

WHAT IS THIS ROADBLOCK TELLING ME

When to stand firm when to prepare and when to change direction

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Have you ever stood in front of a closed door and wondered, "Am I supposed to pray harder, prepare better, or walk away?"

You prayed about it. You invested time in it. You may have already told people it was going to happen. Then something blocked your progress.

One person says, "The enemy is fighting you." Another says, "You were not ready."

Somebody else says, "God must have something better." But you still have to decide what to do Monday morning.

Quit too soon, and you may abandon something worth doing. Keep forcing your plan, and you may ignore a correction you need.

What response does this roadblock require from me?

James 1:5 KJV

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James has been discussing trials, tested faith, and endurance. Trouble creates decisions. I need wisdom to understand how to respond while I am under pressure.

Our prayer can include, "Lord, open the door," and also, "Show me what I need to learn, what I need to resist, and what I need to reconsider."

BEFORE YOU INTERPRET THE ROADBLOCK

In 1 Thessalonians 2:18, Paul identifies Satan as hindering him. In Acts 16:6–7, the Holy Spirit prevents him from going in a particular direction. Being stopped does not, by itself, explain why.

Ordinary limitations and other people's choices also create obstacles. Several factors can overlap, and sometimes we will not know the complete explanation.

“The explanation you prefer may be protecting you from the question you need to ask.”

#1 SPIRITUAL OPPOSITION

STAND FIRM WHEN DISCOURAGEMENT PRESSURES YOU TO ABANDON WHAT IS RIGHT

1 Thessalonians 2:18 KJV

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.

Paul wanted to return to people he loved and strengthen them in their faith. He was doing meaningful work, and he still faced opposition.

The verse does not tell us exactly how he was hindered. We cannot assume that every person who disagrees with us is doing the devil's work.

What am I being tempted to do because this became difficult?

Are you tempted to lie because honesty seems too costly? To become bitter because you were treated unfairly? To isolate yourself from people who could strengthen you?

Examine what discouragement is persuading you to believe. Feeling afraid or disappointed is not, by itself, proof of an attack.

Stand firmly on what God has made clear while you seek wisdom about

what remains uncertain. You can know honesty is right without knowing that one particular job must be yours.

Imagine refusing to lie to secure an opportunity. Someone who exaggerates gets chosen. You think, "Being honest gets you nowhere. Next time I will tell them whatever they want to hear."

Now the setback is influencing your character. You may need a stronger application or another opportunity. You still need to resist the conclusion that integrity is foolish.

"A setback becomes more dangerous when you let it rewrite what you know to be true."

In 1 Thessalonians 3:1–2, Paul explains that Timothy was sent to strengthen these believers. The work continued through another person.

Perseverance can include changing the method.

You can remain faithful to serving people while changing your schedule. You can receive correction without surrendering your conviction.

What has this disappointment tempted me to believe about God, myself, or doing what is right?

#2 LACK OF PREPARATION

PREPARE WHEN THE ROADBLOCK EXPOSES A SPECIFIC GAP

Luke 14:28 KJV

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?

Jesus is teaching about the cost of discipleship. His picture of a builder calls for an honest assessment of what finishing the work requires.

You can want something deeply and still need to prepare for it. A meaningful desire does not automatically supply the skills, resources, or habits the work requires.

What does this opportunity require that I have not yet developed or put in place?

A preparation gap should be specific enough to address. "I am not good enough" gives you nothing to work on. "I need to explain my proposal more clearly" gives you a task.

Do I understand the requirements? Can I perform the work? Can I sustain it with the time, support, and resources I actually have?

Someone wants to teach a class. The announcement looks beautiful, but the lessons are unfinished and the schedule keeps changing. When people hesitate to enroll, the explanation is, "The enemy is fighting the assignment." There may be discouragement to resist. There is also work to finish.

"A calling does not eliminate the need for preparation."

Receiving correction can be difficult after you have already imagined yourself succeeding. Listen when competent, trustworthy people identify the same gap. Ask what improvement would look like.

Ecclesiastes 10:10 KJV

If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom is profitable to direct.

A blunt tool requires greater effort. Sharpening changes the work. Before deciding you need to push harder, ask what needs sharpening.

Prepared people also experience rejection. Look for evidence of a gap, and prepare for the next responsible step. Perfection cannot become your excuse for never beginning.

What feedback have I dismissed because accepting it

would require me to change something?

#3 DIVINE REDIRECTION

RECONSIDER THE ROUTE WHILE REMAINING FAITHFUL TO THE PURPOSE

Acts 16:7 KJV

After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not.

Paul and his companions were trying to preach the gospel. The Spirit prevented this movement. Later, Paul received a vision, and the group concluded that God was calling them to Macedonia. Their mission continued along a different route. The text identifies God's direction here; every closed opportunity in our lives still requires discernment.

Am I committed to the purpose, or unable to consider any plan except my own?

You want to help women grow. You imagined a large event, but the venue is unavailable. A smaller group asks you to teach them. Their invitation looks nothing like what you announced.

That opportunity deserves prayerful consideration. Ask whether it allows you to fulfill the purpose responsibly.

"You may be asking God for direction while allowing Him only one acceptable answer."

If you had never announced this plan, what would you consider now? Examine the direction through Scripture, wise counsel, and honest attention to circumstances. One feeling cannot settle the decision.

Paul and Silas later faced imprisonment in Philippi, as Acts 16:22–25 records. God's redirected route still included difficulty. Comfort alone cannot establish His direction.

CLOSING

You can improve your preparation, resist discouragement, and consider another route in the same season. These responses can work together.

Return to the roadblock you pictured at the beginning. Ask God where you need to stand firm, what you need to learn, and what you need to reconsider.

"You do not have to identify the source of every obstacle to choose a faithful response."

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, give us wisdom. Help us resist discouragement and receive correction. Show us where preparation is needed. Where we need to change course, help us release our preferred plan. Keep us faithful to what You have made clear, and give us courage for the next step. In Jesus' name, amen.

