

## PAUL’S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Acts 18-21)

First missionary trip – Barnabas and John Mark

Second missionary trip—Silas

Third missionary trip-- alone

The third missionary trip focuses mostly on \_\_\_\_\_.

Let us look at four principles that flow out of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus:

### **1. SOMETIMES GOD ALLOWS US TO KNOW WHY HE ONCE \_\_\_\_\_ A DOOR.**

Earlier, on the second trip, the Spirit forbade Paul to enter Ephesus (Acts 16: 6).

But now, the Spirit led Paul to minister in Ephesus for 3 years (Acts 19: 8-9; 20: 31). This was the longest he stayed in one place on his three trips.

Why did God once close the door there? There are at least two possible reasons:

***First, Ephesus is located in the \_\_\_\_\_  
Paul planted.*** Ephesus was like the hub of a wheel. It was the center of God’s strategy for a big area.

***Second, Ephesus was a powerful center of \_\_\_\_\_ kingdom.***

In Ephesus, thousands worshiped the goddess Artemis (Diana).

Local craftsmen made statues of the goddess. These statues had many breasts. The Ephesians believed that men communicated with Artemis through the prostitutes in the temple.

Paul’s preaching lessened the sale of idols. Thus the business people became angry. Opposition to the gospel was never greater than at Ephesus.

Looking back, Paul probably realized why God once closed the door to Ephesus. *“There is a time for everything”* (Eccl. 3: 1).

Has God closed a door to you? Be patient. *“What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open”* (Rev. 3: 7). Be content to walk through the doors He opens. And be thankful for the doors He closes. God knows best. He does all things well.

## **2. THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF \_\_\_\_\_ IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF APOSTLES.**

We read about \_\_\_\_\_ six times in the New Testament (Acts 18: 2, 18-19, 26; Rom. 16: 3; 1 Cor. 16: 19; 2 Tim. 4: 19).

\_\_\_\_\_ had a destiny. He would become a great champion of the Christian faith. But without Priscilla and Aquila, he was a weak witness.

### **HIS STRENGTHS:**

- *“He was a learned man”* (Acts 18: 24).
- He came from Alexandria, the capital of Egypt at that time. Alexandria, Athens, and Tarsus were famous for their universities. SO, Apollos had a good education.
- He had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures.
- *“He had been instructed in the way of the Lord”* (Acts 18: 25). That is, someone taught him about Jesus.
- *“He spoke with great fervor”* (Acts 18: 25).
- He *“taught about Jesus accurately”* (Acts 18: 25). There was no false doctrine in his teaching.

### **HIS WEAKNESS:**

- *“He knew only the baptism of John”* (Acts 18: 25).

Priscilla and Aquila saw what Apollos could become. So they invited him to their home. They did not embarrass him in public. But in private, they *“explained to him the way of God”* in a better way (Acts 18: 26).

Later, he went on to Corinth. Filled with the Spirit, Apollos became a great blessing. Luke says, *“He was a great help to those who by grace had believed”* (Acts 18: 27). Paul *“planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow”* (1 Cor. 3: 6). But do not forget the tent sewers, Priscilla and Aquila. These laypeople helped change Apollos from a weak witness into a champion.

### **3. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR \_\_\_\_\_, AFTER SALVATION**

Read Acts 19: 1-5.

These twelve men were disciples. Everywhere else in Acts, Luke refers to those who follow Jesus as disciples. Therefore, it is likely that these men were believers. Paul did not question the fact that they were believers. In fact, he refers to the time they believed (Acts 19: 2). But he sensed that something was missing in their lives. They lacked the same power that Apollos once lacked.

So Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit after they believed. Their response is surprising. They said they had not heard of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19: 2).

So Paul explained to them the relationship between John the Baptist and Jesus. Then they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Still, they needed to be baptized in the Spirit. So Paul prayed for them.

*When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7There were about twelve men in all (Acts 19: 6-7).*

All twelve men were baptized in the Holy Spirit. This gift is for all believers. John baptized in water. But Jesus baptizes in the Holy Spirit (Acts 11: 16).

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for all who repent, believe in Christ, and are baptized in water (Acts 2: 38). The gift Father promised is for all believers. Do not stop short of it. Be like the twelve disciples at Ephesus.

#### 4. PAUL USED \_\_\_\_\_ AS A TEACHING METHOD

*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. 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” (Acts 19:9-10).*

#### 5. THE POWER IN THE \_\_\_\_\_ FLOWS THROUGH BELIEVERS

*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.” Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. One day the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” 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 (Acts 19: 13-16).*

Power does not flow through words. It flows through relationships.

- A Roman centurion who came to Jesus knew this (Luke 7: 1-10).
- Authority always flows through relationships, not mere words.
- For sure, Jesus is the name above all names (Phil. 2: 9). But God’s power does not flow through the name of Jesus alone. It flows only through those rightly related to the Father.

- Electricity is powerful. But it flows only through wires that are plugged into the source. Power flowed through handkerchiefs sent by Paul (Acts 19: 11-12). But no power flowed through the name of Jesus spoken by unbelievers.
- As we abide in the vine, He gives us all we ask in His name (John 14: 12-14; 15: 7).

## **6. BELIEVERS SHOULD MAKE A PUBLIC BREAK WITH PAST \_\_\_\_\_.**

Read Acts 19: 17-20.

This decision led them to burn their sorcery scrolls. The value of the scrolls was 50,000 drachmas. A drachma was a silver coin worth about one day's wage. So imagine the value of the scrolls they burned. The wages of 50,000 days went up in smoke. That is the total wages of 50 people working for about 3 years!

So why did they burn the scrolls instead of selling them?

1. If something is evil, it should be burned— not sold to others. Believers should not sell any product that is evil. It is wrong for a believer to make profit from things that cause others to stumble or be lost.
2. Sin is strong in the dark. It grows in secret. But the power of sin is broken as we confess and forsake it publicly. When you receive Christ as your Savior, get rid of the sinful things that relate to your past. Burn the bridges between you and your past sins. Destroy the links between you and evil. These evil things may include books, magazines, drugs, videos, pictures, CDs, charms, idols, and so forth. Burn them in your earliest days of following Jesus. Then you will be free from them. They will never again be a stumbling block to you or others. If you have things that oppose Jesus, honor Him by turning them to ashes.

A person will be free only from the things he or she is willing to destroy. Only Jesus can break the chains of sin that bind us. But we should not

leave the old chains lying around the house. Satan may seek an opportunity to put them on us again. Flee from the appearance of evil. *“Hate what is evil; cling to what is good”* (Rom. 12: 9).

## HOMEWORK:

Choose **TWO** of these principles and share your personal thoughts:

1. SOMETIMES GOD ALLOWS US TO KNOW WHY HE ONCE CLOSED A DOOR.
2. THE PRIVATE MINISTRY OF LAYPEOPLE IS AS IMPORTANT AS THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF APOSTLES.
3. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT IS FOR ALL, AFTER SALVATION.
4. THE POWER IN THE NAME OF JESUS FLOWS THROUGH BELIEVERS.
5. BELIEVERS SHOULD MAKE A PUBLIC BREAK WITH PAST SINS.