

June 19, 2022

## “Opened Doors and Closed Doors”

**Acts 19:8-10**

### Prel Rmks

- We are following Paul ...
- Today we’ll see how his ministry unfolded in that large and strategic city of Ephesus ...
- LOGW ~ Title ~ text

**(8)** And he [Paul] went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. **(9)** But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. **(10)** And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

### INTRODUCTION

**Acts 16:6** Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia.

**Acts 18:19-21** And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. (20) When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, (21) but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. [closed → open] [3 Doors -outline]

## I. The Open Door v. 8

(8)

And he went into the synagogue

- custom – why?
- This would be the last time ...

and spoke boldly for three months,

- one of the effects of being filled with the Spirit
  - **Acts 4:13** Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.
  - **Acts 4:29** [they prayed for boldness to speak God's Word]
  - **Acts 4:31** And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.
  - **Paul after his conversion: Acts 9:27** preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.
  - **Acts 9:29** And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus ... they attempted to kill him.
  - **In Antioch of Pisidia Acts 13:46** 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.
  - **Acts 14:3** they stayed [in Iconium] a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace

[“boldness is required ... not arrogance ... but HS boldness ... it is going to be more important than ever in the future ...]

### reasoning and persuading

- **reasoning** = making a thorough argument ~ disputing ...
  - this was his custom
  - **Acts 17:2** [in Thessalonica] Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths **reasoned with them from the Scriptures**,
  - **Acts 17:17** [in Athens] Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.
  - **Acts 18:4** [in Corinth] he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.
  - **Acts 18:19** [at the end of his 2<sup>nd</sup> missionary journey, on his way back to Jerusalem] he came to Ephesus, and ... entered the synagogue and **reasoned** with the Jews.
  - [...]
- **persuading** = convince someone by argument in an effort to win them over ...
  - **2 Corinthians 5:11** Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences ... hallmark of Paul's ministry
  - **Acts 26:28** Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."
  - **Acts 28:22-23** [Jews in Rome] **we desire to hear from you what you think**; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere." (23) So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and

solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, **persuading them** concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening.

[reasoning and persuading not just with man's reasoning ability, but with the W of G in the power of the HS:

- {Adrian Rogers: "Anything I can talk you into, someone else can talk you out of." ...]
- What is needed is the reasoning of the W of G and the persuasion of the HS!
- {JMac – man who never used Scripture – always arguments based on human reasoning and logic without ever appealing to the Scripture}
- What was Paul reasoning with them and persuading them about?]

concerning the things of **the kingdom of God**.

- This was Paul's subject matter – the subject matter of his preaching and teaching ministry:
  - **Acts 20:25** "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.
  - **Acts 28:30-31** Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, (31) preaching **the kingdom of God** and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

- I'm not sure we 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christians put enough emphasis on the Kingdom of God as it relates to the Gospel.
  - {**Trevor Kirkland**: "That phrase, Kingdom of God, is simply a short-hand phrase for describing the Biblical, theological framework within which the Gospel was preached."}
  
- It was the emphasis of the ministry of Jesus to connect the Kingdom to the Gospel in his preaching:
  - **Mark 1:14-15** Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching **the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15)** and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and **the kingdom of God is at hand**. Repent, and believe in **the gospel**."
  - **Matthew 4:23** And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching **the gospel of the kingdom,**
  - **Matthew 9:35** Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, **preaching the gospel of the kingdom,**
  - **Matthew 6:33** But seek first **the kingdom of God** and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.
  - Last Sunday in John 3: unless one is born of the Spirit, he cannot see or enter the Kingdom of God.
  
- It is amazing how often the NT speaks about the K of G:
  - 70 times
  - Matthew: Kingdom of heaven: 33
  - Total: 103 times
  - always related to the Gospel of JC

- In those verses and sections of Scripture about the Kingdom, we learn about:
  - the nature of the kingdom
  - the citizens of the kingdom
  - the demands of the kingdom
  - the coming of the kingdom
  - the savior of the kingdom
  - the entrance into the kingdom (salvation)
- [I just get the idea that maybe we don't preach enough and talk enough and meditate enough on the Kingdom of God
  - **Revelation 17:14** These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful."
  - **Revelation 19:16** And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.
  - Maybe we ought to be announcing that more than we do as we talk about the Gospel
  - There's a Kingdom that is at hand. It's here now! And the King of all Kings reigns over His kingdom now!
  - But a day is coming when that King will make Himself visibly manifest. There's a King who's coming, and we better be ready!]
- [Paul had an open door and **Acts 19:8** And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.]

## II. The Closed Door v. 9a

**Acts 19:9** But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, ...

- Paul had 3 good months – 12 or 13 Sabbaths
- But when God opens a door, does that mean that door will always remain open? Does God also close doors that He previously opened?
- {Wednesday night: Ben Bounds – Cambodia ...
- [Look what happened here]:

**(9)**

But when **some were hardened and did not believe**,

but spoke evil of **the Way** before the multitude,

- the Way = those who were proclaiming that the Messiah had come – Jesus of Nazareth.
- this is how Christians were described by the Jews. They were a considered a subset of the Jewish faith, **a sect** ...
- It is used a number of times here in Acts ...
  - **Acts 9:1-2** Then **Saul**, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest **(2)** and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of **the Way**, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

- **Acts 19:23** And about that time there arose a great commotion about **the Way**.
- **Acts 24:14** [Paul when he was brought before the governor, Felix, confessed that he was part of this group known as the Way] But this I confess to you, that **according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers**, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.
- **Acts 24:22** ... when **Felix** heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of **the Way**, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case."
- We are on the same Way as those 1<sup>st</sup> C Christians
  - narrow way that leads to life
  - It is wonderful to think about the Christian life like this: as being on the Way
  - Jesus said: I am the Way ...
  - Are you on the Way?
- [Acts 19:9 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, **he departed from them and withdrew the disciples,**]
  - Paul: "I know where this is headed."
  - God is closing this door in the synagogue
  - I've seen this before
  - [But when God closes a door, or allows a door to be closed, how should we view that? How should we think about that? – I didn't ask: "How do we think about it?" ...]
  - [How should we think about a door that is closed? How should we respond to a door that closes? What should we be looking for when a door closes?]:



### III. The Next Open Door v. 10

- When one door closes, what can we expect?
- Terry Downey: “God will not be outdone!”

**Acts 19:9b** [Paul] departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

**(10)** And this continued for two years,

so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

- other churches in the Roman Province of Asia:
  - Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Colossae
- **Isaiah 55:6-11** Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. (7) Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. (8) "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. (9) "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (10) "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, (11) So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

## Conclusion / Applications

1. Those Jews in that synagogue who opposed Paul's ministry thought they were shutting him down and what he was teaching. "We'll put an end to this Way here in Ephesus!" ...
2. **Revelation 3:7-8** "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, "HE WHO HAS THE KEY OF DAVID, HE WHO OPENS AND NO ONE SHUTS, AND SHUTS AND NO ONE OPENS": (8) "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it;
  - **Key of David** = reference in Isaiah 22:22 - key given Eliakim to the palace in Jerusalem signifying that he held the key to the Kingdom. Here in Revelation, it saying that Jesus, the Messiah who came in the line of David, is the key that opens the door of entrance to the Kingdom.
3. What an encouragement this ought to be to us ...
  - With the Gospel there is always the next open door through Jesus!
  - "Bro. Paul – always?"
  - "Yes, always!"
  - "How do you know?"
  - **Matthew 28:19-20** Go ... and make disciples ... baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ... (20) ... and lo, (look, behold) I am with you always, even to the end of the age." ...