

The Book of Acts Chapter 19

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Continued)

Acts 19:23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

1. Review
 1. For a quick review of where we ended last time, when Paul ended his second missionary journey, it was with a brief stopover in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) in the city of Ephesus. **[map: second missionary journey-ephesus]**
 2. But on leaving Ephesus, he left behind his missionary partners, Aquila and Priscilla in that city and promised to return (Acts 18:21) later.
 3. Then Paul returned to Jerusalem to report on his second missionary journey and then returned to his home church in Antioch. **[map: second missionary journey_caesarea-Antioch]**

4. Last time we also saw how Apollos had been converted through the ministry of Aquila and Priscilla, and then had gone to Corinth to minister (Acts 18:24-28).
5. It was at this time that Paul had launched his third missionary journey through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia in central Asia Minor, and then found his way to Ephesus. **[map: third missionary journey_Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus]**

ii. Paul's Return to Ephesus (Verses 1-7)

Paul's first ministry in Ephesus was to a group of twelve men who, like Apollos, were disciples of John the Baptist.

Acts 19:1-2

19 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said

unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

6. In other cities, with only few exceptions, Paul had begun his ministry in the synagogue of whatever city he was in if there was one there.
7. Here in Ephesus, somehow and somewhere, Paul found these believers of John the Baptist's message.
8. First, I find it interesting that there had been missionaries who carried John the Baptist's message thousands of miles to Ephesus.
9. Second, it is interesting that he had found these men before he ministered in the synagogue. But again, the Lord was directing Paul's steps.
10. This ministry to these 12 men is very important as it is another occurrence that confirms the apostolic doctrine of the need for baptism in the name of Jesus, and this

time, even when someone had already been baptized in another way.

11. Some churches minimize the need for baptism, but in this city, rebaptism was done when the first baptism was not done correctly or completely.

12. But notice how Paul began the conversation. He first asked these men if they had received the Holy Ghost.

13. John the Baptist had preached that the Messiah, who would shortly come, would baptize His disciples with the Holy Ghost and fire:

Matt 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

14. So anyone knowing of John's preaching, would also know of the Holy Ghost that Jesus was sending.

15. But these disciples of John obviously did not know of the ministry or the death and resurrection of Jesus, and had not heard of the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost as John had foretold.
16. So that was an easy open door for Paul to preach the gospel of Jesus to them. And they readily obeyed and were filled with the Holy Ghost, speaking with tongues and prophesying.
17. So we see that some knowledge of scripture is a great starting place to build on. John's ministry which had seemingly ended with his senseless beheading, was still bearing fruit.

Acts 19:3-7

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him

which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

III. Paul's Ministry in the Synagogue (Verse 8)

1. Paul, after baptizing the twelve disciples of John, went into the Jewish synagogue and preached boldly for three months.

Acts 19:8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

2. He disputed and persuaded, which means he addressed them persuasively.
3. When he had previously stopped in Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem (Acts 18:19-21), the

Jews had desired to hear more of his gospel.

4. It was probably due to this open invitation from the Jews that he was able to minister unhampered in their synagogue for three months.
5. But eventually, as revival is followed by persecution, eventually, the opposition of some finally forced him out of the synagogue, as it had done elsewhere.

IV. Paul's Ministry in the School of Tyrannus (Verses 9, 10)

1. *Acts 19:9-10*

9 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.

10 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.

2. Those Jews who rejected the gospel of Jesus became hardened and hostile, and began to work against Paul, speaking evil of the Christian way before all the people.
3. When Paul could no longer work harmoniously among them, he went out of the synagogue, taking with him all the disciples he had won to the faith of Jesus.
4. When the door of the synagogue was closed to him, God opened another door. A man named Tyrannus, who was probably a Gentile convert, invited him to preach in his school.
5. He continued to preach with perfect liberty in this school for two whole years. His ministry to both Jews and Greeks in this place was so effectual that the gospel message spread into all Asia.
6. It is very likely that Paul himself and some of the missionary team visited many of the

neighboring cities on crusades, and those Christian converts carried the gospel to other communities, until truth reached the whole region.

7. Altogether, Paul ministered in Ephesus for three years (Acts 20:31).

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.

8. This was the longest period spent in one place during all his missionary endeavors, and was doubtless the most far-reaching and widespread.
9. In fact, you can read about the seven churches of Asia in the first three chapters of Revelation, and how Jesus instructed John to address letters to each those churches.
10. It is likely that those churches were started during this period when Paul worked in this region for three years.

11. Notice how close these 7 cities are to Ephesus. [**map: 7 churches of Rev, and -enlarged**]
- v. The Miracles of Paul's Ministry (Verses 11-20)
 1. And again, in Paul's ministry in Ephesus as in other places, God used Paul in miracles and casting out devils.
 2. And this is where the practice of prayer cloths originated:
Acts 19:11-20
11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:
*12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick **handkerchiefs** [face cloth for wiping perspiration] or **aprons** [like a utility belt worn by workmen], and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*
 3. Many miracles of healing were performed through Paul's ministry.

4. It is important to note that there is not healing power to be found in Paul's clothing, and there was no healing power in Peter's shadow (Acts 5:15).
5. The Apostles emphasized that the sick were not healed by their own holiness or power, but by the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:12-16; 14:8-15).
6. However, God honored the faith of the people, and many were healed in the shadow of Peter, and many with Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons when laid on them.
7. We need to remember that the most important message that Peter and Paul preached, was not about sick bodies being healed. That was a way to minister to the physical needs, like providing food and clothing did.
8. But healing, food, and clothing, are all temporary ministries of less importance than the ministry of the Word and the

gospel that offers forgiveness, the Holy Ghost, and eternal redemption.

9. But notice here, that for every true and righteous thing, there seems to exist a false copy. Notice how some Jews tried to copy Paul's ministry:

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.

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

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

16 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.

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.

But even bad publicity can by God's grace turn toward something that was meant for evil, to be turned around for good.

10. The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified, and His message spread to bring deliverance to the hungry:

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

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.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

11. Ephesus was a city wholly given over to idolatry, magical arts, and sorceries. However, when the mighty power of the Holy Ghost is compared against magic and

sorcery, magic tricks were shown to be what they are, tricks.

12. Many who had practiced these deceptions were converted to the faith of Jesus, and made a great bonfire of their books, which altogether were valued at fifty thousand pieces of silver.
 13. The fifty thousand pieces of silver cannot be definitely estimated by our monetary system, but it was approximately equivalent of the annual wages of 160 laborers. A considerable amount of wealth.
 14. But what is the worth of your old lifestyle in comparison to what Jesus did for you?
- vi. Paul's Plans to Leave Ephesus (Verses 21, 22)
1. Apparently, there was a good deal of traveling away from and back to Ephesus that occurred in this next passage.

Acts 19:21-22

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.

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.

2. After remaining in the region for 3 years, Paul could no longer be content to remain in a city any longer, so he made plans to return to Macedonia, where he had started churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (modern Greece), as well as Achaia, where Corinth was.
3. After he visited the churches in these areas, and had made another visit to Jerusalem with hopes to go to Rome.
4. He sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, that they might encourage and strengthen the saints, and he expected to follow them shortly.

5. He returned to Jerusalem and then went back to Asia.
6. Then we find him once again back in Ephesus.
- vii. The Silversmiths Provoke a Riot (Verses 23-41)
 1. Ephesus was the center of the worship of the goddess Diana, whose image was said to have dropped out of heaven. The magnificent temple which had been erected to the worship of Diana in Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
 2. This sinful and immoral religion was also highly commercialized. Many silversmiths had become rich by making and selling miniature silver shrines of Diana.
 3. But Paul's ministry had spread Christianity and as we saw, many converts got rid of their former magic books, and also quit purchasing the silver shrines and this resulted in great financial loss to the

craftsmen.

Acts 19:23-27

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

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

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

26 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:

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 worshipping.

4. Demetrius appealed to his fellow craftsmen and stirred up a riot against Paul, and soon had the whole city in a confused uproar.
5. The mob caught two of Paul's companions, men who had come from Macedonia to aid in the work in Ephesus.
6. When Paul tried to go to their aid, the other disciples held him back from the danger. The rioters then caught a Jew named Alexander, who was probably a Christian convert, who was about to address the crowd.

Acts 19:33-34

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.

34 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.

7. The town clerk was finally able to quiet the mob by assuring the people that Ephesus would still be worshipping Diana, regardless of Paul's preaching.
8. He encouraged them to quiet down so their actions would not be challenged by the Roman government.
9. He then dismissed the assembly, and the mob dispersed.
10. The crisis had erupted because there was "no small stir about that way."
11. *Acts 19:23 And the same time **there arose no small stir about that way.***
That means a great disturbance took place.

VIII. Conclusion

1. I like how Christianity was referred to as "The Way."

2. The Way of the Lord, The Way of God, The Way of Truth, The Way which they call Heresy.
3. Think about the power of The Way. The Town Clerk of Ephesus quieted the mob by telling them they would always have worship of Diana, so lighten up.
4. Well, The Way has continued and worship of Diana died out.
5. The Town Clerk also used the threat of the Roman government rising against their city because they were world-conquering power who were in charge.
6. But where is the power of the Roman government now?
7. Diana is gone. The Roman government is gone. Yet what is remains? The Way!