

in the name of **JESUS**

Acts 19:8-20

**"In the Name of Jesus"** is no magic phrase that closes prayers and guarantees all requests granted. Instead it is "in the name of Jesus" - by His authority & for His glory - that the all-powerful, life-changing message of the Gospel convicts & convinces sinful people that Jesus is worth following.

Today we see how Paul defeated the enemy **in the Name of Jesus** in a place that was the home of idols & all kinds of witchcraft - **Ephesus**. One of the chief idols that Paul confronted was **Artemis** (AKA Diana) - the goddess of fertility who was worshipped through sexual acts. The temple dedicated to Artemis was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world, HUGE and ORNATE.

\* The gospel that Paul preached so impacted Ephesus that some who made their living by making silver shrines to Artemis almost caused a riot in the city. **Read Acts 19:21-41.**

☀ **Kent Hughes** "*Ephesus was the waterhole for every kind of magician, witch, clairvoyant, and criminal. Con artists, murderers, and perverts all found the climate of Ephesus unusually agreeable.*"<sup>1</sup>

Ephesus is the place where Paul spent more time than any other on his missionary journeys (3 years - Acts 20:31) before turning toward Rome.

**Catch the Context:** Paul shared with the 12 disciples of John the Baptist, baptized them in Jesus' name, and laid hands on them (Acts 19:1-8). The Spirit entered their lives, transformed and empowered them. They likely followed Paul to the next opportunity to share the good news of Jesus.

**Acts 19:8-10** (NET) <sup>8</sup> So Paul entered the synagogue and spoke out fearlessly for three months, **addressing and convincing them about the kingdom of God.**<sup>9</sup> But when some were stubborn and refused to believe, reviling **the Way** before the congregation, he left them and took the disciples with him, addressing them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> This went on for two years, so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard **the word of the Lord.**

As Paul's M.O. (Method of Operation) he went the Jews at the **synagogue** first and attempted to persuade them that Jesus was KING of the **KINGdom**. As was the norm, over those **three months**, some responded positively to the Gospel, but others did not. Some began **reviling the Way before the congregation**; that is - making fun of the Gospel message.

**The Way:** Jesus (Jn. 14:6) and the lifestyle of those who follow Him. Luke frequently refers to the Christian lifestyle as "the Way" (Acts 9:2; 18:25-26; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).<sup>2</sup>

Paul left the unbelieving Jews and **took the disciples with him**. That could have included new followers of Jesus and the 12 disciples previously mentioned.

Paul trained these disciples **addressing them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus**. Jesus was honored as disciples were trained & sent out from Ephesus **so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Acts: The Church Afire, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1996), 254.

<sup>2</sup> Biblical Studies Press, *The NET Bible First Edition*; Bible. English. NET Bible.; *The NET Bible* (Biblical Studies Press, 2005).

Earlier in Paul's mission the Holy Spirit kept Paul from going to Asia (Acts 16:6). Yet now, by equipping people from the home base at Ephesus, Paul's ministry impact was far reaching and led to the planting & watering of the 7 churches "in Asia" - the same churches that John later wrote to in the letter we call Revelation (1:4, 11).

**Acts 19:9b-10** (NET) he left them and took the disciples with him, addressing them every day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> This went on for two years, so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard **the word of the Lord**.

***This is the goal of Christian education.*** It's more than teaching a person what to think and how to think, but equipping believers to **take the Gospel to the planet in the power of the Spirit**. That's our privilege - to be a SENDING STATION - reaching the lost, growing the young, & sending out mature believers to impact their communities **in the name of Jesus**.

**Acts 19:11-12** (NET)<sup>11</sup> **God was performing extraordinary miracles by Paul's hands**, <sup>12</sup> so that when even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his body were brought to the sick, their diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

God did the miracles, but used Paul to do them. How wonderful it is to be USED BY GOD!

\* ***You might not be used just like Paul...***but many of you have made the phone call when prompted, said the words when they needed to be said...and heard something back like, "How did you know I needed that!?!?" How wonderful it is to be USED BY GOD...as He does the work THROUGH US!!!

**Acts 19:13-15** (NET) <sup>13</sup> But some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were possessed by evil spirits, saying, "I sternly warn you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." <sup>14</sup> (Now seven sons of a man named Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were doing this.)<sup>15</sup> But the evil spirit replied to them, "I know about Jesus and I am acquainted with Paul, but who are you?"

**Sceva** is NOT on record as a high priest who served in Jerusalem. He was likely a member of one of the high priestly families and/or added this title to pad his resumé, like a con-man who claims to be a pilot or doctor. When they pull out their new magic phrase "*by Jesus whom Paul preaches*"...things don't go quite as they planned.

**Acts 19:16-17** (NET) <sup>16</sup> Then the man who was possessed by the evil spirit jumped on them and beat them all into submission. He prevailed against them so that they fled from that house naked and wounded. <sup>17</sup> This became known to all who lived in Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks; fear came over them all, and **the name of the Lord Jesus was praised**.

The exorcists didn't cast out the demon. The demon cast out the exorcists. And in this way the demon proved more powerful than the seven sons of Sceva...but not for Jesus whom Paul preached.

This miraculous power showed Jesus had power over demons, diseases, & false teaching/teachers. There are at least 2 things that cause people to praise/honor **the name of the Lord Jesus**:

**1) God's Power**

**2) God's People** - when our LIVES line up with our LIPS.

Look what Paul writes the hypocritical Jews who said one thing and did another in the letter of Romans.

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**Romans 2:21-24** (NET) <sup>21</sup> therefore you who teach someone else, do you not teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you steal? <sup>22</sup> You who tell others not to commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? <sup>23</sup> You who boast in the law dishonor God by transgressing the law! <sup>24</sup> For just as it is written, ***"the name of God is being blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."***

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May our lives match our lips and this be true of us...**in the name of Jesus.**

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**Matthew 5:16** (NET)<sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven.

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**BIG QUESTION: Do our LIVES match our LIPS?**

Does your LIFE give reason for others to recognize the power and the presence of the Lord Jesus? OR is your life just another reason for unbelievers to speak evil about Jesus?

**Do you LIVE in the Name of Jesus?** Or are you ashamed of Jesus?

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**Mark 8:38** (NET) <sup>38</sup> For if anyone is **ashamed of me and my words** in this adulterous and sinful generation, **the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him** when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

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Thankfully, when pressed to see the real power of Jesus versus the idols in their lives, many people humbled themselves before God.

<sup>18</sup> Many of those who had believed came forward, confessing and making their deeds known.<sup>19</sup> Large numbers of those who had practiced magic collected their books and burned them up in the presence of everyone. When the value of the books was added up, it was found to total fifty thousand silver coins.<sup>20</sup> In this way **the word of the Lord continued to grow in power and to prevail.**

This amounts to 50,000 days wages for an average worker<sup>3</sup> - that's 139 years of daily work. These people had put a lot of time, energy, & money into this! But if the message of Jesus was true, then what they were so invested in...was NOT TRUE.

What if we all **brought stuff or confessed actions** that kept us from seeking Jesus first?

What could God do in OUR HOMES, OUR CHURCH, OUR COMMUNITY....if WE got rid of sinful activities & attitudes?...If WE humbled ourself before Jesus and asked Him to forgive our hypocrisy - the many times our LIPS haven't matched our LIFESTYLE?

**BIG QUESTION: Do our LIVES match our LIPS?**

 **Charles Spurgeon** "Anything becomes an idol when it keeps us away from God."

**Identify** what is keeping you from seeking Jesus first. and place it at the feet of Jesus so that we can truly live **In the Name of Jesus.**

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<sup>3</sup> Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary: 15:1-23:35*, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014), 2859.