

Acts 19 “The Word Spread and Prevailed”

Acts 19:8-20

March 1, 2026

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8 Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly over a period of three months, arguing and persuading them about the kingdom of God. 9 But when some became hardened and would not believe, slandering the Way in front of the crowd, he withdrew from them, taking the disciples, and conducted discussions every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10 This went on for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

11 God was performing extraordinary miracles by Paul’s hands, 12 so that even facecloths or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, and the diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them.

13 Now some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists also attempted to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I command you by the Jesus that Paul preaches!” 14 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were doing this.

15 The evil spirit answered them, “I know Jesus, and I recognize Paul—but who are you?” 16 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them, overpowered them all, and prevailed against them, so that they ran out of that house naked and wounded.

17 When this became known to everyone who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, they became afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high esteem.

18 And many who had become believers came confessing and disclosing their practices, 19 while many of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them in front of everyone. So they calculated their value and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 In this way the word of the Lord spread and prevailed.

The prevailing theme of Acts 19 helps us know how to handle this passage.

“I command you by the Jesus that Paul preaches!”

Second hand faith.

Matthew 7:22-23

22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name?’ 23 Then I will announce to them, ‘I never knew you.’

Does Jesus know you?

The gospel and the Spirit aren’t things we wield but a strength we submit to.

Union with Jesus.

Ephesians 3:16-17

16 I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.

Fear of the Lord.

Acts 19:17

17 When this became known to everyone who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, they became afraid, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high esteem.

Jeremiah 33:8-9

8 I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. 9 And this city shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them. They shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it.

We fear that we would take God's mercy for granted.

Life Group Discussion Questions

- 1.) What did God say to you through His Word during our Sunday gathering?
- 2.) Related to the Sons of Sceva, discuss the idea of "secondhand faith." What could that be? What is the caution of secondhand faith?
- 3.) The Sons of Sceva seem to have added Jesus to their ministry tool box. How can we add Jesus to our lives without Jesus being our life?
- 4.) Luke's account of the failed exorcism produces fear in Ephesus. What are they afraid of? Why is the fear connected to the Lord and not a greater fear of evil spirits?
- 5.) What confidence can we have in Christ when we are faced with spiritual forces?
- 6.) The believers in Ephesus confessed their cultic practices and burned their magic books. Why? What might be an application for our own lives? They were believers with more "closets" to clean out. What is something that you have recently thrown away?
- 7.) Is there anything your Life Group can you with as you bring old things to the Lord and throw them away?