

SERIES: **THE MOVEMENT-** a journey through the astonishing book of Acts

TEXT: **Acts 19:21-41** *The Riot After the Revival*

HOOK- Sesame Street- "Plaza Sesamo"/ Oscar the Grouch/ Loves his trash

Why don't you stay up on the night before trash day to guard your trash cans?

Because you're not Oscar the grouch- that's not your home or your treasure

The Tension- We defend what we treasure, but sometimes we treasure trash

Hoarders Show on TV: nothing is trash to them- end up with nothing but trash

The bible has a word for this- Idol Worship

MAIN TAKEAWAY- The Gospel will cause conflict where there are idols to defend

I want you to ponder and ask the H.S. to show you- *what am I defending that God is confronting?*

²¹ When these events were over, (Revival/Awakening; people leaving behind their sin/ idols)

Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem. "After I've been there," he said, "I must see Rome as well!" (Intimacy with Christ paves the way for clarity from the Spirit)

²² So after sending two of those who assisted him, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, he himself stayed in Asia for a while. It's during this time that Paul sent the first letter to the Corinthians (really the 2nd)

The remainder of the book of Acts is the journey to get to Rome

²³ During that time there was a major disturbance about the Way.

The Way of Jesus will undoubtedly disturb My Way

My way= get even

The Way= forgive

My way= look out for your own self

The Way= love others as yourself

My Way= take

The Way= serve

Not only had The Way of Jesus transformed individuals, **it was also transforming their city!**

- Ephesus was the richest city in the richest region of the Roman Empire.

It had the primary port and all of the region's trade had to come through it.

- It was multiethnic, and a hub for tourists.
- It had the largest library in the world.
- It had the world's largest temple, 4 times bigger than the Parthenon in Rome!

It was the biggest Roman building in existence at the time! (one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world)

The centerpiece was a statue of Artemis made from a meteorite that had fallen there.

**slides of Artemis and the temple(artist rendering/ our sanctuary vs Artemis' temple footprint)*

Keep all that in mind as we read this next section-

²⁴ For a person named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, provided a great deal of business for the craftsmen. ²⁵ When he had assembled them, as well as the workers engaged in this type of business, he said: "Men, you know that our prosperity is derived from this business. ²⁶ You both see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this man Paul has persuaded and misled a considerable number of people by saying that gods made by hand are not gods! ²⁷ So not only do we run a risk that our business may be discredited, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be despised and her magnificence come to the verge of ruin—the very one all of Asia and the world adore."

THE WAY was transforming people, and in turn people were transforming their very city (and its economy)

"**GODS MADE WITH HANDS ARE NOT GODS**" - Paul's slogan (people started to realize "oh yeah we made that!")

People still do this today btw (we don't carve out idols)-

We interpret who we believe God to be based on our preferences or what people we agree with say about God (the source of origin for this God is our own mind..... IOW, we made that!)

"MY god would not/ never ..." *"MY god is ok with...doesn't judge..."*
that's not the real God, **that's a projection of your preference.**

²⁸ When they had heard this, they were filled with rage and began to cry out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

²⁹ So the city was filled with confusion, and they rushed all together into the amphitheater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's traveling companions.

The amphitheater was one of the biggest back then, seats 25,000 people!

**slides of amphitheater*

They grab the first 2 Christians they see and throw them front and center

³⁰ Though Paul wanted to go in before the people, the disciples did not let him. ³¹ Even some of the provincial officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent word to him, pleading with him not to take a chance by going into the amphitheater.

When not only your Christian friends but also your non-Christian friends think it's a bad idea, best to listen.

³² Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing and some another, because the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

It is chaos! (GOOOO Artemis! GOOOO Raiders! GOOOO Herbalife!)

I realize this may be stretching the text, but hear me out- I believe this emphasizes an important human truth:

People long to be part of something meaningful that's bigger than themselves.

Social causes, sports teams, nationalism, political activism, etc.

What better cause with more lasting impact than the good news of the Kingdom of God?

³³ Then some of the crowd gave Alexander advice when the Jews pushed him to the front. So motioning with his hand, Alexander wanted to make his defense to the people. ³⁴ But when they recognized that he was a Jew, a united cry went up from all of them for about two hours: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

The Jews also believe there is only 1 God, so they want to clarify "**WE AIN'T THEM!**"

³⁵ However, when the city clerk (highest city official) had calmed the crowd down, he said, "Men of Ephesus! What man is there who doesn't know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple guardian of the great Artemis, and of the image that fell from heaven? (it's likely they carved the statue of Artemis from a meteorite)

³⁶ Therefore, since these things are undeniable, you must keep calm and not do anything rash. ³⁷ For you have brought these men here who are not temple robbers or blasphemers of our goddess. ³⁸ So if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a case against anyone, the courts are in session, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. ³⁹ But if you want something else, it must be decided in a legal assembly. ⁴⁰ In fact, we run a risk of being charged with rioting for what happened today, since there is no justification that we can give as a reason for this disorderly gathering."

Ephesus was a "free city" under Rome, they could govern themselves and had freedoms other cities didn't but that could change if Rome felt an uprising was forming/ Pax Romana

⁴¹ After saying this, he dismissed the assembly.

So what are we to make of that?

MAIN TAKEAWAY- The Gospel will cause conflict where there are idols to defend

Acts 19 is the story of the gospel going into Ephesus and challenging the peoples idols, and their pushback as a result God does the same in our lives- challenges or idols and we sometimes resist

Let's bring it closer to home to hopefully identify the idols in our lives-

Idols can be anything that we turn to, to find joy and security apart from God

That's what Artemis was for them – protector and prosperer of the city

3 questions to reflect on to smoke out the idols from hiding-

1. What is the thing you think “if I can have THAT, then I’ll have joy, peace, stability.” ?

- We think marriage will give us stability and peace- until we get married and have problems-
- we think kids will provide the joy we long for- until they move out-
- We even do this with church- we chase the feelings of worship instead of worshipping regardless of how I feel, wanting to feel God but not actually wanting God

The danger with that is that if we don't have THAT, what then? We're miserable

could you be ok if...never have kids, never get married, never get that job...never get healed, never again felt “holy goosebumps”?

2. What do I find myself repeatedly justifying?

Idols need to be protected (The irony is Artemis was supposed to protect them!)

what is that thing no one can mess with?

You get upset, even loud or hostile if it gets brought up or if that thing is threatened.

I've seen people defend (and I have also) relationships, drinking, smoking, money- over God

Sometimes that's *pastoring* for me- Mel will say “hey you could be doing this better, or you really dropped the ball there” and it strikes something deep within me that I feel I need to defend “how dare you, you don't know”

3. Where have I sacrificed my integrity?

idols demand sacrifice

- when I lie it's not cause I'm a compulsive liar but I sacrifice my integrity to get affirmation because that's my idol
- unequally yoked- not because you want to raise kids with someone who doesn't fear God, but you're afraid of being alone and have made romance your idol
- Christians who don't give offerings aren't usually stingy, they've just made comfort their idol, and to give sacrificially would compromise their autonomy with their money
- You work all day not because you want to neglect your children but because that's what it takes to be successful, and where you want to be in life.

where are we sacrificing obedience to God? Where is that altar?

They always demand more!

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A final word of encouragement-

Sin/idols will not go down without a fight....but they all will ultimately go down and the Kingdom of God alone will remain

**show slides of Artemis' temple present day*

“Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”.....no one worships Artemis today.

But millions have gathered to worship the Jesus Paul preached-

This God doesn't dwell in majestic temples, He's made His people His temple

BULPEN-

V21 The Spirit is one step ahead, the riot didn't break out until after the plans have been made to move on

The most natural thing to follow a revival of the heart, is a riot of the flesh

be careful that what you give worth to now, isn't worthless in eternity.

Be careful that what you give value to, isn't robbing your integrity.

The mission requires that we have a disposition to opposition

Resolve in your mind that not everyone will appreciate the good news

The gods they worshipped were a means to an end; different gods promised power, money, sex, family, stability, etc
That's what they were really after.

We may think were so detached from this because we don't bow down to statues,
but we will bow down to whatever else to get these things.

Idols are often good things that we've made into god things.

Don't worship something that cannot sustain the weight of your soul

Jeremiah 2:13

The first is a sin against God and the second a sin against ourselves

The true God doesn't need to be protected- sacrificed Himself

Tim Keller- Jesus is the only God whom when you obtain Him will satisfy you, and when you fail Him will forgive you.

V33 NLT *The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander forward and told him to explain the situation. He motioned for silence and tried to speak.*

The jews are trying to detach themselves from the uproar

Ephesians 2:21-22 the church is the Holy Spirit's temple- the Ephesians would read/ hear this and contrast it with the great temple of Artemis

1 Corinthians 16:5-9 Paul's plans and an open door and opposition

1 Corinthians 15:32 Paul said he fought wild animals in Ephesus

2 Corinthians 1:8 overwhelmed beyond their strength, despaired of life while in Asia (Ephesus)

Artemis not like the Greek one- this one was...weird (multiple rows of breasts) – the mother goddess

People oppose Christianity because Christ opposes their sin.

The gospel confronts us.

Satan opposes the church.

The Lord protects His church against satan opposition.

Matthew 6:21 *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

The gospel, the way, cannot be silenced; it will continue to advance, transforming not only hearts and minds, but cities, societies.

Artemis is no longer worshipped, her temple is in ruins (show slide), but the way, the kingdom is still strong

19:19 the books had much "value" but they valued Christ more

These guys value their money and their idols more