

- ii. Who are these Jewish exorcists?
 - a) No longer is the blessing of Abraham given through natural descent but only through faith in Jesus.
 - b) Jesus, Paul, and those who believe the Word of grace, are alone the authentic people of the authentic God.
- iii. The result is the fear of God...manifest as exalting the name of Jesus!
 - a) A mighty work of repentance by the Spirit.
 - b) The Word continues to increase and prevail.

Those who have faith in Jesus are the only true worshippers of the Only True God over all mankind.

LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups
as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Explain why the conflict in Ephesus is the conflict of the ages and the conflict we face squarely today?
- How is the powerlessness of Artemis in the face of the Gospel exposed in the scene of 19:21-41? In what ways might this scene compare to Elijah's confrontation of the prophets of Baal?
- How has the narrative of Acts built up a sense of suspense at what will happen when Paul goes into Asia? Is this suspense vindicated by Paul's ministry in Ephesus?
- How does the mention of John's baptism fit well with the them of "the Way" referenced regularly in the scenes of Ephesus?
- Can you identify ways in which the church is being identified in our text as the one true people of the One True God?
- How does the story of the sons of Sceva reveal that salvation has nothing to do with natural descent or external evidences?
- In 19:11-20, the various saving aspects of Gospel ministry had become so well known that others may have thought they could profit from it. Can you think of modern examples of this?

The Ephesian Conflict

Jerry Cisar — November 23, 2014

Text: Acts 18:19 – 19:41

Introduction (18:19-21)

- A. Ephesus—zeroing in.
- B. The conflict in Ephesus is the battle of the ages; it is a battle we face squarely today!

I. Scene Four: No Small Conflict Concerning the Way (19:23-41)

- A. Ephesus and the worship of Artemis
- B. Elijah and the Prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:16-45)
 - i. The powerlessness of Baal
 - ii. The powerlessness of Artemis and her idol-makers
 - a) Acts 19:28, 34 Crying out for hours
 - b) Acts 19:26-27 Unable to stop Paul; counted as nothing
 - c) Idolaters thrown into confusion (29, 32)
 - iii. Luke 10:18
- C. What has produced such a disturbance about that Way?

Each of these scenes contributes something that helps us see why Christianity claims to be the one true people of the One True and Living God Who alone saves by only One Name.

II. Scene One: *A Small Disturbance in the Way* (18:23-28)

A. Apollos

- i. He is a *learned man* (NIV), or an *eloquent man* (ESV).
- ii. He is competent in the Scriptures.
- iii. He is instructed in the Way of the Lord, is fervent in spirit, and speaks and teaches accurately about Jesus.
 - a) “fervent in spirit”

b) Aquila and Priscilla take him aside.

B. *The Way*: the road upon which the restored exiles would travel to the restored Kingdom.

- i. Those who are in *the Way* are a part of the one true people of God, the restored Messianic Kingdom.
- ii. Apollos knew only *John's baptism*.

C. Apollos goes to Achaia (Corinth, Athens).

- i. Apollos is part of a community.
- ii. We can learn from both Apollos and the young church in Ephesus about how we belong to each other and have a responsibility to each other.

III. Scene Two: *A Separation of the Way* (19:1-10)

A. Paul meets a group of John's disciples.

- i. “*Having believed, did you receive the Holy Spirit?*”

- ii. FF Bruce: “*No,*” said they; “*we never even heard that the Holy Spirit is available.*”

a) They were clearly unaware that the promised Spirit had actually been given.

b) Paul's response implies two things:

- They did not understand John's teaching as well as Apollos.
- They did not know Jesus at all, but only that Messiah was to come soon.

B. Paul lays hands on them and the Holy Spirit comes on them.

- i. Acts 2:17

ii. What does this mean?

a) Paul proclaims the Kingdom in the synagogue.

- Acts 1:3, 6-8

b) *Speaking evil of the Way* before the multitude, some of the Jews harden their hearts.

c) Paul takes the disciples from the synagogue.

- Paul's custom of going into the synagogue to preach ends here.
- Can the group that left the synagogue be the one true people of God—apart from and away from the synagogue?

C. ***The Way***, the true identity of the restored remnant of Israel under the Messiah, is the church... not the synagogue, not those Jews who harden their hearts in unbelief.

IV. Scene Three: *The Way of Salvation* (19:11-20)

A. But God reveals that there is only *one true Way*—*one true Way to be the One true people of God*.

- i. The Kingdom of God is at hand. (Luke 11:20)