

FINAL THINGS: PRIORITIES, HONOR, AND LOVE

1 Corinthians 16:5-24)

As Christians We Should Prioritize Kingdom Purpose

- Paul shares his travel plans—but notice, they're not random. They are driven by opportunity for ministry.
- *"I don't want to see you now just in passing, since I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord allows. 8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 because a wide door for effective ministry has opened for me—yet many oppose me."* (1 Corinthians 16:7-9)
- **God opens doors, but we must choose to walk through them.**

As Christians We Should Show Honor and Love to Fellow Laborers in the Gospel

- *"If Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear while with you, because he is doing the Lord's work, just as I am. 11 So let no one look down on him. Send him on his way in peace so that he can come to me, because I am expecting him with the brothers. 12 Now about our brother Apollos: I strongly urged him to come to you with the brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. However, he will come when he has an opportunity."* (1 Corinthians 16:10-12)
- **How we treat people reflects how we value God's work.**
- **No matter our age, nationality, background, or financial status, we all are part of God's Kingdom purposes to advance the gospel of Jesus.**

As Christians, Love Is the Foundation That Enables Us to Remain Faithful to the Lord and Accomplish His Mission

- *"Be alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. 14 Do everything in love."* (1 Corinthians 16:13-14)
- **A foundation of love driving how we live and serve demonstrates spiritual maturity.**
- **Christians are called to be deeply rooted in truth while still operating in love.**

As Christians We Must Be Devoted to God's Mission

- *"Brothers and sisters, you know the household of Stephanas: They are the firstfruits of Achaia and have devoted themselves to serving the saints. I urge you 16 also to submit to such people, and to everyone who works and labors with them. 17 I am delighted to have Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus present, because these men have made up for your absence. 18 For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore recognize such people."* (1 Corinthians 16:15-18)

- **A genuine biblical faith is demonstrated by a deep devotion to God's mission over everything else.**

The Church Should Be Known for Its Love

- *"The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Priscilla send you greetings warmly in the Lord, along with the church that meets in their home. 20 All the brothers and sisters send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. 21 This greeting is in my own hand—Paul. 22 If anyone does not love the Lord, a curse be on him. Our Lord, come! 23 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. 24 My love be with all of you in Christ Jesus."* (1 Corinthians 16:19-24)
- **We can have all the right beliefs, yet without a foundation of love we are no better than the Pharisees who were religious but still far from Jesus.**
- **Love does not ignore sin; Love sees others as image bearers of God and worthy of redemption, restoration, and renewing!**

CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

Observation:

- In vss 5–9, what influences Paul's travel plans and decisions?
- What does Paul say about Timothy and Apollos in vss 10–12?
- In verses 13–14, what commands does Paul give to believers about how they should live?

Understanding

- Paul made decisions based on opportunities for ministry. What does it look like today to prioritize God's kingdom in your daily life?
- Where might God be opening a "door" in your life right now, and what might be holding you back from stepping through it?
- Why is it important to honor and support others who are serving in God's work?
- Paul calls believers to be strong and courageous, yet to do everything in love. Why is it important to hold both truth and love together?
- The household of Stephanas was devoted to serving others. What does consistent, everyday devotion to God's mission look like in real life?
- What is one specific way you can live out love, encouragement, or service this week in your church, home, or community?

Loving Outward:

- Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
- Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
- Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?