

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 9TH, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

MOTIVATION (ACTS 19:21–27) RESOLVED BY THE SPIRIT

After being in Ephesus for over two years, Paul is led by the Holy Spirit to continue his journey.

- We do not get the details here, but he is drawn to return to Corinth and Jerusalem while passing through other cities.
- After sending out disciples, he stayed in Asia for a while, but would eventually get to a new mission field: Rome.

ABOUT THAT TIME

Before Paul left Ephesus, Luke records that there was a major disturbance about the Way (the Christian Church).

- Remember, Paul had been sharing and teaching the gospel, as well as sending disciples into the province with the message of Christ for over two years.
- **The continued teaching of the gospel will invoke a response!**

DEMETRIUS THE SILVERSMITH

We are introduced to Demetrius, a silversmith who made shrines of Artemis.

- It seems he was a leader in his trade because he was responsible for other craftsmen's source of income.
- Whatever his position, he was able to assemble a great number of idol makers for the purpose of "exposing" Paul.

PROSPERITY FROM IDOLATRY

First, he addresses the financial implications of Paul's influence.

- Simply put, people were not buying their product because there was no need for false idols.
- **Whenever the gospel is faithfully shared, it will change people, communities, and even commerce.**

NO HANDMADE GODS

Demetrius understood that Paul's message was clear and people were believing the truth all over the Asian province.

- Other groups had taught against polytheism and idolatry, but Paul's message was being heard and acted upon.
- **The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth is God's way of delivering His plan to His people.**

WORSE THAN DISCREDITED

Demetrius stepped up the rhetoric after implying the tradesmen were losing respect in the community.

- Their great goddess Artemis may be despised and come to ruin because of Paul and his teaching.
- This was more than personal finance on the line; it was their entire culture.

THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS

For perspective, Artemis was the premier goddess of the province, not just Ephesus.

- Her temple was three times larger than the Parthenon and one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
- In the fourth-largest city in the Roman Empire, there would have been tens of thousands of Artemis followers ready to be incited to riot for their goddess.

RIOT (ACTS 19:28–34) FILLED WITH RAGE, THEY CRIED OUT

Demetrius stirred up the tradesmen to the point of rage, and they began walking the streets, shouting in anger.

- People heard the shouting and joined the mob as they marched to the 24,000-seat amphitheater.
- Most did not know why they were mad and marching, but they did not want to miss the excitement.

SOMEONE TO BLAME

Demetrius had singled out Paul as the primary problem, but grabbing some of his companions would be good enough to send a message to "the Way."

- **We have a loving message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. It may not always be received the way we expect. Getting caught up in a confused culture war is always a possibility.**

PAUL TO THE RESCUE... NOT.

We know it was not Paul's usual plan to avoid the dangers to which Christians were exposed. He wanted to get up in front of this crowd, share the gospel, and take whatever they had to dish out.

- He was stopped by other disciples and even local officials from entering the venue.
- **Sometimes, we lift our voice. Sometimes, we wait. Always, we stand firm.**

ALEXANDER THE NOT-SO-GREAT.

The Jews, not wanting to be associated with Paul and his message, pushed Alexander to the front to clarify to the crowd that, though the Jews didn't believe in idolatry, they weren't the ones causing this chaos.

- Their irrational and angry response was to shout at the top of their lungs for two hours the praises of their false god.
- **Louder doesn't equal right.**

REASON (ACTS 19:35–41) PEOPLE OF EPHEBUS!

A recognizable, high-ranking city official stood before the crowd and was able to calm them enough to make a "rational" plea.

- They had been stirred up by the name of their goddess, and he would use the same tactic to calm them down.

UNDENIABLE?

The clerk reminded them of what they believed about Artemis.

- Ephesus was the home of Artemis.
- Artemis had fallen from heaven and therefore was from a godly place.
- In his address to the people, he affirmed that Artemis was not made by human hands and could not be destroyed by words.

NOT GUILTY OF THEFT OR BLASPHEMY

As far as the two scapegoats, the clerk clarifies that there had been no robbing of the temple or even blasphemy against Artemis.

- Although Paul had taught that idols are not God, he didn't attack their beliefs directly.
- His message was about the one God and His plan of salvation for those who would believe.

IF THERE IS A CASE AGAINST ANYONE

The calming continues as the clerk points back to the troublemaker, Demetrius, and reveals that IF there is a case against anyone, it should be taken to the courts that have been established for such things.

- He even gave them the chance to voice their opinions at the next scheduled assembly.
- Which was unlikely since the majority did not even know why they were there.

ASSEMBLY DISMISSED

The final point of the clerk was possibly the most powerful.

- What they were doing was rioting, and it was against Roman law.
- The Romans had the right and power to arrest people and destroy the temple if their actions were seen as unlawful. Faced with something larger than themselves, they left.

BIG

- There is something bigger than us.
- **There are many things bigger than us.**
- **Things larger than us can make us feel afraid, small, or comforted. The difference is: how well do we know what is larger than us? The next big question: is it actually real?**

BELIEVE

- Everyone has some kind of belief system.
- **Even believing in nothing is believing.**
- **We agree that WHAT we believe in will make a difference in this life and the next. As followers of Christ, we believe in Him. We believe He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one comes to the Father except through Him. What other beliefs are getting in the way of our belief in Him?**

CONFIDENCE

- We need confidence to find peace.
- **Our confidence depends on its source.**
- **The problem comes when we place our confidence in temporary things. It may not be sinful, but it probably will not be peaceful either. How many of our idols have fallen? Confidence in Christ will bring a peace that passes understanding and lasts through the toughest trials. Is it time to confess what we really believe?**