

Acts 19 - John Karmelich

1. Have you ever thought about how you, or your church is affecting your community?
 - a) What kind of impact does your church have on the world around you!
 - b) To me a sign of a healthy church is it is not only helping its own members grow and mature, but it is having an impact on the world around it.
 - i) Here are some examples:
 - ii) It can impact the community by simply growing. There are people in the area who are no longer staying home on Sunday mornings.
 - iii) It can impact the community by decreases illicit activities or decreases in growth in cult membership in the community.
 - iv) What Jesus Christ offers is *satisfaction* that the world cannot offer. No other activity, no other religion offers the peace of mind that Jesus does. By people seeing that joy within us, they want to be part of it. That is how the Holy Spirit invites them. Any alternative will leave you with some sense of emptiness.
 - v) I like to use the “parachute” illustration: An airline stewardess tells Passenger #1 “Here, put on this parachute. The landing gear is broken and we’re going to have to jump out. The stewardess tells Passenger #2 “You look uncomfortable. Put this parachute behind your back and you’ll rest better. The air conditioning in the plane stops working and it gets very hot. Passenger #2 takes off the parachute, as it is not making him any more comfortable. Passenger #1 clings *harder* to the parachute knowing that in the end, it is his only hope. Passenger #1 takes comfort in the parachute no matter what the circumstances.
 - a) This little illustration is a wonderful example of the Christian life. Both passengers go through suffering. But Passenger #1 has joy *through* the good *and* bad times knowing that he has salvation no matter what happens. Nothing else offers that!
2. OK, John, what does all this have to do with Chapter 19? Glad you asked! ☺
3. Chapter 19 is several examples of Christians having an impact on their local community.
 - a) This chapter has a few strange episodes that break the normal pattern that we have seen the last few chapters.
 - i) The last few chapters can be summarized as follows: Paul and his companions go to a new town, they preach Jesus, some believe, and some don’t. Those who don’t persecute them, and Paul has to flee to the next town. The cycle then starts again. There is obviously a whole lot more to it, but that’s the pattern.
 - b) In Chapter 19, the patterns change.
 - i) There is an episode where Paul encounters people who only know about Jesus based on what they have heard through John the Baptist. They know nothing about Jesus’ death and resurrection, just of a “coming Messiah”.
 - ii) We will read of Paul performing extraordinary miracles (as opposed to “ordinary” miracles. There is no discussion of Paul preaching to these people.
 - iii) We will read of a demonic attack on some non-believers. These guys are not rescued, nor saved in the story. We’ll discuss why this story is included.
 - iv) Then there is this strange story of a large public “rally” in support of a local Greek god. Paul does not address this rally. The story ends with the rally, well, just breaking up. That’s it. Why would Luke include this in Acts?
 - v) The only common element of all these stories is how the Gospel message impacts the local community. We’ll develop this concept as we go.

4. Acts 19, Verse 1: While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"
They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."
- a) If you remember from the last chapter, Apollos only knew Jesus based on what he was taught by John the Baptist (directly, or indirectly). By mentioning the fact that while Apollos was at Corinth and Paul was in Ephesus, Paul ran into these guys who believed in Jesus based on what they knew through Apollos.
 - b) Notice that the guys Paul talks to are called disciples. We'll read further that they were only knew about Jesus through John the Baptist. This probably meant they believed that a Messiah was *coming* to pay the price for their sins. They didn't know that it already happened.
 - i) Scholars make a big deal about why the author-Luke calls them disciples when they clearly were not born-again believers at this point (or were they?). It's one of those debates where I don't understand why they bother to argue! ☺
 - a) We'll read later that these guys *definitely* become full-fledged believers in the complete work of Jesus.
 - (1) The debate is over whether they were "saved" at that particular moment, based only on their knowledge of Jesus through John the Baptist.
 - (2) I believe God judges you fairly based on what you *do* know and how you act upon that knowledge. My view is that even though they didn't know about Jesus death and resurrection yet, they *were* saved because they accepted the knowledge of what they *did* know and acted upon it.
 - b) One of the classical Christian questions is "What about the people in the depths of Africa who never heard the Gospel?" The answer is God judges us based on what we *do* know and how we act upon it. This is covered in Romans Chapter 1.
 - c) For those of you who have a King James Version (KJV), there is a technical point to be made here. The KJV reads: "'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed??"
 - i) All the modern versions, including the New King James has "when" you believed" instead of "since" you believed. Some commentators (Ray Steadman, J. Vernon McGee, et.al.) make a big deal about this. The point is that one receives the Holy Spirit *immediately* upon accepting Jesus. Using the King James text, it implies there is a delay between being saved and receiving the Holy Spirit.
5. Verse 3: So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied.
- a) It is the first time we ever read of Paul questioning whether they have received the Holy Spirit or not.
 - i) This is the first time we ever even read of Paul asking this question. There must have been something about the way they acted that brought up the question.
 - ii) Unfortunately, there are lots of people *in the church* walking around like these guys today. They have some head-knowledge of Jesus, but have never turned their lives *over* to him. They believe they are saved because they go to church every Sunday, or some other good deed.
 - a) Ever heard the "chair" analogy? It is one thing to say "I have faith this chair will hold my weight". It is another to actually *sit* in the chair!

- iii) So how do we know if someone has the Holy Spirit in them? Paul answers this:
 - a) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Gal 5:22-23a NIV)
 - iv) I take the view that once you accept Jesus in your heart; the Holy Spirit comes upon you immediately (Titus 3:5-6). Taking advantage of the Holy Spirit living within you is up to you! Developing regular habits of church, prayer, praising God, reading the Bible, is “exercise” for the Holy Spirit. Not doing these is the spiritual equivalent of being out-of-shape.
 - a) Paul said: For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. (2nd Timothy 1:6-7 NIV)
6. Verse 4: Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.
- a) I noticed there was no mention of any body of water in this passage, so it is probably a summary statement where they found the nearest body of water and did a baptism.
 - i) The Greek root-word for baptism means to plunge, immerse, sink; hence to wash; to be immersed, overwhelmed (in trouble). (Source: Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology)
 - b) Two things happen to these guys. They spoke in “tongues” and “prophesied”
 - i) We talked about “tongues” back in Chapter 2. To summarize, it is the ability to praise God in a foreign language. You may not understand what you are saying, but God does. It is just for praising God, not to communicate to others.
 - a) Tongues are a sign for unbelievers (See 1st Corinthians 14:22).
 - b) The gift of tongues can be used in a prayer meeting or church service, but only if somebody else has the spiritual gift of interpretation (See 1st Corinthians 14:27).
 - c) Why did God give them this gift? The same reason he gave it in Acts Chapter. 2 & Chapter 10. So those 12 people could be witnesses to others. Paul teaches in 1st Corinthians that the gift of tongues is a sign for unbelievers.
 - ii) Second, they were given the gift of “prophecy” .
 - a) When we think of prophecy, we think of predicting the future. The actual definition is much more expansive.
 - b) It also refers to the ability to explain and expound upon the Scriptures.
 - c) “The word *prophet* comes from two Greek words: *pro phaino*. *Phaino* means, "to cause to shine" or "to make shine," and *pro* means "before." So a prophet is one who stands before the Word of God and causes it to shine, who illuminates people's lives with the power and truth of the Scriptures” (Ray Steadman, Acts)
 - d) This gift was given for them to teach the Scriptures to others.
 - e) Hopefully, most people who are called to be pastors or teachers have this gift!

- c) OK all you numerical-value-obsessed people out there, why does verse seven say there were “12” men in all? ☺
 - i) I simply think it was mentioned to show that not everybody in this city has this lack of knowledge, just these 12 people.
 - a) There are commentaries out there that tie the number 12 to “heavenly perfection”, but I’m not sure I buy that argument here. I’m just warning you that those theories are out there. ☺
7. Verse 8: Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.
- a) Back in Chapter 18, Paul had a brief visit to Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem. The local Jews in Ephesus asked him to stay longer and explain his arguments why Jesus is the Messiah. Paul left quickly due to a Jewish vow he made, that does not end until he makes a sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem. Thus, he was in a hurry.
 - b) So here is Paul back in Ephesus. Give the local Jews some credit here. They let Paul argue there for *three months!* That means every Saturday for 3 months. That is a lot more tolerable than any synagogue we have read to up to this point.
 - c) Next we see the usual pattern of the Book of Acts. Some believed and some didn’t. Those who didn’t got violent and Paul had to leave. In verse 9 it states that those who opposed Paul “publicly maligned the Way”. I suspect it wasn’t too violent as of yet, but from experience, Paul left and took those who believed with him.
 - i) There is a lesson for us as Christians: Learn from experience! Paul didn’t wait for violence to interrupt. He left before it got out of hand.
 - ii) Here is an example of “blasphemy of the Holy Spirit”. Jesus said that is the only sin that God will not forgive. (See Matthew 12:31, et.al.)
 - d) In Verse 9, Christians are called “The Way”. This was a common name for Christians before the term “Christian” itself became common. It comes from Jesus’ quote of “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life and no man comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6 NKJV, NIV, et.al.)
 - e) Verse 9, says Paul took the believers out and went to the lecture hall of Tyrannus.
 - i) Most commentators believe this was a place Paul rented out every day.
 - a) In this culture, people worked in the mornings, took the afternoons off and worked again at night. Paul probably spoke during the afternoon breaks. It is similar to the Spanish idea of a mid-day “Siesta”.
8. Verse 10, talking bout Paul speaking in this rented lecture hall. ¹⁰ This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.
- a) We don’t know how, but this place was Paul’s headquarters for the next two years. He probably preached here daily.
 - i) There are 7 churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation Chapter 2. Most of these were probably founded based on Paul’s teaching here at Ephesus. They were all located within the province of Asia.
 - ii) “Asia” refers to Asia-Minor, what we think of today as modern Turkey.
 - b) I wonder how the word spread. Did Paul put up flyers saying, “Free class today, come here about Jesus? ☺ Did the word just spread around town about Paul teaching?

- i) The text doesn't say. This is an example of the Holy Spirit working. People came to Paul's classes. They got saved. They told others about Jesus and invited them to these classes. It just grew. This is how the church grows. The Holy Spirit works, but He works *through people*.
 - a) Luke says, "All the Jews and Greeks...heard the word of the Lord".
 - c) This verse is another example for church growth. Most people focus too much on marketing and outreach programs. God wants the glory for himself, and won't share it with "marketing programs". Paul probably just preached the Word. The Holy Spirit took over from there. To paraphrase Jon Curson, preaching the Word has "cross-generational appeal". It is the appeal of the message draws people, not the speaker.
- 9. Verse 11: God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.
 - a) First thing I underlined was the "extra" in extraordinary. As if "ordinary" miracles are a common occurrence we take for grant it!
 - b) The word for handkerchiefs is actual "sweat-bands". The word for "aprons" is what is tied around the chest. Think of a steel worker with an apron and a sweatband on. Both get dirty from hard work.
 - c) My favorite application of this verse (albeit, a stretch!) is that Preaching the Word requires hard work. God does work through us, but preparation and study on our part is still required. Sweat on our part is necessary.
 - d) Why did God do these extraordinary miracles here, where Paul's "sweat" is used to heal people?
 - i) Part of it is to read this verse in context. In the next set of verses we will read how magic and the occult is commonly practiced in this area. God grants some power to the occult, but God's power is greater. That was the lesson Moses taught Pharaoh and his magicians. That is the lesson Paul is teaching the town of Ephesus.
 - ii) I also believe God delights in creative new ways to draw people to himself. One of the great dangers in Christianity is to "put God in a box". We expect God to work a certain way, and if he doesn't, well, it can't be of God. This is common in larger, denominational churches. We get bogged down in our rules and regulations, and don't allow the Holy Spirit to work his way.
 - iii) Remember that my theme of Acts 19 is "impact". When Christians work together for the glory of God, God delights in that action. He will often work in extraordinary ways so that God receives that glory!
 - e) The danger of this verse is that many con men will use this verse for an appeal for money. They'll say, "Send me \$10 and I'll send you a special handkerchief with the sweat of my brow, that God is using for healing". If it weren't true, it would be funny.
 - i) Often miracles will come true from these stunts because of people's faith in God to use that miracle. Fortunately God holds these type of people accountable. I usually find they get exposed quickly. It is very rare when a preacher can get away with a sin for very long. God takes his name and reputation *seriously*.
- 10. Verse 13: Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out."¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.¹⁵ One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"¹⁶ Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

- a) Maybe it's my warped sense of humor, but I find this story funny. Here are these 7 sons of a Jewish chief priest. Rabbis, then and now, will collect fees for performing a service, such as an exorcism. Judaism has writings on how to perform an exorcism. So these guys say, "In the name of Jesus, come out". Since they're not Christians, the demons say in effect "I know Jesus, I know of Paul, but who the devil are you guys?" ☺ Then the demons beat these guys up pretty badly.
 - b) Remember that demons cannot possess believers, only non-believers. You never in the Bible read of a believer being demon-possessed. There is a difference between Satan tempting you to do wrong and actually being possessed by a demon.
 - c) Don't "casually" mess with demons. There are those in the church who are given the spiritual gift of exorcism as Paul had here. There are many good books and tapes on this subject at a Christian bookstore.
 - i) Most of the documented stories of exorcisms are pretty scary. The movie "The Exorcist" was based on several documented case studies. (In the actual studies, the demons were exorcised, they didn't "win" like they did in the movie!)
 - a) Here they have the power to beat up people.
 - d) Christians make 2 mistakes with demons. Either they think they are everywhere (cause *all* the problems of the world) or that they don't exist. A lot of evil simply comes from our own free will. Revelation Chapter 20 speaks of a 1,000 year period where Satan is bound and chained. I believe one of the purposes for this millenium is to show mankind how evil we are even without Satan's influence, and even in this situation, our need for a Savior!
 - e) Remember that the author Luke is a doctor. He understands and accepts the difference between physical ailments and demon possession.
 - i) I once read the Roman Catholic Church's attitude on this and I liked it. To paraphrase: "You eliminate all other logical possibilities first to determine whether or not they are demon possessed, and then perform an exorcism."
 - f) Last thing: Why did the demons beat up these 7 guys? I thought that demons only attacked believers. Their goal was to stop the spread of the gospel. Why harm the imposters if they didn't believe in Jesus?
 - i) You can tell I spend way too much time thinking about this stuff sometimes! ☺
 - ii) I couldn't find any good comments on this issue, so I'll speculate. The Book of Jude teaches us that in order to rebuke Satan, we are to call on Jesus' name, and no other. (Jude 1:9). I take the view that the *power* in the name Jesus, to a demon, is so destrutful, they hate hearing it. The fact that a non-believer tried to stop the demon's using Jesus name, gave the demons a chance to demonstrate *their* power *without* any ability to stop them!
 - a) The problem was that this strategy backfired on the demons. They did beat up these guys, but we'll read in the next verse that the news of the beating further spread the Gospel. It is amazing how God uses all sorts of instances and circumstances for the benefit of his Glory!
11. Verse 17: When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. ¹⁸ Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. ¹⁹ A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.
- a) The first time I read this paragraph, I thought it implied that the non-believers were so impressed by the demon attack, people converted. That is not what it says.

- i) Verse 17 says that people of Ephesus “held the name Lord Jesus in high honor”. That is so common today. People respect sincere Christians. They acknowledge the power and the changed lives of Christians. “Respect” for Christians won’t get you saved.
 - ii) Verse 18 and 19 are written about Christians. These are the guys who confessed that they were into sorcery.
 - b) Remember that scrolls were expensive. The Christians burned them. Notice they didn’t go around to the non-Christians, stole their scrolls and burned those. God never calls us to do that. They burned their own.
 - i) That is something God calls on Christians to do. To burn the sins of our previous lifestyle. I have found that God works on us slowly, never revealing to us more than we can handle at any one time. God usually reveals a part of our life he wants us to change. When we burn it up, God moves on to something else.
 - ii) It is always good as a Christian to do self-examination. One prayer God always answers is “How can I draw closer to you? What part of my old life do I need to “burn up” to have a better relationship with you and other Christians.
 - a) I have often prayed that prayer in many forms. I haven’t always liked the answer, but I admit my life improves when I respond as God calls.
 - iii) Again, for all you number-secreting types out there, Luke mentions the value of the scrolls being burned at 50,000 “drachmas”. A “drachma” was a silver coin that was arguably, a day’s wage. Figure out what one makes in a day and multiply that by 50,000 and you’ll have a rough idea of the total value.
 - a) I believe Luke’s point is simply to show the *impact* of the Gospel and the large value of the scrolls being burned.
 - b) Which brings us back to my theme of the Chapter: “Impact”. The spread of the Gospel causes people to go through self-examination, and clean out their old lives. Personally, I suspect Paul never preached on the evils of sorcery, or at least didn’t emphasize it. Paul just preached the Cross. Once people were saved, God just started working on people’s hearts and changed their lives.
12. Verse 20: In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.
- a) What way? The impact of the scroll burning. Do you want to see church growth? Let them see how your life has *changed*. That is more impressive than any lecturing you can give them on the evils of their ways! If you confess to being a Christian, people *watch* you. They want to see if you act differently. *That* is your witness!
13. Verse 21: After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also." ²² He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.
- a) Paul says, “I must visit Rome also”. To paraphrase J. Campbell Morgan “This is not the ‘must’ of a tourist, this is the ‘must’ of a missionary”.
 - b) “Luke doesn’t mention it here, but we know that one reason why Paul wanted to go through Macedonia and Achaia, then to Jerusalem was to collect and deliver a fund he had been collecting from other churches to help out the church in Jerusalem (Romans 15:25-31; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4).” David Guzik, Acts Study Guide.
 - c) We know of Timothy from the previous chapters. Paul’s assistant Erastus is only mentioned in passing in 2nd Timothy 4:20

14. Luke changes the story in Verse 23: About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way. ²⁴ A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. ²⁵ He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. ²⁶ And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. ²⁷ There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty."
- a) Some background notes are helpful here. The City of Ephesus has 2 main sources of income, the port/harbor and tourist visiting the temple of Artemis, also known as Diana. This temple was huge, and one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world.
 - i) The harbor was physically falling apart. Silt was coming in the harbor, making it difficult to dock ships. Also, historians believe that the forrestation was being depleted of trees at this time, and thus there were less items to trade via the harbor. Today the ancient harbor of Ephesus is about 7 miles *inland* from the build up of all the silt over the centuries. At the time of Paul, the harbor was already in decline and the main source of income was now tourism.
 - ii) Many people in Ephesus made money by selling souvenirs of the temple of Artemis (sound familiar?). These were the silver shrines mentioned in Verse 24. With the growth of Christianity, came the decline in the Worship at this temple, and thus the decline in souvenir purchasing. Remember that Artemis, or Diana was a goddess. Taking home a silver shrine was like bringing home a good luck charm.
 - a) When my wife & I were traveling in Italy, I happen to see one of these things. It is an ugly, multi-breasted woman. It represented fertility. It never ceases to amaze me what people *will* worship when they turn away from the true and living God.
 - (1) "So it was that when they gave God up and would not even acknowledge him, God gave them up to doing everything their evil minds could think of." (Romans 1:28 TLB)
 - b) So this verse is about the tradesman of town saying "Hey guys, I checked the books, sales are down, inventory is up. These Christians are bad for business".
15. Verse 28: When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹ Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. ³⁰ Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. ³¹ Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.
- a) The speech started a riot. The temple had a very large theatre room. People rushed in.
 - b) It's great to stand back and see the impact of the Gospel. Here was Paul preaching in a rented hall somewhere in town. Citizens of Ephesus and the surrounding community realized that Jesus was superior to all the Greek gods. They started ignoring the Greek gods. Now the non-Christians, who are more concerned about their income than God himself, start a riot! Again, it comes back to my theme about "impact" of the Gospel.
 - c) One of the interesting things to note about this paragraph is how Paul's friends wouldn't let him in this theatre. Paul saw an audience and wanted to use it as an opportunity. Sometimes, just because a crowd forms, doesn't mean God wants us to preach at that opportunity.

- i) There are several comments in Paul’s letters about his life being spared. At least one is believed to be a direct reference to this event.
 - a) Paul said “If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus for merely human reasons, what have I gained?” (1 Corinthians 15:32a, NIV). Most commentators believed that reference to “wild beasts” refers to this event.
 - d) The officials of the region (verse 32) begged Paul not to go into the theatre. These men were probably not Christians, but had enough respect for him to give the advice.
- 16. Verse 32, the uproar continues: The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there.
 - a) “Many people didn’t even know why they were there”. People, who are mostly bored with their everyday routine come in to see what the action is. Even if they don’t know what’s happening, they still go to find out what’s happening.
- 17. Verse 33: The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people.
 - a) Most commentators believe Alexander was a (non-Christian) Jew. The Jews wanted him to speak so the mob would not blame the Jews for the incident.
- 18. Verse 34: But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"
 - a) Verse 34 amazes me more than any other verse in the text. The crowd, for two hours were shouting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"
 - i) I was trying to visualize this scene. I sort of wondered, was it just the repeating of this chant? Was it singing? Was it 4 part harmony, singing: “Great is the god, great is the god, great is the god, great is the god Artemis” ☺
 - b) Remember the appeal of this god. This god represented the livelihood of the town. Not only was it worshipped as a deity, but as the financial provider for the town!
 - i) This is a wonderful example of appealing to one’s pride. People were proud to be citizens of Ephesus. They were proud of their silver shrines. They were proud of the income it provided. That pride swelled and gave rise to the chants that went on for two hours.
 - c) Some of you can see where I’m going with this. People have pride in their country, their community, their business, and their favorite sports team all with greater zeal than the worship of the true and living God. These people made Artemis their god in more ways than one. Things haven’t changed today. We don’t make silver shrines anymore, we just make bumper stickers and license plate frames honoring our gods. ☺
- 19. Verse 35: The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven?"
 - a) The term “city clerk” is more of a local leader, as opposed to the modern word that we think of as a city appointed bureaucrat.
 - b) Remember under Roman law, a city is allowed all sorts of freedoms, except rioting. The one thing Rome feared more than anything else is rebellion. Any sort of uprising will cause swift punishment via an army. Therefore, it was necessary for the town official to try to quiet the crowd.
 - c) The City Clerk had a good ability to control a crowd. When you’re in a situation like this, first acknowledge their argument. Acknowledgement doesn’t mean you agree with them, it just means you have heard what they have said. This is a great technique in any communication setting. People want to know they are heard. Repeat back their key points. This is why he acknowledged the “greatness” of Artemis.

- d) This verse said that the image of “Artemis” fell from heaven. Many commentators believe there may have been some sort of meteorite that landed here, that was a basis for Artemis (Diana) worship. I don’t know what you do with that bit of information, but it was interesting. ☺
20. Verse 36: Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash. ³⁷ You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess.
- a) Again, notice this guy’s ability to quiet the crowd.
- b) I love his testimony about Paul and his fellow disciples “they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess”.
- i) That is an important lesson. I don’t believe Paul ever said negative things about this god. He just preached Jesus as salvation from your sins.
- ii) We don’t have to spend a lot of time preaching the emptiness of other “gods”. God has designed us so that the only satisfaction requires the worship of the true and living God. Our job is to preach Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the one who convicts people of the emptiness of other gods.
- a) Jesus said this about the Holy Spirit “When he (Holy Spirit) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8 NIV)
21. Verse 38: If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges. ³⁹ If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. ⁴⁰ As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it." ⁴¹ After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.
- a) So this town official, managed to successfully quiet the crowd who’s been chanting frantically for the past 2 hours. Notice the reference in Verse 40 of the danger of being “charged with rioting”. The residents, who were part of the Roman Empire, were well aware of that danger.
- b) I read an interesting quote about this, but I forgot the source: “When men praise other gods other than the true and living God, all they could do is shout until they can shout no more”. The reference is that their shouting was futile.
22. To wrap up, let’s go back to my theme about “impact”. Look at the events of this chapter from the standpoint of the impact of the Gospel.
- a) Twelve Guys who only knew about Jesus via John the Baptist now have full knowledge of the Gospel message. The impact of being a good Christian is that we teach people with only partial knowledge, or naïve knowledge about Jesus. Notice also that such people are ones who are seeking more knowledge, and thus are teachable.
- b) Next we have “extra-ordinary” miracles, taken from the “sweat” of Paul, via his headband and apron. Paul’s hard work (i.e. sweat) was used by God in incredible ways, to show the superiority of God over other gods, and occultic practices. The lessons for us is to never underestimate how God is going to work in our lives if we are willing to commit our time and resources for his Glory.
- c) Third, we read of non-Christians trying to perform an exorcism, and well, get beat up.
- i) The lesson is that the power of Christianity will cause others to try to imitate it. They will try to use its power, without paying the cost of being a Christian.
- a) Modern examples include those who join a church for the financial benefits or for political status.
- ii) The impact of Christianity will cause people to try to steal its benefits.

- d) Finally, we have this story of a riot in a large Greek temple. As opposed to the usual story of Paul preaching, some get saved, and some don't, we read of Paul not being allowed in the theater.
 - i) First, its amazing to see the impact of preaching the Gospel can cause a riot among non-believers, especially when it affects their livelihood.
 - ii) Second, it teaches us that not every crowd is an opportunity for the gospel.
23. Next week, we'll wrap up Paul's 3rd missionary journey. Let's pray:. Father, we thank you for these lessons we have learned about the impact of the Gospel. Guide us Lord, in the individual ministry you have called us to, and give us boldness to step forward in faith, knowing that our actions will be used for your Glory. May the Holy Spirit work in a mighty way in our lives, in ways beyond our comprehension and understanding. For we ask this in Jesus name, Amen.