in some of the mature male elephants still residing in Kruger Park. They hoped that the bigger, stronger males could bring the adolescents under control. It worked. The big bulls quickly established the natural hierarchy and reduced the violent behavior of the younger bulls.

As one observer pointed out, "The new discipline, it turned out, was not just a matter of size intimidation. The young bulls actually started following the older males around, yielding to their authority and learning from them. The assaults on the white rhinos ended abruptly." Young males—whether they are wild animals or human beings—need Dads. When that's not possible, they need other men who serve as role models. From men, our young learn how to be tough and tender.

Conclusion:

Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things. Give heart and mind and soul and strength to serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God! The kingdom tarries long. Bring in the day of brotherhood and end the night of wrong.

Rise up, O men of God! The church for you doth wait, her strength unequal to her task; rise up, and make her great!

Lift high the cross of Christ! Tread where his feet have trod. As brothers of the Son of Man, rise up, O men of God!