

STANDING FOR THE LORD

Ephesians 6:13-16

INTRODUCTION

- A. The Ephesian Letter.
 - 1. The church of Christ is unique:
 - a. Christ is its Head, Eph. 1:22.
 - b. Members make up the body [*in Him*], Eph. 2:19-22.
 - c. Salvation reserved for those [*in Him*] who are members of the church of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Eph. 1:3-14.
 - d. Unity and doctrine – consideration in relationships – distinctive marks of the body of Christ, Eph. 4:13-16.
 - 2. The Lord's church cannot avoid contention, but our strength is found in the Lord, Ephesians 3:20
- B. Stand:
 - 1. Some will oppose your teaching – 1 Timothy 1:10.
 - 2. Some will never agree – 1 Timothy 6:3.
 - 3. Some will try to lessen your convictions and redefine God's doctrine – 1 Timothy 1:13, 2 Tim. 4:3-4.
- C. Yet, Christians are called to STAND!

I. STAND IN THE LORD – ITS CHALLENGES.

- A. The Challenge to acknowledge divine doctrine.
 - 1. Ephesians 1:1-4:16 (vs. 1), “...*walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ...*”
 - a. Do NOT relent.
 - b. Do NOT release.
 - c. Do NOT redefine God's Word.
 - d. Stand firm to those who would change.
 - 2. Definition of “stand”.
 - a. Cease from movement.
 - b. Be in a stationary position.
 - c. Stand still and do not move.
 - d. Do not relent in resisting.
 - e. Remain stable.
 - f. Persist.
 - g. Opposed to running away.
 - 3. This stubbornness restricted by the term “in the Lord”, 2 Tim. 1:13.
 - a. The stubbornness applauded is the decision to do ONLY as God says.
 - b. Joshua 24:15; Acts 5:29, 42 – we must obey God...
- B. The Challenge to acquire the distinctive character of Christ, Eph. 4:17-5:24 (5:1).
- C. The Challenge for members of the body to protect the church of our Lord.
 - 1. Eph. 5:26-6:20
 - 2. Provided with the necessary armor providing strength, Eph. 6:13-17.
 - 3. Will we sit silently? Will we rationalize the changes to truth?
 - a. Rom. 16:17-18

- b. Rev. 2:14-16, 20-23
- 4. According to Scripture, nothing less than a full, vigorous confrontation is acceptable to God.
 - a. Acts 20:28-31
 - b. 1 Timothy 1:3-7
 - c. 2 Tim. 1:7-8
 - d. Eph. 6:10-11, *“Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”*

II. STAND IN THE LORD – ITS ILLUSTRATION, Numbers 22-25.

- A. Heroic Stand of Phinehas.
 - 1. The Setting, Num. 22:1-24.
 - a. Israel camped at the edge of Moab.
 - b. Balak (king of Moab) hires Balaam to curse Israel.
 - c. Balaam blesses Israel instead, but later counsels Balak [Num. 31:16] how to defeat Israel, Num. 25:1-9.
 - i. Make peace with Israel.
 - ii. Allow adulterous relationships to have its end.
 - iii. Idolatry follows.
 - d. Israel falls victim to the plan, commits idolatry, 24,000 die because of a plague from God.
 - 2. The Trap of “Peace”.
 - a. Israel wanted peace but refused to “stand” for God’s truth.
 - b. They stripped themselves of the faithfulness to God.
 - 3. The reaction.
 - a. Judgment from God in the form of a plague [24,000].
 - b. Further judgment: (Numb. 25:4-5)
 - i. Kill all chiefs.
 - ii. Kill all involved in fornication and idolatry.
 - c. Leaders are responsible and accountable to maintain standards set down by God, 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:1-5.
 - 4. Utter Blasphemy.
 - a. Zimri, young Israelite and son of prominent man, Num. 25:14..
 - b. Saw no wrong in his actions – flaunted relationship with Midianite girlfriend.
 - 5. Heroic stand.
 - a. Num. 25:7-8
 - b. Many have zeal, but true and righteous zeal is a very rare thing.
 - c. Phinehas acted with the Lord’s jealousy, Num. 25:11.

CLOSING

- A. The Church of Christ is a glorious body designed by God.
 - 1. We are to live as light and salt – one has to make an impact.
 - 2. Christians must STAND – heroically stand. There is no other option.
 - 3. We need men and women to follow the footsteps of Phinehas.
- B. Be strong in the Lord, Eph. 6:10.

1. Many verses from Scripture implore us to stand.
 - a. 1 Cor. 16:13
 - b. Gal. 5:1
 - c. 2 Thess. 2:15
 2. We used to sing songs challenging us to stand for the Lord.
 - a. Soldiers of Christ Arise
 - b. Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus
 - c. To Christ Be Loyal and True
 - d. True Hearted Whole Hearted
- C. Will you not stand for the Lord today?