

THE ACTS OF JESUS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 18:23-21:26

Paul's Third Missionary Journey

Introduction

Paul once again covers a lot of ground in his third missionary journey, as he revisits the churches in Galatia and Phrygia. Yet it is as if Luke hits the fast-forward button and takes Paul right to Ephesus. Because of its strategic location, the city was a major trade center of the Roman world. This prime location also became Paul's home base during his third missionary journey.



Search the Scriptures

Read Acts 18:23-19:10. Why did Priscilla and Aquila have to explain the way of God more adequately to Apollos?

What application does this have to our understanding of Jesus and his word?

What was the difference between Apollos and the disciples Paul found in Ephesus who had only known of John's baptism (verses 1-6)?

What is a valid baptism?

About how long was Paul in Ephesus (verse 8 and 10)?

Summary of Acts 19:11-22. "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul." Some who saw the miracles done through Paul tried to copy him by invoking the name of Jesus Christ to cast out demons. When the seven sons of Sceva tried this, a demon-possessed man gave them a severe beating. This struck fear into many Jews and Greeks in Ephesus. They realized that Jesus' name cannot be used as a superstitious spell or magical formula to cast out demons. Those who believed in the name of Jesus came and confessed their evil deeds, and those who practiced sorcery publicly burned their scrolls.

Read Acts 19:23-41 and discuss the following in a small group:

- How does idolatry in America today compare to the idolatry we just read about in Ephesus? What does a pagan look like?
- Paul never planned to cause a riot or incite any mobs in his ministry, but a riot ensued as a natural consequence to the preaching of the gospel. How have you witnessed the gospel causing an "uproar" in our society? In your own life?
- Paul wanted to speak up but many of his friends persuaded him not to. Was this good advice? Have you ever wanted to speak out against idolatry or unbelief but simply couldn't? What prevented you from doing so?

Map out Acts 20:1-6. Paul revisited and encouraged the congregations in Macedonia and Greece.

Summary of Acts 20:7-12. Paul preaches a very long sermon in Troas. He has lots to say, since he's only there for a short time. His sermon goes on till midnight. A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in a third-story window, sinks into a deep sleep and falls to his death. Paul restores him to life.

Map out Acts 20:13-17. Paul makes one last stop before sailing to Jerusalem.

Read Acts 20:18-38. It almost sounds as though Paul is giving a defense of his work among the Ephesians. What message does he want to leave with the leaders of the church at Ephesus?

What was Paul's outlook as he considered his future (verses 22-24)?

What is a pastor's prayer for a congregation when he departs to serve the Lord elsewhere?

Read Acts 21:1-26. What encouragement was repeated over and over to Paul? How did he respond?

Paul's reputation preceded him, and he was well known in Jerusalem. What did the apostles encourage Paul to do to change the Jews' image of him?

Was this just a hypocritical sham on Paul's part? Explain his actions in Jerusalem.

Scripture to treasure - Acts 20:24

"I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace."