

Paul at Ephesus

We're in Acts 19 and this is where the Word went over Asia in A year and three months so that everybody got a chance to hear the Word. In the first three months it was in the synagogue and after divers were hardened, they went to the school of Tyrannus and they separated the disciples.

Acts 19:9-10:

But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

The Word doesn't cause division, the unbelievers cause the division. When the Word moves in an area, then the unbelievers stir up the others. Then there's a division because they don't want to go with God's Word. That's what happened here; why they separated the disciples. The Word brings unity but those who do not want to believe cause division.

“disputing daily” – They reasoned, not disputed. They reasoned daily, just like twig fellowships.

“one” – delete

The schools of rhetoric normally operated in the morning until about 11 o'clock or so; therefore if Paul utilized the school, he would have had to use it in the afternoon. This school of Tyrannus, if it was a Greek school or Roman or something, they may have just utilized it; rented it or something. If it were a Jewish rabbi school, then the only reason they could have utilized it was because he would have been converted and would have been a believer. Those are two possibilities. Nevertheless, using this school and going out witnessing into the different communities, all Asia had a chance to hear the Word. This pretty well solidified the work from at least the Jerusalem area all the way up around Asia. Who knows how it had been reaching over into Egypt and over into Babylon or up north into Armenia. We don't know because there are no records in the Word on it.

In the second century it spread into parts of Spain and other parts of the world. By the third century it had spread throughout a much bigger area. Then, after that, it spread even further. In the first century they hit the major parts of the Roman Empire, plus. Anybody that was really hungry for truth had an opportunity to hear if they really wanted to.

When it says that everybody in Asia heard the Word, does that mean that everybody believed the Word? No. When everybody in that whole area had a chance to hear the Word, does that mean that the majority believed? No, a handful believed but look at what that handful did for the whole civilization of the world at that time and who it effected people throughout history in subsequent centuries. It will do the same thing today. It's still the same Word.

If one person stands; look what Joseph did in Egypt. Joseph stood and Egypt became the most wealthy place. He was the only believer there. He was a believer in jail for a number of years. Then over night he became the second in command in the country. So what if you have to sit in jail for twelve or fifteen years as long as you get to be made second in command. That's one way to look at it. You and God make a majority. All you have to do is believe.

Look at the believing in that community that all of Asia got to hear the Word.

Acts 19:11:

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

“special miracles” - are “not ordinary miracles.” That's what it literally means. They are extra ordinary miracles. The reason they are extra ordinary is not because God favoured them specially over other groups. It's because the believing was so high there. Look how the Word moved out. How many miracles happened in Athens? In Athens how many believed? Just a few. What was the temperature of believing in Athens? Low.

You may go into some community and the temperature of believing is very low. You witness there, you find those that are hungry and believe, and you go on. Continue to help them, love them. They're part of the family but you'll never really make any headway in that particular city because; no hunger. The temperature of believing is low. You may go into another city, the same size, relatively speaking, and the temperature is high; people are hungry. You see many people believe and get born again and you see signs miracles and wonders by the score. That's the difference in communities because of the hunger of the people there. You go into some communities and they're loaded with devil spirits and others; they're not.

“by the hands of Paul” – it was by Paul's hands. It wasn't that he was possessed. He wasn't a channel. He wasn't a medium. He wasn't used. Paul operated by the freedom of his will. He did the miracles but by the power of God that was in him.

Acts 19:12:

So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

“evil spirits” – in the Aramaic it reads, “devils”

Those little pieces of cloth didn't do anything, except the people believed that when they received them, they'd be healed. Why did Paul use cloth? Because of revelation; that was the revelation because God by His foreknowledge knew what would make them believe.

If God says, "Cut up an apron and give it to everybody and they'll be healed," do you know what's going to happen? They're going to be healed when you cut it up and give it to everybody. If God says, "Pour everybody a glass of water and dump it out on the ground in front of them," then you do what? Pour a glass of water for everybody and dump it on the ground in front of them. If God says, "Take a bucket of water and throw it in their face," then you do what? Do what ever the revelation is.

You can't have a handkerchief waving ceremony or an apron waving ceremony and expect to get results unless you have revelation.

Acts 19:13:

Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

"evil spirits" – "unclean spirits" in the Aramaic

They saw what Paul was doing. They were exorcists. They were the counterfeits in exercising evil spirits. You have them today and people use this verse to show how great exorcism is. They never read the context.

They didn't say like Paul said to the spirit in that woman, "In the name of Jesus Christ come out" and it came out pronto. They said, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth," because that's a name that seems to be getting results. Sometimes they would use other names like Abraham, Isaac, or Solomon.

Acts 19:14-16:

And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so.

And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

It overcame seven men. That tells you the power of the evil spirits when you don't know the power of God that's in you.

Acts 19:17:

And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

That fear is kind of neat. To the unbeliever it was “fear” fear. To the believer it was respect.

Acts 19:18:

And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

“deeds” – *praxis* – The book of Acts is called *praxeis* – that’s the plural form of the word. *Praxis* means act or deed or work. *Praxeis* means acts or works or deeds or practise. They showed their practises, what they had been doing, their acts, their deeds. What had they been practising? Hooky-pook; black arts, white arts, exorcism.

Acts 19:19:

Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all *men*: and they counted the price of them, and found *it* fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.

“used” – this is the verb form of *praxeis* – *prassō* – they practised curious arts. They used curious arts. They worked curious arts.

“fifty thousand *pieces* of silver” – a piece of silver is worth 64 cents. When you multiply that you get 32 thousand dollars. In our time, if the average cost of a book was 10 dollars, you’d have 3,200 books. If they were only 5 dollars for a book, that would be 6,400 books. However I don’t know what the cost of books was in those days. Books were not like we know them. They were scrolls, papyrus rolled up. Some of these may have been single sheets of papyrus. Some may have been small rolls, some larger rolls that they had their curious arts on. But they brought all these and made a big pile and burned them. It must have been a big fire.

Acts 19:20:

So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

“mightily” – means; with strength. So the Word of God grew with strength and it prevailed. When you prevail over something, that means you win out over it. What caused it to prevail? It grew with strength. Was that Word over the world? No, that was back n verse 10:

Acts 19:10b:

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

Everybody heard it; Word over Asia. Verse 20 is the mop up, where the Word grows in strength. This is the mop up. After everybody has had a chance to hear the Word, then

you still keep teaching the Word. The job's not done. You keep teaching and the Word will grow in strength in individuals and prevailing. That's the mop up. Verse 10 is the Word over the WORLD. Verse 20 is the mop up.

That's a great key. The first thing you want is everybody to have a chance to hear it. Then you go in and it's still the Word, the Word. And everybody gets a chance to really grow in that Word. That's growing in strength and the Word prevails. To the end that it continues to prevail, you're going to have quite a country or land. But when legalism and some of these other things start tearing away and people don't stand on the Word, then you won't have that prevailing. That's why we have to just keep teaching the Word. It's our responsibility as leaders to continue to teach the Word no matter how many have heard in any place.

Acts 19:21:

After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

Paul purposed in the spirit" the Aramaic reads; purposed in his mind. Dr. Wierwille gives this usage of spirit number 4 in the Receiving the Holy Spirit Today book, which is; the seat of the personal life. Paul didn't purpose in his new-birth spirit. It was in himself. "He strongly desired," is what it's saying.

This is the first hint of him wanting to go to Jerusalem. Was it the will of God for him to go to Jerusalem? No, but he strongly desired to go to Jerusalem. It's been over two years since he's been there.

He not only wanted to go to Jerusalem, he wanted to go to Rome. He was at Ephesus and he wanted to pass through Macedonia and then down into Achaia (Greece). From there he wanted to go down to Jerusalem. This is what he purposed to do. And from Jerusalem to Rome. That is the trip he wants to make. That's his vision; his desire; what he wants to do.

Acts 19:22:

So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.

Paul sent Timothy and Erastus ahead to look things over and later on he's going to go there. Remember his desire was to go to Macedonia, Greece, Jerusalem and then to Rome. Sometime in this period, we're going to see when a little later, he wrote to the Romans because he wants to go there.

Romans 1:8:

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

There were believers in Rome already. Paul had not been there yet but he says, “Your believing is spoken of throughout the whole world.” All over they’ve heard about their believing.

Romans 1:9-10:

For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;

Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.

He wants a prosperous journey, by the will of God, to come unto the Romans.

Romans 1:11:

For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

“established” – *stērizō* – like *epi stērizō* that we had earlier – this is the end part of it

The “gift” would have to be a gift ministry.

Romans 1:12-13:

That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let [hindered] hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

He hadn’t been there yet. He wants to come and have some fruit among them too.

Romans 1:14-15:

I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

This was written a little time after Acts 19 but already here is where he’s beginning to purpose to strongly desire to do that. He wants o go to Rome. But he also wants to go to Jerusalem and so he sends Timothy and Erastus ahead of him.

Romans 16:23:

Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

“mine host” – this was the guy he was staying with when he was writing Romans.

When he wrote Romans he was around Corinth. I’ll show you that later. Erastus was the chamberlain of the city of Corinth. He was also one of Paul’s companions in Ephesus.

II Timothy 4:20:

Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

This is towards the end of Paul’s ministry.

Erastus went back home to Corinth. That’s where he stayed. I believe those are the only mentions of Erastus.

In I Corinthians, which is the first epistle to those in Corinth, he mentions Timothy that he had sent ahead.

I Corinthians 4:17:

For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

Timothy was more than likely the one who delivered I Corinthians to them when he went. We’re going to see, later on, that I Corinthians was written about this time from Ephesus.

Paul stayed in Asia for a little while.

Acts 19:23-24:

And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

For a certain *man* named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

Demetrius was the big guy in this whole organization that brought a whole lot of money in to all the craftsmen in this idol business.

Diana was her Roman name. Her Greek name was Artemis. Artemis, in Greek mythology was a chaste hunter. She did a lot of hunting. She was chaste, which was unusual for the Greek gods and goddesses however I don’t think that’s the one referred to because it came originally from an oriental goddess by that name who, according to Bullinger, personified the bountifulness of nature. An alabaster statue in the museum of Naples represents her with a castellated crown, and many breasts, with various emblematic figures indicating that she is the universal mother of all creation. Layard gives reasons for identifying her with Semiramis, the Queen of Babylon, from whom all the licentiousness in ancient worship proceeded.

Really that's where she, along with basically all the other pagan goddesses, come from; was from Semiramis who was supposedly married to Nimrod and they had a child after Nimrod died who she said was Nimrod reincarnated. Remember? It's all in the book called Jesus Christ is not God. She was worshiped with many breasts, mother of nature etc. The temple in Ephesus was built over a meteorite and she was worshiped as a goddess from heaven.

Acts 19:35:

And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?

This could be referring to the meteorite. This temple was a great marble temple which had a floor area of 10,000 square feet. It's one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Besides that, at Ephesus, they had a big open air theatre like a stadium. This theatre seated about 24,500 people. Besides that, Ephesus was the capitol of the Roman province of Asia. We learned earlier that it was one of the three major trade centers around the Aegean Sea and one of the chief links between Rome and the east. Again, it shows you the significance of why the Word would reach out from this particular city. This was quite a temple. A lot of people knew about it. Demetrius was one of the guys that was getting a lot of money off of the worship.

Acts 19:25-26:

Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth.

Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:

Acts 17:24-25:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

Do you think he taught the same thing at Ephesus? Sure, that's where they get this; that Paul's teaching there aren't any gods made with hands.

Acts 19:27:

So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

He said they were not only concerned about their wealth and their economic stability, but they were also concerned about their great religion. He sort of pleaded with their dominant buying motives; on the money category, sort of on the greed end and in the category of worship.

Acts 19:28-29:

And when they heard *these sayings*, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians.

And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.

“men” – some of the texts read “man” – “...having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, a man of Macedonia...”

Acts 20:4:

And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

This talks about Paul's companions. One of them is Gaius of Derbe. If this is the same Gaius, and Derbe is way over in Galatia, then Acts 19:29 would read “man”, meaning that only Aristarchus was of Macedonia. Gaius could have been of Derbe and Aristarchus of Macedonia. It is possible that this is another Gaius and in Acts 19:29 they're both from Macedonia.

Acts 19:30:

And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not.

He wanted to go in because of tenderness and love. He didn't want to stay out and let his men go in and face them. He wanted to be in there in the fight himself. That's a tremendous leadership principle even though in this instance perhaps it wasn't right to go in there, that's where his heart was.

“the disciples suffered him not” - his disciples didn't allow him to go in

Acts 19:31-32:

And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring *him* that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly [*ekklēsia* – the church; the called out] was confused: and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

They didn't even know why they were there, that's how confused it was.

Acts 19:33:

And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defence unto the people.

They grabbed Alexander, another one. They had Gaius. They had Aristarchus. They grabbed another one, Alexander. They grabbed him and put him up there.

Acts 19:34-40:

But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great *is* Diana of the Ephesians.

And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Jupiter?

Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess.

Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another.

But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly [*ekklēsia* –church – called out ones].

For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse.

This guy was a great politician. He said, "If you want to do something, let's do it legally. Let's bring the charges in because he new the Roman law. The Roman legion is going to want to know what's going on down here; why all this noise?"

Acts 19:41:

And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly [*ekklēsia* – the church].

Whenever the adversary tries to stir up something like this he has to do it illegally. He can never do it legally when a country is founded on biblical principles; while there's

still freedom in a country. The Roman Empire had certain principles in it that were built on the same kind of freedom that you have in the Word. Men, in order to do something, had to do it lawfully or else suffer the consequences. It's the same way today in the United States. These men tried to do it illegally and that townclerk said, "Look, if you want to get the job done, let's do it right; do it legally. If there is nothing that they are doing that is illegal, then forget it. It's a free Empire."

Today it's the same thing. When countries start making laws that make that which is illegal legal then you've got nothing but confusion and the country is going to die soon. But as long as the principles are based on the Word, it will continue to stand. It's the same way here. The Roman Empire later on fell because it started dwindling in that category.

This is the Word. You just stand on the Word and legally they can't touch you because when you act on the Word you're going to walk within the confines of the country as much as possible and still hold forth the greatness of the Word.