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Letters to the Church during COVID-19: 26 August 2020

To the church family at KBC,

I hope this finds you well and keeping safe! This the final instalment of our weekly letters and I hope they have been an encouragement for you during this season. On the 6th September we will start meeting again, albeit differently, as we emerge out of the lockdown. It is my prayer that slowly, safely and following the guidelines, as the next few months unfold, we will be able to meet more regularly in person and various activities will begin to start up. As a closing exhortation to these letters I wanted to share a great verse with you. It was the verse of the day on YouVersion Bible App and a great encouragement. It is 1 Corinthians 16:13-14, go ahead and read it. It is Paul's closing encouragement to the church in Corinth and a great encouragement for us in this season as well. Five practical instructions for us.

Be on your guard or keep watch encourages us to live a life of readiness for the Lord's return. My mentor and friend, Stu Woodward, would always say, 'the day of the Lord's return is closer today, than it was yesterday' and we want to be a church ready for His return so, be on guard and keep watch.

Stand firm in the faith is Ephesians 6:13-14 language. It is a reminder that there will be many things in this life to distract and discourage. In the midst of this we are encouraged to stand firm, remembering that our fight is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers in the heavenly realm. So, we must stand firm in our freedom as God's children, stand firm in unity as brothers and sisters and stand firm upon the Word of God.

Be courageous. The idea behind this phrase is 'don't quit'. As this season drags on it is easy to become disheartened because it has been so disrupting. It is easy to grow weary of doing good and persisting in seeking His face away from the encouragement of meeting together. But we must be courageous, we must not flinch in the face of these trials and we must not quit.

Be strong. It is important to remember that Paul is speaking to the church collectively. He is not saying to individual Christians standing alone, 'be strong' but to the church together. We are to be strong together. It is why from the start of the lockdown I have encouraged us to keep connected and call for support because it is together that we stand strong. If

you find yourself feeling isolated, a little cut off from others, discouraged and disheartened today then pick up the phone and call for support, that you may be strengthened to fight the good fight.

Do everything in love. When you distill Paul's commands in his letters, so often they come back to the love. Love for the Lord and doing everything to bring Him honour and fame. Love for one another, that people may see that we are His disciples. And the catchall word here is 'everything'. Do everything in love. Your speaking, your working, your serving, your parenting, your encouraging, your resting...everything, let it be done in love for Jesus and for one another.

This is good food for the soul, a couple of verses worthy of our attention and ongoing reflection. May it feed your faith, strengthen your spirit and cause you to overflow with joy!

Grace be with you!
Stu

#KeepTrusting #KeepConnected #Call4Support

Notices and Upcoming events on Zoom:

Thursday: **No** Unpack the Preach this week.

Sunday: 10:30am, Sunday Morning Service (we will open the room at 10am for people to gather to chat and leave it open after the service for people to chat as well).

KBC YouTube channel: Here you will find back copies of Stu's daily mini devotional series 'Therefore..' and 'You are...'. and our sermons each week.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0lqZEJkxDYGSeCQCw6onJw/featured>

Resources: Do not forget to check out our resources page on our website, which is constantly being updated, including resources for families and activities for children and youth: <https://kingswoodbaptistchurch.co.uk/resources/>