

OPPORTUNITIES, OPPORTUNITY

Lamech (a descendant of Cain) didn't view the mercy that God had upon Cain as an **opportunity** to repent. Instead he saw it as a chance to kill more people.

- **Genesis 4:23-24:** "And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

When Joseph's brothers met him in Egypt, he created a situation where they had an **opportunity** to betray Benjamin, just as they had once betrayed him.

- **Genesis 44:2, 17:** "And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken. ... And he said, God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father."

When the king of Egypt asked the midwives why they weren't killing the male Hebrew babies, they deceived Pharaoh by saying the babies were born before they arrived and therefore they had no **opportunity** to do anything.

- **Exodus 1:19:** "And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them."

There are times when God gives people an **opportunity** to repent and prevent a judgment from coming (by giving them time to do what He commanded). (In this case, the plague of flies wasn't going to come upon Egypt until the following day.)

- **Exodus 8:21, 23:** "Else, if thou wilt not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thy houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. ... And I will put a division between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be."

The reason Joshua didn't want Israel to immediately pursue the kings of the Amorites was because God had delivered their armies into the hands of the Israelites, and he didn't want to miss that **opportunity** to defeat them. (Defeating those armies was a bigger priority than defeating five kings who had been sealed in a cave.)

- **Joshua 10:17-19:** "And it was told Joshua, saying, The five kings are found hid in a cave at Makkedah. And Joshua said, Roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, and set men by it for to keep them: And stay ye not, but pursue after your enemies, and smite the hindmost of them; suffer them not to enter into their cities: for the LORD your God hath delivered them into your hand."

The Israelites had an **opportunity** to drive out the Canaanites, but they didn't take it. (This terrible decision caused them grief for centuries.)

- **Joshua 17:13:** "Yet it came to pass, when the children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to

tribute, but did not utterly drive them out."

The reason Samson married a Philistine woman was to find an occasion to attack the Philistines. When his wife was given to someone else, he took that as the **opportunity** he had been looking for.

- **Judges 14:4:** "But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the LORD, that he sought an occasion against the Philistines: for at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel."
- **Judges 15:2-3:** "And her father said, I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: is not her younger sister fairer than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her. And Samson said concerning them, Now shall I be more blameless than the Philistines, though I do them a displeasure."

Samuel told the Israelites that this was their **opportunity** to bring accusations against him before God. (However, he wasn't guilty of anything.)

- **1 Samuel 12:3:** "Behold, here I am: witness against me before the LORD, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you."

The three oldest sons of Jesse didn't fight Goliath (even though they had the **opportunity** to do so).

- **1 Samuel 17:13, 16:** "And the three eldest sons of Jesse

went and followed Saul to the battle: and the names of his three sons that went to the battle were Eliab the firstborn, and next unto him Abinadab, and the third Shammah. ... And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days."

Eliab (who didn't fight Goliath, even though he had the **opportunity** to do so) was angry with his brother David for being willing to fight him.

- **1 Samuel 17:26, 28:** "And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? ... And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men; and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle."

Saul wasn't grateful that David had just saved the town of Keilah from the Philistines. Instead he decided to use that as an **opportunity** to kill him.

- **1 Samuel 23:5, 7:** "So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah. ... And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars."

When God gave Saul into David's hand, David wasted the **opportunity**. He could have ended Saul's wicked and bloody reign right there, but instead he let him go (which led to terrible suffering). David did this even though God had rejected Saul and made him the rightful anointed king of Israel.

- **1 Samuel 24:4, 7:** "And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. ... So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way."

When David confronted Saul the second time, David prayed that his life would be precious in God's sight. (Yet God gave David multiple **opportunities** to bring Saul to justice for all the innocent blood he had shed, and David rejected each opportunity. Even though the Mosaic Law required murderers to be put to death, David consistently refused to do that his entire life.)

- **1 Samuel 26:24:** "And, behold, as thy life was much set by this day in mine eyes, so let my life be much set by in the eyes of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all tribulation."

Abijah managed to conquer Bethel, the city that had one of Jeroboam's golden calves. However, he didn't destroy that golden calf (even though he had the **opportunity** to do so.)

- **2 Chronicles 13:19:** "And Abijah pursued after Jeroboam, and took cities from him, Bethel with the towns thereof, and Jeshanah with the towns thereof, and Ephraim with the towns thereof."

Job's sufferings gave his enemies an **opportunity** to rise up against him.

- **Job 16:9:** "He teareth me in his wrath, who hateth me: he gnasheth upon me with his teeth; mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me."

Solomon said that when the immoral woman's husband was gone, she took that as an **opportunity** to commit adultery.

- **Proverbs 7:18-19:** "'Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey:"

A virtuous woman looks for **opportunities** to help her household. This includes buying land, planting crops, and increasing her family's wealth.

- **Proverbs 31:16:** "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard."

God warned the Jews in advance about the terrible things that were going to happen to Judah and Jerusalem. (He gave them an **opportunity** to repent, and but they didn't.)

- **Isaiah 3:25-26:** "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground."

When the Babylonians arrived, Hezekiah took advantage of that **opportunity** to try to impress them with his wealth (instead of talking to them about the greatness of God).

- **Isaiah 39:1-2:** "At that time Merodachbaladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a present to Hezekiah: for he had heard that he had been sick, and was recovered. And Hezekiah was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not."

God told Ezekiel that there was still an **opportunity** for the Jews to turn from their sins and be saved. (However, they refused.)

- **Ezekiel 18:32:** "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."

God warned of His judgments before they came and told the Jews that they wouldn't be able to endure them. (He gave them an **opportunity** to repent, but they didn't.)

- **Ezekiel 22:14:** "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it."

Even though God was angry with the Jews for their idolatry, He was also angry at the nations that took the **opportunity** to

attack and kill the Jews. (God was going to punish the Philistines for adding to the suffering of the Jews.)

- **Ezekiel 25:15-16:** "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will stretch out mine hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast."

The reason God tells people that they're wicked and His judgment is coming against them was so they could repent and be saved. He's giving them an **opportunity** to be delivered from the wrath to come.

- **Ezekiel 33:8:** "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand."

When Daniel spoke to Belshazzar, he used the **opportunity** to glorify God.

- **Daniel 5:18:** "O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour:"

When God punished the Jews for their idolatry, He became angry when other nations rejoiced over it and took the **opportunity** to make things worse for the Jews.

- **Obadiah 1:13-14:** "Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea,

thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity; Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress."

Gentiles have been given an **opportunity** to escape the tribulation period and be hidden during that time by repenting before the Lord returns. (This is a reference to the rapture.)

- **Zephaniah 2:2-3:** "Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you. Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger."

When Jesus saw a great multitude of people, He took the **opportunity** to teach them.

- **Matthew 5:1-2:** "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,"

When Jesus shared a meal with publicans and sinners, He used that **opportunity** to call them to repent.

- **Matthew 9:11-13:** "And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with

publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

- **Luke 5:30-32:** "But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Jesus didn't tell His disciples to not pluck corn on the Sabbath to avoid a confrontation with the Pharisees. Instead He allowed it and used it as an **opportunity** to confront the Pharisees.

- **Matthew 12:1-2, 7:** "At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. ... But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless."

Jesus could have avoided healing people on the Sabbath, but He didn't. Instead He publicly healed on the Sabbath in front of people who believed that it was wrong, and used it as an **opportunity** to correct them.

- **Matthew 12:10, 12:** "And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying,

Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. ... How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days."

When the daughter of Herodias was told to ask for anything she wanted, she used that **opportunity** to execute a prophet of God.

- **Matthew 14:7-8:** "Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger."
- **Mark 6:23-24:** "And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist."

Jesus said that since He was only around for a short time, it was better to honor Him than the poor. Once He was gone, the **opportunity** to honor Him in that manner would be gone as well. (That's why it was better for the woman to use the expensive ointment to honor Jesus than to sell it and give the proceeds to the poor.)

- **Matthew 26:10-11:** "When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always."
- **Mark 14:6-7:** "And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye

may do them good: but me ye have not always."

Judas only looked for an **opportunity** to betray Jesus after the chief priests agreed to give him 30 pieces of silver for doing so.

- **Matthew 26:14-16:** "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him."
- **Mark 14:10-11:** "And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them. And when they heard it, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him."
- **Luke 22:4-6:** "And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude."

The disciples of Jesus missed their **opportunity** to watch and pray with Him. (They slept through it.)

- **Matthew 26:43, 45:** "And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. ... Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."
- **Mark 14:40-41:** "And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist

they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

In the parable of the vineyard, the owner kept giving the people who leased his vineyard an **opportunity** to repent and pay what they owed, even though doing so cost the life of his faithful servants.

- **Mark 12:2, 5:** "And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. ... And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some."

The multitude was given the **opportunity** to free Jesus. (However, they chose to free Barabbas instead.)

- **Mark 15:9, 11:** "But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? ... But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them."

In order for us to be given the **opportunity** that we desire, we must knock on the door. (God wants us to take action, not sit quietly and do nothing.)

- **Luke 11:9:** "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

If we knock on doors and pursue **opportunities**, we won't go away empty handed. (God rewards those who take action instead of sitting quietly and doing nothing.)

- **Luke 11:10:** "For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Jesus had **opportunities** to teach that His mother was the queen of Heaven, or that people should look to her to find favor with God. However, He never did that. Instead He stopped people from glorifying her and commanded them to obey God instead.

- **Luke 11:27-28:** "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

When Jesus went over to the house of a Pharisee for dinner, He used that **opportunity** to rebuke him for his sin.

- **Luke 11:37, 39:** "And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat. ... And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness."

We must not use the delay in the return of Jesus as an **opportunity** to sin.

- **Luke 12:45-46:** "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers."

The reason we should seek to take the humblest seat when invited to events is so the person who invited us can have the **opportunity** to move us to a more honorable place.

- **Luke 14:10:** "But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee."

When Jesus shared a meal with someone, He took that **opportunity** to preach the truth to them.

- **Luke 14:15-16:** "And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:"

When the crowd lamented Jesus as He was led away to be crucified, He took that **opportunity** to teach that terrible times were coming.

- **Luke 23:28-29:** "But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for

yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck."

When Jesus met a Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, He immediately started a conversation with her about salvation. (In other words, he used that **opportunity** to preach to her.)

- **John 4:7, 10:** "There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. ... Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

There won't always be an **opportunity** to do the works of God. At some point the opportunity will end.

- **John 9:4:** "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the religious leaders responded by deciding to put Him to death. From that moment forward they looked for an **opportunity** to kill Him.

- **John 11:47, 53:** "Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. ... Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death."

Peter used the healing of the lame man as an **opportunity** to preach Jesus.

- **Acts 3:12-13:** "And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go."

When Paul was in Philippi and went to the river on the Sabbath, he took that **opportunity** to preach the gospel to the women who had gathered there.

- **Acts 16:13-14:** "And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spoke unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

The masters of the woman who had been possessed with a spirit of divination realized since the demon had been cast out, their **opportunity** to make money with her ability was gone.

- **Acts 16:18-19:** "And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul

and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers,"

The Jews who swore to kill Paul asked the Jewish leaders to send word to the chief captain to bring Paul down tomorrow under a pretext, so that they would have an **opportunity** to kill him.

- **Acts 23:14-15:** "And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him."

Those who ignore God's goodness and continue to sin are despising the riches of His goodness. They're despising Him, who has graciously given them an **opportunity** to repent of their wickedness.

- **Romans 2:4:** "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Faith can only exist *before* the thing comes to pass. Once we've seen it, the **opportunity** to have faith is over.

- **Romans 8:24-25:** "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then

do we with patience wait for it."

It's important for married couples to regularly have sex because that reduces the devil's **opportunity** to tempt them to sin.

- **1 Corinthians 7:5:** "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency."

It's sinful to get drunk during communion. Those who use communion as an **opportunity** to get drunk are doing something very wrong.

- **1 Corinthians 11:17, 21:** "Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. ... For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken."

The church has a variety of needs, which means there's a variety of service **opportunities**.

- **1 Corinthians 12:5-6:** "And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."

Paul didn't want to leave Ephesus while he had a great **opportunity** to preach the gospel.

- **1 Corinthians 16:8-9:** "But I will tarry at Ephesus until

Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

If we don't forgive those who have repented then we're harming ourselves (because we're giving the devil an **opportunity**).

- **2 Corinthians 2:10-11:** "To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

There may be good reasons to not take advantage of an **opportunity**. (There were some opportunities that Paul didn't take.)

- **2 Corinthians 2:12-13:** "Furthermore, 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, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia."

Paul considered fellowship so important that he left an **opportunity** to preach the gospel because Titus wasn't there. He told this story to teach the Corinthian church that fellowship is important, and they should forgive the person who had repented and bring him back into the church.

- **2 Corinthians 2:12-13:** "Furthermore, 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, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them,

I went from thence into Macedonia."

God is the one who gives us the **opportunities** that we have.

- **2 Corinthians 4:1:** "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;"

Paul said he wasn't going to boast about himself. Instead he was going to give the Corinthians an **opportunity** to "glory on our behalf".

- **2 Corinthians 5:12:** "For we commend not ourselves again unto you, but give you occasion to glory on our behalf, that ye may have somewhat to answer them which glory in appearance, and not in heart."

Paul said there was a time when he knew Christ "after the flesh", but not anymore. (This seems to be saying that Paul spent some time with Christ in person, but that **opportunity** had ended.)

- **2 Corinthians 5:16:** "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."

Paul wanted the church to be ready to give to those who were in need, so that when the **opportunity** came up they could immediately meet those needs.

- **2 Corinthians 9:3-4:** "Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain in this behalf; that, as I said, ye may be ready: Lest haply if they of Macedonia

come with me, and find you unprepared, we (that we say not, ye) should be ashamed in this same confident boasting."

We have a responsibility to do good to everyone, as we have the **opportunity** to do so.

- **Galatians 6:10:** "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

There may be times when people want to help, but lack the **opportunity** to do so.

- **Philippians 4:10:** "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity."

Paul wanted the Colossian church to pray that God would give him the **opportunity** to preach the gospel.

- **Colossians 4:3:** "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:"

Paul never asked any church to pray that God would save the soul of a certain person. Instead he sought **opportunities** to preach the gospel.

- **Colossians 4:3:** "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:"

Paul wanted to make the gospel manifest to the world. Even though he was in prison for preaching the gospel, he wanted **opportunities** so he could preach it even more.

- **Colossians 4:3-4:** "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

Since Paul wanted to visit the Thessalonians again, he prayed that God would give him that **opportunity**.

- **1 Thessalonians 3:10:** "Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?"

Paul wanted the **opportunity** to spread the gospel.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:1:** "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:"

The devil is looking for **opportunities** to condemn Christians.

- **1 Timothy 3:6:** "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

Paul wanted to visit Timothy in the near future, but he didn't know if he would have the **opportunity**.

- **1 Timothy 3:14-15:** "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that

thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

It's important for Christians to do what's right and not fall into temptation. We must not give people an **opportunity** to speak against the church.

- **1 Timothy 5:14:** "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."

Those who sin are actually opposing themselves. We must look for **opportunities** to instruct them in the Bible, because God may use that to save them.

- **2 Timothy 2:25:** "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"

Even though we don't know if our efforts will have any benefit at all, we still must pursue **opportunities** to teach others because God may chose to work through us to bring them to repentance.

- **2 Timothy 2:25:** "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"

Heretics must be given two **opportunities** to repent. If they won't repent after the second admonition then they must be rejected as a heretic.

- **Titus 3:10-11:** "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."

Paul expected Philemon to pray that the apostle would have an **opportunity** to go to his home and visit him.

- **Philemon 1:22:** "But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you."

There are times when God opens a door of **opportunity** for churches.

- **Revelation 3:8:** "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

When God opens a door of **opportunity** for a church, no one can shut it.

- **Revelation 3:8:** "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."