

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Paul Returns to Ephesus
Acts 19:1-20

Last time...departing Corinth, Paul concluded his 2nd Missionary Journey
He left Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus while he carried on to Antioch
While Paul was gone, Apollos came to Ephesus and received Jesus' baptism of the
Holy Spirit before moving on to Corinth

Paul, then, started his 3rd Missionary Journey, strengthening the disciples in the provinces
of Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23)

This time...Paul returns to Ephesus

We will be in Acts 19

v1-3 while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul...came to Ephesus:
Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey [map] brings him back to Ephesus;
it was God's will (Acts 18:19-21)
By the time Paul gets back to Ephesus, Apollos has moved on to Corinth
And upon his arrival, Paul encounters 12 (v7) disciples/learners/followers of God

He engaged them in conversation to find out what their story was

Have you received the Holy Ghost...the promise of the Father (Joel 2:28),
the baptism of Jesus...since you believed (in the Living God)?

We have never heard anything about any such Holy Ghost.
We don't know what you are talking about.

Unto what were you baptized?
What kind of disciples are you?
Whose disciples are you?

Unto John (the Baptist's) baptism

Matt 3:1-6 "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand."
Baptized of him, confessing their sins

John bore witness of Jesus, did not bear witness of the Holy Spirit
Jesus bore witness of John the Baptist, of the Father, and the Holy Spirit
(John 14-16)

v4-5 baptism of repentance...baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus:

Paul speaks more of the message of John the Baptist, increasing the understanding of the kingdom of God for these 12 disciples

Of a truth, John (the Baptist) did indeed baptize (unbelievers) with the baptism of repentance while pointing those who repented to put their faith/trust in Jesus, of Whom he/John was the forerunner

Matt 3:11-12

The Messiah, King and Judge of all the earth

Their understanding of the things of the Living God now broader and deeper, these 12 disciples were baptized (water) in the name/authority of the Lord Jesus Christ

Matt 28:19-20

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, **baptizing** them in the **name** of the **Father**, of the **Son**, and of the **Holy Ghost**: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world

Acts 2:38

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be **baptized** every one of you in the **name** of **Jesus Christ** for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the **gift** of the **Holy Ghost**.

Acts 2:41

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

Rom 6:3-11
Eph 1:12-14

baptism is something believers do in the moment of belief, a Divine gift

John 3:5

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

These 12 disciples are now born-again believers in Jesus Christ

Then, going deeper still in the things of God...

v6-7 laid hands upon...Holy Ghost came on:

Acts 1:5

after John 20:22

Acts 1:8

Acts 2:1-4

the initial outpouring, not a one-time one-place event

Acts 2:16-18

Just as Acts 2:1-4 (upon believers) followed John 20:22, for the 11 apostles and
Just as Apollos' baptism of the Holy Spirit followed his baptism by water
(Acts 18:25-26), so do the baptisms of these 12 disciples...
the baptism of Jesus (of the Holy Spirit upon believers) followed the
baptism (water) in the name of Jesus

Evidence that these 12 were baptized in the Spirit (Acts 1:8) was like in Acts 2...

- tongues...the gift of tongues, a language not known by the speaker but known/understood by the hearers, either other humans or the Holy Spirit
- prophesying...speaking the words of God

Note: Spiritual gifts are presented in 1 Cor 12-14 and Rom 12

2 baptisms

water baptism and baptism of the Holy Spirit

John

Jesus

unbeliever

believer

repentance

power

turning around

moving forward

for Self

for others

Red Sea

Jordan River

These 12 disciples – their spiritual growth path

1. unbelievers (prior to v1)
2. repentant believers in the Living God (v1)
3. believers in Jesus Christ (v5)
4. empowered witnesses of Jesus Christ (v6)

Where are you in that spiritual growth progression?

The kingdom of God now has an additional 12 empowered workers!
And now Paul gets back to work in Ephesus

v8 went into the synagogue...three months:

As he did when he first arrived in town (Acts 18:19), so Paul does upon his return to town – he goes to the synagogue to reason with the Jews about the kingdom of God

Paul, empowered by the Holy Spirit, spoke boldly of Jesus Christ

The Holy Spirit is a bold Witness of Jesus Christ

The believer indwelt and baptized with the Holy Spirit is a bold witness of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:29-33)

For 3 months he was “discussing, reasoning” (not arguing) with them and persuading/convincing them about the things of the kingdom of God

A. The King is Jesus Christ

B. The nature of the citizens – born-again of the Spirit of God, whosoever would believe (John 3:16), Jew and Gentile

C. The entrance requirements – salvation is by grace thru faith not works (Eph 2:8-9)

D. Righteousness – the faith of Christ, Who gave Himself for sinners

Rom 3:22 the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe

Phil 3:8-9 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith

Hab 2:4

Heb 1:6

E. The invitation – the Gospel (Rom 1:16-17)

v9 hardened...separated:

Then rose up those in the synagogue who

- had hard hearts toward, did not believe
 - God’s Plan of Redemption
 - The King of the kingdom of God
 - The nature of the citizens of the kingdom of God
 - The entrance requirements of the kingdom of God
 - The invitation/Gospel
- vilified and reviled The Way (John 14:6)

Paul, who had not been arguing, does not start arguing now (ala Jeremiah, Jer 28)
He simply separated the children of God from the enemies of the Cross...
and continued discussing and reasoning with them who were hungry

Don't be drawn by the children of the world into fruitless discussions,
intentionally "off topic"

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain

2 Tim 2:16 But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness

2 Tim 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes

1 Tim 1:4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do*

Don't be provoked into an argument, a test of wills, intellect, and emotion

The separated-from-the-world congregation/church met...in a school
A school of philosophy run by Tyrannus

v10 two years...all they which dwelt in Asai:

There in the school the believers continued to meet for two years

From there, Ephesus being a very busy center for trade and commerce,
went the Gospel throughout the province of Asia [map]
and "the churches of Rev 2-3" were planted

Being taught and proclaimed: the Word of God...only
Not the philosophies or traditions of men

Observations from v8-10:

1. the Word of God, the Truth, is spoken for 3 months until a decision is reached. (share the Gospel until a decision is reached)
2. sharing the Gospel will be met with opposition by the evil one
3. the Church is separated from the world ie is holy
4. daily in the school: The Word and work of God never rests (Ps 121:4)

v11-12 God wrought special miracles:

There was a great deal of occultism in Ephesus
In a dark place, the Light of God was clearly seen

God worked special miracles (power, *dunamis* ala Acts 1:8)

Paul did NOT work special miracles

God worked special miracles, using Paul as an instrument (1 Cor 3:9)

Handkerchiefs/napkins and aprons of Paul were taken to the physically sick and
spiritually afflicted...and God healed them, causing the diseases and the
demons to depart

v13-14 vagabond Jews:

Enter the scene of God working are the 7 sons of Sceva, a Jewish priest
The sons of Sceva were itinerant exorcists...wandering Jews who conjured spirits,
making a living off the spiritually afflicted;
spiritual mercenaries, spiritual parasites

Seeing what "Paul was doing", they presumptuously impose themselves in the
work God is doing thru His anointed servant

They took to themselves...rather than God giving to them...some of the
demon-possessed and attempted to cast out the demons, copy-cat style
They immediately got more than they bargained for

v15-16 Jesus I know and Paul I know:

This always makes me laugh...but spiritual warfare is no laughing matter!

The demon replied to the incantations of the sons of Sceva

Jesus I know...personally, experientially – He is the Creator, Lord of all
Paul I know...acquainted with – he is the Spirit-filled servant of Jesus
Who are you guys...what authority over me do you unknowns have?

The sons of Sceva have no Divine seal (Eph 1:13-14) seen in the spiritual realm
They are not believers in Jesus Christ, they are merchandisers, power-trippers,
pretenders

They have no authority, no power, here

A donnybrook breaks out...and it is a beat down!

And the sons of Sceva get worked but good by the demon-possessed man,
all 7 of them fleeing naked and battered

v17-20 known to all...fear fell on them all...grew the Word of God:

News of what happened

- to the sick and afflicted who were touched by God via Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons
- to the 7 sons of Sceva

spread like wildfire in Ephesus

Man without the Lord Jesus

- cannot heal himself
- is no match for the demons

Man with the Spirit of the Lord Jesus can

- command the demons
- heal the sick

Fear/reverence of the Living God and of the name of the Lord Jesus fell on the city of Ephesus

And a revival broke out!

Many that believed (Matt 16:16)

- came "to church", to the congregation of believers
- confessed their sin against God
- shewed their deeds, came clean, declared the spiritual practices they used to do before their softened hearts were converted

Many who had practiced curious arts

- the occult
- magic
- witchcraft
- sorcery
- conjuring spirits
- Freemasonry
- TM
- Contemplative prayer

were so

- appalled by what they had believed, in the light of the Truth
- eager to distance themselves from that darkness in order to draw near to the Light of the Living God

that they had a book-burning before the entire city,

books with a total computed value being

- 50,000 pieces of silver/drachma/shekel
- 160 man years of wages (6 day work week)

The Word of God, God's Book, grew mightily in the lives of people, transforming lives...the hallmark of every Revival

Paul was given a safe harbor in Ephesus for 2 years.
During this time, the Lord did a mighty work of taking His Word to all men
throughout modern-day Turkey from this humble church

And during this time the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write 2 more letters
The Epistle to the Galatians
The 1st Epistle to the Corinthians

Our study in the ministry of the Holy Spirit resumes next week in Galatians 1

Application/Lessons

1. Revival – a great need for each of us personally, this church, the Church, the nation

Find the Word
Believe the Word
Surrender to the Word
Be not conformed but transformed by the renewing of your mind!

The Church is not about just **coming to** Church, the Church is to **be** the Church
Coming to Church is important to be refreshed in the Word and encouraged/edified
to carry on the work of the Church, which is outside all week
Coming to Church can become robotic if the Church is not being the Church...
shining the Light of Jesus at home, work, play, wherever and
inviting those in darkness to come into the Light i.e. being a part of what God is
doing in the spiritual growth of others
And our participation is not just how we do that but by Whom we do that – Holy Spirit
In other words, we simply cannot be the Church without the Spirit of Christ

Could a revival break forth from this church-in-a-school?
Sure, but that depends upon our availability to be used and our willingness to be
empowered by God the Holy Spirit

Why is a revival needed?

2. Understanding the times...current events understood by the Light of Scripture
Israel

Gen 12:3

Zech 12:1-10

Ezk 38-39

Vladimir Putin's statement
 Hamas navy targeting Israel's offshore drilling rigs

Rise of anti-Semitism worldwide, particularly in USA

Pro-Hamas mobs attacking Jews in NY, LA, other major cities
Germany in 1930's being repeated

Ruling power in USA

- openly pro-Hamas and anti-Israel
- demand USA stop selling arms to Israel
- Biden, a deceiver, was rebuffed by Netanyahu regarding a cease-fire
- Egypt brokered the cease-fire
- Biden, a liar, claimed credit/glory for the cease-fire
- those on the Left who previously supported Israel are wavering, cowing before the Socialists
- USA's turning from Israel is in full swing

President of Turkey proposed providing Hamas with air support in Jerusalem

The Church's time to be the witness of Jesus Christ on earth is almost over!

Luke 21:28-36

In these days, the Body of Christ, the witness of Jesus Christ on earth, NEEDS the power of the Holy Spirit...not just the gift "in" by also the power "upon"

Why are so many believers ignorant of the Holy Spirit?

- a. He does not "promote" Himself, does not testify of Himself
- b. The teachings and practices in Christianity have resulted in Christians feeling uneasy or "weird" when the subject of the Holy Spirit comes up

e.g. The gifts of the Spirit ceased with the Apostles

The Holy Spirit is no longer doing what is recorded in Acts

Which is more likely:

- The Holy Spirit punched off the clock after 60 years and has been idle ever since
- or
- mankind has corrupted everything God has given him

Since much of the Church believes the gifts of the Spirit are no longer in operation or relevant, many disciples of Christ today suffer from this great void in their discipleship/spiritual growth

Remember the path of spiritual growth

1. unbelievers
2. repentant believers in the Living God
3. believers in Jesus Christ
4. empowered witnesses of Jesus Christ

1 Cor 3:9 and 1 Cor 6:19-20

Ezra 1-3 zeal to build the Temple, discouraged

Haggai Consider your ways

Zech 4:6

e.g. Some parts of the Church declare that unless you speak in tongues one is not saved

That is a denominational statement, not a Biblical truth...

a false teaching

e.g. from our personal experience – Topical teaching, teaching series
superficial, crowd-appealing, pastor favorite issues/topics

vs

Acts 20:27

Verse-by-verse expositional teaching of the entire Word of God

In which style of teaching are you more likely to hear instruction on the Holy Spirit and His ministry and His gifts?

Our personal testimony: our spiritual growth erupted when we embraced this approach to ministry

e.g. Woke-ism

Woke-ism is Matt 24:7 being played out right in front of our eyes...

race relations in an uproar and confusion

man judging man based on the color of his skin

From one man came all races

The races are a testimony of the genius of the Creator of man,

the differences are to be celebrated not used to divide and strive

The Creator of man is color-blind and so are His children to be

Woke-ism is carnal and unholy, it has no place in the holy Body of Christ

It is the mind of anti-christ

e.g. Social Gospel

Jesus did not suffer and die...the Father did not send His Son to suffer and die...for ANY social cause

Jesus was sent to defeat our enemy – death, a spiritual reality

e.g. Prosperity Gospel, Health and Wealth, Name it and Claim it
Such staggering Biblical illiteracy and manipulation/merchandizing!

On TV we see

- God the Holy Spirit misrepresented
- The gifts of the Spirit counterfeited
 - tongues
 - prophesying
 - miracles
- “Evangelists”/merchandisers/wolves in sheep’s clothing fleecing the flock of God with “prayer hankies” to enrich themselves... able to do so because the flock is Biblically ignorant, foolish, and undiscerning

Acts 19:12 has been shamelessly corrupted by con men posing as men of God.

So many sheep fallen prey to these ravenous wolves because they do not know the Word of God.

Result: sickly sheep and a fleeced flock.

What would the church at Ephesus done with these modern con men?
Run ‘em out of town!

The Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, is a gift of God and the power of God to empower believers to bear witness of His Son
Luke 11:9-13

He is but for the asking...and receiving by faith!
Is the Father God?
Is Jesus Christ God?
Is the Holy Spirit God?
What part of God do you not want?!

The difference between a ho-hum Christian and an on-fire, dynamic Christian
(bearing abundant fruit of the Spirit like love, peace, joy)
is the Holy Spirit upon

This city/state/nation/world needs Jesus Christ...before it is too late!
Who will receive by faith the baptism of Jesus?

Prayer

Laying on of hands for the baptism of the Holy Spirit