

Four Essentials to a Christian's Effectiveness

I Cor. 16:13

Introduction:

- A. Verse is a concise formula for effective Christian living.
 - 1. Does not supply details, leaves that to other passages.
 - 2. Does give basic attitudes - attitudes are important. (2 Cor. 10:5).
- B. Verse lists four essentials for a Christian's effectiveness.

Discussion:

I. **Watchfulness.** ("Watch" - "Be alert" (NASV).

- A. Alert to spiritual *dangers*.
 - 1. From within oneself. (1 Cor. 9:27).
 - a. Signs of losing interest in spiritual exercise.
 - b. Signs of distraction from main purpose in life.
 - c. Signs of seeking easy way out of life's difficulties.
 - d. Signs of chronic complaining. (cf. 1 Cor. 10:10)
 - e. Signs of chronic complacency. (cf. 2 Pet. 2:7,8; Acts 17:16).
 - 2. From outside oneself. (2 Pet. 2:1-2).
 - a. Do well to listen to experienced teachers. (Heb. 5:12-14).
 - b. Experience and knowledge often can see danger ahead. (cf. 1 Sa. 8:10-20).
- B. Alert to spiritual *opportunities*. (Gal. 6:10).
 - 1. Jesus seized opportunity at well in Samaria. (John 4).
 - 2. We miss many opportunities by not being alert. (cf. Shoe salesmen on remote area)

II. **Stability.** ("Stand fast (firm) in the faith.")

- A. Must be *equipped* to stand. (Eph. 6:13,14).
 - 1. Grounded "in the faith." - based on knowledge of God's word. (Rom. 10:17; 2 Tim. 2:15).
 - 2. Anchored in hope. (Heb. 6:19) - based on scriptural reasons (1 Pet. 3:15).
- B. Must be *determined* to stand. (Eph. 6:13,14).
 - 1. Some equipped without determination.
 - 2. Some determined without equipment.

III. **Maturity.** ("Quit (act) like men")

- A. General maturity - not childish. (Cf. 1 Cor. 13:11). - Some babes in Christ, some just babies.
 - 1. Not fearful - "be brave." (NKJ)
 - 2. Not attention seekers. (1 Pet. 5:6).
 - 3. Not fickle. (1 Cor. 15:58).
 - 4. Not touchy.
 - 5. Not pouters. (Lk. 15:28).
 - 6. Not Naive. (1 John 4:1).
 - 7. Not tattlers. (1 Tim. 5:13).
- B. Spiritual maturity. (1 Cor. 14:20; 2 Pet. 3:18).
 - 1. God arranged for mature men to lead the church.
 - 2. Yet, many churches, even with elders, allow themselves to be led by immature element.

IV. **Strength.** ("Be strong")

- A. Source of Christian's strength is Christ. (Phil. 4:13; Jno. 15:5).
- B. Fruit of Christian's strength is self-crucifixion. (Gal. 2:20).
 - 1. Real strength not in steam-roller abusive tactics.
 - 2. Real strength in firm, faithful, courteous and fair teaching.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us improve each of these essentials daily.
- B. Let us be more interested in effective spiritual power than financial, political or social power.