

Power to Witness in Word and Deed – Part 2

The Book of Acts

Acts 19:1–22

Paul continues his third missionary journey and comes back to Ephesus, thus fulfilling his promise to return (18:21). “This city was an essential port for all sea lanes...the judicial center and capital of the Roman province of Asia; and the religious and cultural center with its Artemis cult (cf. 19:27). Ephesus was, indeed,...most strategic to Paul’s evangelistic purpose (19:10, 26).

“The gospel had already been preached there by Priscilla and Aquila and Apollos, who had moved to Corinth (18:19, 24-27).”¹

Read Acts 19:1–7.

1. Arriving at Ephesus, Paul found about twelve disciples (vv. 1, 7).
 - a. Who were they disciples of? (v. 3;  * Lk. 3:1-6)
 - b. Who had they not heard of? (v. 2)
2. John the Baptist “told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus” (v. 4). How was John’s baptism lacking compared to the baptism that Paul knows? (vv. 4-5; Acts 2:38; Lk. 3:16;  Jn. 1:23-34)
3. What special signs accompanied the gift of the Holy Spirit for these believers? (v. 6)
4. What are some of the differences that the Holy Spirit makes in the lives of all believers?
Jn. 16:13-15

Rom. 8:9-11

Eph. 1:13-14

Ezek. 36:26-27

Read Acts 19:8-10.

5. Paul moves his ministry from the synagogue to a public meeting place (v. 9). How does this change in location reflect what God is doing spiritually? (v. 10; Eph. 2:11-22)

¹ William J. Larkin, *Acts*, Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Carol Stream: Tyndale, 2006), 558

*The  symbol indicates verses for further study.

6. In Acts 16:6 Paul was “kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.” What is the Holy Spirit now doing in the Asian city of Ephesus? (v. 10; Acts 1:8)

Read Acts 19:11-22.

7. The seven sons of Sceva are beaten and humiliated when they “tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed” (v. 13).
What does the evil spirit say to the sons of Sceva? (v. 15)

What are the sons of Sceva missing in comparison to Jesus and Paul? (Mt. 12:22-28; Jn. 14:11-13)

8. What effect does this attack by the evil spirits have on the community? (v. 17)
9. What does this incident bring about in Ephesus, a stronghold of idolatry and sorcery? (vv. 18-20)
10. What can we learn about the name of Jesus from these events?
11. Given what has happened in verses 13-16 and 18-19, what can we infer about the spiritual climate of Ephesus?
- Why do you think God uses “extraordinary miracles” (v. 11) to break into this culture?
12. Paul has plans to go to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and ultimately Rome (v. 21). Why does he choose to postpone these plans? (1 Cor. 16:8-9)
13. Glance back over this week’s passage. Where is the power of the Holy Spirit at work transforming the city of Ephesus?
14. Sometimes the work of the Holy Spirit is dramatic (as in Ephesus), but sometimes it is more subtle. What are some ways you have seen his transforming work in your life since you first believed in Jesus’ name?