

Connect

Share about a time when you were just "passing through" but ended up "spending quality time" with someone. What made that time special or impactful?

Verses - 1 Corinthians 16:5-12 (CSB)

READ ALOUD:

1 Corinthians 16:5-12 CSB

5 I will come to you after I pass through Macedonia-for I will be traveling through Macedonia- 6 and perhaps I will remain with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way wherever I go. 7 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. 10 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.

Briefly restate the context. How is it encouraging, challenging, comforting, etc.?

Study

Answer the questions together based on the Bible verses:

1. In verses 5-7, Paul describes his travel plans. What is his stated desire for his visit to Corinth (v. 7)? What does his condition, "if the Lord permits," teach us about his approach to ministry and planning?

2. In v.9, Paul gives two reasons for staying in Ephesus: "a great and effective door has opened" AND "there are many adversaries." Why is it significant that he sees both of these as reasons to stay, not to leave?

3. What instructions does Paul give the church regarding Timothy in verses 10-11? What does the command "let no one despise him" (or "look down on him") imply about a potential problem in the Corinthian church?

4. What do we learn about decision-making and God's sovereignty from the note about Apollos in verse 12? How does this balance Paul's authority with Apollos's personal will?

Share

Discuss 1:
Pastor Takeshi used the story of Elijah on Mt. Carmel to show that a great work of God (fire from heaven) was immediately followed by great opposition (Jezebel's threat). When you face criticism or discouragement while doing "the Lord's work," is your first instinct to run (like Elijah) or to stand firm? What helps you stand firm?

Discuss 2:
Paul was worried the church would "look down on" Timothy. When have you "looked down on" someone who is doing the Lord's work, perhaps because they are younger, different, or not the person we wanted (like the church wanted Apollos)? Why is it important to allow any believer in the family of God to contribute the gift that they have been given?

Minister to one another through sharing specific prayer requests.