

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE CLUB

WITH TEACHING COMMENTARY BY NICK BOORK

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August 25 – 1 Corinthians 16:1-24

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: ²On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. ³And when I come, whomever you approve by *your* letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me. ⁵Now I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia (for I am passing through Macedonia). ⁶And it may be that I will remain, or even spend the winter with you, that you may send me on my journey, wherever I go. ⁷For I do not wish to see you now on the way; but I hope to stay a while with you, if the Lord permits.

⁸But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. ⁹For a great and effective door has opened to me, and *there are* many adversaries. ¹⁰And if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. ¹¹Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren. ¹²Now concerning *our* brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to come to you with the brethren, but he was quite unwilling to come at this time; however, he will come when he has a convenient time. ¹³Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. ¹⁴Let all *that you do* be done with love. ¹⁵I urge you, brethren—you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and *that* they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints—¹⁶that you also submit to such, and to everyone who works and labors with *us*. ¹⁷I am glad about the coming of Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, for what was lacking on your part they supplied. ¹⁸For they refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore acknowledge such men.

¹⁹The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house. ²⁰All the brethren greet you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. ²¹The salutation with my own hand—Paul's. ²²If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come! ²³The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. ²⁴My love *be* with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen.

OKAY, HERE'S MY TEACHING COMMENTARY

Paul says that a great door for effective ministry had been opened to him and there were many adversaries. Today we are going to study what the Scriptures have to say about God opening and closing doors for us his servants. This saying is found in several places in the Bible. Jesus said in Revelation 3:7-8 "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens": ⁸"I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door,

and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. The message of Jesus to this church was that he opened a door for effective ministry because these believers were faithful to the word of God and they did not deny his name. It appears to me that when the Lord opens a door for one of his servants or in this case for a local church, it may be an indication that God is pleased and is promoting for greater service.

Paul asks for specific prayer that God would open a door to preach the gospel and do so with boldness. Colossians 4:2-4 Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; ³ meanwhile praying also for us, **that God would open to us a door for the word**, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains, ⁴ that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak. Remember what Jesus said in relation to knocking on the door in prayer? He said knock and the door will be opened. I believe this means that we are to seek God in prayer petitioning him for opportunities to share the gospel that become effective. In other words asking God to open doors in the minds and hearts of people to be receptive to the message of Christ. Because the work of the ministry is spiritual we absolutely need the Holy Spirit to do the work of revelation and conviction to bring people to repentance causing them to be born again in Christ. This element of prayer runs throughout all of Paul's letters as he prayed fervently for his converts to grow up into the maturity of Jesus Christ. Paul also declared to the church how God opened the door for him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. Acts 14:27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the **door** of faith to the Gentiles.

One way that God opens doors for us is that he speaks to others about having us come and minister to them. This is what happened when Cornelius had a vision in prayer of an angel telling him to send men to look for the apostle Peter. Peter also had a vision during which the same men came and knocked at the door where he was staying asking for him in particular. When Peter went to Cornelius home he found a large gathering ready to listen to his message. As he preached they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to magnify God speaking in tongues! There was no doubt that God had opened this door for Peter to go through and preach bringing the gospel to the Gentiles.

Another example of God opening a door is with Apollo's. Acts 18:27-28 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; ²⁸ for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ. God put the desire into the heart of Apollo's to visit the believers in Achaia. When they heard that he wanted to come and teach they invited him to come which was his open door! And the fruit of his ministry there was very positive because he greatly helped the believers and he proved from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ the Son of God. So Apollo's was able to use his teaching gift in a powerful way and that is a great feeling for any minister of Christ especially when those you are teaching are really hungry and there is a very positive response to your ministry. When God opens the door you can be surprised at what the Lord will do, to him be all the glory!

Paul received divine guidance as God directed his ministry. He wanted to preach in some places but the Holy Spirit did not allow him and closed the doors. Acts 16:6-7 "...They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. ⁷After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them." However in the night Paul had a vision of a man over in Macedonia saying come over and help us. Paul woke up and told his entire team to pack up and let's go because the Lord has open the door for us to go to Macedonia and preach. Well, when he got there things were slow at first but then he ended up casting a demon out of a young girl that was used to tell fortunes. This got him and Silas beaten and thrown into prison. Can you imagine what Silas was thinking going through this ordeal? He may have been thinking Paul you totally missed God. You just ate too much pizza last night and had that weird dream. However as they began to sing songs and praise the Lord at midnight God sent an earthquake and opened all the doors of every prisoner. Paul prevented the keeper of the jail from committing suicide and was able to lead him to faith in Christ and baptized him in his household that night.

Talk about an open door with many adversaries this was one and it was no uncommon thing for the apostle Paul to deal with great resistance and persecution in the middle of very effective ministry leading people to salvation and planting new churches. It's not like the devil is happy when a man of God comes to town and begins to destroy his works. This is why Jesus said that upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. You see we are advancing with the gospel to break down the gates of hell and set people free in Jesus name! So, after you believe that God has opened a door for you don't be surprised when all hell breaks loose against you! Just because you encounter all kinds of resistance, trials, needs, problems, demons and perils among false brothers it does not necessarily mean that you are out of the will of God but on the contrary may be a great indicator that you are right in the middle of the will of God. Of course discernment is necessary! My point is when God opens the door it may come with many adversaries but the fruit is worth the price when God opens a door and you go through it.

WHAT'S THE BOTTOM LINE?

- 1) Jesus has all authority to open and close doors for his servants.
- 2) New doors opening can be God's way of promoting for greater service
- 3) It is important to pray and ask the Lord to open the right doors for you and close the doors he does not want you to go through.
- 4) The Holy Spirit can put a desire in your heart to minister to people and then God can open the door as he did for Apollo's.

- 5) When God opens the door for effective ministry it may come with a price tag of many adversaries but resistance does not necessarily mean you are out of the will of God.

PRAYER TO APPLY THE WORD OF GOD TO OUR LIVES



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