

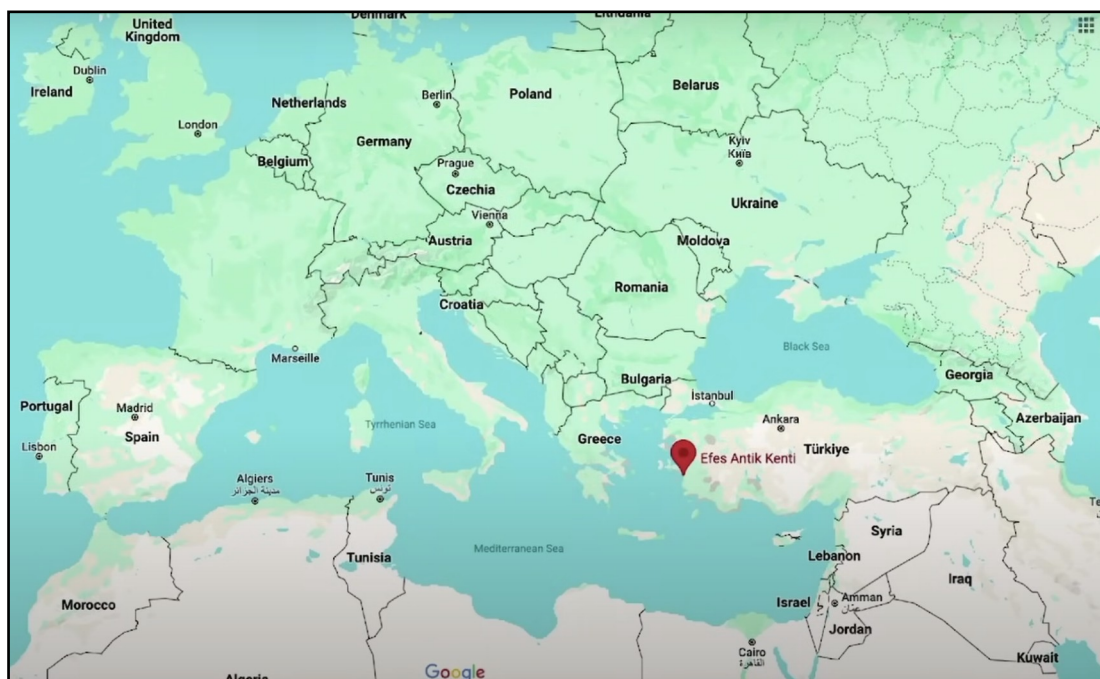
Acts 19 (Part 2): 8-41 • Ministering in Ephesus

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This is our second time, our second part, I should say, in Acts chapter 19. We're picking it up in verse 8. We did the first 7 verses of the chapter last week as part of the end of chapter 18, so let's pray. We'll start with prayer.

Father be with us this morning and speak to our hearts. Minister grace in this place. Touch us all Lord God, with Your Word. We just really pray for Your Holy Spirit to lead and guide and for our hearts to be open to hear Your voice. Lead us in wisdom and help us Lord to apply Your Word. We ask it in Jesus name, amen.

You'll remember that when we left off last week, the apostle Paul has started what we call his third missionary journey and he's on his way to Ephesus. He had been there once before at the end of his second journey, but only for a very short time. And if you need to remember where Ephesus is, we'll put a Google map up on the screen for you there. You can see the little red dot, hopefully there. In the lower right hand corner, you can probably make out Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, that sort of thing. And then, but that little red dot is where Paul is heading to Ephesus.



And in fact, in verse 8, we are told here, as we start reading in our text, that once Paul got there, “...*he entered the synagogue and for three months (he) spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them (and them means the Jews primarily) about the kingdom of God.*” (ESV)

And I'll just remind you that this was Paul's way. When he would come into a new area, he would always begin by sharing with the Jews, and then after that, he would go to the Gentiles.

But it tells us that in verse 9 that, “...*some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, (that means publicly they began to denounce Jesus, what Paul was saying, and so) he (Paul, it says) withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, (meaning those who had come to faith in Christ and he began to reason) ...daily in the hall of Tyrannus.*”

I want you to pause there with me for just a moment because there's an evangelizing tip that I think we need to be careful to take note of here. And that is that there is a point when you withdraw. You're sharing, you, probably no point when you stop praying, but there is a point when you're talking to people, and you're sharing the life of Christ with them. And you'll notice that Paul did it for an entire 3 months with the Jews, but eventually, it says they just became stubborn, and they determined that they were not going to believe.

In fact, the NIV says they refused to believe. It wasn't that they couldn't. It wasn't that Paul wasn't making sense. It wasn't that the gospel wasn't clearly articulated. They just weren't going to have it. Some of them just decided, no, no, not going to believe it. And not only that, but they began to speak against what Paul was saying publicly.

And it was at that point that Paul said, you know what? Okay, I'm done. I'm done. There are people who will listen. There are people who will open their heart to the Gospel message. I'm going to take the message to them.

And so it's important to understand here that there comes a point when you're talking to people about the Lord, where you're just banging your head against the wall. And I think some of you have probably experienced that in the past, whether you're talking to family members, friends, coworkers, or what have you. There's just a point where it's like, you know what? I'll pray for you. We're not getting anywhere anymore. So we have to recognize those sorts of situations.

And so Paul, as it says here in the end of verse 9, *“took the disciples...”* Again, those who had come to faith in Christ, and he began to just teach in what is referred to here as the, *“hall of Tyrannus.”* It sounds like a dinosaur, doesn't it? Yeah, it's not. It was just a name. And we don't really know anything about this Tyrannus character other than the fact that he had a hall or a school, and Paul used it to teach in the city of Ephesus.

And Luke tells us in verse 10 that, *“This continued for two years...”* That's a long time for the apostle Paul to stay anywhere. And it tells us here that the result is that *“all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”* And if you need to know what Asia meant back then, we're talking about really the whole western half of Turkey, what is modern day Turkey today, heard the Gospel.

And that of course isn't just because of what, they didn't hear it directly from Paul. There were people that took the message from Paul and spread out, and traveled out, and began to share so that whole area just became saturated with the message of the Gospel, and it's pretty powerful.

I mean, when you think about a day and age where there's no internet and there's no printing press. I mean, anything that's read has to be written by hand, by scribes, and that can take a long time. And so this is just amazing that in that two year period, that whole area of what was then known as like Asia Minor was saturated with the Gospel.

And we go on and read in verse 11 and following, we find out that Paul was doing more than just teaching. It says that, *“...God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.”*

This is pretty amazing, but I want you to notice a very key word here that Luke gives you in verse 11 concerning these miracles that were happening through Paul. And it's the word, extraordinary. Did you catch it? The word extraordinary means that they're super rare, very unusual. These were very unusual, but they were happening. And what was happening? Well, they were stealing Paul's handkerchief and apron.

Well, first of all, that tells you Paul was working in his tent making to support himself during certain times of the week because you see a handkerchief wasn't something that people blew their nose with back then. A handkerchief was something they wore around their neck. It was like a sweatband because when

they worked, it was very warm and so this was something to catch the sweat. Yikes, huh, kind of gross, but people were stealing Paul's handkerchief and they were taking it, and laying it on people who were sick and demon possessed. They were also taking his apron. And of course an apron is just, you know what that is. It was something that workers used to protect their clothing from getting damaged or soiled.

And the people were taking Paul's apron and they were laying it on people and they would get better. So what are we supposed to conclude? That there's such a thing as anointed aprons or anointed handkerchiefs? There are some people that would have you believe that was the case. No, of course not. There was nothing special about Paul's handkerchief.

What was special is the people had faith. It was their faith, that's what made the difference. Remember the woman in the Gospels who had the issue of bleeding? Spent all that she had with the doctors, couldn't get better. Got worse, in fact. So she finds out that Jesus is going through her area and what does she say to herself? If I can just touch the hem of His garment, I'll be healed, I know it.

What are we supposed to do? Start selling anointed hems? Again, some people would have you think so, but there was nothing special about the hem of Jesus's garment. She could have just as easily said, if I touch His hair. If I touch the hair on His head, or if I touch His arm, or if I kneel down when He's going by and touch His sandal. If I just touch His sandal, that's all it'll take. It doesn't matter what she wanted to touch. The issue is, that was her touch point of faith, and she said, I believe I'll be healed, and she was.

And it's the same thing in this situation. They're stealing Paul's handkerchief and apron because they believed that it was going to make a difference and God honored their faith, so we got to be careful.

I'll never forget one time I got a, I opened up my mail at home and I saw this envelope. It was fairly large envelope. I opened it up and it said it was an anointed prayer mat. It had been anointed specially to do miracles, and that if I just sat on this mat, or kneeled on this mat while I prayed, miracles were going to happen. And it was made out of paper. I mean, it was literally a piece of paper. And yet, I'm supposed to believe that's what's going on. People, it's a faith issue. It's not about things. Very important that we remember that.

Verse 13. Now it says *“Then some of the itinerant (meaning travelling) Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had*

evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you (which is a way of saying, I earnestly say to you) by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.""

And so here you got some Jewish exorcists. By the way, you might wonder why we hear so much in the Bible about demon possession, because there's a lot of it going on. I mean, Jesus met many demoniacs and when He sent out the disciples and anointed them to go and preach the gospel, and to do miracles, they cast demons out of people. And here we are in the New Testament, and you think, well, why were there so many demons that were inhabiting people back then?

Well, people, it was because of paganism. Paganism had been rampant for years in the known world. And the apostle Paul talks about the worship of pagan deities in the New Testament. And he tells people, he tells us, he says, you don't realize that these people are worshiping demons.

What, there's really going on in the known world at that time was a lot of demon worship, although the people were doing it unwittingly. And so there's demon possession is rampant and because it is so rampant, there were traveling exorcists who went around purporting to cast out demons.

Now, the name of Jesus became popular through the ministry of Paul to the point where some of these Jewish exorcists decided that they were going to take that name and use that name to cast out some demons now. They don't know Jesus personally. They have no, they're not born again Christians. They're just Jews, but they're hey, it works for Paul so let's see if it might work for us.

The problem is they're using the name of Jesus like somebody would use a lucky rabbit's foot or something like that. It's more superstition than it is real faith belief and that sort of thing. And so we're going to find out it's not going to go too well for these guys.

Verse 14. It says, *"Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this."* We don't know anything about a Jewish high priest named Sceva. It's even possible that was untrue and they were using that as a title to lend credibility to what they were doing.

Anyway, they're going around they come up to a demoniac and they say, we adjure you by the name of this Jesus guy. We don't even know who He is, but we're..., come out and so forth. Look at verse 15, *"But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?"* ¹⁶ *And the man*

in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”

That's a fancy way of saying they got the snot beat out of them by this single guy with a demon. And so they discovered the hard way that the name of Jesus cannot be casually thrown around as a magical incantation.

And we need to remember that too, even as believers. We usually tag the end of our prayers within Jesus name. People, that's not a magical incantation to make sure that your prayer is going to get heard or answered.

To speak in the name of Jesus is to speak in the authority. When you end your prayers saying, in Jesus name what you're saying is, I'm speaking, not in my authority, but in His authority because He gave me that authority.

Well, what if you say that but you haven't been given that authority? Well, the seven sons of Sceva found out what happens, when you just throw out that name but you don't have authority to use that name, right? Because these guys aren't believers. There's no faith in their own hearts. There's no personal relationship. There's no redemption. And so this is just a thing, right? And so they found out the hard way that, that doesn't work.

Isn't it interesting, we normally don't like to sit and take apart the words of demons, but it is interesting what the demoniac says, or the demon says in response to these guys trying to cast it out?

He says, *“Jesus I know, ...”* By the way, if you have a New King James Bible, your Bible says, *“Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?”* But what's interesting about that is those two words that in the New King James are translated, know and know, are two different Greek words. The first one is the Greek word, Ginosko, when the demon says, *“Jesus, I know, ...”* That word means, Jesus, I know by experience, right?

Then when the demon goes on to say, *“and Paul, I know,”* or as the ESV says, *“Paul, I recognize,”* that's the Greek word Epistamai. And it means, Paul I know about, heard of Him. So Jesus I know by experience, Paul I've heard about, but then that rather frightening end, *“but who are you?”* And that's when he turns and pumbles them, right there in front of everybody. It's a pretty, pretty incredible story.

Luke goes on to say in verse 17 and this changed people's opinion about using the name of Jesus. Let's look at verse 17. *“And this became known to all the*

residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear (meaning the fear of God) fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled.” Which means, held in high honor.

And that means they stopped using the name of Jesus as their magic rabbit's foot, and they began to respond differently and honor the name of Jesus as more than just a magical incantation.

Verse 18, and “...many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. ¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts (witchcraft) brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. (in other words, they had a public bonfire) And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.”

We're not really sure how much that's worth because we don't know the price or the value of silver, but it was obviously a lot because Luke makes mention of it. And so he says, “²⁰ So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.”

What's going on here? People are getting saved, but there had been many folks who had been involved in all kinds of sorcery and spiritism, which by the way, is alive and well today. And they had now come to faith in Jesus Christ.

So through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, they publicly brought out the books that they'd used to learn about spiritism and witchcraft, and they burned them in a public demonstration of repentance and the new life that is in Jesus Christ.

And I think this is a very cool sort of a deal for us to read because what it's showing us is what can happen when the Holy Spirit really gets a hold of people and He makes them to realize that they are now a new creation in Christ. And that's what the Bible says. Those who are in Christ are a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17) The old is passed away. The new has come. Here's the question. Are you acting like it? Are you acting like it?

Is your life consistent with that new creation? And this is what they were showing. And what they were doing in this public sort of a way, they didn't just take their books and sneak out into the backyard and put these in the burn barrel when nobody was watching. I'm going to get rid of these are creepy.

No, they came and did it publicly. They came out in the public square, and they piled these books, and they set them ablaze. This is very much like water

baptism and what water baptism means. Because water of baptism is a public declaration of the fact that I have been washed and renewed. And then what do we do when somebody comes up out of the water? We bring them up out of the water to signify that they've been raised to live a new life. A different life from the old life, right?

And really, what they're doing here, what they're demonstrating is what people demonstrate in the rite of water baptism. We're new. We're new creations. And this old junk that we used to be involved in, the speaking of incantations and witchcraft, and sorcery, and spiritism, that's in the past. It's my old life, and I'm done with my old life. You might say, well, pastor Paul, doesn't everybody come to that conclusion when they get saved? I wish.

I thought about it during, when I was teaching in first service. I should have brought it with me, but I got an email from a guy just this last week who wrote to give me his testimony, which was really cool. It was a fairly long email, but what he shared is how his walk with the Lord was not a quick night and day sort of an experience, which some people do have.

They get saved and boom, life changes forever. And they're just, it's just crazy. But I've learned that there's probably more people that sputter. That's the word I use to describe the fact that somebody will hear the Gospel and they're like, yeah, that's really cool. But they go back and they keep living their old life. And then later on they hear the Gospel again, and this time they respond. And they're like, yes I want to be forgiven, and stuff, but they don't really get connected to a church and they go back.

And that's what this guy's note was all about. He..., it was really, it was almost hard to read because he would talk about how he would go to church for a few weeks and then he'd go back and do cocaine, and smoke pot, and sleep with prostitutes. And then he'd get convicted about it, and he'd go back to church for about 3 or 4 weeks, and then he'd get dragged back in to cocaine use.

And then he got a girlfriend, but they were living like the world, living together, sleeping together. And he'd go to church once in a while, and then he finally got to the place in his life where he was sick and tired of being sick and tired, and he really, truly gave his heart and his life to Jesus Christ in the sense that he was willing to take the old man and put it off, which is what we're called to do. But not everybody does that.

And you might say, well, Pastor Paul, are they saved? Well, that's not mine to say. I don't know. Because we're saved by grace through faith, it's faith that saves us. I'm glad I'm not the judge.

All I'm saying is, I think sputtering is pretty common. I use that term because it reminds me of what my cars used to do when you get a little bit of or anything, I guess. If you get a little moisture in the gas tank, you got to burn that out and the thing sputters and dies. And there's been a lot of people whose walk with the Lord is very much like that.

There might be some people even in this room who've been sputtering. Once in a while I'll see some folks come to church. They'll come to church every 4, 6 weeks. Sometimes they even come down for prayer afterwards. Pastor Paul, would you pray for me? And I know what's going on. They're sputtering.

And sometimes I'll just get bold and just say, well, you ready to live for Jesus or not? Are you going to go back out and slop around in the pig pen? Because that's what's going on. So if you're sputtering, I want to encourage you, It's time to put off the old man.

Paul wrote about this, interestingly enough, to the very people that witnessed these folks burn all their books. In his letter to the Ephesians, he said this, up on the screen. He says,

Ephesians 4:21-24 (ESV)

...you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

...you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, (it's like taking off an old garment, it's rotten and stinky) which (but that all) belongs to your former manner of life (he says) and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

And you see, that's what the people did when they, and they showed that they did it there in Ephesus, when they took all these books that meant so much to them in their past life before Christ. And they brought them out and publicly burned them publicly. I'm not going back. This is all part of the old life. I'm not

going back there again. I'm not going to go back and dabble. I'm not going to sputter and I'm not going to go back to the pig pen and wallow in the mud.

Because you see, I've been saved. Jesus washed me, He redeemed me, and now it's time for me to start living the life that is consistent with what He has done in me.

Verse 21, it says that, *“Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.””* He wanted to get to Italy.

“²² And having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.” He's resolved to make his way back through Macedonia and get back to Jerusalem, but he hasn't left yet.

And before he could leave. Verse 23 says, *“About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way.”* And by the way, that's what Christianity was referred to before it was called Christianity. It was called, the Way, and I rather like that. I like it for a lot of reasons, not the least of which Christianity has largely lost its meaning. Because there's a lot of people today who call themselves Christians that don't believe historic, biblical, Christian truths.

They don't believe the Bible is God's Word. They don't believe Jesus is the only way to heaven. They don't believe those things. And yet they would call themselves Christians. And so the name has gotten difficult sometimes to define, but I like, the Way it's simple. We're part of the Way.

Why did they call it the Way? Oh, it's because Jesus said He was the Way. He was the only way. Not a way, He was the way and I like that. You want to get to heaven? Jesus is the way. Sure makes sharing the Gospel easy doesn't it?

Boy back in the 1970s? I remember a Bible with that name. Some of you guys with white hair or no hair know what I'm talking about. You remember what it looked like? Here's a picture of it up on the screen.



How many of you guys had a The Way Bible? Yeah, we're still around, praise the Lord. We've been we saw the 70s come and go. Yeah, and if you had a New Testament version, it was called Reach Out. Remember that? And it was the Living Bible.

And whatever else you might think of the Living Bible, those were popular in the 70s and a lot of people had them. And I think a lot of people came to Christ through them, too.

By the way, there's a difference between the Living Bible, which is a paraphrase, it's not a translation, and the New Living Translation. That's a real translation, alright, that went back to the original languages. It's important to keep that separate. Anyway, there you go.

Verse 24. So we got a problem that's starting to rise up here. It says, “...*a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen.*”

Let me just tell you here as we pause for a moment that Artemis was the primary deity of Ephesus. They had a huge temple there in the city of Ephesus

to the goddess Artemis. She was considered to be the goddess of fertility, pictured as a multi breasted woman. Yeah, just try to get that image out of your head.

Anyway, it says, *“²⁵ These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, “Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth.”* And that is really what the issue is all about. It's about money.

And he says, *“²⁶ And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.”*

See, now to you and me, that's a no brainer. It's like you made your god, I don't think that's a god. Well, but that's not what people believed at one time and Paul was ruining their business.

Verse 27, *“And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, (and listen to this) and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.”*

Well, you read that, aren't you just, you just think what in the world? I mean, if your god can be deposed of your god's magnificence, that might be your first hint that you're worshiping the wrong God.

Verse 28. *“When they heard this they were enraged (and of course, that's what Demetrius was trying to do, to get everybody all lathered up) and (they) were crying out, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” ²⁹ So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's companions in travel.*

³⁰ But when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him. ³¹ And even some of the Asiarchs, (that's a word that means dignitaries in the province of Asia) who were friends of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater.” They feared for Paul's life.

“³² Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them (look at this, most of them) did not know why they had come together.”

So most of this mob that was yelling didn't even know why they were there. This is a typical a mob scene. You don't really need a reason. It's just a big rush to come together.

“³³ Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander, motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all cried out with one voice, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”” Can you imagine two hours of hearing this chant over and over and over again.

“³⁵ And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky?””

They believed that this stone bore the image of Artemis. How do you know what Artemis looks like? It's like people who see the Virgin Mary in their cornflakes or something. It's like, how do you know what she even looks like? Anyway, it's just weird.

It says, *“³⁶ Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess.”*

Did you hear that? These guys did not blaspheme Artemis. These Christians didn't speak against Artemis. Why do I bring that up?

I hear a lot of Christians today going around talking about well, basically bashing every other belief and they never get around to talking about Jesus because they're always pointing at what they think is wrong. And so they're known for what they don't believe, rather than what they do believe.

These Christians didn't go around talking about Artemis. That wasn't their job. Their job was to talk about Jesus and to bring people to faith in Jesus. See, I can convince you, I suppose, well, maybe, I could spend time trying to convince you of all the things you shouldn't believe in.

But at the end of the day, even if I'm successful at telling you what you shouldn't believe in, I haven't really done any good in your life because I haven't told you what you should believe in, and put your faith in Jesus Christ, you see.

And I really like the fact that these men were, this testimony was given of them that they did not speak against Artemis, because they were too busy talking about Jesus.

Verse 38, *“If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹ But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. ⁴⁰ For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.” ⁴¹ And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.”*

And the reason he said what he said about not being able to justify this riot to Rome is because Rome looked very dimly upon riots. And if a city or a region was given to them, Rome would respond by taking away their privileges. We don't exactly even know what, but they would withhold certain things from them and it was a very serious sort of a thing. And the people knew that was serious and so that was enough to cause the people to disperse peacefully.

But as I was kind of finishing up my studying about this chapter, I got to thinking about this crowd of people yelling for two hours, great is Artemis of the Ephesians. And here they are talking about a false god, a god who is not a God at all. And yet they were very passionate, very passionate in their belief that there was something significant about this pagan deity named Artemis.

And I was reminded of a rather sobering Proverb that I'm sure some of you have run into up on the screen. It's from Proverbs. 16. It says

Proverbs 16:25 (ESV)

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

Now, what's interesting about that Proverb, I want you to look at it up there because there's a phrase in there that really sets it apart to help you understand. Because the Proverb is saying is that you can be very passionate and believe very strongly about the things you believe and in the end, it's going to be, you're going to be, death to you.

You might say, well, how do you know what's true and what you can believe in? Well, look at that verse again.

Proverbs 16:25 (ESV)

There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

There is a way that seems right to a man, (that's the key right there) but its end is the way to death.

The man believes what seems right to him. In other words, he himself, he is the judge. And if it seems right to him, he believes it. If it doesn't seem right to him, he doesn't believe it. He is the final judge. Have you ever met that kind of a person? Some people even apply that same idea to the Bible. You might say something or read something in the Bible and they'll just come back to you and say, well, that doesn't seem right to me.

There's a lot of people out there who don't think that there's a hell. You know why? It doesn't seem right. And there's other people who believe other things that aren't in the Bible because it does seem right to them. That seems right. And once again, it is an exaltation of self. I'm going to be the judge of what I believe.

You see, as Christians, that's not what we do. We don't believe things because they seem right. We believe things because they're true. And we also know the one truth. Who declares himself to be the truth. We quoted it before. Here it is up on the screen from John chapter 14.

John 14:6 (ESV)

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, (oh) and (I am) the truth, (You'll notice that Jesus didn't say I am a truth. In other words, as if there are many truths out there and I'm one of them. He says, I am the truth) and (I'm also) the life. (You want to come to the Father? There's only one way) No one comes to the Father except through me."

The way is Jesus and He is the truth. We believe it because He said it. That's enough. It's not because it seems right to me or doesn't seem right to me. That would be the height of arrogance on my part. It's God's Word. I believe Him, amen?

Let's stand in closing prayer. If you need prayer, come on up after we're finished, and we'll have our prayer team up here to pray with you. Let's go to the Lord.

Father, we thank You so much for Your Word and the beauty of it, and the clarity of it. And the things that we learn as we apply the Word of God, and open our hearts to the ministry of Your Holy Spirit.

Father God, help us we pray to put off the old ways because the old ways keep wanting to come back and attach themselves to us, but Lord, that's not who we are any longer.

We have been reborn and we are being made into the image of our Redeemer. And I pray my Father God that You would give us all the strength that we need to say no to the flesh and yes to the Spirit to yield to everything that You desire to do in our lives.

Help us Father God to walk with You every single day, to live our lives in a way that's consistent with the salvation that is ours in Jesus Christ.

We thank You. We praise You, Lord, as the truth. In Jesus precious Name and all God's people said, amen.

God bless you.

Have a good rest of your day.