

Introduction:

The idea for this lesson came from something that happened or didn't happen. We were in Bowling Green to take some stuff to a storage shed. Upon finishing we decided it was too early to eat lunch so Eli and I came back to the farm to do some work. Once back we received a phone call from Jon wanting to know if we want to see him and Tommy. We have totally missed an opportunity to see our favorite son-in-law and grandson. What a bummer! This got me to thinking about "opportunities" and what the Bible says about them.

I) The Context of *Galatians 6.10*

A) Paul's letter to the Galatians, in chapter six is the topic of "responsibilities of Christians."

1. *Galatians 6.1-2 help one another, especially those overtaken in a fault*
2. *Galatians 6.4-5 examine yourself*
3. *Galatians 6.6 help those who are preaching the gospel*
4. *Galatians 6.7-8 look at what you are sowing, you will reap your harvest*
5. *Galatians 6. 9-10 do not grow weary in doing good, do good to all men, especially those of the household of faith.*

B) Key phrase is "as we have opportunity"

1. Defining opportunity – an appropriate or favorable time or occasion; a situation or condition favorable for attainment of a goal.

2. Opportunity cost – the money or benefits lost when pursuing a particular course of action instead of a mutually exclusive alternative.
 - a. Sleeping late means you can't get up at the crack of dawn.
 - b. In occupation being a doctor means you have to give time to studying and that means that time can't be used doing something you would like to do.

II) The Nature of Opportunities

A) Can be to do bad things, sin

1. Judas sought opportunity to betray Jesus.

Matthew 26:14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests 15 and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. 16 So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

- a. That opportunity was limited by the time element of that week.
 - b. Judas could have passed up that opportunity but instead choose to do bad.
2. David's sin with Bathsheba was due to the opportunity, he saw her, her husband was away with the army, and he called for her.
 3. Normally we associate the words temptation and trial with these kinds of opportunities.

B) Can be good –

1. A favorable outcome, success, etc .
2. Stated in **Galatians 6.10** are the very words ***“let us do good to all men especially those of the household of faith.”***

C) Opportunities are valuable

1. Due to the need for help, i.e. money being sent to help the needy saints as Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 8:6 *So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well. 7 But as you abound in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us--see that you abound in this grace also. 8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others.*

2. There was a sense of urgency in Paul's writing.
3. Opportunities are time sensitive – they won't last long. Each opportunity is limited for various reasons.

III) Things That Limit Our Opportunities

A) Time by itself

1. Opportunity of parents to rear their children.

Ephesians 6:4 *And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*

2. Lois and Eunice's opportunity to instruct Timothy was limited by Timothy's time as a child.

B) Providentially hindered, circumstances beyond our control

1. Paul's second missionary journey.

Acts 16:6 *Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. 7 After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."*

2. Probably won't have a vision but we might move away from an opportunity or someone may move away from us.

C) Satan hindered Paul

1 Thessalonians 2:18 *Therefore we wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us.*

1. This might be by religious persecution, riots, etc.
2. Our opportunity to preach the Gospel may be hindered by "Satan" in the future.

D) Failing health and/or death

1. None of us are immortal and neither are those around us. We are all growing older.
2. I often think of those who have suffered strokes and are no longer able to communicate. Think of those with Covid 19 and on a respirator, they are awake and aware but unable to speak.

E) Hardness of heart

1. Five times between **Exodus 7** and **9** we read of Pharaoh's

heart being hardened.

2. The parable of the sower implies the idea of one hardening their heart.

Luke 8:11 "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 "Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 "But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 "Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity.

3. There are places I used to preach that I can no longer preach at because they won't listen to God's word. The same goes for individuals.

IV) We Need to Take Advantage of Our Opportunities.

A) What open doors of opportunity do I have?

1 Corinthians 16:9 For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

2 Corinthians 2:12 Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord,

1. We need to be looking for our individual and congregational opportunities.
2. We need to beware of those we already have.

- a. As parents to teach our children
- b. To help those in need
- c. To grow as Christians, etc.

B) There is a real cost with opportunities

- 1. The cost of obeying the Gospel.

Luke 14:25 Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, **26** "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. **27** "And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. **28** "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it -- **29** "lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, **30** "saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.'

- 2. There is the cost of not obeying the Gospel

2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 3. What is the reward of obedience to Christ? ***Matthew 25*** parable of the talents and the parable of the judgement where the sheep are separated from the goats.

- a. ***Matthew 25:21*** "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many

things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

b. ***Matthew 25:34*** "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

4. What is the reward in not obeying the Gospel? Eternal separation and torment.

a. ***Matthew 25:30*** 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

b. ***Matthew 25:41*** "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: