

"The Third Missionary Journey"**Part 7****Acts 18:23-21:26**

Introduction: Last week in our study we were in Ephesus with Paul as a riot was about to begin. The Gospel was being preached and as people were saved, they were turning away from their idols and namely they were turning away from the goddess Diana. They were also not purchasing the silver shrines that were made in Ephesus that represented the Temple of Diana. This is what stirred up the riot. The Gospel was changing the lives of people and as their lives were changed the business of selling shrines was feeling the impact.

Notice Acts 19:23-27

These people were fearful that their income and their popularity would go away. Notice the words of MacArthur.

"Ephesus would suffer. The temple of Artemis was famous throughout the Roman world, and it had been built with gifts from many rulers. Anything that tarnished Artemis's reputation would lower Ephesus's status, hinder civic pride, and disastrously cripple the city's economy. Loyalty to Ephesus demanded that the craftsmen oppose the new religion that threatened to undermine the city's claim to fame and source of revenue."

Paul and the others preached the Gospel and it was completely changing the city. People were turning from their idols and from the false goddess and were coming to Jesus Christ. This is a picture for us to see what the Gospel does when it is proclaimed in the power of God. These people were far more concerned about their wallet than they were their soul. Think about what it will be like for them on the day of judgment. They heard the Gospel, they heard and seen of the mighty power of Jesus Christ and they suppressed all of this and chose to worship their money.

1 Timothy 6:8-11

⁸ *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

⁹ *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

¹⁰ *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

¹¹ But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

Application:

There is a warning in all of this for us as believers. The love of money and the love of the world can get a grip on believers as well as unbelievers. When it happens to believers it will cause the believer to lose their concern for the souls of the lost and it can take the believer away from their God given responsibility. On Sunday we considered how David had neglected his God given responsibility and it was one of his failures that led to sin. In each of us God has deposited the Holy Spirit and with Him He has also given us spiritual gifts and we are to use these to glorify God. We also need to know that we will stand before the Lord and be held accountable for how we have carried out our God given responsibility.

1 Corinthians 3:13-15

¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

2 Corinthians 5:9-11

⁹ Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

¹¹ Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.

Getting back to Acts, the following Demetrius were more concerned about their wallet than they were about spiritual matters.

- The Revolt
- Part 2

Notice Acts 19:28-29

Satan will go to any extreme to stop the spread of the Gospel and here in Ephesus he stirred up the entire city. We need to all notice that the city was in a state of confusion. This is another tactic of Satan. He loves to cause confusion. He will do it within the church if he can so as to prevent people from growing in the Lord.

1 Corinthians 14:33

³³ For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

When confusion arises, we can know that Satan is involved.

Notice Acts 19:28-29 again.

We need to notice that in verse 28 the people were filled with wrath and then came the confusion. The uncontrolled wrath led these people into a state of confusion. This is what anger and wrath do. They send the mind into a state of outbreak and confusion. They lead a person to do things and say things that are not normally what they would do or say.

Numbers 20:7-12

⁷ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

⁸ Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink.

⁹ And Moses took the rod from before the LORD, as he commanded him.

¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock?

¹¹ And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.

¹² And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

Getting back to Acts, this all started with the venom of Demetrius. He sent the crowd into a state of wrath which then led to confusion. This is how mob rule originates. Let us learn

to be careful about who we listen to. There are many Demetrius's in our world today. They are alarmist whom Satan uses to stir up wrath and confusion. This also happened in Esther's day.

Esther 1:10-13, 15-18

¹⁰ On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven chamberlains that served in the presence of Ahasuerus the king,

¹¹ To bring Vashti the queen before the king with the crown royal, to shew the people and the princes her beauty: for she was fair to look on.

¹² But the queen Vashti refused to come at the king's commandment by his chamberlains: therefore was the king very wroth, and his anger burned in him.

¹³ Then the king said to the wise men, which knew the times, (for so was the king's manner toward all that knew law and judgment:

¹⁵ What shall we do unto the queen Vashti according to law, because she hath not performed the commandment of the king Ahasuerus by the chamberlains?

¹⁶ And Memucan answered before the king and the princes, Vashti the queen hath not done wrong to the king only, but also to all the princes, and to all the people that are in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus.

¹⁷ For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes, when it shall be reported, The king Ahasuerus commanded Vashti the queen to be brought in before him, but she came not.

¹⁸ Likewise shall the ladies of Persia and Media say this day unto all the king's princes, which have heard of the deed of the queen. Thus shall there arise too much contempt and wrath.

Notice Acts 19:30-31

Paul desired to enter the theatre but the disciples stopped him and his friends who were Asiarchs. It is interesting who these men were. Notice the history.

"Asiarchs: were members of the noblest and wealthiest families of the province of Asia and were bound together in a league for promoting the cult of the emperor and Rome...

Every year an Asiarch was elected for the entire province, and additional Asiarchs were elected for each city that had a temple honoring the emperor. The title was probably borne for life by officers in the league; so, in Paul's day there could have been a number of Asiarchs at Ephesus."

These men promoted the practice of emperor worship and here we read that they were friends of Paul. This tells us that he would make friends with many different people and he would then use this as an opportunity to share the Gospel with them. I point this out because there are some believers who are so judgmental of the unsaved that instead of building friendships in which they can share the Gospel they build walls. They will stand back and criticize the lifestyle of the unbelievers, which usually causes contention which in turn causes them to shut out the believer's testimony. Let us learn from Paul that making friends with unbelievers is not a sin. It can be a means of stepping into their lives to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Getting back to Paul in this situation, we can see that there are times to step forward and there are times to stand still. There are times to speak and there are times to be silent. To walk into the middle of this mob and share the Gospel would have been cast pearls before swine.

Matthew 7:6

⁶ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Notice Acts 19:32

Here again is the "mob mentality." Many of these people had no idea what was going on but they made the choice to join the mob in the riot. Satan had used the venom of Demetrius to lead these people into a state of frenzy.

Notice Acts 19:33-34

In the middle of this they pulled a man by the name of Alexander and when they knew he was a Jew they drowned him out with their chanting for a full two hours. Now let me show you what Paul wrote to Timothy.

1 Timothy 1:19-20

¹⁹ Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

²⁰ Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2 Timothy 4:14-15

¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

¹⁵ Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

Was this the same man? We do not know for sure. We do know that Timothy pastored the church at Ephesus. We also know that when this riot broke out Timothy was not there because Paul sent him to Macedonia.

Notice Acts 19:22

It seems to be the same man but we cannot be sure.

Notice Acts 19:35-41

Conclusion:

These people chanted for hours of the greatness of Diana. But today the Temple of Diana is gone. Today people chant about the greatness of their sports team, or their political favorite, or the economy, but when someone stands up and declares the greatness of Jesus Christ they are seen as strange. No one worships Diana directly today. Someone has said that idols and false gods all have expiration dates, but Jesus Christ lives forever. Someday the world will realize how deceived they really were when they stand before the Lord.