

# Open Door, Closed Door

by Danny Bond

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a passion for evangelism, being spiritually mature, and having a shepherd's heart to effectively spread the gospel.*

**Duration:** 52:14

**Scripture:** Acts 15:36

**Topics:** "Purpose Of God"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the pastor emphasizes the importance of personal evangelism and discipleship in spreading the gospel. He highlights the example of Paul, who was passionate about reaching out to those who had never heard the gospel before. The pastor also emphasizes the need for believers to be strong in the grace of Christ and to pass on the truth to faithful men who will continue to teach others. He encourages the congregation to not be content with the status quo but to have the same passion and dedication as Paul in sharing the gospel.

---

## Transcript

One thing we do not have here is a lukewarm life. We are on the trail of the Apostle Paul. This guy is all passion.

He's all wing, all fire, all force for Jesus Christ, and he's always on the move. A very special call from God, and here in this passage we have the passion of Paul for evangelism and for the people of God to teach them and disciple them, two things. We have also the person of Timothy who is so different as a young man than John Mark.

So, in the end, you're either a John Mark or a Timothy as a young man, young woman today. We have here what I call the positioning of closed doors. They march across Asia Minor, one door after the next is slammed, slammed, slammed, slammed in their face for months.

From the moment Paul makes a decision to go on a second missionary journey, there's conflict, opposition and slam doors. But you know what? It was the biggest call, the biggest call he'd ever received from God at this point, maybe that he ever got in his whole life. And what follows it immediately, conflict with the brethren, opposition and closed doors for months.

But he was right on target when he heard it and made the decision to move and act. So the final thing we'll see is that there's an open door at the end and they pass right through it. And it's glorious.

But to begin with, I'd like to start reading at verse 30. We're actually going to study from 36 down to in Chapter 15, where we left off down to Chapter 16, verse 11. Sometimes chapter divisions in the Bible don't really fit.

That's because in case you don't know this, God didn't put them in there. God didn't put them in there. Man did.

Sometimes they're just in the wrong place. So here we are. Let's start with verse 30.

So we get back into where we've been. You remember, the Judaizers came up from Jerusalem where they'd gotten stale, wanted to stay Jews, even though they become Christians and Jesus fulfilled the law to put it away. New covenant in his blood.

And they went around to the churches where Paul preached the gospel, planted churches where people believe that you were saved by grace plus nothing in Jesus Christ. So they had a council with Jerusalem. Things worked out.

Paul stood against them, saved the gospel of grace, and we read in verse 30 that they were sent off and they came to Antioch, which is back to the headquarters for the Gentiles. The church that Paul uses headquarters and ministered from. They went off.

They came to Antioch, verse 30, and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered the letter from the Council of Jerusalem. And when they had read it, they rejoiced over its encouragement. Now, Judas and Silas.

This is a different Judas. Silas is the one we want to be concerned with themselves being prophets exhorted and strengthen the brethren with many words, and after they stayed there many for say, therefore, time they were sent back with greetings from the brethren to the apostles back to Jerusalem. Then verse 34 is very interesting because it seems like such an insignificant footnote.

However, it seemed good to Silas. To remain there where the church in Antioch. Who else was at the church in Antioch? Verse 35.

Paul and Barnabas and they remain there, and they were teaching and preaching the word of the Lord with many others also. So here you have three names Silas Barnabas and Paul. That will be whittled down to two names before God is done.

Now here's what happens. First of all, we come to the passion of Paul. This man is so on fire to reach out to people that have never heard the gospel before, so he's here for a while.

We read in verse thirty six. Then, after some days, Paul said to Barnabas, Let's go. That's Paul all the way.

It comes a time when he's got to go. Paul was never content with the status quo. Are you? See, Paul had just come back from a long missionary journey.

Months very successful. Many churches were planted. If Paul was to follow the pattern of the average sure, or church worker, Sunday school teacher, shall I go on? If he was to follow the pattern of the average person who signs up to do something in the church and drops out after several months, considering they have done their time of service in the body of Christ for life.

I put in my nine months. How I'm looking forward to retirement into living. You realize how many Christians live like that? Really? So many help a little while.

Oh boy, this is grueling. But eight months of my life into teaching children about Jesus Christ. One of them may grow up to be the next Billy Graham, but I'm not thinking about that.

I'm just thinking of how grueling it was and how glad I am that I got my gold watch on my retirement. If you live in and I'll spend the rest of my time watching the time of the picture breach until he stops so I can go to Coco's and live out my life with spectatoritis filing in and filing out, waiting for the shout of Michael, the archangel in the rapture. So many Christians live like that.

I pray to God with all my heart that this church, Pacific Hill Church, is simply not like that. The church is not the building. The church is us.

The people we should pray that we could be like these people. Paul was never plateaued out. Are you? I've arrived.

I'm there. Paul says, Let's go now. I like that, too.

Let's go now. Let's not talk about it. Let's do it.

Barnabas, let's go now. Time for a second journey. Paul was always and ever and always looking for the next thing he wrote to the Romans, and he says, I long to come to you and I pray every day all the time.

I pray for you without ceasing that I come to you that I might impart some spiritual gift to you. Then in chapter fifteen, Paul writes to the Romans and he says, I want to come to you when I'm done doing what I'm doing, and then when I'm done with you, I want to go on to Spain. Spain was the farthest point out.

Spain was the jumping off point to the end of the earth. You know where Jonah went when God called him in Nineveh? Nineveh was that way. Spain was the end of the earth.

He headed straight for the jumping off point of the end of the earth. Paul is always praying and looking at him. Where's the next place I can go? What's the next thing I can do? Where are the next group of people who have never heard the gospel before? And that's the way the early church operated.

It had people like Paul who spread that kind of influence around. So he says, let's go back and visit the brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing. So one thing about Paul is he was always looking for the next person to reach for the gospel with the gospel, but he always held on to what is the secret of long-term evangelism.

And do you know what that is? Rightly dividing the word of truth, feeding the flock of God because healthy sheep reproduce. The most effective form of evangelism is to disciple people. Jesus said, this is the Great Commission.

Go into all the world and preach the gospel, making what of all men disciples. Why? Because those are the ones that are well fed, well taught, well rounded. They grow up into the major of the stature of the fullness of Christ, then they can teach others.

None of us are called the sacks. Some of us unfortunately become like the Dead Sea with no outlet. You should be like the Sea of Galilee with lots of outlets and the River Jordan running right through it.

Everyone always making it fresh and fruitful. Paul knew that for the brethren to be those that would reach out to others, they would have to be well taught, well fed. So he says, let's go back first to the churches we planted and teach them some more.

We know that that's what he did, because if you look at verse 4535, Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord notice with many others. Also, they'd already done that in Antioch. That's why they were free to go out and preach, and others could stand and preach and teach in their absence and lead and feed the church.

Hold your place here and turn in your Bible to Second Timothy, chapter two, verse two. Here is the secret of long-term effective evangelism. I am all for crusades, but in the long haul, more people are one to Jesus Christ.

They come out of the darkness and stay there one on one, one on one, and they already have somebody to follow up on them because they're led to the Lord by a friend who's going to be there tomorrow. Somebody who goes to church is going to take them to a church where they can hear the Bible taught. That's why Paul is about to die.

He's writing his last letter to Timothy and in Second Timothy, chapter two, verse one. He says, You, therefore, my son, the son of faith, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus and the things that you have heard from me and my many witnesses commit these two faithful men who will be able to teach others also give the truth to men who will give the truth to men who will give the truth to men. We are all about reproducing reproducers, and it's the word of God, rightly taught, rightly divided, digested and lived out that does that.

So that is the secret to long term effective evangelism to blow into town, preach and leave will not build up disciples. So he says, Let's go back and build them up. Then we'll go on from there to where we've never been before.

Passion of Paul. Is that your passion to look beyond yourself to someone else in your life that's never heard the gospel? We assume that everybody that is around us that we know about because they live in America or they live in California, has heard the gospel at some point in time. I remember for years we had a brother here in the church.

He's now moved back east to help on the churches there that we planted. He told me he lived to be fifty five in America and no one ever preached the gospel to him. No one ever preached the gospel to him until he was fifty five years old.

You know, he does every day of his life. He goes out and he finds people alone on the streets and he asks them if they've ever heard the gospel. And he's always leading people to Jesus Christ because people are out there every day that have never heard the gospel.

Paul wasn't like that. I don't want to be like that. I pray that none of us are like that.

God fills us, feeds us. Let's be reproducers of reproducers. Let me say this and we'll move on.

You know more than somebody else in your life. Give away to them what you know. Find someone in your life who knows less than you do and teach them what you know.

Even if it's one person, you'd be surprised what God might do. You will be surprised. OK, the second thing we see here, which is set up by the Holy Spirit in the passage, is what I would call the person of Timothy.

You say, what about John Mark? Well, that's why I call it the person of Timothy, because first is John Mark, who's self-centered. Second is Timothy, who has a shepherd's heart. John Mark has a self-centered heart.

Timothy has a shepherd's heart. Both are young men. Why is one so different than the other? Because of their heart and their decisions.

So here's God. He's greatly gifted, Paul, and he gives him the call now to go on a second missionary journey. Verse 37, he said, All right, let's go.

Now, verse 37. Now, Barnabas. So Paul gets this call from God to go on this journey.

It's the biggest call of his whole life, because it's going to lead to Europe, which will lead to the whole world, which eventually leads to us. He gets the biggest call of his whole life, and here's the reaction of Barnabas. Verse 37.

Barnabas is determined. Oh, wait a minute right there. You have preconceived ideas.

Barnabas. Yeah, I think I want my way. That's true.

I mean, God gave the call. You got your ideas. Barnabas was determined to take with him.

John called Mark. Just so happens it's his nephew. Paul insisted they should not take John Mark.

No, Barnabas. Yes, Paul. No, Barnabas.

Yes, Paul. No, Barnabas. Yes, Paul.

No, Barnabas. Yes, Paul. And they had a contention.

Oh, my gosh, a contention between these men of God. Yes, yes, yes. Finally, John Mark comes and says, I'm so sorry.

I'm such a flake. I'm dividing two great men of God. I'm breaking up the Barnabas and Paul evangelistic Association.

No, you know, this is not one effort in that direction. That's because he really was self-centered and he really wasn't ready. And Paul was right on target.

You see, they had such a contention. Paul insisted that they would not take him. That's such a contention.

Verse thirty nine. It became so sharp that they parted from one another. Now you've got division in the church.

And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. He also sails right off the pages of the Bible. You don't see him again.

But the Holy Spirit follows Paul everywhere he goes. That in and of itself says something, whatever it is. I'm not sure.

But I am sure we don't hear of him again. He pushed the point. Now, John Mark had a selfish heart.

He was young. If you are young, you know what you face? The recklessness of youth. The recklessness of youth.

See, the real problem with John Mark is he was spiritually immature. So when they were on this missionary journey last time and God was really working. He really blessed that trip.

When they were at Pamphylia, John Mark just said, You know what? I'm out of here. I don't need this. Everybody had to do double duty.

Paul was taken away from studies and preaching time to do John Mark stuff. OK, I'm going to have to cook dinner because John Mark is gone. So I can't go preach over here tonight in Pamphylia because John Mark bailed.

Yeah, and I got to go to the grocery store because John Mark bailed. So you do dinner while I go to the grocery store and I got to push the shopping cart because John Mark bailed. Everybody had to pick up the slack of John Mark.

So Paul said, He's not ready. We're not bringing him. Barnabas says, Fine, I'm out of here, too.

Well, that's just great, Barnabas. Isn't that human? But you want to know something? Above it all was this huge sovereign God who's in full control, full control. So what happens in verse 40 is that Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God, and they end up bumping into Timothy.

What is sad about John Mark is that he caved into the recklessness of youth and he was self-centered. And in the words of Jonah 2.8, it says, They would observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy. That is exactly what happened to John Mark.

So he's spiritually immature. He's selfish and self-centered. And he is in contradistinction to Timothy.

Exactly the opposite, as we'll see in a minute. But let me show you something. We all battle the recklessness of youth and some of us don't ever grow up, so we battle it our whole life.

You know that some grow up, some don't. But in Christ, listen, in Christ, with the Holy Spirit, the word of God, we are all to grow up into the measure and the stature and the fullness of Christ. We're all to go from children to young men to fathers.

It's actually babies in the Lord, children, young men and fathers. It's always a progression to the upward call of God in Christ. We face not only the recklessness of youth and all that brings.

It's a carelessness. It's a blindness to the priorities of life. Spiritually, it's a procrastination.

It's putting everything off as important today. It's not submitting to elders. It's all this anti-Bible stuff is what the recklessness of youth is and self-centeredness.

And the thing is, is that whether you're young and and reckless or you're old and apathetic, because it tends to flip that way. Some people stay reckless and immature throughout their youth, and then they get older and they become now old and apathetic. So either way, they don't do anything for God.

We all face, however, young or old. The temptation in this day and age to be self-centered, selfish. Hold your place and turn your Bible to 2 Timothy chapter 3. Every one of us here is going to be tempted to not have a shepherd-like heart, which doesn't mean you have to be a pastor or full-time in the ministry.

It means that you are concerned about the other sheep around you and how they're doing. And if you know more than them, you can pass on your knowledge and you're concerned to see others come to Christ. It's the heart of Christ is what it is.

But every one of us face the temptation to be like John Mark, immature, self-centered. Why? Because 2 Timothy 3 verse 1, Paul writes, Know this, be knowing this, don't forget this. In the last days, perilous times will come.

Why? For men will be, what does it say? Lovers of themselves. Lovers of money. Now, here's how it works.

Lovers of themselves, that's like the sewer pipe. Out of that drips everything else in the list. Lovers of themselves are lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

That's the day in which we live. And on top of it, in the midst of it, on Sunday, in a pew, having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such people, when you know them, turn away from them.

Don't hang around them. Why? Because they will pull you down into it. This is heavy stuff.

It's a long list, and it's a powerful magnet. In the last days, a lot of people are going to be that way. In the time of Paul, John Mark bailed out of a missionary journey where souls are being saved to go into heaven forever, which is the all-important issue of life here.

And he just walked away because he was full of self-love. So, you know what? God has somebody else in store, and his name is Timothy, and he has the heart of the shepherd, a shepherd's heart, not a selfish heart. And he's waiting for them.

What is interesting to me is how the Holy Spirit orchestrates this whole thing. Verse 40 of Acts 15, but Paul chose Silas. Barnabas leaves Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God.

They went through Syria, Cilicia, strengthening the churches, and then they went on from there to Derby and Lister, and behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy. You know what just happened right there? What just happened was human frailty in action. Two men of God get in a big, giant argument.

They part company. That's human frailty in the kingdom of God. So that they part company.

Barnabas and Mark leave. Paul chooses Silas, and then they run into Timothy. And what you have is all of a sudden you have a brand new team.

And this is, may I say, the European team. Barnabas was a Levite. Barnabas was extremely Jewish.

John Mark was extremely Jewish. Paul grew up in Tarsus in Greek culture. Timothy is a Greek father.

He grew up in Greek culture. And by the end of the chapter, there's another chapter, but the section we're in, they get a call from the man from where? Macedonia. And they go to Macedonia, which is Greece.

What they have here is a real Jewish team that they need to get into Greece and Europe, but the gospel is a Greek team. God uses a fight among the brethren, a split in the church to form the team necessary to take the gospel to Europe. It's huge.

The principle is the principle is this. Our God is sovereign, right? And so he understands how we are. So he uses the frailty of your humanness.

My humanness. God uses the frailty of men to work his sovereign purposes to advance the kingdom of God. He uses the frailty of men to work his sovereign purposes to advance the kingdom of God.

Write it down, laser it on your heart. Don't ever forget it, because what happens is when you see something like that going on, you tend to panic. Did you hear about Barnabas and Paul? Oh, my God.

Which one do you think was in the spirit? Do you think Barnabas was in the flesh? He walked off the page of the Bible. Oh, my John Mark. I never did like him.

He always had a funny look in his eye. How do you react when the brethren aren't getting along? Here's what I do. I just go.

God's at work. He's using his sovereign purposes to the frailty of men. He's going to use this.

Something's going to come out of this. He's reorganizing and he's just woven it into his plan. Our human frailty.

If he didn't, how in the world could he use the foolish things of the world to confound the wise? Because we are all lofty fools. Oh, I don't like that. I'm offended at that.

I don't know how you could be. How many foolish things have you done in your life? They are without number. I thank God he uses the foolish things of the world to confound the wise.

I thank God that I get to see Paul and Barnabas having an argument. And I thank God I get to see God use it. So what happens then is Barnabas takes Mark and leaves.

Then they come to Derby and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman. Act sixteen, verse one, who believed, but his father was Greek.

He was well spoken of by the brethren who are Lystra and Iconium. You know, that tells us about Timothy. Unlike John Mark, who's not well spoken of by the brethren and Paul refuses to take him, he's the opposite.

He is a man of God in his own house, a man of God in his own neighborhood, a man of God in his own city. And beyond Lystra, he's well known in Iconium, which means he's already influencing well beyond his own city, just walking with the Lord. He's young like John Mark.

The difference is he has a different heart. He's saying, Lord, I know I'm a young man, but I know I'm reckless, but you can fill me with your Holy Spirit and the fruit of the spirit is self control. So, Lord, you bring that fruit of my life.

I don't want to be like that, perhaps because they had already gone through there on their last journey. Perhaps Timothy knew about John Mark's bailing. And in fact, I'm sure he did.

And perhaps he went to the Lord and said, you know what, Lord, I don't ever want to be like that. And by the time they come back, everybody knows him as this wonderful young man of God, and he becomes the perfect one to add to the team instead of John Mark. Verse three, Paul wanted to have him go on with him, so he took him and he circumcised him because of the Jews that were in that region, for they all knew.

They all knew. They all knew. See, Timothy's influence.

They all knew that his father was great. Paul had him circumcised just to get that distraction out of the way. When it came to doctrinal issues of the Jerusalem, he would fight tooth and nail when it comes out to different situation where it's just a distraction and a hindrance.

Get it out of the way. I'm not so sure Timothy felt that way, but at any rate, Timothy becomes so much like Paul that when the Philippian church later they're going to fill apply at the end of all this later when they want Paul to come, he said they can't come right now, so I'm going to send Timothy to you because he will do. He will say he will teach exactly what I would, and he will come back as my eyes and my ears, and he would tell me and show me what I would have seen if I was there myself.

That's how submitted this young man is to God. All of that is to say, are you a John Marker? Are you a Timothy? You don't have to stay at John Mark. If you are one, you can become a Timothy.

You don't know something really great. God was at work in such a huge way here. God wanted Paul to disciple Timothy when Paul is about to be executed in second Timothy, writing his last song from last swan song from the managing dungeon.

He's handing the baton of his ministry to Timothy. He's telling him all the last instructions he's giving his ministry to Timothy. God wanted Paul to disciple Timothy.

God did not want Paul to disciple John Mark. You understand that? So he just allowed them to be themselves for a little while. It's all God has to do.

He doesn't have to do any magical that let some of us get in a squabble. Paul, he has to just take the spirit away just for a second and move. You know, let him be themselves for a day and I'll get them all split up and we'll get the plan going.

So what he did was he took the patience of Barnabas and funneled it into John Mark. And later, Paul writes years later and he says, send Mark to me. He is profitable for the ministry.

He had changed so greatly. Listen to this. Barnabas leaves with John Mark.

You might say, gee, that's kind of a tiny ministry to be stuck with on the island of Cyprus. Legend has it he stayed there and died there. No man kind of a tiny ministry after the Barnabas and Paul Evangelistic Association and all the Paul does later.

Jay Barnabas settled for the lesser one. No, God was in charge. God is sovereign.

God is in charge in your life. You will have bickering. You will make fleshy decisions.

God has already woven them into the plan. Listen to this list of the Gospels in your mind. Matthew.

What's the next one? Oh, my gosh. Are you kidding me? Here is a guy who can't even be taken on the journey because he's such a flake. He writes the second Matthew Mark.

Here's the second gospel. Matthew portrays Jesus as king of the Jews. Luke portrays Jesus as the son of man.

John portrays Jesus as God. Mark portrays Jesus as the perfect servant. The very thing he was not the day he left for Barnabas.

You know what? That sneaky guy, Barnabas, he made his lasting contribution after all massive. The gospel of Mark and so much of Barnabas is in that. So isn't God good because you can go, Oh, my gosh, I think I'm a John Mark and I don't think I'm going to get out of it in time and I'm going to vanish.

No, you're not going to vanish. God knows right where you are. He'll continue to work and he will work his plan if you just have an open heart so that the new team is formed.

Timothy is right in there with Paul. He is so usable. He overcomes the recklessness of his own youth early in life.

And in verse four, they went through the cities and they delivered them the decrees to keep, which came down from the council at Jerusalem and the churches were strengthened in the faith and increase in number daily. One of the things you want to get before we go any farther is this, that you can be very, very young and you can be very, very used. Charles Spurgeon was 17 years old when he pastored his first church, 17 years old.

Most 17 year olds today are still trying to figure out why they flunked algebra. Just kidding. Think of the average 17 year old today, or if you're that age, think of what you think about.

Spurgeon was pastoring his first church at 17 at 19, 19. He was in London. He had taken over the pastorate of the New Park Tabernacle.

The New Park Street pulpit is the first, I believe, two or three or four volumes in his Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit series. Those sermons you read in there were preached by a 19 year old teenager. And I'll tell you something.

They are beyond most of the sermons you hear from most of the pastors today that are well beyond 19. Do not underestimate how much God can use a young man, young woman whose heart is truly surrendered to the Lord. Spirit of the Lord brings forth fruit of the Spirit, which is love, joy, peace, self-control, long-suffering.

It's just awesome what God can do. Let him do it. Okay, team is now up and running.

They're moving forward. Paul heard the call. He's got his passion.

He then has Timothy who comes forth. His person is godly. They're moving.

They've had some conflict, but they're moving. They're moving. Where are they moving? They're going across from Antioch across Asia Minor like this.

Imagine now how excited Timothy is. Oh, I'm on a team with Paul. We're going to see church after church after church after church planted.

I get to watch him preach and preach and preach and preach all in this tour. And imagine Silas. I cannot believe I'm an associate with Paul.

This is incredible. What I am going to see is a lot. No, you're not.

Not for a while, anyway. See, God calls Paul to take this journey. It's definitely God.

Definitely met with conflict, division, all these things. Definitely God working at the same time building a new team. Then God sets about to position that team exactly where he wants it for exactly what he's called them to.

You want to know how he does the positioning? You may not like this by slamming doors in their face for months and months and months and months so that he can move them with each slam door in another direction until they can't move anymore because in front of them is ocean. So you read it. Verse six, the positioning of closed doors.

And this to me is one of the lessons we need to ever learn in our life. And once we do, we'll be so happy because it will take a lot of bickering and arguing and arguing and yelling at God out of our lives. We're always looking for open doors.

He opens doors. No man can close. The Bible says it has not.

I'm knocking. I'm looking for the door to open. Do you remember that he also closes doors? No man can open.

And how often do you look for closed doors? We all look for open doors, but do you look for closed doors? I venture to say most of us don't, and we're shocked when they slam and we're moving so fast towards the closing door that we get our nose caught in it. You know, Lord, that really wasn't nice. I didn't sign up for slam doors.

I signed up for joy and for love and the overflowing cup, not slamming doors. Well, that's how he moves us into position for some of the greatest works of our life. This is the greatest call on the Apostle Paul's life.

And look at this verse six of Chapter 16. When they had gone through Phrygia and gone to the region of Galatia, which is where they've already been now. Now they're into uncharted territory where they want to share the gospel, preach it.

So what do we read? They were forbidden, verse six, by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. What is this? Lord, you call me to go on a missionary journey. I answer the call.

The team breaks up. I'm still answering the call. We get a new guy.

We get another new guy. We got a new team. Now we got a new team.

It's great. Thank you, Lord. Now we're moving across Asia.

Mind you forbid me to preach when you call me to preach. What is this? Meanwhile, Silas and Timothy are going. You're the great Paul.

You don't even preach. So they go through Asia and they are forbidden to preach verse seven. After they had come to my fear, they tried.

All right, it didn't work back there. No, no, listen up, guys. We're going to have prayer meeting tonight and tomorrow we're going to hit my fear.

We're going to hit the ground running tracks, flying mouth open. We're going to preach it. You see, God works here.

Second missionary tour. You've got your T-shirts, right? Right. Yes, sir.

Do your people love him? Yes, sir. Are we going to my fear? Yes, sir. Right.

They tried to go into Virginia. The spirit did not permit them. Well, it's just terrific.

Let's have another prayer meeting. Paul is really great. There's a lot of fruit.

So passing by my fear. Oh, this is terrific. Now we just pass places.

Paul, you know what? I think you were in the flesh when you got an argument with Barnabas and God's not blessing you anymore. I think I think maybe you lost your anointing and they come all the way to Troas. You know how long they have traveled? They have gone the equivalent of starting in Maine on foot and traveling all the way across California and they haven't preached at all.

Can you imagine that I'm flying a jet five hours and get out in L.A.X.? No, they've been a long time and they haven't done anything except get forbidden. Slam, slam, slam. The wind is blowing in their face.

They're fighting against the wind. They're not sewing with the wind. They're fighting against it all the way across Asia minor.

And then they come to the Aegean Sea and get their toes wet in the ocean and they look at Paul. They say, you know, I love your journeys. Remind me to come another time.

This is great. What are we going to do on the way back? Is it going to be just as exciting as it was coming here? Do we get the fish before we go? I mean, they're human. So let me just say this.

All of that was to lead them to what we read in verse nine. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man from Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, come over to Macedonia and help us.

Now, after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. You know what happened? One slammed door after the next. Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam, bam.

Keeps moving them like this until they're at Troas. They're on the Aegean Sea and straight across from them is Necropolis, the port with Neapolis, the port which is 10 miles from Philippi. God wants this European team in Philippi to preach the gospel so revival can break out and it can spread from there and across Europe and into England and into the Puritans many years later and onto the Mayflower and across the Atlantic Ocean to Plymouth Rock, where they could get out with the gospel.

And we are here today knowing Jesus Christ, because Paul answered the call way back, went through division, went through conflict, went through opposition, slammed doors and everything, got to the Aegean Sea, stayed in faith, went to bed, praying, got a vision from God, went across, took the gospel to Europe and obeyed God. Amazing, huge, absolutely huge. And he used closed doors to get him to that point.

He used closed doors to get him to the entrance of the greatest thing he ever did in his life. Take the gospel of Europe, where it had never been before. There was a town in the South years ago that was growing cotton, and that's how they made all their money.

And then they got invaded by boll weevils, and the boll weevils got all over the cotton, ruined the cotton crops, and everybody was really upset. Somebody stepped forward and said, Do you know boll weevils don't like peanuts? Oh, fine. Fine.

Got Diet Coke to go with them? Slide them over. Let's talk about it. Do you know they don't like peanuts? We should grow peanuts instead of cotton.

All the gang on the committee that says this is the way we've always done it. This is the way we're always going to do it. Everybody knows this is the way it's always done, committee.

They said, We do cotton here. We don't do peanuts. So some real, real strong, courageous individuals said, Let's go ahead and plow our fields of cotton and plant some peanuts.

See what's happened. It's like magic. It's a true story.

To make a long story that's true short, they ended up planting peanuts, and they had bumper crop after bumper crop, and that place became so wealthy from the peanuts so far beyond what they ever had with cotton that they put up a huge statue of a gigantic boll weevil. This is true of the city square. What is the moral of the story? Thank God for boll weevils.

So next time you hear the door slam, if it's slamming today, if it's been slamming all week, if it's been slamming all month, it's been slamming doors all year. Thank God for boll weevils. Thank God for boll weevils, because they've taken you to someplace new, someplace better.

These slam doors took him to the big main entrance to Europe. There was a couple that had a little general store back east and years ago, and they had a little milk, little bread, little this, little that, few band-aids, you know, a little aspirin and, you know, things these little mom and pop shops have. Well, some developers came along and they built this big store over here that had all kinds of things, discount everything type deal.

Then on this side over here, they built a big discount market. So everything in the one place was that they had was discounted and had more of it and was cheaper. And then when they built the discount grocery store, they had more of everything and it was cheaper.

And so their business in the little mom and pop shop stopped overnight. So when they're, they're losing it, their business is gone. Slam the doors closed on their business.

So as they start to run out of money, one day pop went to mom and he said, you know, I got an idea. He said, this is it. We're going down the drain.

We're out of money. We're going to have to close our doors, but I have one last idea. I think it'll work.

He said, we need to make a sign with our last bit of money. This is true. We need to make a sign.

And she said, where are we going to put them to sign? And he said, trust me, baby. I just threw that in there. So they, this is true.

They went in, they, that part wasn't, but they went in and they had this huge sign made. It's so huge. It covered the whole little mom and pop shop.

And you know what it said on the sign? Main entrance here. Yes. From that moment, everybody started piling right through that door.

Main entrance here to get to the other ones and their business went right through the roof and mom and pop lived happily ever after. That is exactly what happened here. They get to the GNC, Paul goes to bed.

Lord, what are we going to do in the morning? There's no more land. And God in the night says, main entrance here to Europe, to the gospel in Europe, to the biggest thing you'll ever do in your whole life. Right here.

All this hard getting here. You had the wind in your face, but from here you'll sail with the wind at your back. Literally look at verse 11.

They got up in the morning and verse 10, after they saw the vision concluded, they should go to Macedonia immediately. So verse 11, therefore, sailing from Troas, Luke writes, we ran a straight course to Samothrace little island, spent the night and the next day to Neapolis port where they landed on European soil, Philippi, 10 miles away from there to Philippi. What happened is Luke writes.

We ran a straight course. Luke used a phrase he only used twice, once here. It is a nautical term in the Greek, and it means to have the wind at your back.

I love it. We go all this way. They get the wind in their face.

It's all opposition. It's all difficulty. Then they get to where God has been taking them through all the difficulty.

They are right on target. The sovereignty of God has been an action of the spirit of God. They are right on target when they set sail.

Literally, physically, the wind was at their back. They had the wind with them and they set a straight course right over into Europe. When God is closing doors in our lives, maybe one right after the next, maybe for a long time, he's leading us somewhere.

He's leading us to the main entrance to the next phase of our life. And when we go through that open door, the wind is at our back. God is with us and fresh breezes are blowing.

And it's different than it was in all the difficult months that it took to get us right there. And we're right in the middle of the will of God. Our God is an awesome God.

He is an awesome God. And he is able. He is able.

The next time you see a door slam, say, thank you, Jesus. It's hard, isn't it? We don't like slamming doors. No, it's very hard.

Unless you understand the truth here that makes you free and you start looking for closed doors. You really do. You start looking for closed doors.

Something happens. You go, oh, that's a closed door. Thank you, Lord.

You're working. Where's the open one? Slam another one. Oh, wow.

You're getting really active. Slam. Boom.

Another one. What a disappointment must going to be a big open door coming up. Boom, boom, boom.

Oh, that was horrible. Oh, my gosh. God, you really working.

I'm overwhelmed. I've never seen so many slam doors. Lord, I love you.

You're so good. Next thing you know, the door opens up and suddenly everything makes sense. You have a brand new vision, brand new phase, brand new team, brand new friends, whatever.

And his will has come in your life. His kingdom is coming as well as being done and will be done from there by the leading of the spirit. Our God is an awesome God and he does reign and he works mightily by his spirit in the hearts of those who love him, who seek him, who surrender to him.

Are you a John Mark or are you Timothy? It's a matter of the heart. It's your decision. You don't have to be a John Mark at any age.

You don't have to be apathetic because you're old and you don't have to be reckless because you're young or both. You can just simply be godly. You know something, if you are open door or closed door, you're going to have what most people around you don't have, and that's contentment.

Because godliness with contentment is great gain. Even when doors are slamming, you can still be content because you have him. Hi, my name is Danny Bond, pastor of Living Streams Christian Fellowship, now meeting in New Lenox.

The message you just heard was taken from a Sunday morning study through the book of Acts. With a high view of God and his word, the Bible allows us to share real water with those who are spiritually thirsty, while giving hope to those who long to be close to God. We would like to extend an invitation for you to join us and experience for yourself what the Lord is doing in Living Streams.

We meet Sunday morning at 10 a.m. and Wednesday evening at 7.15. If this message has encouraged you and you would like directions to where we meet, call us. 815-478-0200. Again, the number is 815-478-0200.

Thanks again for listening, and may God bless you as you seek him.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/0/SID0696.mp3>  
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/danny-bond/open-door-closed-door/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**