

Witnesses to Christ
Studies in the Acts of the Apostles

The Mighty Word of the Lord
Lesson 16
Acts 18:24-19:41

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
April 17, 2016

Acts – a Major Transition

- ▶ The completed work of Christ – a new order
- ▶ The Law of Moses ended (Gal 3:24-25)
- ▶ The nation Israel set aside (Rom 11:15)
- ▶ The ministry of the Holy Spirit enlarged
- ▶ The Gospel sent to the world
- ▶ The establishment of churches

Outline – Acts 1:8

- ▶ Witnesses in Jerusalem (1-7)
- ▶ Witnesses in all Judea and Samaria (8-12)
- ▶ Witnesses to the remotest part of the earth (13-28)
- ▶ Witnesses of Jesus Christ
- ▶ Witnesses by the power of the Holy Spirit

Witnessing to the World (13-28)

- ▶ Three missionary journeys
 - #1 (Acts 13-14)
 - #2 (Acts 15:40-18:22)
 - #3 (Acts 18:23-20:38)
- ▶ Christian ministry
 - Proclaiming the Word of God – reasoning and persuading
 - Jesus is the Christ
 - The Way
 - The Kingdom of God
 - Opposition and persecution
 - The Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed
 - The work of the Holy Spirit – guide; teach; enable; do (authenticating) miracles

Third Missionary Journey, Part 1

- ▶ Flashback – Apollos in Ephesus (18:22-28)
- ▶ 12 Disciples in Ephesus (19:1-7)
- ▶ Paul’s ministry in Ephesus (19:8-12)
- ▶ Jewish exorcists in Ephesus (19:13-20)
- ▶ Paul’s plans (19:21-22)
- ▶ Riot in Ephesus (19:23-41)
- ▶ Observations
 - Emphasis on Holy Spirit
 - No sermons here – Antioch, Athens, Ephesus
 - Anecdotal structure
 - The Word of the Lord (18:28; 19:10, 20)

Apollos and the Twelve Disciples

▶ Apollos (18:24-28)

- Eloquent man - mighty in the Scriptures
- Instructed in the way of the Lord and fervent in spirit
- Speaking and teaching accurately the things of Jesus
- Only acquainted with the baptism of John
- Priscilla and Aquila “explained to him the way of God more accurately.”
- Departed to Corinth – teaching by Scripture that Jesus was the Christ

▶ 12 disciples (19:1-7)

- Never heard that there was a Holy Spirit
- Baptized into John’s baptism – disciples of John or Christ?
- Paul: John’s baptism of repentance; teaching faith in Jesus
- Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus
- Holy Spirit came on them – spoke in tongues and prophesied

What did John teach?

- ▶ Prepare for the way of the Lord (Isaiah 40:3; Matt 3:1-12)
- ▶ Call to repent – for forgiveness of sins (Luke 3:3)
- ▶ Flee from the wrath to come
- ▶ Baptism of repentance: repent - be baptized - bear fruit
- ▶ A preparation, not a destination!
- ▶ A coming One
 - He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (wheat and chaff)
 - He is greater, mightier and more worthy than John (Mark 1:7; John 1:30)
 - The Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world
- ▶ The work of the Holy Spirit

What did Apollos and the 12 disciples miss?

▶ Apollos

- The truth of the baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Repentance necessary to prepare for Christ

▶ 12 disciples

- The existence and work of the Holy Spirit
- The necessity of faith in Jesus – not just repentance

What did Apollos and the 12 disciples learn?

- ▶ The baptism of the Holy Spirit
 - Union with Christ in his death and resurrection
 - Rom. 6:3-11 – united to Christ in His death and resurrection
 - 1 Corinthians 12:13 – baptized by the Holy Spirit into one Body
- ▶ Forgiveness comes by faith in Jesus Christ
 - Jesus is the Lamb of God Who takes sin away
 - John taught that salvation comes by faith in Jesus
 - The Holy Spirit is the Agent of the work of salvation
 - SL Johnson: “The essential evidence of Christianity is the possession of the Holy Spirit” (cf. Rom. 8:9)
 - Paul did not teach faith in the Holy Spirit

What happened next?

- ▶ Apollos taught that Jesus was the Christ
- ▶ The 12 disciples spoke in tongues and prophesied
- ▶ Paul taught about the Kingdom of God
 - Salvation (John 3)
 - The reign of Christ up on the earth – 1000 years & eternal

Paul's Ministry in Ephesus (19:8-12)

- ▶ Teaching and persuading about the Kingdom of God
- ▶ Opposition – hardened Jews
- ▶ Daily ministry for the disciples
- ▶ Miraculous works – healing and casting out demons

Jewish Exorcists in Ephesus (19:13-20)

- ▶ Counterfeit authority
 - A spiritual warfare
 - Not a mere name – not a magic formula
 - The necessity of the power of God
- ▶ A house divided
 - Children of the devil seeking to cast out demons
 - Demon overpowered and injured the false exorcists
 - A house divided will not stand (Matt 12:25-28)
 - A vanquished foe

Paul's Plans (19:21-22)

- ▶ Plan to go to Rome by way of Achaia and Jerusalem
 - Wanted to take the Gospel to Rome (Rom 1:11-12; 15:24)
 - Collecting a gift for Jerusalem saints (Rom 15:25-28; 1 Cor 16:1-3; 2 Cor 8:1-9)
- ▶ Sent Timothy and Erastus ahead (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10–11)
- ▶ Stayed to minister in Asia “awhile.”

Riot in Ephesus (19:23-41)

- ▶ Ministry in Ephesus
 - Extraordinary miracles (19:11)
 - Magic repudiated by believers
 - Word of God growing mightily and prevailing
- ▶ “No small disturbance concerning the Way”
- ▶ The problem
 - Success of the Gospel
 - Threat to economic prosperity (19:25, 27a)
 - Common motive: hindrance to personal aspirations
 - Preaching

The Near Riot

- ▶ Filled with rage
- ▶ “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians”
 - An imaginary god
 - Confusion
- ▶ Great is a Divine attribute
 - Good – includes all God’s benevolent attributes (Charnock)
 - Great – includes God’s power and sovereignty (Psalm 104)
- ▶ Jews try to separate themselves from “the Way”

The Assembly Dismissed

- ▶ The town clerk
- ▶ A deceived defender
 - The greatness of Artemis
 - The harmless servants of God
- ▶ Appeal to self interest
- ▶ He dismissed the assembly

The Mighty Word of the Lord

- ▶ The need to know the truth – “more accurately”
- ▶ The need for the ministry of the Holy Spirit
- ▶ The rule of God
 - Over demons – they do His will
 - Over men – they do His will
- ▶ The mighty Word of the Lord
 - Study – 2 Tim 2:15
 - Meditate – Psalm 1
 - Proclaim – 2 Tim 4:2