

When Good Plans Must Change

Introduction and Review

- All believers experience various kinds of suffering in life & ministry for Christ's sake – church leaders & members (v. 1-2, 8-9a)
- God comforts all believers in all kinds of suffering (v. 4-5)
- God comforts in 2 ways: encourages us “**in**” affliction (v. 4a) or delivers us “**from**” affliction (v. 10a)
- God has purpose for this comfort: Praise for our God (v. 3, 9b-11) & Comfort for other believers (v. 4, 6-7)
- More lessons for life & ministry from Paul – if the messenger is discredited, so is the message & ministry (Mt. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18)

I. Making Godly Plans (v. 12-16)

A. Integrity with people (v. 12-14)

Godly plans must involve right actions & attitude – “behaved...with simplicity and godly sincerity”. Godly plans must avoid using earthly wisdom, but trust the power of God by grace (1Co. 2:1-5). Godly plans must involve holy intentions, words & actions (v. 13-14; 1Co. 3:12-15).

B. Benefit for people (v. 15-16)

Paul had told the church at Corinth of his original plan (1Co. 16:5-7) – “if the Lord permits”. His plan would have benefited them significantly (v. 15-16) – two extended visits of ministry.

Godly plans should have integrity with & benefit for people.

II. Changing Godly Plans (v. 17-24)

A. False Accusations (v. 17)

The opposition was intense & church members were unreasonable – rejection, scorn & contempt. Paul wisely perceived they needed time to calm down & be reasonable – no 2nd visit (2:1). Paul was falsely accused of being indifferent & selfish when he changed his plans (v. 17).

B. Godly Justification (v. 18-24)

God is faithful (v. 18), God's message is faithful (v. 19-20) & God faithfully works through His messenger (v. 21-22). God gave Paul wisdom to withdraw & refrain from contact for a while (v. 23-24).

Godly plans must be changed with godly wisdom & trust God with the consequences!