

there's power in this **HOUSE**

Part 1 • January 4, 2026 | Pastor Jason Smotherman

Paul's personal desire is revealed in one simple statement. Paul, our older brother in the faith, recognized that God blesses obedience and not potential. The door of obedience requires a shaping in maturity.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:8-9 (NASB)

But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost; for a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

"But I will remain." Another translation words it like this:

1 CORINTHIANS 16:8-9 (NKJV)

But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Paul ties three things together that we usually try to separate:

The Power of Remaining • The Power of Opportunity. • The Power of Opposition.

Most of us want the open door without the adversaries. But Paul understood something we all must learn:

- Great doors are rarely quiet doors.
- Effective doors are almost never easy doors.
- Big doors are still opened by small keys.

If God opens a door, the enemy will post resistance. Not because you're weak, but because you're dangerous. Paul says, "I will remain."

Not because it's comfortable. Not because it's popular. Not because it's easy. But because it's necessary. Hell is real. Jesus is coming back again. The gospel is only good news if it doesn't stop with you.

Ephesians 6 tells us why remaining matters. "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might... Put on the whole armor of God... For we wrestle not against flesh and blood..."

This is not a temporary skirmish. This is not an afternoon contest. This is not a season you outgrow.

This is war. And war requires endurance. If you want to be a House of Power, you must be a mature believer who understands the following.

1. THE POWER OF REMAINING THROUGH THE PRESS

Pressure is God's classroom. Pressure is the gym of the Spirit.

Nobody gets stronger by watching weights. Strength comes from resistance.

We pray, "God, change me." God says, "Lay down." And suddenly the surgery table feels cold.

Because transformation always requires exposure. And exposure feels like weakness before it becomes strength.

The press is like physical therapy. It hurts not because something is wrong, but because something is being restored.

Paul says, "I will remain." Not because it feels good, but because healing rarely does. Remaining is like staying on the operating table when the anesthetic wears thin. That thing you feel is not pain returning, it's health returning. The fact you can feel again is a good sign.

You trust the surgeon because you know the outcome is worth the pain.

James says, "Count it all joy when you fall into trials." Not because trials are joyful, but because the product is.

The press doesn't crush you. It extracts oil. Olives don't become oil by being admired. They become oil by being pressed. And oil is what fuels fire.

The press was never meant to take you out. It was meant to take you deeper.

It's meant to take you past your past, not drag you back into it.

Every believer needs to know the kind of victory that only comes after you've survived some things.

I will remain through offense. Remain through betrayal. Remain through silence. Remain through disappointment. Remain when prayers feel unanswered.

It wasn't designed to return you to your past. It was designed to move you beyond it.

2. THE POWER OF GOD OPPORTUNITIES

For a great and effective door has opened to me...

Doors don't open to people who quit hallways. Most people abandon the corridor right before the door swings open.

Calling is not discovered in comfort. Calling is revealed in consistency.

Eyes open when you remain. You start noticing things you were blind to before. You recognize opportunity where others see inconvenience.

Closed doors are not punishment. They are GPS recalculations. God shuts doors the way a good father locks medicine cabinets. Not to withhold, but to protect you from taking something you're not ready to handle.

Purpose is not a trophy. It's an assignment. If God gives you the assignment, He supplies the resources.

You say, "I can't." God says, "You're right... alone. But with Me..."

God did not gift you to decorate your life. He gifted you to deploy your life. Gifts are tools, not trophies. And tools only make sense when they're used.

Calling always pulls you forward. It always demands movement. And movement always attracts resistance.

"But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great and effective door has opened to me." Remaining gives you vision. Endurance opens eyes in such a way to complete the vision.

Great means above average. Effective means it works. Eyes are opened when you remain. Doors are opened when you're called.

God opens doors. God shuts doors.

And shut doors are not wasted time. They simply let you know you're one step closer to destiny.

The greatest moment in a person's life is when they realize what they were born to do.

You were born on purpose for a purpose.

If God gave you the purpose, He will give you the power.

You say, "I can't." God says, "With Me, all things are possible."

God didn't gift you to be a gift to yourself. God gifted you so others could see the Gift-Giver inside of you. You must experience moment of calling.

3. THE POWER OF OPPOSITION

"...and there are many adversaries."

Why the adversaries? No forward motion goes untested. There are three enemies you will face your entire Christian walk.

FIRST: THE SIN IN ME

The Darkness of Decay. Romans 7 says, "There is another law warring in my members..."

Sin destroys. It eats like cancer. And it lives in us. "The old man is never so dead that he cannot be resurrected."

SECOND: RELIGION

(The Darkness of 'I'm OK') Religion is worse than sin because sin knows it's wrong. Religion thinks it's right. Religion excuses what conviction wants to remove.

Conviction becomes a nuisance, not a necessity. Religion gives grace to me and law to you.

Faithful in activity, but distant in affection. Revelation 2 says: "You've worked hard. You've endured. But you've left your first love." It is possible to be faithful and still not be truthful about where you are with God. Return to your first love. That is the Holy Spirit's primary work.

THIRD: THE DEVIL INC.

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood..." These forces are at war with you because you are a threat to them. This war is not for a participation ribbon. This war is for people. The only thing you can take to heaven is people.

Victories have names. Some of them are sitting here. Some of them aren't saved yet. Some of them are waiting on your obedience.

So where do these victories happen? "But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost..."

They happen at Pentecost. They happen in the moving of the Holy Spirit. Most people don't understand Pentecost. They view it as the bystander who passed by the upper room in Acts 2. They're drunk. They're emotional. They're spiritually crazy. No, they were just obedient. Peter simply said....NO. NO. NO. THIS IS THAT.

The victory of the press is fulfilled when God comes in the room and you let Him go deep. When was the last time you let God go deep? The victory of the calling is found in His presence, when He whispers destiny.

The victory of soul-winning happens when the Spirit brings your words alive to the hearer. That's when lives change.

Remain. Stand. Suit up. Fight.

Because the door is open. And the war is worth it. Paul's personal desire is revealed in one simple statement: "But I will remain."

Paul does not say, "I will visit." "I will try." "I will stay until it gets hard." He says, "I will remain."

Remaining is not passive. Remaining is not comfortable. Remaining is warfare. Remaining is like a soldier refusing to abandon his post even when the bullets start flying. Paul says, "I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."

Doors and devils show up together. If the door is great, the resistance will be loud. If the door is effective, the enemy will try to exhaust you before you ever walk through it. Ephesians 6 tells us why. "This is not an afternoon athletic contest."

In other words: You don't take armor to a pickup game. You don't wear a helmet to a jog. You don't carry weapons unless you're in a war. If God says "armor," it's because something is trying to kill what He put inside you.

This is not flesh and blood. This is organized darkness. This is strategic opposition. This is a long fight.

And long fights require people who know how to remain.