

he is the captain who's told us the way to go he's given us the instructions the orders the directors and we are to carry out our duties at his command and so we see here he has issued for us these imperatives these instructions these commander's orders to his soldiers so firstly let's see what they are firstly watch ye watch ye watch our lord urges us to watch vine calls it a spiritual alertness we need godly men who will stand guard it's like a military century who guards the outskirts of the camp they're stationed on the entry points to the camp standing guard we need men who will stand guard today men who will stand guard over their families and over god's work the church needs a watchword a motto a watchword

a watchword is defined as a word or phrase expressing a person or group's core aim or belief watch the watchword we need is watch watching what am i saying we're called to watch to be vigilant in other words to keep our eyes peeled to keep on the alert to keep on the lookout we need to watch what's the opposite of watch slumber how many christians are slumbering and sleeping in these days but friends we need to wake up and be watchful it's important to be awake to be alert just as for the lighthouse keeper they need to be on the lookout for the ships in danger just as a ship's pilot as they're steering the vessel they need to be alert and wakeful at their post what are the things that we should be watchful today we should be alert to such things as false teachers we should be alert to worldliness we should be alert to opportunities to serve alert to the time of judgment because the judgment will begin at the house of god watch be on guard as christian soldiers let us be always on the lookout for the dangers around about for the attacks of the enemy this is an instruction more so a command watch watch watch is the opposite of being lazy and indifferent we're not to snooze on the hammock and be slack and careless in these days not to be deceived but to be watchful watch it talks about spiritual perception having those eyes peeled looking and watching watching yourself watching myself the bible says take him to yourself and to your doctrine to your teaching watch yourself watch against the world and its temptations friends we're in hostile enemy territory we're behind enemy lines and we are to make no friendship with the world we're not to fraternize with the enemy we are to reach them for christ it's a hostile environment that we're in people today the lord jesus is in mark 14 to peter he says watch and pray lest you enter into temptation the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak watch and pray he says to peter watch against the fiery darts of the wicked in 1 peter 5 verse 8 that familiar one be sober be vigilant because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour be sober be vigilant there's that sense of being on the alert being watchful we need watchmen today watchmen who will be on the towers as it were the watchtower as it were will be stationed to guard the camp and be watching and wearing watching stand fast in the faith quit you like men be strong let all your things be done with charity firstly watch you secondly stand fast stand fast in the faith stand maintain your ground stand firm stand sure we're called to stand to stand firm in the faith again a military metaphor a century stays alert to anticipate an attack they've got to stand at their post and not be swayed it's a military term for holding on to a position to not deviate to hold back the enemy to stand and hold your ground what's the opposite of standing firm it's being unsteady of wavering rather let us stand stand stand fast once the battle is engaged a good soldier holds their position they will not budge an inch their orders are to hold back the enemy to keep their ground how we need men of god people of god to stand fast hold fast hold fast do not be swayed have convictions and stand by them convictions are what will hold us when times get tough in a world where truth is seen to be relative we have unyielding spiritual truth we must have we must hold firm stability comes from convictions of course they should be biblical convictions that's the key they must be biblical convictions our commanding officers says to you to me he says stand strong stand firm be anchored be immovable be firm be rock solid how are we to stand in these days of compromise stand fast in the faith paul writes about standing fast in the gospel in 1 corinthians 15 verses 1 through 2 he says to the thessalonians in 2 thessalonians 2 verse 15 stand fast in the traditions or the pattern that he has said now we know there's traditions from the dark ages there's traditions of men but there are traditions that are godly and rightful that is what paul's speaking of there the pattern that he sets is a tradition that's a godly one we should stand for that what's the uh we could stand uh for the tradition of the as as far as scriptural truth or we can go with the trends and that would be as as the saying goes go with the flow you know we've been in churches like that they said we didn't like the we didn't like the trend we didn't like the flow and they said go with the flow or go well we went some are unsteady some are unsteady in these days they'll just go with the flow they're not anchored in true bible authority some say go with the flow i heard a good quote about

just this not long ago about this philosophy of go with the flow and this bears thinking about never go with the flow until you know where the water falls are amen you can go with the flow and go down uh down the niagara falls to your destruction you can go with the flow and go the easy way or you can swim upstream where will you go some do go with the flow and they get blown around with contrary winds like thesians 4 says that we henceforth be no more children what did paul say in 1 corinthians 16 be men don't be children anymore tossed to and fro carried about with every wind of doctrine he says stand fast stand fast in the faith some things are worth standing for they're worth standing for and we are to hold fast to the truth we have believed stand fast in the faith better i believe to be thought a stick in the mud if we are standing in the right place that's important make sure you're standing in the right place i don't want to be a stick in the mud if i'm standing in the wrong place but better to be a stick in the mud than a flip-flopper i would rather be accused of holding to tradition if it is based on godly principles and biblical truths than to be wildly shifting to fitting with the whims of men and the trends of popular christianity tradition or trends which will it be again i'm not saying that all tradition is good there's lots of tradition that is woeful and horrible and bad and wrong plain as day but bible truth is what we're standing for in jeremiah 6 verse 16 jeremiah says thus saith the lord stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths where is the good way and walk therein but they said we will not walk therein we're not looking for new paths today we're looking for the old paths there is no revised truth it's still the same the truth is still the truth the truth is still the same we want the old truth we can communicate the old truth in new ways but we want the old truth stand fast in the faith maintain the truth we adhere to the faith once delivered to the saints what did paul say while corinthians 15 i love this one therefore my beloved brethren be ye steadfast unmovable always abounding in the work of the lord for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the lord stand fast stand fast brother stand fast sister stand fast stand fast and this standing fast is not some man-made yoke or bondage it's actually a freedom it's actually a liberty the yoke that he gives to us is not a man-made yoke of bondage but it is a harnessing with his power stand fast therefore in the liberty where we christ has made us free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage galatians 5 verse 1 so stand fast there's a liberty in standing fast there's a there's a freedom a release in standing fast because you're standing with him watch him stand fast in the faith quit you like men be strong let all your things be done with charity so we're saying watching stand fast thirdly quit you like men quit you like men now again it's an old english uh word here uh the word quit when it was written here in our bibles had the meaning of conduct yourself in a certain way we use the word acquit today a quick acquit yourself it's it's how you set yourself it's how you conduct yourself in a specified way so when it says quit you like men that's the sense of it in other words be men act like men it speaks of maturity in the face of battle again this is an imperative it's an imperative it's a command it's a word of command it's the opposite of be timid be immature be man be men be mature be men the bible speaks of effeminate men it condemns them men be men women be women quit you like men how are we meant to conduct ourselves as christian soldiers it's saying here don't be a wimp don't be a sissy be a man act manly now there's times we all feel like uh having our tail behind between our legs and and going and retreat retreating being a coward but the bible says be a man be manly now there's an old hymn that goes rise up o man of god have done with lesser things give heart and mind and soul and strength to serve the king of kings god's looking for men and when i'm saying that i'm not excluding the women uh because there's a sense where women can have that bravery of a man also it's got that sense of resolution of showing yourself firm and strong showing yourself men to be a man god is looking for men he's looking for men through the word of god and you know sadly in many places in many churches not that uh i'm not discounting women don't get me wrong but it's generally um predominated by women you've got women preachers you've got uh predominantly a majority of women now this is nothing against women don't get me wrong uh women here today but there's a sense where men should rise up and be men men should rise up and stand up and man up god is looking for men

men we need men we need fathers we need husbands we need men who will be godly leaders who will be firm and faithful in ezekeiel 22 it says that god was saying through ezekeiel i sought for a man among them who should make up the hedge and stand in the gap but i found none we're looking for men still god's looking for men of course he's looking for worshipers who worship in spirit in truth male and female but where are the men today where are the men men be exhorted be urged today to stand up don't be a coward be brave and be mature the fight calls for courage watching stand fast in the faith quit you like men be strong let all your things be done with charity come to number

four now be strong be strong we're called to be strong be strong be strengthened in other words in mind and spirit be strong in faith we're called to strength we need strength in these days where weakness prevails strength the word here refers to strength in action that's the sense of the greek if you want to get into the greek of it there's a sense where there's a strength in action this is not a strength that's not engaged it's a strength that's engaged it's a strength that's active it's about perseverance that's what wins battles it's perseverance you know some of the weakest armies prevail because they persisted we need to be strong we have power today by the holy spirit joshua 1 verse 9 god says to joshua have i not commanded thee be strong and of a good courage be not afraid neither be thou dismayed for the lord thy god is with thee withersoever thou goest god's with you wherever you go be strong because he is with you how we need to be strong in these days of compromise philip brooks an old-time preacher he says do not pray for easy lives pray to be stronger men do not pray for tasks equal to your powers pray for powers equal to your tasks god will give you something to do and though you feel weak as i do do do it god will give you the ability as you do what he's put you in you in you to do he'll give you the power he'll give you the strength so friends we're in a day of battle we need to be ready we need to be strong as a preacher i want to deliver strong preaching preaching not to be a wimpy gutless preacher but to be strong gutsy preaching preaching that boldly delivers the message not a message that i want to impart but a message that i feel is heaven sent that is god's message for his church that he's entrusted to me or to have a preachers here that our preaching will be gutsy preaching we won't hold back we'll pull out all the stops because we need to have it straight and true today to be empowered from on high to have his strength in what we do and how we deliver it that's god anointed it's god empowered and that we speak with authority thus saith the lord because that's what it says that's what it says not some extra biblical you know god's told me this or that but god says here it is written that's our authority so i say to you be strong be strong endure hardness as a good soldier of jesus christ be strong here in the sense of the original greek it says be strong is actually a passive the sense of it here is we cannot strengthen ourselves we command it in other words be strengthened for battle be strengthened the strength is not your own it's not my own it's be strengthened it's received his strength be strengthened allow god to strengthen

[21 : 38] you that's the sense of it it's something god does for us and in us to us not something we do for ourselves by ourselves the strength that we need the be strong that we need it's not something that's from our own generated from our own ability but it's a reception from god be strong in the lord and in the power of his might ephesians 6 be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man ephesians 3 16 paul says the holy spirit strengthens him he says i can do all things through christ which strengtheneth me philipans 4 13 be strong you will win the victory i know there's people here today going through all kinds of battles you might be feel like you're right there on the front line and where's the reinforcements you know you might feel like you're there at the very front of the trenches be strong be strengthened let god strengthen you in 2 corinthians the chronicles 15 7 2 chronicles 15 7 it says be strong therefore and let your hands and let not your hands be weak for your work shall be rewarded be strong how we need to be strong today everything's going to water you know there's um a prophecy in the old testament of um of someone that says they're weak as water we don't want that we don't be weak as water we want to be strong we want to be strong and we will not fear we will be bold even if in time and it might be true it means the stake it means it means the rack it means death to stand strong that's what it meant back then when you know in the days this book was written the people went to the rack and the flame because they believed the word we need to be bold we need to be strong in his strength in his strength he says in 2 chronic corinthians 12 my grace is sufficient for you my strength is made perfect in weakness how we can rejoice for when i am weak then am i strong our strength comes from him your strength comes from him when you're feeling weak then am i strong read that one you know when i am weak then am i strong it's a good place to feel weak it's a good place to feel weak and inadequate and feel like packing your bags and giving up when i am weak then am i strong be strong in the lord and in the power of his might ephesians 6 verse 10 colossians 1 strengthened with all might according to his glorious power how we need that that resource that strengthening that equipping how can we be strengthened how do we achieve strength think of it in the natural sense how do we achieve strength by nourishment and exercise nourishment and exercise in 1 Timothy 4 paul writes in part of nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine words of faith and good doctrine will nourish us up that's nourishment and secondly exercise or training we know that is profitable for instruction in righteousness it's profitable for our training in

that godly life this is the training resource this is our exercise in godliness which we have that nourishment and that exercise paul says to timothy 1 timothy sorry 2 timothy 2 verse 1 be strong in the grace that is in christ jesus there's a strength in grace a strength in grace you know what's the opposite of grace it's being ungracious isn't it you know let's be strong in grace the grace that is in christ jesus 2 timothy 2 verse 1 so watch ye stand fast in the faith quit you like men be strong lastly let all your things be done with charity love work in love verse 14 let all your things be done with charity

with love paul tamer's these military-like commands with this one that wraps it all up and kind of encompasses the whole thing you know we can have those four things and lack love and it will be missing something that's the vital ingredient the vital ingredient do everything in love now that's not a lovey-dovey thing that that kind of accommodates and thinks everything's uh okay uh doesn't challenge uh there's truth in love there's speaking truth in love and love will will challenge in in a respectful way do everything in love that should be our motive brothers and sisters in this campaign that we are in today the commanding officer says to you do everything in love that should be the motive the battle is won by love the bible says love the lord it says love thy neighbor as thyself it says love one another love uh the brethren 1 john 3 14 love the brotherhood 1 peter 2 17 so if we love well we'll consider the other person and be thoughtful we won't murmur or backbite or sow discord we will love with the love of christ we will love in a genuine way in a real way in a heart deep in a practical way we'll love and a love will be real real 1 peter 1 22 says unfeigned love now to feign something you know when the kids play boxing or whatever they do a pretend punch it's a feigned punch it's pretend peter says don't feign it don't fake it make it real make it real unfeigned love of the brethren and that you love one another with a pure heart fervently i pray that our church will know that love that will live that love that will love that love that will love one another with a pure heart fervently and that means showing grace to one another uh at times it might it might mean forbearing one another when someone gets under your skin or you don't like the preacher you know you might still love me uh i pray that you'll love one another love one another we must love enjoy jude 1 21 it says keep yourselves in the love of god keep yourselves in his love paul writes in galatians 5 6 faith works by love hand in hand our faith and our love it's interesting if you check a concordance and see where faith occurs with love they occur together you know faith hope love but you know certainly faith works by love our faith that that confession of our trust in christ and our conviction of his truth it works by love we're driven by love in our faith and so friends we see we're in a fight we're in a battle zone today you might think yeah i know what you're talking about preacher i've been through the battle zone last week or or i know what i've got to face monday morning you know it could be that battle zone is very real to you today and this is not airy fairy generalities that you are engaged in a fight and so we see the commands here of your commanding officer in this christian fight we're to be watching standing in the faith showing that courage being strong and that that means protecting our loved ones and and what we care about the truth our way of life our christian walk and it is all wrapped up in love love underpins it and wraps it up love is the command it's one of the imperatives one john three this is his commandment his commandment this is a command from the general hq from the chief commanding officer he says this is his commandment that we should believe on the name of his son and then there's a third part we're gonna find it i've lost my notes now there's that third part which is absolutely critical we should love his son jesus christ and love one another it's as important as believing jesus christ is loving one another so what is love you know i could say love one another you think okay i'm gonna love one another what does it mean what does it mean how does it translate into the rubber hitting the road stuff love means meeting the needs of others it means being considerate of others it means putting others above yourself it means giving and sacrificing for the sake of others love is all about others 1 john 3 8 10 it says my little children let us love not in word neither in tongue but in deed and in truth let it be lift down indeed and in truth philippians 2 talks about having the same love verse 2 being of one accord of one mind so think of these things now think of those five commands again without love watchfulness can deteriorate into a judgmental spirit you can be watch watch watch what's everyone else doing oh they've got an error there or this one said something well they should be a hit with a big stick or whatever it might be watch watch watch it's not watching with a judgmental critical spirit and it's watching in love as the shepherd i'm watching the sheep because i love them i love the sheep as as do as does our brand elder there's a watching over the sheep because we love the sheep that's our motive it's not to pick

on people and so without love some of these commands can come across as as harsh love keeps our firmness from becoming hardness and our strength from becoming domineering it keeps our maturity gentle and considerate it keeps that right attitude that humility when it comes to right doctrine it doesn't become a dogmatism that is a put down of others but it becomes an attitude of service of humility and not of self-righteousness that is the love that we need let all your things all your things be done with charity let love be emoted the lord jesus says it's a characteristic of the end of the world that love will grow cold matthew 24 12 so we need to watch our love let's measure our love let's watch that we don't neglect to love let love keep you alert so you care for one another we're watching out for one another amen that's the watching we should do we're watching out for one another we don't want anyone to stumble and uh slip we want to watch out because we care we're alert it keeps us alert and loving let love inspire you stand we love god we love his truth we love the gospel we love uh standing in a bible believing church we love where we stand because we care about the truth we our love makes us brave and courageous so we'll defend one another you know we don't shoot the wounded in this church we care for the wounded the battle weary the battle worn we'll go the extra mile for those of our fellow soldiers who might have got might have got hit they need a bit of tlc that will make us brave and courageous so we'll go i'm just thinking creatively here you go into the no man's land and retrieve them and get them back safely and soundly that bravery will take you to the nth degree to reach out and to care for your brothers and sisters and that love will make you strong because it's a love for christ in verse 15 it goes on again of military terminology of some there in 1 corinthians 16 verse 15 of some who gave themselves they addicted themselves to the ministry it's again it's a sense of it's a military term as well they addicted themselves when the websters defines addiction as the state of being devoted of course we know there's unhealthy addictions but there's a a godly addiction there's a godly devotion that's a good thing and again it's a military term it means to line up in an orderly arrangement it means we've got an assignment and we're going to fulfill it that's the spirit that we need where we've got that military um order and that that stand as a soldier would stand in a battle because as much as these are somewhat symbolic terms it's real we are at war we are at war and sometimes i think we forget that you know it's peace time in australia as we know but really we're at war and we need to have that that strength of a battle unit that strength of a fighting force and god will help us to have that and to grow in that so as the spiritual conflict rages all around us and sometimes we feel like it's very hard watching stand fast in the faith quit you like men be strong let all your things be done with charity let us be in the number who will stand let us be amongst those who will be addicted sold out as the battle rages we will not deviate we will press the fight and battle on because the battle's not yours it's the lord's and you are more than conquerors through him who has loved you so friends battles will come and you you may be in the thick of it next week but he is with you be of good courage be strong let us pray