

Open Door Opportunities

Scripture: 1st Corinthians 16:5-12

Our gospel meeting is now only 3 weeks away.

During this gospel meeting, we will have many special *opportunities*.

First, we will have the opportunity to hear brothers Omari French & Jeff Walker from the Uptown church of Christ.

Second, we will have the opportunity of hearing 3 special lessons in securing our eternal destiny.

Thinking of these opportunities, the main text for our lesson today is 1st Corinthians 16:9.

For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Throughout the Bible, the figure of *an open door* is used to refer to *opportunities* that are given.

So then, to emphasize the opportunities that our upcoming gospel meeting will afford us, let us examine the effectiveness of an opened door.

I. OPEN DOORS OF SERVICE

Our gospel meeting will give us *open doors of service*.

The term “open door” is found in Revelation 3:8, where Christ commends the church at Philadelphia.

“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.”

They had only “a little strength” or a little ability, but they had *used* it, and the result was that the Lord had given them even greater *opportunities to serve*.

The opportunity to *work* is one of our greatest *blessings* in the kingdom of God!

One of the best ways in the world to keep a child of God faithful is to obey passages like these:

“For we are God’s *fellow-workers*: . . .” (1 Corinthians 3:9);

“*Work* out your own salvation with fear and trembling”

(Philippians 2:12);

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, *always abounding in the work of the Lord*, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58);

So then our gospel meeting has value in that it provides opportunities to *serve* and *work*.

A few of those opportunities are as follows:

- 1) Visiting people
- 2) Holding home bible studies
- 3) Helping in passing out invitations
- 4) Bringing people to hear the preaching

Therefore,

A gospel meeting is an opportunity for members to work for the Lord.

II. OPEN DOORS OF TEACHING AND PREACHING

Our gospel meeting will give us *open doors* of *teaching* and *preaching*!

The apostle Paul prayed for such an open door in Colossians 4:3: “Withal praying for us also, that God may *open* unto us a *door for the Word*, to speak the mystery of Christ, . . .”

And when he came to Troas, he said that such a door was opened: “When I came to Troas to *preach* Christ’s gospel, and a *door was opened* unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit” (2 Corinthians 2:12-13)

Open doors of preaching and teaching are blessings indeed!

But, it is possible that we do not appreciate fully the *openness* with which we can have a gospel meeting and invite others.

However, an opportunity like this must be *used*.

How?

We have *two* great open doors of teaching and preaching in connection with our gospel meeting:
Public and *private* teaching.

Paul said:

“I . . . have taught you *publicly*, and *from house to house*” (Acts 20:20)

We must use *private* teaching in preparation for the gospel meeting.

We can also be getting people enrolled in our correspondence course, using tracts, talking to loved ones about their souls, *using every* means to tell people the simple gospel story.

Again, we must *use* the open door of *public* teaching after the gospel meeting begins.

We *can* bring people to the gospel meeting if we begin *now* to invite them.

And we *must* bring people or we will have “closed the door” on the effectiveness of our gospel meeting.

III. OPEN DOORS OF REACHING THE LOST

Our gospel meeting will *give us open doors of reaching the lost*.

We used 1 Corinthians 16:9 as our main text.

Now, let us reread it, beginning with verse 8:

“But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For *a great door and effectual is opened unto me.*”

In these verses, Paul is referring to the receptiveness of those in that area.

Evidently, the Ephesians were tired of their paganism, so when the gospel was preached to them, they received it with open arms.

And because of their receptivity, Paul stayed with them two years, teaching in the school of Tyrannus.

Thus we read that

“this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

But the greatest proof of their receptivity is the *change* that took place in their lives.

In verse 19 of the same chapter we read:

“And not a few of them that practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all, and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver”
(Acts 19:19).

Worth in today’s currency: \$6.4M

They literally “burned their bridges behind them” in becoming Christians.

And you know what,
There are people just like that where we live:
people who are dissatisfied with denominationalism,
people who are looking for something better.

With the demographics of our area and the diversity of our city,
there are probably *hundreds* who are looking for something better.

And our gospel meeting can give us an open door to reach these people!

But again, we must *use* this opportunity.

We must not conclude that any person “is not interested” *before we ask him/her*.

We must invite *all* we meet -- for only God Himself knows the hearts of people and whether they will be receptive or not.

And if we *use* this “open door” by inviting, bringing, and filling the building each evening, *we will reach the lost!*

IV. OPEN DOORS OF SALVATION

Our gospel meeting will also provide *open doors of salvation*.

The term “open door” is used in at least one more sense in the Scriptures.

After the gospel had been preached to the Gentiles, the evangelists discussed how “the door” had been “opened” to them:

“And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had *opened a door of faith* unto the Gentiles” (Acts 14:27)

Jesus Christ opened the door of salvation to *all* men and it has never been closed since!

The point is this:

Let us see the opportunity of saving the lost!

Let us see that the *main purpose* of this gospel meeting is to *save souls*—and that if we will get people and the gospel together, souls will be saved!

Now, let us have:

A list of ways we can take advantage of this open door:

Determine to bring at least one person to every service!

If possible, try to bring the same one to every service.

Don't just invite, but bring.

Offer to go by and pick them up.

Chances are they will *want* to return night after night.

Begin now to pray for these.

Pray for them daily.

Pray for them by name.

Ask others to pray for them. Prayer is powerful!

Put the meeting first that week.

Cancel all other engagements.

Attend every service.

There is no other way that we can show others that this is truly the most important thing in the world to us.

CONCLUSION

But there is one more thing that we need to notice about our main text: “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, *and there are many adversaries*” (1 Corinthians 16:9).

With an “open door” come adversaries.
(challenges/hindrances/obstacles)

At Ephesus, where Paul found the open door, he had to face *paganism*, for they were worshipers of Diana (Acts 19:35).

And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: “Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Zeus?”

In the same way, we have to face the *world*.

Because,
Denominationalism and false teaching is still a hindrance even up to this day.

But Paul also had another adversary: *weak brethren*.

Because:
Our greatest adversaries in this coming gospel meeting will be ourselves.

We will determine the success or failure of this gospel meeting by whether or not *we* take advantage of the opportunities that will be ours!