

Acts Chapter Nineteen

Acts 19:1-7

And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they *said* to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they *began* speaking with tongues and prophesying. And there were in all about twelve men.

- Paul had been in Ephesus a few days on the way back from Corinth—on his second missionary journey. We now get a glimpse of what takes place during his third journey.
- This section begins by sharing that Apollos was at Corinth. He had received revised instruction from Priscilla and Aquila. (Consider I Cor 3 in this context).
- Before Paul came to Ephesus—Apollos was here. This might explain why some disciples were unfamiliar with the Holy Spirit (Acts 18:24-26).
- Paul wrote I and II Corinthians while in Ephesus—he gives much instruction about the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. (I Cor 16:7-9)
- Instruction was to 12—not the entire church.
- They knew to turn from—but not to turn to.
- Were these disciples saved? This does cause us to reflect on the Presence of the Holy Spirit and how that is manifested in our lives.

Acts 19:8-10

And he entered the synagogue and continued speaking out boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading *them* about the kingdom of God. But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he withdrew from them and took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this took place for two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

- Paul has an extended time teaching in the synagogue.
- When the Jews become hardened—we have a perfect illustration of the parable of the soils.
- Romans 3:8—describes his encounter with Jewish opposition.

- Paul leaves the synagogue due to opposition, and takes up teaching in the school of Tyrannus—the hall where a gentile teacher gave instruction.
- From the school of Tyrannus, Paul has the ability to sow the Word into other places—from one location. (Church of Colossi exists before Paul comes due to written instruction—he write Colossians before visiting them).
- Paul worked to support himself in Ephesus—as well as teaching daily. This is a significant investment made by Paul for the sake of the Kingdom.
- This kind of ministry helped spread the gospel to Jews/gentiles in Asia.

Acts 19:11-17

And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." And seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who lived in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.

- Extraordinary miracles—miracles not of the ordinary kind (dunamis).
- Extraordinary: what God might do for one person due to faith—but not for replication. We can receive in an unusual way from the hand of God—but should pursue what there is a biblical pattern for.
- This city is a center of false worship/occult powers
- The miracles being done—shaking Ephesus to its foundations.
- Exorcists try to duplicate what they saw Paul accomplish (magicians in Egypt).
- Magic attempted to gain power without paying the price of humble submission to the God Who provides the power.
- They fail because they have no personal relationship with Jesus.
- When their attempt backfired—it had a good effect on the spread of the gospel.
- Situation with the 7 sons of Sceva—impressed all with the reality of the demonic world. Ephesus was a stronghold of satan—many superstitious/satanic practices. Books containing formulas for sorcery were prevalent.
- The evil one recognizes his enemies.

Acts 19:18-20

Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices. And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and *began* burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.

- Repentance spontaneous as they encounter the Living Jesus by His Spirit.
- Repentance came as the reality of the two spiritual realms begin to manifest conflict.
- They confessed—took action in keeping with their repentance.
- Summary of what is taking place in Ephesus: Eph 1:19, 3:16, 3:20, 6:10, Col 1:11, I Cor 1:18, 1:24-25, 2:4-5, 4:20, II Cor 4:7, 6:7, 10:4, 12:9
- Estimate of value in today's economy—between 1 and 5 million dollars
- Repentance linked with revival

Acts 19:21-22

Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

- This is when Paul wrote Corinthians—sent it with Timothy. It is sent to one location, but others will read it as the travelers pass through.
- Paul determines what he does through the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- We know Paul wants to travel through these regions to collect/deliver a fund he was collecting from the churches to help Jerusalem (Rom 15:25-31, I Cor 16:1-4).
- He sends two partners on ahead.

Acts 19:23-27

And about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no little business to the craftsmen; these he gathered together with the workmen of similar *trades*, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. "And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no

gods at all. "And not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship should even be dethroned from her magnificence."

- During these two years—Paul is up against a significant spiritual stronghold—and probably suffered from what he faced.
- We find out a bit about Paul from what he wrote to the Corinthians during this time period. In II Corinthians 1:8-9, Paul is crushed to the point of despair. He speaks one way about power in I Corinthians and differently in II Corinthians. He learns that power works best through weakness.
- Opposition that is voiced here is really a compliment to the effectiveness of the work of the Kingdom through Paul.
- Temple of Diana—huge pagan temple—supported by 127 pillars that were 60 feet tall—decorated with sculptures—rediscovered in 1869—main altar unearthed in 1965.
- Artemis is Greek name—Diana is her Roman name. Mother goddess—multiple breasts.
- This was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world—largest Greek temple ever built.
- Temple was also a major treasury/bank of the ancient world—money kept safe under protection of deity.
- Many were profiting from the human traffic that surrounded this attraction. Worship of Diana had spread throughout Asia—this location was a central focus.
- When gospel begins to have a financial impact—trouble follows (Christianity should effect the economy—Welsh revival).
- Demetrius appeals to financial self-interest and civic pride.
- Paul has acted for Jesus—not necessarily campaigning against Diana.

Acts 19:28-34

And when they heard *this* and were filled with rage, they *began* crying out, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" And the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia. And when Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the disciples would not let him. And also some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent to him and repeatedly urged him not to venture into the theater. So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know for what cause they had come together. And some of the crowd concluded *it was* Alexander, since the Jews had put him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the assembly. But when they recognized that he was a Jew, a *single* outcry arose

from them all as they shouted for about two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

- This conflict effects the entire city.
- When God moves among his people—it effects the livelihood of those connected with vice/immorality.
- Asiarchs—political and religious officials
- Alexander—wanted to make a defense that this was not a Jewish uprising.
- What would cause us to enter a stadium and shout for 2 hours today?

Acts 19:35-41

And after quieting the multitude, the town clerk said, "Men of Ephesus, what man is there after all who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, and of the *image* which fell down from heaven? "Since then these are undeniable facts, you ought to keep calm and to do nothing rash. "For you have brought these men *here* who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. "So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against any man, the courts are in session and proconsuls *are available*; let them bring charges against one another. "But if you want anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the lawful assembly. "For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's affair, since there is no *real cause for it*; and in this connection we shall be unable to account for this disorderly gathering." And after saying this he dismissed the assembly.

- Town clerk—like the mayor
- God worked mightily in Ephesus—faced with great spiritual resistance.
- Paul writes significantly about battle in Eph 6:10-20
- When disciples experience revival—culture experiences a revolution.

Acts Chapter Nineteen—Workbook

Key Words:

Harmonize:

Read Ephesians 6

Dig:

- 1) Who was in Ephesus teaching the scriptures before Priscilla, Aquila and Paul arrive? How might this influence the first disciples Paul meets there?
- 2) What does baptism represent?
- 3) When did the Ephesian disciples receive the Holy Spirit?
- 4) While Paul taught in the synagogue, how did the people respond?
- 5) How did Paul train disciples while in Ephesus? What was the outcome?
- 6) What do you learn about the demonic realm from vs 13-17?
- 7) What are the evidences of a community responding to the Lord?
- 8) What do we know about the stronghold of the evil one in this region?
- 9) Why did Demetrius rally people against Paul?

10) Make a list of the effects, spiritually, which took place when the Kingdom of God began to confront the kingdom of darkness.

11) Who is Artemis?

12) Who are the ministry partners named in chapter 19?

13) How does the division between 'church and state' get illustrated in this chapter?

Discuss:

- 1) What are the cultural idols that influence the ways we think in our city? How does the church see and then navigate these?
- 2) How are our religious and political beliefs connected to the financial realm? Is this positive or negative?

Point of Prayer:

Examine Ephesians 6 for fuel for your prayers this week.

Integrate:

What other scriptures come to mind as you read this chapter?

Application:

- 1) In your own discipleship, have you been adequately equipped / trained to recognize and deal with demonic influences?
- 2) What had to change in your own lifestyle when you began to follow Jesus?

- 3) When you came to Christ, did you have to get rid of anything?
- 4) Have you ever been accused of 'wrongdoing'? How did you respond?
- 5) What has the Lord convicted you to repent 'from' recently? What has He called you to repent 'to'?
- 6) What is your first reaction when faced with spiritual conflict?