



ENOGERA BAPTIST CHURCH
Jesus changes lives

ACTS



Acts #32 – 19:21-40 The Riot of Ephesus

Acts 19:28 *When they had heard this, they were filled with rage and began to cry out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"*

NOTE FOR LEADERS

This document is intended to be used as a discussion *guide*, rather than a curriculum. As small group leaders, please feel free to lead through the topic as most appropriate for your group.

HOUSEKEEPING

Things going at the moment:

- **By the Book Mini Course – An Introduction to the Bible and Its Big Story**
 - Monday Nights starting June 10 @ 7pm
 - Register on the website
 - \$10
- **Members Meetings**
 - June 23 after morning tea



#32 ACTS 19:21-40

REFLECT

This is a time to generate some discussion by reflecting on the ideas in this week's message. Some ideas include:

- Ask the group to debrief for those who have missed the sermons on Sunday
- What stood out? Do you have any questions?
- Were there any special moments of clarity where God spoke to you clearly?

DIG INTO THE WORD

Let's dig a little deeper. Use the biblical text to discover what God reveals to us in his Word.

Acts 19:21-40 The Riot in Ephesus

²¹ After these events, Paul resolved by the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem. "After I've been there," he said, "It is necessary for me to see Rome as well." ²² After sending to Macedonia two of those who assisted him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

²³ About that time there was a major disturbance about the Way. ²⁴ For a person named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, provided a great deal of business for the craftsmen. ²⁵ When he had assembled them, as well as the workers engaged in this type of business, he said: "Men, you know that our prosperity is derived from this business. ²⁶ You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this man Paul has persuaded and misled a considerable number of people by saying that gods made by hand are not gods. ²⁷ Not only do we run a risk that our business may be discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be despised and her magnificence come to the verge of ruin—the very one all of Asia and the world worship."

²⁸ When they had heard this, they were filled with rage and began to cry out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" ²⁹ So the city was filled with confusion, and they rushed all together into the amphitheater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's traveling companions. ³⁰ Although Paul wanted to go in before the people, the disciples did not let him. ³¹ Even some of the provincial officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent word to him, pleading with him not to venture into the amphitheater. ³² Some were shouting one thing and some another, because the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. ³³ Some Jews in the crowd gave instructions to Alexander after they pushed him to the front. Motioning with his hand, Alexander wanted to make his defense to the people. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"



³⁵ When the city clerk had calmed the crowd down, he said, "People of Ephesus! What person is there who doesn't know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple guardian of the great Artemis, and of the image that fell from heaven?" ³⁶ Therefore, since these things are undeniable, you must keep calm and not do anything rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are not temple robbers or blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ So if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a case against anyone, the courts are in session, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹ But if you seek anything further, it must be decided in a legal assembly. ⁴⁰ In fact, we run a risk of being charged with rioting for what happened today, since there is no justification that we can give as a reason for this disturbance." ⁴¹ After saying this, he dismissed the assembly.

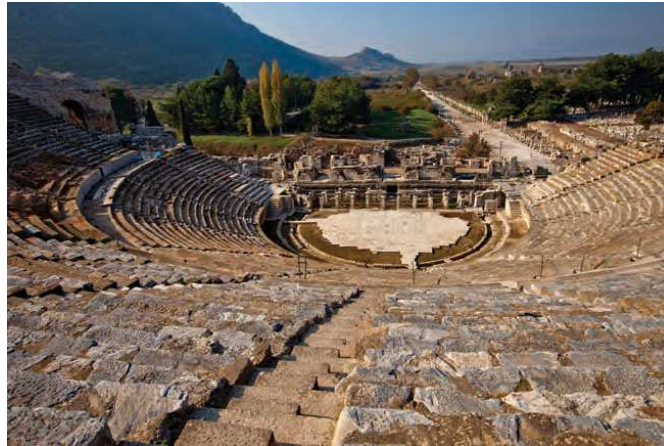
2 Corinthians 2:15-16 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.

Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.





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The theater in Ephesus was the location of the riot of the silversmiths (Acts 19:29). The silversmiths were upset that Paul's teachings were hurting their idol-making business.¹

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives. Get group members to talk about the real life implications of the study.

1. **DISCUSS:** How are we to apply these things? Are there any immediate implications?
2. **REVIVAL IN EPHEBUS:** Read Acts 19:21-40.
 - a. *What caused the riot? What was the root cause?*
 - b. We are in a cycle of spiritual decline in Australia and in the West, but this is by no means the way it will always be. For us, that can be hard to believe sometimes. *What might cause something like this to happen in our culture? What would it look like for the very roots of our culture to shift to a degree that there is economic and social impacts like in Ephesus?*
3. **BEING PREPARED FOR BOTH REACTIONS:**
 - a. Read 2 Corinthians 2:15-16. There are two responses to the word of the gospel.
 - b. **LIFE:** *When have you been used by God to bring life to someone by speaking His word?*
 - c. **DEATH:** *Have you ever experienced resistance from people when trying to speak about Him?*
 - d. *How can we be prepared for either response?*
 - e. God has called us to live with integrity, in that we live outwardly what we believe inwardly. *Are you prepared to put your reputation on the line to do that?*
4. **SEASONED WITH SALT:**
 - a. Read Colossians 4:6. *How can we be both bold and gracious?*

¹ Carson, D. A. (2015). [The Gospels and Acts](#). In D. A. Carson (Ed.), *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message* (p. 2262). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.



PRAY

Pray that we would be a church filled with gospel shaped people who live out our faith by grace alone! Pray that we would grow in our missional living and discipling of one another.

Pray for boldness and graciousness in our witness to the truth. Ask God to move in power in our city and bring widescale revival.

NOTES

Acts 19:11–12 Using Paul’s “handkerchiefs and aprons” for healings and exorcisms is not magical because “God did [these] extraordinary miracles through Paul.” Similar healings occurred when people touched Jesus’ clothing (Mark 5:27–34; 6:56) or Peter’s shadow (Acts 5:15), God uses tangible objects to reveal his power and confirm his messengers. The failure of the sons of Sceva to drive out an evil spirit (vv. 13–16) shows that the power of God—not the use of magical incantations or objects—accomplishes these miracles.

19:21 Luke does not say why Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, but in his letters Paul repeatedly refers to a collection he is taking for the poverty-stricken Christians there (24:17; Rom 15:25–31; 1 Cor 16:1–3; 2 Cor 8–9). For Paul’s plans to travel through Macedonia and Achaia, see Introduction to 2 Corinthians: Place of Composition. Paul’s journey to Jerusalem, where dangers await him (20:22–25; 21:4, 11–14), parallels Jesus’ journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:51; 13:33–34).

19:22 Timothy. See note on 16:1–5. **Erastus.** May be the same individual named in Rom 16:23b; 2 Tim 4:20. Paul identifies him as the city treasurer or director of public works. This may also be the same Erastus named on an inscription excavated at Corinth.

19:23–41 The Riot in Ephesus. The theme of spiritual warfare at Ephesus continues as the guild of craftsmen provoke a riot against Paul and his fellow missionaries. The many conversions to faith in Jesus were causing a recession in the idol-making business, so they take action against Paul. Civic life at Ephesus centered on the worship of the goddess Artemis (the Roman Diana), and her magnificent temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. At Ephesus the traditional Greek Artemis, a goddess of the hunt, was merged with the traditional Anatolian fertility goddess Cybele. The many-breasted statue of Artemis stood in the temple at Ephesus, and a week-long festival in the spring, known as the Artemision, attracted thousands of devotees to the city. Worshiping the goddess was a source of enormous civic pride.

19:23 the Way. One of Luke’s favorite designations for the early Christian movement (see note on 9:2; cf. v. 9; 18:25–26; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

19:24 silver shrines of Artemis. Small replicas of the famous temple of Artemis.

19:25–27 Demetrius focuses first on the Ephesian’s economic loss and then appeals to their loyalty to the goddess, who brought fame to Ephesus. Greed and pride are among the strongest (and most dangerous) of human motivations.



19:29 theater. An open-air amphitheater almost 500 feet (150 meters) in diameter that could hold over 20,000 people. It was built on the slopes of Mount Pion and faced west toward the harbor. Evidently Aristarchus and Gaius are not harmed since they become part of the delegation that travels with Paul to Jerusalem (see notes on 20:4; 27:2).

19:33 Alexander. Probably a Jewish representative trying to disassociate the Christians from the Jews and show that the Jews are not responsible for any sacrilege against Artemis. The crowd shouts him down because they recognize him as a Jew who rejects idols.

19:35 city clerk. The city's chief administrative officer (something like a mayor) who presided over the city council and served as liaison to provincial authorities. He calms the crowd with four points (vv. 36–40): (1) Artemis is too great for these events to threaten her. (2) Paul and the others have not directly blasphemed the goddess or robbed her temple. (3) There are civil courts to handle issues of liability and financial loss. (4) If a violent riot breaks out, the Roman authorities will hold this crowd responsible. This sane and balanced perspective introduces a recurring theme in Acts: Christianity is innocent under Roman law. An important part of Luke's purpose is to demonstrate to the Roman authorities that the Christians who live among them are law-abiding citizens and not enemies of the empire. See Introduction to Acts: Themes and Theology, 7. **her image ... fell from heaven.** Perhaps a meteorite kept in the temple that they consider a sacred sign from heaven of Artemis's greatness.²

2 Corinthians 2:15–16 aroma. Perfumes were sometimes sprinkled or incense burned along the processional route. As faithful preachers of the good news about Christ, the apostles themselves formed "the pleasing aroma of Christ" (v. 15) rising up to God as a sweet fragrance. Irrespective of the human response to the gospel that brings life or brings death, its proclamation delights God's heart because it centers on the Son, whom he loves.

2 Corinthians 2:15 are being saved. Paul can speak of salvation in three tenses: past (Eph 2:5–8; Titus 3:4–5), present (here; 1 Cor 1:18), and future (Rom 5:9; 8:23; 1 Thess 1:10).³

Colossians 4:6 full of grace. Either divine grace or pleasant graciousness that should be the mark of casual conversation with others. Christians should not needlessly antagonize outsiders (cf. 1 Pet 3:15–16). **seasoned with salt.** May be a metaphor for wisdom in answering challenges, or may refer to winsome speech that is not insipid or boring but appealing to others.⁴

REFERENCE:

² Carson, D. A. (2015). [The Gospels and Acts](#). In D. A. Carson (Ed.), *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message* (pp. 2261–2262). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

³ Moo, D. J. (2015). [The Letters and Revelation](#). In D. A. Carson (Ed.), *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message* (p. 2364). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

⁴ Moo, D. J. (2015). [The Letters and Revelation](#). In D. A. Carson (Ed.), *NIV Zondervan Study Bible: Built on the Truth of Scripture and Centered on the Gospel Message* (p. 2434). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.



Developed with the help of the following:

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