

**“REINFORCEMENT &
REFRESHMENT”**
1 Corinthians 16:13-24

INTRODUCTION

Looking back at Corinth, it was certainly a wealthy city, pluralistic (worshipping all other gods, but not the *only* God), sexually immoral, and esteeming famous people. This church was an outpost of the Kingdom of Heaven! The goal of the letter was to change the Corinthians and anyone who read it. That's us! The Lord wants to show us that Jesus is right and the world is wrong. This letter closes with reinforcement and refreshment for His church. In this section of Scripture, it breaks down this way: **v.13-14** – What they are up against; **v.15-18** – What they are in need of; **v.19-20** What they are a part of; and **v.21-24**- What they are there for.

TRUTH AND LOVE

In **verses 13-14** there are several things that He is trying to remind us of: 1) Watch, 2) Stand fast, stand firm, 3) Be brave and 4) Be strong! We need to be alert and awake spiritually, as is encouraged in **Luke 21:34-36** and **1 Thessalonians 5:5-6**. We need to be prepared for battle! Some Christians who are weak may oppose those who are strong. Some view evangelical Christians as bigots, narrow-minded, hateful people. We must be able to stand in the midst of that type of criticism.

We need to be uncompromising, but not unloving! Jesus said that we should be wise as serpents, but harmless as doves. Avoiding conflict and just trying to get along is not love. We still need to stand for what is right. Sometimes the most loving things parents do is disagree with their kids! This is especially true if you have a prodigal. In **Hebrews 11**, the chapter is filled with those who stood firm because of love.

ADDICTED!

The first fruits, just like an offering of your best, are in this passage those who were first saved in Achaia. (cf. **1 Corinthians 1:16**). This is referring to the household of Stephanas. They were addicted or devoted to the ministry of the saints! They weren't coerced, but willingly sacrificed their lives for this. To those with such a heart to serve, we should submit, and not give them grief. Want to be great? Be a servant!

REFRESHMENT

Saints need saints for fellowship! The appearance of Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus was refreshing to Paul, **v. 17-18**. They supplied what Paul needed and were not a drain on him. He really valued loyal friendships, those who stuck it out with him. Aquila and Priscilla were dear friends who he met in Corinth. There were disappointments in his life such as Barnabas, Demas, Phygellus, Heromogenes, etc. This was painful to Paul. (cf. **2 Timothy 1:15, 2 Timothy 1:16**).

CONSIDER

Paul, from **verse 21** on, ends this letter by writing it by his own hand. His final thoughts stress the importance of loving the Lord Jesus! **John 3:17-18**. The stakes are high!

The Holy Spirit is moving in many places. The majority of churches that now exist are 250 members or less. These churches have a major role to play, as we are all part of something bigger! When the Son of man comes will He find faith on the earth? **Luke 18:8**. Oh, Lord come!

PRAY

- * That we would have hearts that love the lost!
- * That the Lord would allow us to purchase the land behind the church for youth activities.
- * That God's Spirit would refresh the pastors at our East Coast Pastors' conference in September.