

Acts 19.23-41

Honor Jesus – Disturb the World

Great Book of Acts! OUR History as Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ!

FOUNDATION of the Church that Worships Savior who Died & Rose for Us

Story of CHURCH begins in the SHADOW of the CROSS

50 days Later Followers Stand in CITY where MASTER was MURDERED

BLOOD Still STAINED the COBBLESTONES of JERUSALEM

Message of HOPE and ACCUSATION > You KILLED Him, but He ROSE!

From FIRST Century to FINAL Century – Church ADVANCE thru ADVERSITY

PROCLAMATION goes hand in hand with PERSECUTION

In our TEXT we See these TWIN Themes in the CITY of Ephesus



Christian FAITH is Spread by HEARING AND SEEING

GOOD NEWS of God who LOVES > Seen in People who LOVE Others for God

Paul now on THIRD Mission Journey – Slight Change in TACTICS

LONGER Visits in KEY Cities > Planting churches that IMPACT Regions

EPHESUS – LARGEST and MOST INFLUENTIAL City in Roman ASIA

¼ of Million Citizens > Major City in Roman Province of Asia

Had One of World’s Largest Libraries > Was Popular Center of Occult Arts

Ephesus was the waterhole for every kind of magician, witch, clairvoyant, and criminal. Con artists, murderers, and perverts all found the climate of Ephesus unusually agreeable. That city was the Dark Castle of Asia Minor. R. Kent Hughes

## 1. The Gospel Declared

Ephesian Church was FOUNDED on STRONG TEACHING

“Paul entered the synagogue (in Ephesus) and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God...he had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord” Acts 19.8-10

OVER 3000 hours of Bible Teaching by Greatest Theologian in Church History

Paul’s Letter to Church at Ephesus > RICH, DEEP TRUTHS of Theology

Paul MOVES to NEUTRAL Building – Open to ANY & ALL in Roman ASIA

Today we should GO to where PEOPLE ARE – Not just MAKE them Come to US!

From that Strategic City – Gospel Spread thru Roman Asia / Modern Turkey

v. 8 spoke boldly...arguing persuasively

SOME Consider Arguing – UNCHRISTIAN – UNCARING - ARROGANT

Word ‘spoke boldly’ 6 X’s in Acts > All Done by PAUL / All to JEWS

JEWS – So CLOSE yet so FAR from Gospel of Jesus > Admiration & Animosity

Because he believed the gospel to be true, Paul was not afraid to engage the minds of his hearers. He did not simply proclaim his message in a ‘take it or leave it’ fashion; instead, he marshaled arguments to support and demonstrate his case...the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, and he brings people to faith in Jesus not in spite of the evidence, but because of the evidence, when he opens their minds to attend to it.

John Stott

v. 9 But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them.

Coming to DIFFERENT OPINION – STRONG Disagreement – NOT HATRED

NO Place for FORCE or VIOLENCE – Can PEACEFULLY Co-Exist in World

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

1 Corinthians 13.1

Completely REJECTED System of LAWS/TRADITIONS BOUND 1<sup>st</sup> C JEWS

Jewish and Christian & Islam – EXCLUSIVE, MONOTHEISTIC Religions

Anyone says AGREEMENT – Compromised or Confused about their own Beliefs

SIMPLY Only 2 RELIGIONS in World – ‘DO’ and ‘DONE’

100’s of Traditions, Ideas, Leaders, Rituals, Sacred Books > Same message DO!

DO this Prayer, Offering, Ritual, Tradition, Pilgrimage, Payment – DO and LIVE!

Christianity says NOTHING we can DO – Guilty, Sinful, Completely Unacceptable

GOOD NEWS Jesus has DONE It! DIED / ROSE – Forgiveness AND New Life

When we enter an area, we need to spread the gospel, which we can do through books, tracts, radio, television, and other forms of mass communication...But proclamation is not enough. It must be followed by actualization...so people living in the cities will be able to say, “Not only are these Christians speaking the gospel to us, but they are living it too.”

James Boice

## 2. The Gospel Demands

Here is ARTISTS Rendering of Ancient Temple to Artemis – Now Destroyed



Magnificent Temple to Mother Goddess > Artemis to Greeks / Diana to Romans

**4 X's larger than Parthenon in Athens**

1 of 7 Wonders of the Ancient World > Shrine to Pilgrims > Source of Pride and  
Income to Ephesian Leaders > Scandal to the Ephesian Christians

Ephesus Intellectual Center of Asia -- 3<sup>rd</sup> Largest LIBRARY in World of That Day

Antiquity Slang 'Ephesian Writings' = Magic Chants, Incantations, Spells

Paul NOT IMPRESSED with their WIZARDS and WITCHCRAFT

v. 26 And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all.

v. 8 about the kingdom of God / 'Kingdom' – JUST 7 X's in Acts

Heard Paul BEATING Same Drum - in EACH CITY – Asian or European! – Jesus!

Preaching SAME GOSPEL in Each Venue – Synagogue, Shopping Center, Streets  
 Points ALL People to Jesus: Slave/Free, Men/Women, Jew/Gentile, Rich/Poor  
 KINGDOM – SOVEREIGN Rule of Risen Christ over ENTIRE UNIVERSE

Paul NOT PROFITING from MAGIC – he was PREACHING the MESSIAH  
 MAKING TENTS – DECLARING TRUTH – ALL DAY, EVERY HOT DAY!

For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your  
 servants for Jesus' sake. 2 Corinthians 4.5

vs. 17-20 ...Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

New Believers SAW SEVERE JUDGMENT on Hypocrites who MOCKED God  
 BOOK BURNING & IDOL BREAKING NOT imposed by Preachers or Ayatollahs  
 WILLING Choice of Christian People under CONVICTION of Sin by God's Spirit  
 TODAY'S MONEY = Millions of RMB!

Societies are changed from the bottom up, not the top down. Look at the Great Awakenings and the Reformation—they were grassroots movements. Yes, these movements had their great leaders: Wesley and Whitefield, Luther and Calvin, but they became powerful engines for change when the *grassroots* were motivated and ready for action. Charles Colson

v. 17 they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor.

NAME of Jesus Sometimes DISHONORED by BEHAVIOR, Practices Followers

PART of Pastoral Care New Converts from DARKNESS – CLEAN, FULL Break

If they were going to accept Christ, they had to reject idols and cease to depend on any other non-Christian practice. I usually do this with Buddhists and Hindus before they pray a prayer of commitment to Christ. I do not lead them into the step of commitment unless they are willing to forsake all other gods...With people who have dabbled in the occult, there must always be some dramatic form of cleansing from the past.

Ajith Fernando

### 3. The Gospel Destroys

LUKE is Recording a SPIRITUAL Confrontation – IDOLS and Living God

Confrontation applies to ALL AREAS of LIFE and SOCIETY

BELIEF about TRUTH, REALITY, GOD, ETERNITY Foundation of Society

GODDESS Artemis was MOTHER and MEANING of Life for many Ephesus

EPHESUS had FESTIVALS – Athletic Games, Orgies, Feasting, Drinking

It was the festival of Artemis, and every place was full of drunken men, and all the market-place was full of a multitude of men through the whole night.

Achilles Tatius, eyewitness

#### a. Losing their Riches

vs. 23-25 About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way. A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business.

GUILD of Silversmiths had POWER & INFLUENCE in City of EPHESUS

Studied ECONOMIC Trends and saw PROFITS Shrinking

WHO NEEDS a Statue of GODESS with NO POWER?? Market SHRINKING!

FINANCIAL Impact on Tourism, Artisans, Priests, Butchers, Prostitutes, Guides

If our Christianity is not affecting the economy of our world, we do not have much Christianity.  
James Boice

## b. Losing their Reputation

vs. 26,27 And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty."

More than JUST Economics > It brought SHAME to their EMOTIONS

Attack to their POCKETBOOK and their PRIDE

GREAT ARTEMIS is what MADE Them GREAT >> CIVIC PRIDE at Stake

WHO are these FOREIGNERS and their FOREIGN Gods > We are EPHESIANS!

## c. Lost their Reason

vs. 28-32 When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater. The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there.

ANGER Rose in Ephesus > RIOTING was RESULT of their FEARS

APPEAL of Secular World Today – MIGHT makes Right – Everyone is Doing IT!

NOT Sure WHY Believe WHAT We Do – But Everyone Does – MUST be Right!

Even CITY Clerk agrees EVERYONE Knows Diana is Goddess of EPHESUS

TODAY if you can PROVE Enough People believe Something MUST be TRUE!

#### d. Lost all Restraint

vs. 33,34 The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"



I STOOD in AMPITHEATER of Ephesus – Still There – Seats over 25,000 People

CRAZY Shouting for HOURS - "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

MANY do NOT Know WHY or WHAT They're SHOUTING!

Root of Conflict > ECONOMIC Impact of MORAL BEHAVIOR of Believers

Appealed to CIVIC PRIDE and ECONOMIC SURVIVAL > Great DANGER!

Economic LOSSES – Artisans, Priests, Temple Prostitutes, Butchers



Paul STOOD with BLOOD THIRSTY, Angry Crowd SHOUTING!

v. 30 Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him.

PROBABLY thinking of this MOMENT...

If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained?  
1 Corinthians 15.32

Takes COURAGE to Stand Against ANY CROWD – esp an ANGRY CROWD

TRUTH is NOT Always the MAJORITY Opinion

If you are ON GOD'S SIDE – YOU are ON the MAJORITY

World NEVER Changed by MAJORITY – but by Wise, Courageous MINORITY

#### 4. The Gospel Delivers

What was the OUTCOME of this RIOT in Ephesus

ONCE Again – EVERY Time Xtians before Gov't in Acts > Declared Innocent

vs. 35-41 The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess..."

World TRIES SHOUT DOWN the TRUTH of Gospel > but Shouts itself HOARSE

Luke's Purpose in Account > ROME has NO CASE Against Church of Jesus Christ

TEMPLE of Artemis PILE of LONELY Rocks in Ephesus TODAY



BILLION People WORSHIP LORD Jesus Christ today, Nobody worships Artemis  
 Apostle PAUL in Authority of RISEN Jesus Christ > It is all BIG LIE  
 Christian MOVEMENT Confronted their PRIDE and their PURSES  
 Within 300 years of RESURRECTION Idolatry Disappeared from Mediter World

Before Paul LEAVES Ephesus, NAME of Jesus going to be LIFTED UP over City  
 Last 2000 years – More Books about Jesus than Anyone – Worlds Calendar on Him

How has CHRISTIAN Faith been SPREAD Around WHOLE WORLD

Why is CHURCH of Jesus Growing STRONGER in MANY Nations of Earth?

Not by APPEALING to NUMBERS – Not being worried if we are MAJORITY  
 NOT by Winning an ELECTION or CIRCULATING Petition – fighting for 51%  
 Did NOT have MASS Rallies or SING Emotional Songs

That is WHY PAUL’S PRIMARY WORK in 3 Years in Ephesus – WORD of God  
 The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple  
 Psalm 119:130

v. 10 ...all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

v. 17 ...the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus...were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor.

v. 20 In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

Want to CHANGE your World – BOLDLY Teach Word of God?

And LOVINGLY and SHOW the World what the LIFE of Christ LOOKS Like

GLOBAL Opportunity for CHURCH / Freedoms, Communication Technology

KEY – Then & Now – FAITHFUL Servants

Need to Wisely & Winsomely make Clear “ Jesus Christ is Lord and God!”

PRACTICE our PROFESSION with UNCOMPROMISING LOYALTY to Him

Jesus Will be UNRIVALED Master in City that REALLY MATTERS

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it...The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. Revelation 21:22-27,22.3

Acts 19.<sup>23</sup>About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.  
<sup>24</sup>A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. <sup>25</sup>He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. <sup>26</sup>And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. <sup>27</sup>There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty." <sup>28</sup>When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" <sup>29</sup>Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. <sup>30</sup>Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. <sup>31</sup>Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater. <sup>32</sup>The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. <sup>33</sup>The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. <sup>34</sup>But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" <sup>35</sup>The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? <sup>36</sup>Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. <sup>37</sup>You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess. <sup>38</sup>If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges. <sup>39</sup>If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. <sup>40</sup>As it is, we are in

danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." <sup>41</sup>After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.