

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral  
Lesson 40 “Revival and a Riot”

I. We have been studying through *Acts* and how the gospel went viral through various revivals in the first century. This is what caused the gospel to spread so rapidly in the first century.

A. Last week we started looking at the revival in Ephesus which is the greatest revival in the New Testament.

1. Over 100,000 people were saved in a 2-3 year time period. This church ended up becoming a prominent church in Asia Minor. The other 7 churches listed in the book of Revelation came from out of this move of God in Ephesus.
2. Last week we saw how God opened a door for Paul in Ephesus and yet he didn't initially discern it. He ministered there a short while and then left to go to Jerusalem and the Apollos came in and ministered. After Apollos left, Paul returned and ministered to many of the same people and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to operate in the gifts of the spirit.
3. After this Paul taught in Ephesus for 2 years all in Asia heard the gospel of Jesus. This came through the outbreak of miracles as Paul ministered.

B. Today we are going to finish studying the move of God in Ephesus and we are going to see both the revival and a riot break out simultaneously. Why?

1. Historically, every major move of God has a Satanic counter-attack. We must understand this while we are believing for a great move of God in the USA.
2. Revivals aren't clean. They are messy. If we aren't ready to deal push back and mess, we'll check out early on the revival and say what God is doing is not of God. ex: William Seymour and the Los Angeles Times.

II. Revival and a Riot

A. **Acts 19:11-20 Miracles Initiate the Revival**

1. The miracles flowing from the handkerchiefs and aprons that touched Paul's body were so prodigious that Satan had the 7 sons of Sceva tried to exercise demons in Jesus's name. **Satan felt so threatened by what God was doing through Paul that He panicked and started running a PR campaign for Paul.**
2. 2015 CCC example - Pastor Lawson ended up getting on Fox News.
3. The 7 sons of Sceva didn't have authority over the demons because they weren't born again. We must have a relationship with God to walk His power.
4. After all this controversy happens all the Jews and Greeks in Ephesus heard it and the fear of God came upon them. They began burning their magic books and burned them. This would be worth \$5 million in today's money.

## B. Acts 19:21-40 The Riot in Ephesus

1. Interestingly, Paul purposed in the spirit to leave Ephesus, but instead sent others. It's possible God was trying to get Paul out of town to avoid the riot, but Paul didn't obey.
2. The Bible says a commotion began because Demetrius the silversmith got upset that people began destroying their demonic books and getting rid of their silver idols. This threatened his and the other silversmith's livelihood. Interestingly, when he brings this up, his focus is on his trade falling into disrepute first and then the dishonor of the goddess Diana. His motive was greed.
3. The temple of Diana was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. Diana was an important Greek goddess of wild animals and the hunt. People came to Ephesus to worship her and paid to have sex with prostitutes in her temple.
4. In *verses 28-32*, chaos breaks out. One person shouted one thing and another person shouted something else. Sounds like most of the last two years with some of the riots. The root of all of it is demonic and based in confusion - ex: burning the statues of Ulysses S. Grant, defunding police, the gender identity stuff.
5. Alexander (most likely Alexander the Coppersmith from *2 Timothy 4:4* who did Paul great harm) tried to speak and put a stop to the riot but people continued to chant. He didn't do this because he liked Paul, but because he was Jewish and wanted to distinguish that the Jews weren't part of this move God was bringing.
6. In *verses 35-41*, the city clerk (similar to a mayor) put a stop to the riot. He basically said this riot could get them in trouble with the Romans who dwelt harshly with riots. This put fear in everyone and they all went home.
7. Interestingly, this man proclaimed the statue of Diana fell from the heavens. This shows the level of deception going on in Ephesus.

III. Conclusion - Many of us want a great move of God, but are we ready for the riot that will coincide with it? Jesus said affliction and persecution comes for the word's sake. This means when God's word of awakening goes forth, there will be an attack. History records Herod trying to murder Jesus when he was born, the Catholic church trying to murder Martin Luther, and John Wesley being kicked out of the church of England because He preached free grace.

A. Usually I would close by praying we have boldness and while we do need boldness, the way I feel impressed to close is making the point that the key to overcoming adversity is a radical commitment to Jesus. We must not love our own lives unto death. Many of us don't need more boldness as much as we need a radical commitment to Jesus where we push all our chips to the center of the table and say I'm all in whatever it costs.

B. Call Up Prayer Team and Pray Closing Prayer (prayer of commitment)