

Open Doors & Closed Doors

The Sovereignty of God

1. **Open doors; Acts 13 has many examples of “open doors” (v. 15, 42-44, 48). Read I Corinthians 16:9; II Corinthians 2:12, and Colossians 4:2-4.**
 - a. Can you explain what Paul means by an “open door”?
 - b. How do you recognize an open door?
 - c. What should you do when God opens a door for you?

 2. **Using the Word (v. 17-41)**
 - a. How often do you read the Bible?
 - b. How often do you study the Bible?
 - c. Do you know the Bible well enough to share the Gospel clearly?

 3. **Closed doors (v. 46)**
 - a. Sometimes Christians become discouraged when others do not respond positively to their witness for Christ. How do you normally respond when someone rejects your attempts to witness to them?
 - b. When the Jews contradicted Paul’s preaching, he said, *“It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 13:46)*. How do we know that Paul’s turning to the Gentiles was God’s will and not simply a spiteful reaction to the Jews’ opposition?
 - c. We will see in future passages that Paul and Barnabas would face opposition again and again, yet they did not always move on immediately. How can we be wise in discerning when to move on from a ministry and when to “stick it out”?
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Acts 13:13-52

¹³Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.

¹⁴But when they departed from Perga, they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. ¹⁵And after the reading of the Law and the Prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent to them, saying, "Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say on."

¹⁶Then Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: ¹⁷The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He brought them out of it. ¹⁸Now for a time of about forty years He put up with their ways in the wilderness. ¹⁹And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land to them by allotment.

²⁰After that He gave them judges for about four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet.

²¹And afterward they asked for a king; so God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. ²²And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' ²³From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior—Jesus—²⁴ after John had first preached, before His coming, the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. ²⁵And as John was finishing his course, he said, 'Who do you think I am? I am not He. But behold, there comes One after me, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to loose.'

²⁶"Men and brethren, sons of the family of Abraham, and those among you who fear God, to you the word of this salvation has been sent. ²⁷For those who dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they did not know Him, nor even the voices of the Prophets which are read every Sabbath, have fulfilled them in condemning Him. ²⁸And though they found no cause for death in Him, they asked Pilate that He should be put to death. ²⁹Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. ³⁰But God raised Him from the dead. ³¹He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. ³²And we declare to you glad tidings—that promise which was made to the fathers. ³³God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm:

'You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.'

³⁴And that He raised Him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, He has spoken thus:

'I will give you the sure mercies of David.'

³⁵Therefore He also says in another Psalm:

'You will not allow Your Holy One to see corruption.'

³⁶For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption; ³⁷but He whom God raised up saw no corruption. ³⁸Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through this Man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; ³⁹and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. ⁴⁰Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:

⁴¹'Behold, you despisers,
Marvel and perish!
For I work a work in your days,
A work which you will by no means believe,
Though one were to declare it to you.'

⁴²So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath. ⁴³Now when the congregation had broken up, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.

⁴⁴On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. ⁴⁵But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. ⁴⁶Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. ⁴⁷For so the Lord has commanded us:

'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,
That you should be for salvation to the
ends of the earth.'

⁴⁸Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

⁴⁹And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. ⁵⁰But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. ⁵¹But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium. ⁵²And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

*See also: Matthew 10:12-14 (Mark 6:11, Luke 9:5);
Matthew 7:6; Acts 16:6*