

Why Being Close is not Good Enough

Acts 18:23-19:22

November 1, 2020

Acts Series: Taking the Message of Jesus' Kingdom Everywhere

Acts 19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples ² and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied.

⁴ Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues ¹ and prophesied. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

⁸ Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹² so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

¹³ 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 the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." ¹⁴ Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. ¹⁵ One day the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?" ¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. ¹⁸ Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. ¹⁹ A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. ²⁰ In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

²¹ 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." ²² He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer. ¹

¹ The New International Version. (2011): Zondervan.

1. A fragment of John the Baptist

Acts 18:23-28

He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. Verse 18:25

A. Apollos the Scholar

Acts 18:23-25

Alexandria was a famous place of learning
This marks the start of Paul's third journey
Apollos was possibly 'saved' but lacking pieces
Passion if misinformed is misdirected

B. Baptism of John

Acts 18:25, 26

Baptism of Repentance – Behavioural change based on principle
Ready to learn and ready to act

C. New Ministry

Acts 18:27, 28

Grace and possibly belief seem to be new
Possessed ability to prove Jesus is the Messiah

2. A fragment of Baptism

Acts 19:1-7

Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." Verse 19:4

A. Disciples of whom?

Acts 19:1-3

Something is not quite right Verse 1
Paul assumed they were 1) disciples of Jesus
That also meant they would have 2) received the Holy Spirit

What Holy Spirit? Verse 2
We read the crucial question

B. The Holy Spirit

Acts 19:4-7

Believe in Jesus Verse 4

Responded through baptism Verse 5
1) meets the discipleship issue

Holy Spirit's presence very obvious Verse 6
2) Meets the Holy Spirit issue

These 12 'disciples' were following John the Baptist
They had anticipated Jesus but had not yet encountered him
Now they are followers of Jesus

3. A fragment of Jesus

Acts 19:8-16

"Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?" Verse 19:15

A. Getting things started

Acts 19:8-12

A Typical start	Verses 8, 9
Lecture hall of Tyrannus	Verse 9
Extraordinary Miracles	Verses 11, 12
More unusual – supercharged – powerful	
God's power at work yet people being misdirected	

B. Using the power?

Acts 19:13-16

An attempt to use the name	Verse 13
The evil spirit	
Jesus I know	I know about Paul
Who are you?	Sees the pretenders and is not impressed
Overpowered - Easily	Verse 16

C. The Name of Jesus is not a tool to be used

Evil spirit even knows Jesus but is not 'saved'

4. A fullness of Faith

Acts 19:17-22

"Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds." Verse 18

A. Healthy respect for Jesus

Acts 19:17

Fear – worship – understanding the significance and power

B. Confession by believers

Acts 19:18

Admission of evil deeds by believers
Transformation of behaviour, character and understanding

C. Repentance

Acts 19:19

No turning back

D. Word spread and grew

Acts 19:20

Freedom took time to take root

E. Paul's work here is nearly done

Acts 19:21, 22

Why being close is not enough

Our response to Jesus must be personal and firsthand

Apollos

- We seek to know more about Jesus
- We seek to experience more of Jesus
- We hope to serve Jesus

Our response to Jesus must be more than knowledge

12 Disciples of John the Baptist

- We may have not heard it right
- We may find more work needs to be done
- The presence of the Holy Spirit is the 'mark' of salvation

Our response to Jesus must be more than serving our needs

7 sons of Sceva

- They were looking for power (self serving)
- The evil spirit even had knowledge about Jesus
- Faith in Jesus is not about self help or personal growth

Our response to Jesus will touch every area of our lives

Deep respect – Fear – Worship

Confession of wrongdoings

Transformational Repentance

Word of God spread and grew in power

Paul sees the basis of his work as complete