

**1 Corinthians 16, Paul closes his letter with some final instructions and exhortations: Last week, "the care of the churches":**

In our day, New Testament Pastors today, are called by God to care for one church and one gathering of saints; but in the infancy and birth of the New Testament church, the Apostle Paul was called and sent by the Lord Jesus to care for all of the churches.

2 Corinthians 11:28: "Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches"

As sinners came to faith in Christ (in the time of the apostles) in cities throughout that region of the world, (Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Asia minor, which is modern day Turkey, Greece, Albania, Rome, and Spain), as New Testament churches were born, Paul's ministry was filled with traveling to many of these countries and cities preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ and strengthening and caring for these "new" churches.

As 1 Corinthians 16 begins, we read of Paul's love and care for the saints at Jerusalem, as he coordinated collections from the other churches for their help and relief.

Beloved, we ought to care for our sister churches and send relief when our brethren in other cities and countries are in need.

August 2016 flood In Louisiana

**In (Verses 5-7) Paul communicated his intentions and plans to visit the church at Corinth; "it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you"**

Paul teaches us a valuable spiritual lesson here, as children of God, which, if practiced and imprinted upon our hearts, it will strengthen us in our faith and obedience to Christ.

Note that after he wrote of his intentions and plans come to Corinth, and even perhaps to spend the winter with them, he deferred his intentions for his future plans to the Lord. He wrote,

"IF THE LORD PERMIT".

HOW OFTEN do we communicate our future intentions to go somewhere, do something, visit someone today, tomorrow, or next week as if we are the gods of our own lives? Yes, I will definitely be there:

Proverbs 27:1, James 4:13-16, Acts 18:19-21

Hasn't the Lord taught you and I (often enough) that it is "His will" that WILL BE done today and tomorrow, and not ours? And isn't this the way we ought to live our lives

today and tomorrow? The qualifier or caveat for ALL of our plans and intentions for "today or tomorrow" should be "if the Lord permit", or "if the Lord will" I will do this or that!

But understand, I am not teaching you to simply add the phrase, if the Lord will to the way you communicate your intentions; I want this to be in your hearts! Beloved, this is the language of faith and humble submission to God's will, which should be in every one of our hearts!

Luke 11:2: "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth". Luke 22:42: "Not my will, but thine be done"

Consider this, the next time you get irritated because none of what you planned for YOUR DAY has come to pass.

In your irritation, what gospel door, what gospel opportunity did you miss? God detained you and changed your plans and sent you to where He would have you to serve Him! What is more important to you? God's will? Or yours?

### **1 Corinthians 16:8: "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost"**

From this passage, we understand that this letter was (in all probability) was written by Paul from Ephesus. Furthermore, Paul stated WHY he would STAY or TARRY at Ephesus until Pentecost.

1 Corinthians 16:9: "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries"

The borders of the Kingdom of Christ were "expanding and growing" in Ephesus! The gospel was being preached, Christ was conquering souls, freeing captive sinners, leading them out of the enemy's camp and into the Kingdom of God's Dear Son. Acts 19:1,8-23

God had opened a "great and effectual door" in Ephesus. Great: #3173, Megas, meaning very wide. Effectual: #1756, Energes, meaning active, powerful, operative! God was actively moving in Ephesus and saving sinners. It was for this reason that Paul determined stay until Pentecost.

Brethren: We need to be able to see and perceive (by faith) the work of God, but we must also be able to see and perceive (by faith) great and effectual DOORS that God sets before us!

But hold on just one minute, could this "actually" be an open door? The latter part of 1 Corinthians 16:9 tells us that were (in Ephesus) many adversaries!

Remember where Paul was, Ephesus was a city given to idolatry, the home of the great goddess Diana. We learn of Demetrius, a silversmith who made his living making silver shrines, idols, for Diana! And he wasn't the only one who was of this craft! Acts 19:24-29

### **In Ephesus, Paul became public enemy #1:**

He preached the gospel of Christ, persuading the people of Ephesus that there is no god that could be made or crafted by men's hands! There were many saved, but there were also many who were filled with wrath!

We need to know how to perceive an open door from the Lord! With all of this chaos and confusion and anger, we might think, O that door is closed!

Many adversaries against the ministry of Christ is NOT necessarily a bad sign, Satan knows where to muster his forces!

When MANY ADVERSARIES come to bear against the church and gospel ministry, that is a good indication that God IS doing His work in that place and among that people! Satan is going to greatly resist the plundering of his kingdom and captives!

"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"

### **Paul's instructions concerning Timothy/Apollos: 1 Corinthians 16:10-11:**

Timothy was being sent by Paul to Corinth to deliver Paul's letter, but also to teach and correct many of the problems in the church.

Timothy was a young man, Paul therefore wrote of his concerns to the Corinthians, instructing and admonishing them to receive him respectfully and honorably.

1 Timothy 4:12: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou the example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity". Acts 19:21-22, 1 Corinthians 4:14-17

### **1 Corinthians 16:12: "As touching our brother Apollos":**

Apollos had already been to Corinth, he ministered in the church at Corinth, we know this from this letter. We are introduced to Apollos in the Book of the Acts:

Acts 18:24-19:1, 1 Corinthians 1:10-12, 3:4-6.

Paul greatly desired Apollos to go to Corinth. We don't know why he was not willing (at that present time) to go with the brethren. Perhaps Apollos did not want to rekindle the strife that existed when he was in Corinth previously, or he did not want to hinder Timothy in his work.

Bottom Line Up Front, when a brother or sister in Christ tell us, I am not willing to do this or that (at this time), we must respect their personal walk of faith with the Lord, and...we must know that our will or desire for them (as right and correct as it may seem to us), may not be their will or desire.

**Closing: Remember to humbly submit your todays and tomorrows,  
and your plans and intentions to the will of the Lord!**

This is how we should live every day of our lives! Thy will, not my will be done in my life.

Constantly be looking by faith for "gospel open doors" that God will put before you! But know this also, when God opens wide and effectual door, Satan is going to muster his forces!