



Life Principles Notes™

Confronting Closed Doors

Summary:

We've all experienced it: cherished plans that must be abandoned. Doors suddenly close before our eyes, and we ask God why He would allow these disappointments. Then we respond in one of two ways. We make matters worse with the wrong response, or we trust God and move on with new reasons for hope.

In Acts 16, the apostle Paul saw his hopes fall short not once but twice. He had carefully planned for his second missionary journey, but God seemed to be closing doors. Paul and his companions were

“forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia” (Acts 16:6). Again at Bithynia, “the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them.”

Why would the Holy Spirit forbid Paul to preach? This passage teaches us how to confront a situation where God closes doors we wish to open.

Key Passage: [Acts 16:5-13](#)

Supporting Scripture: *1 Corinthians 16:8-9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; Colossians 4:2-3; Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 64:4.*

Scriptural Principles:

1 Who is responsible for our closed doors?

There are several reasons why our desired plans may suddenly be cut off. We could simply be the victim of circumstances; the place and the time could be wrong. Then again, another person or group may close the door. We could be hindered by the work of Satan. Of course, sometimes it is God Himself who is intentionally moving to prevent us from some action that we are eager to take.

2 God closes doors to protect us from our own mistakes.

Why would God close a door and disappoint us? There are many sensible reasons. The first of these is that He loves us and wants to protect us from our own ignorance. When our plans fall through, it is an important opportunity for relying upon our faith in God. After all, we don't have all the information, but we know that He does. If we knew the plans He has for us, we would realize our mistaken perceptions.

3 God closes doors to redirect us.

Another reason God might close a door is to send us in a different direction. We cannot see the future, and have no way of realizing a greater opportunity than the one we desire. The story of Paul shows that God is capable of moving you through another door for greater service and fruitfulness in your life. The apostle had planned to visit small towns in Asia, yet God redirected Paul's steps into the European continent through the gateway of Macedonia. This redirection would have a profound impact upon world history.

4 God closes doors through promptings of the Spirit.

Paul didn't wait for God to explain His reasons. God owes us no explanations, but we owe Him immediate obedience. The Lord directs our steps through the simple promptings of the Spirit. How do we recognize

that message? It is a strong, godly impression about what we should do. He sensitizes us over time so that we learn to recognize His voice. This is a part of growing in Christian maturity. By trial and error, we learn to trust Him by discovering what a mistake we make by ignoring His prompting.

5 God closes doors to test us.

God may also close doors in order to test us. Closed doors test us in two particular areas: faith and perseverance. In terms of faith, are we ready to trust in what God is instructing us? Will we rest on the principle that He always, with no exceptions, causes all things to work together for our good? It is a test of faith. In terms of perseverance, will we stand firm over time? Will we become discouraged in our faith and wander from our reliance upon Him, or will we redouble our resolve by drawing closer?

6 God closes doors to fulfill His timing.

We may never realize that a tremendous and exciting opportunity is just around the corner. Walking through the wrong door could cause us to miss something wonderful that was part of the Lord's plan. Sometimes it's all a matter of divine timing. The door we want to walk through is a good one, just as we thought, but the hour for walking through it was wrong, and God is working to equip us for a future opportunity.

7 God closes doors due to our disobedience.

We may have chosen the correct door, but prevented ourselves from walking through it. In other words, we may have become disqualified due to our own disobedience. God is always watching to see if we are willing to obey Him. He never uses servants who do things their own way. Therefore, if we fail to follow His guidance, He will close the door until we prove trustworthy, or He will direct someone else through it.

8 What are the wrong ways to respond when God closes doors?

There are several mistakes we can make when opportunities fall through. We shouldn't try to force those doors open through our own strength. Don't ask someone else to open the door for you rather than waiting upon God. It is a terrible mistake to become emotionally upset and give in to anger, then bitterness, then hostility toward God and life. Be wise and avoid the trap of looking for other people to blame.

9 What are the right ways to respond when God closes doors?

One of the greatest biblical principles is to wait upon God. How long? We should wait until we hear a clear word from Him. God "acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him" (Isaiah 64:4). Therefore we should think positively as we wait. We should look for God's purpose in these new developments in life. Why not ask Him to show us His purposes? He will often make the answer clear to us. As we wait and trust God, we can anticipate His wonderful answers and we can be faithful where we are until His will becomes known.

Conclusion:

Wherever you may be in life, you can be certain that God has the best in mind for you. You and I are bound to run into many closed doors in life. We will be disappointed regularly because we don't always know what is best for us. Why rebel against a loving God, and not trust His infinite wisdom?

Instead, we should wait patiently whether doors are open or closed. We should never run ahead of God or behind Him, but keep in step

with the Spirit, knowing that He is acting in our behalf; He will work all things for our good. When we accept unpleasant surprises in stride, our faith grows stronger, and our witness grows more powerful. Then as our ministry multiplies, you and I can thank God for loving us enough to open the right door at the perfect time, and with His blessings. 🙌

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