

A Wide Open Door

042218AM

1 Corinthians 16:5-9

- At Ephesus, though many adversaries, Paul saw “a great and effective door” opened for him.
- Are we inclined to focus so much on obstacles that miss the open doors?
- There are some things the Bible teaches us to do, so that we can focus on the opportunities rather than the obstacles.
- I have missed some open doors... Here are a few things that would have helped me, and can also help us all.

Identify & Admit to Our Needs

- 1 Cor. 2:5 – We need our faith to be in the power of God, the message of the cross (1:18)!
- Rev. 3:17 – The Laodicean church's problem is common.
- 2 Tim. 3:16-17 – We need the inspired word of God.
- **Tit. 2:11-12 – To be taught by the grace of God.**
 - **Tit. 2:13 – To be looking for the appearing of Christ.**
 - **Tit. 2:14 – To be redeemed, purified and zealous for good works!**
- Heb. 10:25 – We need each other (also Rom. 14:7).
- Jn. 15:13 – We need to be friends (1 Jn. 3:16).

Identify & Develop Our Strengths

- 1 Cor. 3:11 “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”
- 1 Cor. 1:10 – Cannot identify & build strengths if blocked by weaknesses. Compare Mat. 26:41.
- 1 Cor. 3:12ff – We find our strengths and develop them by accepting challenges.
- **Jas. 4:13-17 – We need to be focused on the Lord's will, then our plans will come into line.**
- Mat. 19:22-26; Mk. 10:23-27 – What seems impossible to men is possible with God.
- Lk. 17:5-10 – Our faith increases through selfless service.

- **What do we want to do with what remains of our lives?**

Aspire to Greater Service and Sacrifice

- 1 Cor. 4:14-16 – The gospel by which the Corinthians had been saved was being deconstructed rather than built upon.
- Compare Gal. 4:15-16 – Paul had become an enemy of those who would once have plucked out their eyes for him.
- Heb. 5:12 – Hebrew Christians needed to relearn first principles; **we cannot give what we do not have.**
- Eph. 4:11-16 – The apostolic framework was laid in expectation that Christians would mature, and that they should desire to mature.
- Rev. 3:7-11 – The church at Philadelphia...
 - **V. 7 – No man can shut a door that the Lord has opened!**
 - **V. 8 – Doesn't take great strength, but requires keeping the word of Christ and not denying His name.**
 - **V. 9 – If we keep His word, He will defeat the opposition.**
 - **V. 10 – He will help us overcome our weaknesses!**

Decision...

- What do we want for ourselves, our families, and our congregation?
- Phi. 4:13 – Are we too focused on why we think we can't, rather than on what we can do through Christ?
- Are we more concerned about the opposition than we are with the opportunities?
- Do we know, and acknowledge, our needs?
- Are we desirous of greater service and sacrifice?
- The Lord has opened a door for each of us...