

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 33: Open Doors

So, Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy get this call to come and minister in Macedonia, but then they get there, and things are anything but smooth.

- Watch what happens in Thessalonica: Acts 17:1-10
 - Does that look like an open door of opportunity to you? But it was!
 - We often think that a tell-tale sign that a door of opportunity is open for us is for there to be no opposition, but often opposition is one of the signs that the door is open!
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1. **How do we know when God is opening a door of opportunity for us; what does a real God given opportunity look like?**

First of all, we need to address the fact that not all open doors are from God.

- Some open doors lead to opportunities and blessings others open up to elevator shafts!!!
 - Satan loves to give you opportunities and options to distract you from what God wants.
 - He'll flood the market so to speak in order to make God's opportunities harder to see.
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2. **What constitutes a door opened by God?**

1. Open door is just that: an open door...you won't have to push it or make it happen.

- I'm certain that we've all tried to force a door open: It's something we want or want to do, so we manipulate ourselves or our situation to make it happen.
 - Don't do that...you may just get what you're asking for and find out that it was not what you wanted!!!
 - If a door isn't opening, figure that God is protecting you from something or that you're not ready yet for what's on the other side.
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2. Let me show you an example of an open door in Scripture: I Cor. 16:8-9

- Paul wrote I Corinthians from Ephesus
 - The door of opportunity was wide open there with literally thousands coming to faith in Christ.
 - Ephesus was the key city of the province of Asia and through his ministry there Paul was able to impact the whole province.
 - Scripture says that the Gospel's influence was so powerful in that region that it began to put those who made idols out of business because so many were coming to Christ.
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3. An open door will have several defining characteristics:

1. It will agree with your talents and abilities: an opening for Paul to preach in teach freely in Ephesus certainly agreed with his talents and abilities.
 2. It will square with biblical values:
 - Will not make you compromise your relationship with God...it's not an open door from God if it takes you away from Him, His service, or His church.
 - If it causes you in anyway to compromise your ethics or morals it is not from God.
 3. It will grow you spiritually...open doors will not undermine your spiritual growth.
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4. It will sit well with strong, stable Christians!

- One of the best things you can do to help guard yourself from making mistakes is to find some Christians who are strong in there walk who you can bounce things off of.
 - When they are not certain or feel funny about a potential open door in your life, don't move or at least don't move quickly.
 - God has given us the body of Christ to protect us from things we may not be able to see.
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5. A door that God opens will often be opposed. **I Cor. 16:8-9.** – Would you have read it as a door of opportunity??

- Satan will often oppose an open door especially if he knows your intent is to serve the Lord in whatever doors He opens for you.
 - Back to our text in Acts: Paul was opposed greatly in Thessalonica.
 - The text says the main instigators were the Jews but look who Paul blamed it on: **I Thess. 2:14-15, 18.**
 - Paul knew who the real enemy was...do you?
 - Satan will try to deceive you: the options are only 2 = right and wrong = chocolate and Vanilla, but he'll give you 31 flavors!!
 - Satan will try to discourage you – he will throw difficulties and discouraging circumstances in your way to keep you fully entering the door the Lord has for you to go through.
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6. A door that God opens will be a door of conviction.

- For Paul, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Philippi and any other that God opened to him was a matter of conviction for him.
 - He felt obligated to go and work and serve in those places: **Rom. 1:14.**
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