



The Good News

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Getting Back to Basics

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When any sports team struggles or is having a difficult time in competition, we often hear the coach of such a team say, “We have to get back to basics.” There could be several reasons for the need to get back to basics: perhaps the team has become distracted by other issues and need to be refocused, or perhaps they have forgotten the basics and are therefore unable to do anything more advanced. A third reason could be that the team never was fully established in the basics and therefore require lessons in fundamentals. Regardless of the reason, it is painfully obvious when teams of any sport are lacking in fundamental principles. In fact, the necessity of observing “the basics” can be applied to almost any endeavor in life. Most importantly, and for our purposes today, we find that this certainly applies to spiritual matters as well. Paul, as he ends his first letter to the Corinthians, gives some final instructions to a congregation that is struggling: “Get back to basics!”

Mind your stand in truth! In I Cor. 16:13, Paul encourages the brethren to “stand fast in the faith”. This standing fast will need to be accomplished in several ways. They will need to stand fast by adhering to the Gospel, always being faithful to the teaching of Christ through Paul. This will mean they must stand fast against false doctrine and adhering to the character that is taught by the Gospel. In doing this they can address the most basic of Christian fundamentals: remember the teaching of Christ!

Mind your own mind! Paul goes on to encourage the brethren in I Cor. 16:13 to “watch”, “be brave”, and “be strong” as a means of reminding them they must guard their own minds so that they can stand in truth. The brethren in Corinth were facing persecutions, temptations, and adversity from both outside and inside the church. They could not allow themselves to become compromised in their own minds. This is why Paul reminds them to always keep their mind where it should be...on spiritual matters!

Mind your brethren! Many of the difficulties that the congregation in Corinth was facing involved their brethren; they needed to be reminded to submit to one another. Paul reminds them in I Cor. 16:15-18 to emulate the example of those who edify and minister to the saints. Paul also reminds them to submit to the authority of the Gospel, no matter who is teaching it. They were to always heed the brethren among them that were teaching the truth, not ignoring them or seeking to exalt themselves over them. By minding their brethren, especially those teaching the Gospel, they could ensure purity among one another.

We often need to be reminded of “the basics” so that we will never forget the principles that form the foundation of our faith: By standing in truth, guarding our minds, and submitting to one another in faith, we can keep ourselves from ever struggling as the Corinthians did, both as a church and as individuals.