

## ***Get your Uniform and Be Ready to Preach the Gospel***

***“31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee. 32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. 33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”***  
(Luke 13:31-33 KJV)

Waiting for the proper and suitable moment to utter the Word of God to a specific person, and the message of salvation to the people around us is wisdom. But waiting for the full freedom to preach the good news is waiting in vain. Some are waiting for the Bible to be freely sold in the market in some restricted places, some are waiting to the rules to be changed, and some are waiting for the authorities to be more relaxed and then they will preach the Gospel. Some are waiting to move to another places and countries to preach the Word of God. Some are waiting to marry first, and others are excusing by being married and have children and responsibilities. Some are waiting for a new job, or the boss to be changed. Waiting...waiting...waiting then I will preach the Gospel!

Wake up, the threats and fears around us are the same as were around Jesus. He was preaching the Kingdom of God by the periscope of the narrow door as He declared, ***“24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.”*** (Luke 13:24 KJV) To enter at the narrow gate you should live a righteous life away from sin. And that was not suitable for the Pharisees, so they threatened Him and asked Him to move into another place. ***“31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.”*** (Luke 13:31 KJV) But who was behind those Pharisees? The answer is Satan and demons; **the last two characters may still approach us today to put fears in our hearts to stop us from doing the will of God.**

**The Word of God is the light. But when and where that light ought to be preached? The answer, whenever there is darkness there is need for the light.** In fact, Jesus came down from Heaven because there was darkness. And whenever there is darkness, there are dangers, adversaries, persecutions, foxes and Herods! And the core of them all is the prince of darkness, Satan. Preaching the Word of God and the will of God is against the realm of darkness. **And Satan will press on you either indirectly; by affecting your finances, job, family, health, life, etc., and by creating to you social, language and cultural barriers trying to hinder you from preaching the Word of God. Or affecting you directly; by putting fears in your heart, so be aware of that, or persecuting you by the authorities and antichrists, and when he is fed up from you he will tell you ‘Herod is searching for you, Herod wants to kill you!’**

**In any place in the world Satan will not allow you to preach except in the moon as long as no human can live there. And clearly from the above it is not only the usual but the normal to face difficulties and adventures in preaching the good news, and eventually you will meet those foxes during your journey with the Lord. “32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.”** (Luke 13:32 KJV) From the aforementioned passage of the Bible we can conclude

the direct actual benefits that outweigh the dangers and convince us to move toward the field to preach the gospel, and these are:

**1. Driving out Demons:** People are tormented by many psychosomatic illnesses like migraine, tension headache, joints and muscles pain, backaches, anxiety, depression, sadness, sorrows, etc., and these all with full respect to the medical knowledge, are the arrows of the evil one. The devil showers us with the same flaming arrows but we are immune to it by our faith in Christ Jesus. **By preaching the good news you will bring the joy to the hearts of those souls, and the flaming arrows of all the above sicknesses will be extinguished by the new shield of faith.** (How I love to share the following verse with you to let you know what is in my heart and to understand what was said), ***“16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”*** (Ephesians 6:16 KJV)

**2. Healing the sick:** When God’s Word is preached, there is always healing from many organic illnesses like blindness, deafness, paralysis, ulcers, tumors, etc. When you preach the good news to a sick person, like the one who has cancer in his body or any other serious illnesses, his soul rejoices with the salvation, and he will become indifference to all infirmities. And he will not be dismayed by death, for we can assure him by these words *‘My friend, your redemption has come’*. **For all sickness are temporary events destined to be removed at the resurrection.**

**3. Reduction in the demonic realm:** **One person accepting the Lord may bring salvation to his family, his people, his nation, and the Word of God will grow like a tree. And with the growing of the Word of God, righteousness will come, sinners will repent, crimes will be reduced. The people, the society and the city or the country whom we are in will be changed to a better state.** For example, one harlot who repented may open her house to a Bible study. A homosexual when he repents may open his house to a prayer meeting. **This is the policy of ‘disarming the devil’.**

**4. Reach the goal of salvation to the humankind:** Honestly speaking the devil is weak but active. **If we will not diligently work today, tomorrow or the next day, and will remain lukewarm we will not reach the goal. And keeping silent will not also satisfy Satan with what he has, but will continuously threaten us to control the remaining freedom that we have, the freedom to preach.**

Jesus said in reply to the threat that came against Him, ***“33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”*** (Luke 13:33 KJV) Jesus in spite of all what was around Him, He was pressing toward His goal because he knew His destiny, ***“for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.”*** We know very well our destiny, the eternal life, we must keep going toward the goal, and we should remove the fears from our hearts for His promise is still standing. Listen to the Savior’s Word in **Matthew 28:20**, ***“and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”***

Speaking more about evangelism let us read the following passage from the life of Apostle Paul, ***“5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia. 6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go. 7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I***

*trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit. 8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. 9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.” (1 Corinthians 16:5-9 KJV)*

Ephesus is a city in the province of Asia Minor (today Turkey) over the Mediterranean Sea. A city was inhabited by few Jews and more of pagan Greeks. Here we will find the Jewish synagogue, and the main temple of the goddess Diana which brought worshippers from all over the world and contributed to the city’s financial prosperity. Paul reached this city Ephesus in his third missionary journey. He arrived to this city by travelling through the land, and there he met few of the disciples whom he baptized by water and whom God baptized by the Holy Spirit when Paul laid hands on them and planted with them the church in Ephesus, **“I And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.” (Acts 19:1-7 KJV)** Paul had in his heart the great goal in preaching the Word of God on travelling to Ephesus. When he arrived there the Word of God spread but he faced high opposition to preach the truth; to start with, from the obstinate Jews, **“8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. 10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. 11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. 13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the LORD Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. 19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.” (Acts 19:8-20 KJV)** After this persecution Paul suffered the persecution from the local Greeks because they were running the business of shrine-making to the goddess Diana, the business that suffered the threat of collapse upon the spread of the gospel in Ephesus by Apostle Paul and the church with him, **“23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen; 25 Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation,**

**and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. 26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: 27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. 28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 29 And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul’s companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.” (Acts 19:23-29 KJV)** So the above was the situation around Paul whom at this stage was writing the letter to the Corinthians.

From **1 Corinthians 16:5-9** we can point out certain practical points about evangelism and how to reach new people for Christ. Evangelism should have a strategy and principles we need to observe in choosing the places that God is calling us to reach out. We should be led by the Holy Spirit of God to do the things that He is leading us to do. In analyzing that passage we can come out with the following fact that reflects Paul’s thoughts, plans, attitudes and actions as He was directed by God:

**1. Concentration on the goal: “But I will tarry at Ephesus ....” (1 Corinthians 16:8 KJV)** Paul’s desire was to visit the church in Corinth, but he suppressed this desire and fixed his effort on **“Ephesus”**, and on the noble goal he came to achieve there. Paul stayed in Corinth for 18 months and after he left the church he was following them through letters. The meaning of the word **‘Corinth’** is **‘satiated’**, which means also **‘full and satisfied’**. Paul did all he could to do to the Corinthians church and we know that they were not much satisfied with Paul’s labor for them. Paul was still thinking of them and to visit them, but they were full and satisfied, and if they will not be repenting by themselves then nothing can be done further. **In evangelism we should understand that certain people whom we have done our part and they are not satisfied we should no more give our attention to them.** In regard to the Corinthians Paul wrote to them that he will visit and stay with them if God would permit him, **“7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.” (1 Corinthian 16:7 KJV)** Paul’s mind was clear that the Lord should work now on the Corinthians and he (Paul) should concentrate on the city of Ephesus and the church there. The meaning of Ephesus is **‘permitted’**, which has also the following meaning, **‘legal’**, **‘allowed’**, **‘endorsed’** or **‘officially recognized’**. So Paul realized that Ephesus was God’s choice and target for him to stay at that moment to evangelize and spread the Word of God. This point is a very important point in evangelism; we need to grasp where God wants us to concentrate, which place and to which people, so that our effort will bear the fruit.

**2. Patience: “8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.” (1 Corinthians 16:8 KJV)** Paul stayed long at Ephesus, **“10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.” (Acts 19:10 KJV)** Paul stayed until Pentecost. The feast of Pentecost was for the Jews but for Christians it is a celebration commemorating the pouring of the Holy Spirit over the disciples. And, figuratively speaking, I will stay until Pentecost, or until the appearing of the Holy Spirit on the reality state that mark the victory of any spiritually inspired Lord’s mission. So, that was what really happened in Ephesus, **“11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:**

**12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.” (Acts 19:11-12 KJV)**

**3. Appreciation for the great task God delegated to you: “9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me,” (1 Corinthians 16:9 KJV)** Paul comprehended the honor that God gave him when he found himself in a city with a strong resistance to the Lord’s message. The great door of resistance in the eyes of Paul was recognized as a blessing from God. **In the same way, can you grasp the resistance that you are facing today is a sign that you are at the right place to spread God’s Word.**

**4. Confidence: “and there are many adversaries.” (1 Corinthians 16:9 KJV)** Paul was confident about the certainty of the nature of his mission to the Ephesians. Paul in spite of the great opposition this did not shake him and did not make him doubt about the will of God for his presence in Ephesus and for what God wanted him to do there. Paul fought wild beasts at Ephesus as the following verse informs us but he did not quit, **“32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.” (1 Corinthians 15:32 KJV)** **You should have the same thought and understanding; your mission will have its value with such resistance and opposition.**

**5. The need for plenty efforts: “9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me,” (1 Corinthians 16:9 KJV)** In response to above situation in Ephesus there were many things needed to be done and hard work required to pave the way towards the victory. **You should understand and accept that effective and hard work is needed to achieve the victory.**

**6. The spirit to conquer and the foreseen victory:** In spite of many Jews and Greeks who opposed him he found in them the target to teach himself and to develop the spirit to overcome in reaching his goal, the Ephesians. Finally as we know that the Lord did miracles and wonders that helped Paul in his mission. **“17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.” (Acts 19:17 KJV)** **You should behave and act in the same way that even you are facing resistance but you are called to reach certain people who are in need of the gospel of Jesus and for the Word of God.**

**My Dear and Beloved:** There is a saying in the football game, ‘*the best way to defend is to attack*’. Jesus exactly in his life on earth did the same. Brethren, this is the right place; it is now the time, for the Lord is with us. And this is the time to give a smart reply to the contemporary foxes, those who oppose us and the message we preach, not by any word but by preaching the Word of God. **So get up, get your uniform and be ready. See the Lord reigns and let the earth rejoice. You are at the great door. Let much opposition bless you. You need to work hard in your ministry, for you are living in contemporary Ephesus. What God wants to tell you from this message is that as Jesus and Paul stayed in the place that God wanted them and did not leave and go or left early to another city, you need to stay where you are to continue the work that God started in you. Therefore, “13 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” (1 Corinthians 16:13 KJV)** Let us pray . . . .

**My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Thank you*

*for your Word that brings encouragement and imparts to me more faith and more understanding of how I serve you and spread your Word in the place that you had placed me in. Lord I thank you for your Word that caused me to repent. Lord thank you for all the teachings, the corrections, the rebukes and the admonishments we received in this message.*

*Now confess and renounce all your sins. Confess and renounce your fear of man and your lack of full trust in God. Confess and renounce your laziness and your non willingness to work hard in order to achieve the goals that God wants you to achieve in your life. Confess and renounce your non willingness to get persecuted and suffer for Christ. Confess and renounce your non willingness to evangelize and spread the good news of Jesus. Lord forgive me I repent of the following sins \_\_\_\_\_.*

*Lord I commit myself to go and serve you and do the work that you had prepared in advance for me to do. Lord equip me and enable me to preach your Word, to heal the sick and to drive out demons. Lord watch over me and guard my life. Lord give me wisdom and patience to wait upon you and be confidence to trust you fully. Lord do miracles and healings in my ministry so the people will believe in you that you are the true God and I am your servant. Lord refill me with the Holy Spirit and give me the gift of evangelism to go and preach the good news to others and to make disciples. Lord give me good health, strength and provide for me to continue to serve you. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*

*Lord I pray for my Brothers and my Sisters who committed their lives to go and evangelize, Lord baptize them with the Holy Ghost, and give them the spiritual gifts to go and spread your Word. Lord give them boldness to stand firm and to abide in your Word and to do your will in full. Lord I pray that you will protect them and provide all their needs and do marvelous miracles in their lives and in their ministries.*

*Lord bless us as your church, and enable us Lord to reach new people, new families, new villages, and new areas with the gospel, impacting new cities, countries and nations with the gospel of Jesus. Lord enables us to preach boldly your Word and to do the very thing that you want us to do. We come against all the work of the devil and the spirit of fear and we rebuke them and cast them out from among us in the name of Jesus. Lord enable us to plant new Bible studies and more congregations for the church in various places. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.’ Lord take the message and spread it to reach the rest of the church congregations, workers, members and the lost souls. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.*

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