

## ***BEWARE OF ADVERSITY***

1 Corinthians 16:5-24

DEFINITION: Adversary - enemy, adversary, opponent. Application: The Greek word means a legal opponent such as an opponent in a lawsuit. It also means a common day-to-day opponent like a neighbor who opposes and stands as an enemy against us. The picture is that of the devil opposing us in every conceivable way.

- ⇒ It is the picture of Satan standing in a law court, standing as an adversary in the court of God accusing us before God.
- ⇒ It is the picture of Satan standing here on the earth, standing against us and doing all he can to trip us up and to defeat and destroy us.

*“If you have no opposition in the place you serve, you’re serving in the wrong place.” ~ Dr. G. Campbell Morgan*

- Paul was neither an optimist nor a pessimist; he was a ***realist***.
- He saw both the ***opportunities*** and the ***obstacles***.

*One necessary principle for doing the Lord’s work in the Lord’s way is accepting opposition as a challenge rather than a hindrance.” ~ Dr. John MacArthur*

What adversaries did the apostle Paul face at Ephesus?

- Organized idolatry, centered in the famous temple of Diana.
- Ritual prostitution and sexual perversion not only were tolerated but were promoted in the name of religion.
- Jewish exorcists who went around claiming to cast out evil spirits in Jesus name.
- Paganism, idolatry, occultism, demonism, superstition, sexual vice, racism, and religious animosity.
- Verbal, spiritual, and physical abuse and warfare.

*“So the Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.”  
~ Acts 19:20*

What final imperatives did Paul give to Corinth as they faced adversity?

1. Be ***alert*** spiritually.
2. Be ***firm*** in the faith.
3. Be ***mature***.
4. Be ***strong***.
5. Be ***loving***.

⇒ In Paul's closing greeting, we see reflected seven marks of Christian fellowship:

1. **Evangelism** (16:15a)

2. **Service** to each other (16:15b).

⇒ Devoted (tasso) means **addiction**.

⇒ Drug addiction has three primary characteristics:

A. It involves a strong **habit**, an overpowering desire and compulsion to take a given drug.

B. It involves a growing tolerance to the drug, so that, in order to maintain the desired **effect**, larger and larger doses must be taken.

C. The final characteristic is **dependence**, the state in which the addicted person must have the drug in order to function.

⇒ Sin never stays in its original form; neither does **spiritual** growth!

3. **Submission** (16:16).

4. **Companionship** (16:17-18a).

5. **Respect** (16:18b).

6. **Hospitality** (16:19-20a).

7. **Affection** 16:20b).

What adversaries are you facing today that would keep you from Christ and a growing addiction to serving him?