

## “AN INSPIRED APPEAL”

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When the apostle Paul came near to the end of his first letter to the Corinthians he made an appeal that would be appropriate for the church in the first century and in all subsequent generations to carefully consider. The appeal found in I Corinthians 16:13,14 is, “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. Let all that you do be done with love.” The problems that the Corinthians church faced made this appeal especially meaningful. Some of the problems addressed by Paul in this letter were following men, which resulted in dividing the church, immaturity, immorality, going to the law with brethren, marriage issues, self-centeredness, worship issues and questions about the resurrection of the dead. Paul’s appeal near the end of the letter should have served as an antidote for the problems with which the church was struggling. *First*, Paul said, “Watch.” This is the word for a soldier who protects a city. He is ever attentive, ever on guard. *Second*, Paul urged, “Stand fast in the faith.” This term spoke of the military man who stood firm against all onslaughts and refused to retreat or to surrender. The Corinthians were to stand firm “in the faith,” so they were to hold to the “body of truth as presented by God.” *Third*, Paul enjoined, “Be brave.” The Greek word for “brave” means “to show one’s self to be a man; to be mature.” *Fourth*, Paul pleaded, “Be strong.” This word means, “to be powerful” with the strength that God supplies. Each of these admonitions are characteristics of the Christian soldier who realized he is in a life and death struggle with evil, error and darkness. *Fifth*, Paul changes the picture from military conflict to the attitude that is to be manifested in all of the

Christian's relationships: "Let all that you do be done with love." Let love for God, for the church, for brethren and for all motivate every attitude, every word and every action. If the Corinthians did this, and if we would do this today, most of the problems the church faces from within would fade away.