

“OPEN DOORS BRING MANY ADVERSARIES”
1 CORINTHIANS 16:9

INTRO: Ever since the TIME OF CHRIST, those who have experienced tremendous ministry have found that in THE MIDST OF THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES, CAME THE MOST DIFFICULT OPPOSITION. That was the case of the Apostle Paul and with all preachers and missionaries right down to where we live today. Paul teaches this in 1 Corinthians 16:9 and we would do well to focus on the idea that OPEN DOORS BRING MANY ADVERSARIES.

BACKGROUND OF TEXT: Paul was speaking about his ministry in Ephesus as recorded in Acts 19 where he had trouble by facing FALSE DEMONIC TEACHERS that brought a great threat on his life. Cp. 2 Corinthians 1:8-11.

I. THE OPEN DOOR

NOTE: “open Doors represent OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY! With every OPEN DOOR and OPPORTUNITY FOR MINISTRY there will be a certain amount of opposition. EXPECT IT!

- A. The Opportunities for Ministry are Great
 - 1. For The Apostle Paul
 - a. To go to the Gentiles – Acts 9:15; Acts 14:27
 - b. To plant churches (In the case of this text – Ephesus)
 - 2. For Us Today
 - a. Individually – God has something for EACH OF US to do.
 - b. Local Church – God has something for EACH CHURCH to do.
- B. The Opportunities for Ministry are Effectual
 - 1. For the Apostle Paul
 - a. He saw people saved
 - b. He saw Churches planted
 - c. He wrote Epistles (13 or 14 {Hebrews})
 - 2. For Us Today
 - a. Individually
 - 1) What has God done through you?
 - 2) What IS God doing through you?
 - (Name your ministry and what God is doing through it now)
 - 3) Note 1 Corinthians 15:58
 - b. Local Church
 - 1) God has used FBC in the Community
 - 2) We must remember our Secure Mission
 - Matthew 16:18
 - 1 Timothy 3:15

ILLUSTRATION:

II. THE MANY ADVERSARIES

NOTE: In this text Paul has reference to the DEMONIC OPPOSITION he faced in Ephesus as recorded in Acts 19:13.

- A. What Is an Adversary?
 - An opponent, an enemy, one who withstands.
- B. Who Are our Adversaries?
 - 1. Anyone around us who will oppose the message of the Gospel.
 - 2. Anyone around us who will discourage our ministry (A Believer)
 - a. A Spiritually immature Believer

- b. A Worldly Believer
- c. A “Diotrephes” Believer who wants Preminence (3 John)
- 3. Satan is our Chief Adversary – 1 Peter 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:18
- 4. Our Personal Adversaries – Conditions within our own lives that prevent our ministry from flourishing.
 - a. The Lack of Faith
 - b. The Lack of Vision
 - c. The Lack of Commitment
 - d. The Lack of Obedience to the Word
 - e. The Lack of Determination

ILLUSTRATION:

LESSON: The Greater the Opportunity, the Greater the Opposition. But don't give up! The best is yet to come! Remember Galatians 6:9

APPLICATION:

- 1) Thank God for the Open Doors of Opportunity
- 2) Confirm the Will of God in the Open Doors of Opportunity
- 3) Expect Adversaries Regularly
- 4) Be in the Word of God Regularly
- 5) Keep your eyes on the Lord
- 6) Determine not to let the Adversary hinder your ministry
- 7) Turn your Adversaries over to the Lord