

Bible Study

Gods Word in Focus



Week Fifty One

Acts of the Apostles

Acts 19:1-41

Paul at Ephesus

When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he found some disciples who had only been baptized in John's baptism. He instructed them that they should believe on Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul laid his hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. They spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Paul spoke boldly about the kingdom of God in the synagogue in Ephesus for three months. Some were hardened and spoke evil of "the Way." Paul then went to the school of Tyrannus, reasoning daily with the disciples. Paul continued this for two years. All of Asia heard the Word of the Lord.

The seven sons of Sceva

God worked miracles through Paul. Even handkerchiefs and aprons brought from Paul drove out diseases and evil spirits. Some itinerant Jewish exorcists called on the name of the Lord Jesus to drive out evil spirits. Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, did this as well. An evil spirit in a man recognized the name of Jesus and Paul, but did not recognize them. The man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them and prevailed against them. They fled naked and wounded. Both Jews and Greeks heard of this in Ephesus, and the name of the Lord was magnified. Many who practiced magic brought their books together and burned them. The books were worth about fifty thousand pieces of silver. The word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

An Uproar at Ephesus

Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem and then to Rome. He sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, while he remained in Asia. A great commotion occurred about the Way. Demetrius, a silversmith, called together those of similar occupation. Recognizing they prospered greatly from this trade of making idols, he warned that Paul was preaching that the idols were "not gods which are made with hands." He proclaimed that their trade was in danger, and even the temple of the goddess Diana was in danger. He claimed this preaching was happening throughout Ephesus, and across most of Asia. The people were stirred up, became angry, and cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" They seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions. Paul wanted to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not allow it. The crowd was in great confusion. The Jews put Alexander forward to speak, but when the crowd realized he was a Jew, they cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" The city clerk calmed the crowd. He told Demetrius and his fellow craftsman to take their cases to the open courts, and that any other inquiry should be made in a lawful assembly. This assembly was a disorderly gathering, and they were in danger of being called in question. He then dismissed the assembly.