

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 8TH-9TH, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

GODS (ACTS 19:21-27) NEVER SITTING STILL

After the “extraordinary” events in Ephesus, “Paul resolved by the Spirit” to visit a couple churches on his way to Israel. Romans 15 tells us he was also collecting money to help the Christians in Jerusalem.

- Before he left, he sent Timothy and Erastus so he could stay in Turkey a little longer.

“IT IS NECESSARY FOR ME TO SEE ROME...”

Luke wasn't finished telling what happened in Ephesus, but he sets the tone for what will drive the rest of Acts: Rome. Paul desired to bring the faith into the epicenter of the world.

- He would eventually make it to Rome—but in chains. **God's will often unfolds in ways we don't see coming.**

“A MAJOR DISTURBANCE ABOUT THE WAY”

Ephesus was the economic hub of Asia Minor and also housed the temple of Artemis. Thousands would come visit the temple, and like most tourist cities, they sold souvenirs.

- Demetrius was a man who made shrines of Artemis and “provided a great deal of business” to other craftsmen.

THE TRUTH GOT IN THEIR WAY

Because Christianity was gaining traction via Paul, many people stopped worshipping false gods, visiting the temple, and buying idols.

- Paul taught “gods made by hand are not gods.” **Believing in Jesus means submitting to Him and relinquishing control**, and some people refuse to do it.

MONEY AND CONTROL

Demetrius appealed to the Ephesian business owners' fear of losing their money, control, and cultural identity.

- Even as Christians we can white-knuckle things we should let go of. **Do we let culture, politics, money, or success steer us more than Jesus and His Word?**

A RIOT (ACTS 19:28-34)

THE EPHESIANS PUT NATIONALISM OVER TRUTH

Demetrius convinced the crowd that their homeland was going to be ruined, and “they were filled with rage and began to cry out, ‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’”

- **We can be patriotic without being nationalistic. Christ, the Word, and people should be our highest priorities.**

RUSHING INTO THE AMPHITHEATER

The city fell into confusion and congregated in the 25,000-seat amphitheater. In the absence of Paul, they grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions.

- When Paul heard, he wanted to speak to the crowd, but his disciples and even some city officials begged him not to go.

THIS SOUNDS FAMILIAR

A fascinating note is “**most of them did not know why they had come together.**” This subtle fact shows just how impressionable and weak people can be.

- We must **follow the Bible, choose our company wisely** (1 Corinthians 15), and **be willing to go against groupthink** (Romans 12:2).

MORE CHAOS AND CONFUSION

The Jews who were also anti-Christian pushed a man named Alexander to the front to convince the Ephesians that the Jews had no connection with Paul.

- Though they had a common foe, when the Ephesians realized Alex was a Jew, they yelled for two hours as they internally fought.

PECULIAR (ACTS 19:35-41)

AN UNLIKELY HERO

Similar to Gamaliel bringing some order to the Sanhedrin (Acts 5), a city clerk (mayor) recognized the people had gotten out of control and were violating the *Pax Romana*.

- God will often use ungodly people to fulfill His will. **We are simply called to trust and live above reproach** (1 Timothy 5:7).

“AND OF THE IMAGE THAT FELL FROM HEAVEN”

More than likely, the worship of Artemis began with a meteor that fell to earth and was carved into a goddess, then placed at the center of the first temple.

- There have been many similar objects of worship over the centuries, most recently the Kaaba in Mecca.

THE CHRISTIANS HADN'T BROKEN ANY LAWS

The clerk said the Christians hadn't robbed the temple or “blasphemed our goddess,” so there wasn't a legal case against them.

- **The only time a law should be broken is if it directly contradicts the Bible.** If not, **we're to submit to the governing authority and be good citizens** (Titus 3, Romans 13, Matthew 22).

IS THIS WHY LUKE WAS SO DESCRIPTIVE?

This passage has no preaching, conversions, or appearances of major characters. Maybe Luke wanted to emphasize that **the behavior and mission of the church were done with respect and without breaking laws.**

- **Christians are the bride of Christ and represent Him on earth until He returns.**

LEVEL HEADS PREVAIL

After the clerk spoke some rationality into the mob, they calmed down, and “he dismissed the assembly.”

- Though not a Christian, the clerk did a very Christlike thing by **bringing peace and logic to a chaotic and irrational situation. We should aim to be “peacemakers”** (Matthew 5:9).

THE “WORLD”

- When the Bible speaks of the “world,” it is referring to the systems and culture that dominate societies.
- We are not to live in opposition to people but **in contrast to the broken and evil systems, philosophies, and morality many people have adopted.**

CALLED TO STAND IN CONTRAST (1 PETER 2:9)

- The world places self above all things, but we're to **seek God first** (Matthew 6:33), **deny self** (Luke 9:23), and **consider others** (Philippians 2).
- The world only loves and respects those similar to themselves, but we are called to **love, respect, and show grace to all people regardless of the outcome** (Matthew 5:47).
- The world is selfish and materialistic, and it hoards money, power, and resources.
- Christians are called to be **humble, benevolent, and not materialistic, and to use their talents and resources for the glory of God and the greater good** (1 Peter 4:10; Hebrew 13:16; 1 Timothy 6:18; Proverbs 3:27).
- The world often mindlessly follows the fervor of the prevailing cultural mob.
- Christians are called to be **unwavering in their belief in, and practice of, the solid and eternal teachings of Scripture, despite what is temporarily popular or acceptable in society.**
- The world operates in lawlessness and chaos. God is a God of order, and **we are to live and do all things “decently and in order”** (1 Corinthians 14) as we represent Christ as **good, honest, and moral citizens.**
- Through the wisdom of the Word and the Spirit, Christians should be **peacemakers.**

PEOPLE NEED ANOTHER PATH

- **Our ways are not working**, but there are many people who are ignorant to the fact that there is a better way to live!
- As the church, **we are to know the character and nature of God and to demonstrate a path that not only saves souls but offers a more fulfilling and meaningful life!**

IN THE WORLD BUT NOT OF IT (JOHN 17:9-19)

- Do we understand that the ways of the world don't work in the long-run?
- Are we proper, biblical ambassadors of Jesus? Do we know what that means?
- Do we engage or isolate?
- **Do we love unconditionally, without compromising biblical truths?**