

***>>>>>> Acts - Lesson 30 <<<<<<<***

- 1) As we concluded last time, after being told by the Lord in a vision, Paul remains in Corinth teaching and preaching.
- 2) Paul was then dragged before Gallio the proconsul of Achaia by Jews from Corinth on some very weak charges.
- 3) Gallio summarily dismissed the attempt because they were dealing with matters pertaining to the Jewish religion and this was nothing that he wanted anything to do with.
- 4) Additionally, Sosthenes was beaten by the crowd for no really apparent reason.
- 5) That incident being complete, we continue...

**Acts 18:18–22 (NIV)**

- 6) Paul spends some more time in Corinth and then decides to return to Antioch.
- 7) He, Aquila and Priscilla set sail from Cenchrea to Ephesus where he leaves the husband-and-wife duo to continue the work there.
  - a) Remember they had been forced out of Rome because of a decree of Claudius. (18:1-4)
  - b) They evidently remain there several years because, as we will see, they are there when Paul writes to the church in Rome.

**1 Corinthians 16:19 (NASB 2020)**

<sup>19</sup>The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.

- 8) In this passage, Luke makes a side mention of Paul getting his head shaved at Cenchreae because of a vow.
  - a) We really don't know exactly what precipitated this. There are at least two possibilities.
    - i) It may have been a temporary Nazirite vow, which would end with shaving the head and offering the hair as a sacrifice (Numbers 6:18).
    - ii) Or, it could have been personal vow of thanksgiving, offered in light of God's providential protection while in Corinth.
- 9) While in Ephesus, as usual, he enters the synagogue and presents the message.
  - a) Even though they are receptive to the message and ask him to stay, he apparently sees a greater need to go to Jerusalem and then to Antioch so he declines.
- 10) The voyage to Caesarea is 500 miles.
- 11) Once there, he goes up to Jerusalem, reports on all that he has been doing then goes down to Antioch – back to home base again.
- 12) With that, the second missionary journey is complete.

**Acts 18:23 (NIV)**

<sup>23</sup> After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

13) Luke tells us that he spent “some time” in Antioch.

a) Scholars estimate this to be a few weeks to a few months – definitely not a long time.

14) So we are off again going through the churches encouraging and teaching.

15) This is obviously the start of the third missionary journey.

16) As this trip unfolds, we will see that there is not as much specificity regarding stays in each town as there has been in the first two missionary journeys.

a) We will also note that he stays longer in several of these locations.

### **Acts 18:24-28 (NIV)**

1) Apollos was a Jew from Alexandria.

a) Alexandria Egypt was the second most influential city in the Roman empire at this time.

b) It was also a major hub for philosophy and rhetoric – a true university atmosphere.

c) Also had a large Jewish population.

d) All that said, we can see why Luke comments that he was a “learned man with a thorough knowledge of Scriptures.”

2) We are not given the source of his knowledge of the “**way of the Lord**” but, we do know that it was not complete – “knew only the baptism of John.”

3) Priscilla and Aquila hear him speaking and “explain the way of God more adequately.”

a) One must assume here that they baptized him and he received the Holy Spirit as would be normal.

b) Apollos taught Jesus accurately so beyond that, they may not have been able to add much to his knowledge of Jesus.

4) Continuing, he was obviously very effective in his teaching and reasoning with the Jews of Ephesus.

5) He then departs for Achaia and winds up in Corinth.

### **Acts 19:1–12 (NIV)**

1) At first glance, this situation is a little bit complicated and has a lot of moving parts so let’s do a quick recap to get all the pieces put together in our minds.

a) When Paul decides to end the second missionary journey at Corinth

i) he sets sail first to Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila.

ii) vs. 19 of this chapter, we find that Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila arrive in Ephesus.

- <sup>19</sup> They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.
- iii) Paul preaches in the synagogue at Ephesus as usual.
  - iv) He then takes his leave of them promising to return (vs. 21).
  - v) Off to Caesarea then Jerusalem and finally home at Antioch.
- b) Meanwhile, Apollos shows up in Ephesus speaking “boldly in the synagogue”; he is taught “more perfectly” by Priscilla and Aquila and then leaves for Corinth.
- c) Somewhere in this time frame Paul begins third missionary journey.
- d) As part of the third missionary journey, Paul arrives back at Ephesus and finds some Christians there who had still only been baptized with John’s baptism and did not know of the Holy Spirit.
- 2) An oddity here is that Paul, coming some time later would find this situation since this was in essence the problem that Priscilla and Aquila addressed with Apollos before he left for Corinth.
- a) One thing that we really need to be keep in mind here is that we are not told that the synagogue where Apollos taught was the same synagogue where Paul had taught before.
  - b) Archeology shows us that there was a large Jewish presence in Ephesus at this time so there indeed could have been multiple synagogues.
- 3) In other words, this could just be a case of these 12 disciples basically “falling through the cracks” so to speak in all this.
- 4) At any rate, the problem is solved, Paul teaches them, they are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.
- 5) So, everybody is in their places and we proceed with Paul teaching in Ephesus on the 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey.

### **Acts 19:8–12 (NIV)**

- 1) Again some of the Jews reject Paul’s message and this time, after 3 months, he stops preaching in the synagogue(s) and moves to the lecture hall of Tyrannus.
- a) There is some debate about what this actually was. There are two possibilities.
  - b) One suggestion is that it was a school and that Tyrannus was a teacher, possibly a rhetorician or perhaps even a Jewish rabbi.
  - c) A second possibility was that it was simply a building named after a man name Tyrannus.
    - i) This would be similar to how a university building might be named after a historical figure.
- 2) Either way, it functioned as a place for learning and discussion, making it a suitable venue for Apostle Paul's purposes.
- 3) So, he takes the disciples he has made and moves to that location.

- 4) These 3 months was perhaps the longest time Paul ever spent teaching in a given synagogue.
  - a) Evidently, some of the members of the synagogue became discontented with Paul and his teaching and made a big enough stink about it (maligned the Way), Paul simply decided to move on.
- 5) Obviously from what Luke says here, folks either come from all over the province of Asia to hear him or he is going throughout the region preaching.
  - a) If indeed the hall of Tyrannus was a school, one possibility is that he was getting exposure through it as he taught there.
  - b) Then, those he taught were spreading the word throughout the province.
- 6) In actuality, Paul stays almost three years in Ephesus ministering and forming the church there.
- 7) And of course, here we have the famous passage about the handkerchiefs and aprons the acquiring healing properties.

### **Acts 19:13–20 (NIV)**

- 1) According to at least one source, these Jews were actually making a living by claiming to heal and drive out demons.
- 2) Often such people would recite a list of names in their incantation to be sure of including the right deity. Here they were trying to use Jesus' name in an effort to match Paul's power.
  - a) We will see that many Ephesians engaged in exorcism and occult practices for profit.
  - b) This is spelled out in verses 18 and 19 of this passage.
- 3) These particular Jews, the sons of Sceva, were evidently impressed by Paul's work but failed to see that Paul's power to drive out demons came from God's Holy Spirit, not from incantations and magic formulas.
- 4) They decided to emulate Paul and call on the name of Jesus without knowing him personally.
- 5) One evil spirit who they tried to cast out said he knew Jesus and knew about Paul but not them.
  - a) Notice the distinction – knew Jesus but only knew about Paul – another sign of Christ divinity.
- 6) The man who had the evil spirit then attacks and badly injures them .
  - a) Hollywood at its best usually doesn't have 7 bad guys beat up by one.
- 7) If you ever need an incident which shows clearly that knowing about Jesus is not the same as knowing him, this is it.
- 8) Once this news got out, the name of the Lord Jesus came to be viewed as the most powerful name and not one to be taken lightly.
- 9) As we continue with vs. 18–20 we see Ephesus was a center for black magic and other occult practices.

- 10) Superstition and sorcery were commonplace and even many of the Ephesian converts had been involved in these dark arts.
- 11) However, the demonstrated power of the name of Jesus over evil spirits became the impetus for a spiritual spring cleaning in the lives of many of the new believers in Ephesus.
- 12) They renounced their fascination with all occult practices.
- 13) They brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire.
- 14) This made a costly but clean break with the sin that was in their lives.
  - a) A drachma was considered a skilled worker's daily wage. So, 50,000 drachmas could represent over 138 years of such wages.

### **Acts 19:21–22 (NIV)**

- <sup>21</sup> After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia. “After I have been there,” he said, “I must visit Rome also.”
- <sup>22</sup> He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.
- 15) Having been in Ephesus for 3 years now, it is time for Paul to move on.
  - 16) He states his intent clearly here – go to Jerusalem and then to Rome.
    - a) This will effectively end the third missionary journey.
  - 17) As you have probably noticed if you have looked at any maps of Paul’s missionary journeys, they are ever expanding westward.
  - 18) He also states clearly in the letter to the Romans that this is his intent.
  - 19) One curious thing about this plan is that Macedonia and Achaia are in the opposite direction from Jerusalem.
  - 20) He tells us the reason for this seemly out-of-the-way travel in the same Romans passage that he tells them of his desire to come to them.

### **Romans 15:22–26 (NASB 2020)**

- <sup>22</sup> For this reason I have often been prevented from coming to you; <sup>23</sup> but now, with no further place for me in these regions, and since I have had for many years a longing to come to you <sup>24</sup> whenever I go to Spain—for I hope to see you in passing, and to be helped on my way there by you, when I have first enjoyed your company for a while—<sup>25</sup> but now, I am going to Jerusalem, serving the saints. <sup>26</sup> For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.
- 21) So we can see from this that the reason for the travel to Macedonia and Achaia was to gather the contribution that were going to provide and then proceed to Jerusalem.

22) Meanwhile, back in Ephesus there is trouble brewing with a capital T!

**Acts 19:23–31 (NIV)**

- 1) Artemis was the Greek goddess of the hunt also, the wilderness, wild animals, nature, vegetation, childbirth, care of children and chastity.
- 2) The Roman equivalent goddess was Diana.
- 3) The Artemis of the Ephesians was that same goddess but the emphasis was on her being the goddess of fertility. (different form of the idol)
  - a) Curious thing here is that the Ephesian goddess statue was totally different from other idols that I found pictures of.
  - b) I could not find (quickly anyway) any other examples of two different representations of the same god or goddess.
- 4) Though Demetrius is a maker of statues of Artemis, we need to notice that his argument is beyond that.
- 5) Indeed, it appears that he has gathered many if not all the craftsmen who have anything to do with creating the idols used in the city.
- 6) Basic complaint – Paul is causing them to lose customers with his message.
  - a) Loss of customers equals loss of income for everyone.
- 7) It has been my experience (and I am sure yours as well) that you can mess with a lot of things but when you stick your hand in someone's pocket you will normally get a reaction very quickly and normally in a very emphatic way.
- 8) Obviously, that is the case here.
- 9) And, oh by the way, if that doesn't work he appeals to their sense of the sacredness.

the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited; and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty
- 10) This sets the whole city in an uproar and so they seize Gaius and Aristarchus and carry them into the amphitheater.
- 11) Paul attempts to go there to perhaps reason with the crowd and free Gaius and Aristarchus.
- 12) His own disciples would not let him go presumably because of the danger, and even some of his friends who were officials of the province sent word for him not to go there.
  - a) This does indicate that this riot went on for some time – don't know for how long – at least several hours.
- 13) These officials of the province were the most prominent men of the province of Asia, responsible for the religious and political order of the region.

14) Paul's message had evidently reached all levels of society crossing all social barriers and giving Paul these friends in high places.

**Acts 19:32–41 (NIV)**

- 1) There were some Jews in the crowd and they pushed a man by the name of Alexander to the front in hopes of quieting the mob.
- 2) Did NOT work – the crowd saw that he was a Jew and would not listen to him.
  - a) One commentator notes that the Jews might have hoped that this Alexander would be a spokesperson to explain that the Jews were distinct from the new religion that was causing economic problems for the silversmiths.
  - b) However, they seemed not to care – Christian or Jew – they were to blame.
- 3) Finally, insteps the mayor (city clerk) to calm the situation.
  - a) A little bit of logic and common sense seems to go a long way this time and the crowd disperses.