

ACTS Session 16: Pauls' Ministry in Ephesus (Chapter 19)

Welcome back to our study of the ACTS of the Apostles. Today we're going to be looking at chapter 19. And once again, we're going to visit one of the epistles that Paul wrote from one of the churches he established in Ephesus. Last session we talked about his first letter to the Corinthians, which he wrote in today's chapter when he visited Ephesus. Let's begin in prayer. In the NAME of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Lord Jesus, we love you and we adore you. We do thank you for this opportunity to study your precious Word. Open our hearts, Lord, to your WORD that we would come to know you more intimately and that we will be formed to you. Lord Jesus, we pray that You would open our hearts and our minds that we would see you more clearly in all that we study. May we take something from this study today to put into practice that we bring you glory in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. In the NAME of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I enjoy the book of ACTS because it's one of those books that is kind of a historical narrative of the early church, and we can pop in and out of it at different times looking at the various churches that Paul was visiting. And in today's chapter 19, we see that Paul ends up staying for a considerable time in Ephesus, and I want to start off by reading the first 10 verses of ACTS 19 and then stop for a moment and think about what the epistle to the Ephesians means and what Paul is trying to get across to these people in Ephesus. We'll talk a little bit about Ephesus also. In your notes you have been given some information on Ephesus and some information on Artemis, the Greek goddess who is worshipped in Ephesus, we are going over that material also in a little bit (ACTS 19:1-10). Starting with verse one, *While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples and He said to them, Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? And they said, No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit. And he said, Into what then were you baptized? They said, Into John's baptism. And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is Jesus. On hearing this, they were baptized in the NAME of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. There were about 12 of them at all. And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly arguing and pleading about the Kingdom of God. But when some were stubborn and disbelieved, speaking evil of **The Way** before the congregation, he withdrew from them taking the disciples with him and argued daily in the Hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord both, Jews and Greeks.*

The apostle Paul ends up staying in Ephesus for more time than in any other place. In fact, *he stays there for the three months plus two years*, so it's over two years that he's in Ephesus, and most believe that is from 53 to 55 AD. And I've always thought to myself, *What would it be like to sit in Ephesus and listen to Paul teach? What would you like to have experienced for two years, three months in this hall of Tyrannus?* Tyrannus is a large meeting hall that they met in, like a public meeting hall, and it seated quite a few people. *Would you have liked to have sat there and listened?* Well, the advantage that we have is that we can see in the narrative of ACTS that Paul is going from Cyprus to Ephesus to the Corinth and then Ephesus and all these different places in Asia Minor but then we get the added advantage of reading his letters later, when he writes back to these churches, and I'm thinking that he's probably revisiting some of the things that he taught. So, if you want to get a good idea of what Paul is teaching in Ephesus during this two years then **read the book of Ephesians** and you'll probably get a good idea of the types of things that he was trying to build into them. As I said last session, the types of things that they're dealing with are problems like the Corinthian church was dealing with like the **seven major problems** that we covered in our last in our last time together, but the Ephesians have a very unique situation in Ephesus. Let me give you a little background on Ephesus that you have in your notes. Ephesus was:

- Capital of Asia

49 • One of the largest and most impressive cities in the ancient world; 4th largest in the Roman
 50 Empire.
 51 • Located in the southwest part by water; part of Turkey.
 52 • Four trade routes converged in Ephesus. So, this is kind of li
 53 • Like the *promised land* of Asia Minor; all these trade routes that are converging in Ephesus
 54 • Played a significant role in the expansion of Christianity, because of its geographic location at
 55 the time of St. Paul
 56 • Population of 250,000 people with a **large number of Jewish resident residents.**
 57 • Home to the Temple of Artemis; one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
 58 • Center for magical arts in Asia during the first century. For example, in the year 13 BC, Caesar
 59 Augustus ordered 2000 Magic scrolls to be burned because of the rapidly growing mystery cults that
 60 were springing up out of Ephesus, and they were replacing the honor given to the Olympian gods. So,
 61 Caesar Augustus puts out an order for all these magic scrolls to be destroyed and that's 13 years before
 62 Jesus; approximately 53-55 BC. **The dynamic helps us understand why Paul's letter to the Ephesians**
 63 **contains many references to spiritual powers and spiritual warfare.** Because where there is a rise in the
 64 occult there also needs to be a rise in spiritual warfare, in spiritual combat to deal with that, **the magic**
 65 **arts are of the enemy, and it's a direct hit upon God** as we are going to read from the Catechism today.
 66 So, Paul has a major emphasis on warfare and that's why he talks about the Ephesians, the major parts
 67 of the armor that the Christian puts on, and fights that good fight of faith, with a helmet of salvation,
 68 and so forth. So that's about Ephesus. Let me give you a little background on Artemis.
 69 • One of the Olympian gods; the goddess of fertility
 70 • Depicted oftentimes as a woman standing with many many, many, many, many breasts, I mean,
 71 she is the goddess of fertility.
 72 • She was a major cult in in the first century.
 73 • Her temple considered one of 7 Wonders of the World; some of the sculptured remains of other
 74 columns and can be seen in the British Museum today.
 75 • First temple made entirely of marble; more than twice the size of the Parthenon; larger than a
 76 modern football field.
 77 • Largest Greek temple ever constructed with one hundred twenty-seven 60' columns.
 78 • Filled with many paintings and statues
 79 • Housed a great meteorite that was thought to resemble Artemis; became very precious Holy
 80 stone for this
 81 • Widely considered the most beautiful structure in the world; her temple people came from all
 82 over to see it and deliver gifts.
 83 • Credited for fertility as the patroness of fertility for Asia Minor.
 84 So that's what's happening in Ephesus in Corinth, we had cult prostitution and we had a lot of other
 85 problems here. We have arguments to deal with. So, there's a real emphasis on Spiritual Warfare and
 86 preparing yourself for that. But what we want to do today is to dip into just three different portions of
 87 Ephesians to get an idea of what the message was to these people who were dealing with, I guess what
 88 you could say *ancient New Age thought*. We today are confronted as Catholics with a world at work, our
 89 neighbors, our own families, who are very much caught up in New Age thought; anything goes.
 90 Oftentimes we are confronted with people whose spirituality goes as deep as hanging a crystal on the
 91 rearview mirror in their car and believing that some kind of energy or power comes from that some kind
 92 of solace taken in crystals. But we certainly live in an age today where there is a multitude of ideas
 93 about God, that God is in you, that you are God, or that we are all God, or God is in the earth. And so,
 94 we're facing, in some ways, kind of a new Ephesus in our time, a new Corinth in our time. And there's a
 95 strategy to Paul's writing to the Ephesians particularly in **how he's going to introduce**

the gospel to a group of people that are not are not acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures, or the narrative of salvation history. Once again, this is an exciting time because we see the great champion Paul, the student of Gamliel, who has gone to the Gentiles and now he is, he is converting the Gentiles with the gospel. It would be similar to taking a Princeton professor or a Yale or Harvard professor and putting them smack down in the middle of the Bronx in New York, and converting them to different lifestyles, to different ways of thinking in most cases, and that's the challenge that Paul is faced with here. So, I want to take just a moment and go over to Ephesians for a little bit and look at how Paul addresses these Ephesians then we'll go back to ACTS 19. Listen to how Paul starts off his letter to the Ephesians. He is going to start off by reminding them with a whole litany of blessings that they have obtained in Christ. That's how he's going to start off in Ephesians 1:3-14. He unpacks spiritual blessings in the heavenly places, and this is a great example for us on how to witness to people today in what to show them. And one of the great needs that people have today is this sense of identity and who am I and what am I doing on Earth and am I of any importance on Earth at all. What is my importance? And so, he starts off, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.* Now imagine that now as he goes through this litany starting in verse four. These are the types of things that he must have taught for over two years in Ephesus, and he's reminding them of what he has taught them as a **father in the faith** and he says, *Even as He chose us, in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In Him, we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, which He lavished upon us. For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight, the mystery of His will, according to His purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him., things in heaven, and things on earth.* So, he begins to go through this litany of these spiritual blessings in heaven. And the first thing he mentions in verse four is that **God chose you**. God chose you. Now this is interesting because the Olympian gods, the gods of the Greeks, were for the most part, gods who were benign, I mean they were selfish in many ways. They were not personally involved with the people. In fact, they would use the people and there wasn't that intimate relationship between the false gods of the Greeks and the people. In fact, the word to be used for it is the opposite of love. And the opposite of love, which God is love. **The opposite of love is not hate.** Anyone know what the opposite of love is? **It's indifference.** And that's the word that best describes the Greek gods is that they are indifferent and here's Paul writing to the Ephesians who are worshipping in the greatest temple in the Roman Empire, the temple of Artemis. And the first thing that he brings out is this, **God chose you**. He chose you. He's not indifferent. He isn't just wandering around not caring and using you and laughing and fighting with the other gods. He is not indifferent, He chose you. And that is so precious for us in this age that we're living in where many people feel that God is indifferent, and that God doesn't really care about me, and he doesn't care about my problems, and if he cared about my problems, why would all of these things be happening? And just this last couple of weeks, I spoke to a young man in Arizona who is going to be putting together the Bible timeline for teens, and I'm working with him on it. It's going to be taped in March. It's going to be out this fall. Most likely this fall the Bible timeline for teenagers. And he was telling me he said, *Jeff*, this generation we're dealing with now, their **biggest problem is cynicism and indifference**. And they don't even know if God even exists, and if God exists, prove it to me. And so, we're dealing with a very skeptical generation that feels that if God is there, He's indifferent. And here's Paul fighting that attitude and he's saying, *You are chosen. Ephesians 1:4, ...even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.* So, it goes on. And he brings this out more in Romans 8:11-16 that not only did God choose you Ephesians who believe in a bunch of gods who are

indifferent, but he adopted you. He adopted you into His family. I find that those are the two best ways to start off witnessing with anybody and that is this.

1. God chose you. God has come after you. He is there and He is not silent, and He has come after you but He has come after you to make you family. He wants you as a son. He wants you as a daughter. And so, He destined us in love to be sons and daughters. That's what our destiny is, to be sons and daughters. In Ephesians 1:7, he talks about how we are redeemed through his blood. *We have been bought with a precious price*, as Peter says in his epistle, *through the blood of the Lamb*. And then in verses seven and eight, he talks about the *riches of the Trinity which are lavished upon us*. Notice all these goodies that he brings out right at the beginning of the letter to the Ephesians - *riches of the Trinity lavished upon us*. **The Trinity is the Father, loving the Son, pouring Himself out for the Son, the Son responding, loving the Father; this great tremendous love between the Father and the Son. That love between them is the Holy Spirit.** That's the Trinity. That's what we're destined to be caught up in. That's where we're destined for. That is what we are called to live in -this life of the Trinity and eventually in heaven where we'll be celebrating living in that dynamo of love and perfect happiness forever and ever and ever. He says in verse nine how we have this close to us; **has disclosed to us the mystery of His will**. This is rich stuff, *the mystery of His Will*; God's Will has been made apparent to us. And then he talks about it in verse 11, **how we've obtained an inheritance**. We've obtained an inheritance in verse 13, been **sealed by the Holy Spirit**; God's mark is on us, *sealed by the Holy Spirit for the work of evangelization*. And then verse 14, the **Holy Spirit is a pledge of our inheritance**. So, we have all of these tremendous gifts that are mentioned right at the beginning of Ephesians. Paul is writing the Ephesians about a tremendous list of gifts. But the problem is so often is that we don't see it, and we don't see ourselves that way. And the reason is because we have an imprint on our minds and hearts of a different person inside. How many of you are familiar with what ducks do when ducks are hatched? Ducks are kind of funny. They're different than a lot of other animals. Ducks tends to imprint immediately after birth or hatching. After a duck is hatched, they **imprint**. What do we mean *to imprint*? **It means they attach themselves to the very first thing they see after they hatch** thinking that they are that thing. You see what I'm saying? They hatch, their little eyes come open, and they see a red truck and they think they're a red truck. Now, there are real stories about this. For example, there was the one of this phenomenon of imprinting backfiring because I suppose 9 times out of 100 when a duck is hatched, guess who he sees first? Mama. So, he grows up thinking, *I'm a duck*. Imagine that. Lucky for that duck. He grew up thinking he was a duck. He was imprinted properly. Sometimes it backfires. There was a story of a duckling who was hatched, and the Mother Duck was gone, but the duckling hatched under the care of a collie dog. It's true story. It hatched under the care of a collie dog. And that duckling acted like a duck quack, quack, quack, but also acted like a collie chasing cars. It followed the example of the collie and when the car went down the driveway, a collie was barking and the dogs out there running after the car because the duck thought it was a collie and sleeps under the porch. True Story. Some Christians often experience a similar confusion of identity. We grow up in a world that is fallen. We listen to people in school when we were growing up about who we were, when we were teased, when we were bullied, we listened to people talk about who we were based on our height, our weight. We listen to the world and the television programs tell us who we were and what was truth. And we have been in a certain way *imprinted* and we might not see ourselves **as sons and daughters of God** adopted with an inheritance and lavished with all the blessings in the heavens but we might see ourselves as the hopeless son of an alcoholic who will probably be an alcoholic or marry an alcoholic or we see ourselves in a hopeless situation as the daughter of an abuser and we can't seem to break that. That's what Jesus Christ is coming to do. He's showing us that we have new citizenship, and our place is with Him; why he chose you even before the foundation of the world. You are destined to become sons and daughters. You are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. You have all the gifts lavished on you in the heavens and on and on and on all the way through Ephesians 1. And what we have to do is to renew our

minds as Paul says in Romans 12. He says *we need to renew our minds and we need to start thinking differently and get an imprint*. Now as a baby duck is hatched and it thinks it is what it sees, what I would recommend is that we need to, in a sense, be **spiritually re-hatched** as adults. And we need to go to adoration, and we need to sit before the Blessed Sacrament and before the King of kings and the Lord of lords until we get a good imprint of who we really are. By reading the scriptures and saying you know what? I know what they said about me in elementary school. I know what they said about me in high school. I know what my college professor said I would never become. I know what my dad said when he was drunk, or my mother said when she was absent from the home and came back and was angry. I know all of these things. But **I now know truth and who I am**. And there's a different me and that's who I'm going to become. That's what Paul is telling the Ephesians, *this is who you are!* He is reminding you of a father. We grew up in this fallen world and we learned the ways of the world and when we become a Christian or have a conversion, we are in Christ. **We're in Christ, spiritually**. We are no longer who we once were as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17. *We are new creatures; all things are new for us*. Now if I sat here in 2006, and I ordered my life and I lived my life based on what the guy said about me in elementary school and what the girls said about me in junior high because I couldn't dance, or what people said about me in high school, in college, and all of the other influences in my life, I'll be honest with you, I'd be a basket case. But **I have chosen** not to believe that but to believe what God says. That's the message to the Ephesians 1. It helps us to see who we really, really are. In Ephesians 2:1-10, Paul gives a striking contrast between the way it was and the way it is. And it's a striking contrast. I'll read just some of those contrasts with you, but I won't be able to go into any detail because we're just getting a quick overview of Ephesians because that's where Paul at in ACTS 19. Right now, he spends the lion's share of His ministry in Ephesus dealing with these issues and striking a contrast in Ephesians 2:1-10. He talks about:

- Living in transgressions v. living in good works
- This world v. the heavenly realms.
- Death v. life, sinful
- Nature v. union with Christ
- Wrath v. mercy
- Ruler of this age v. being seated with Christ not from works v. through faith but by faith

Now, it's kind of interesting because in Ephesians 2:8-10, he says, *For by grace, you have been saved* and we believe that we're saved completely by grace, 100% Grace. So, to our Protestant brothers and sisters, he says *You're saved by grace, for by grace you have been saved through "faith"*. Through "faith". What does it mean *to be saved through "faith"*? Well, the Greek idea of faith is the word **pistes** is and the Hebrew idea of faith is the word **Emunah** and includes this idea of faithfulness, one continuous steadfastness and fidelity and that we are saved by grace alone. *There's nothing we could have done to save ourselves*. No works in the world could have saved us. Nothing. We could have done good works the rest of your life and never be saved. You're saved by grace alone. Not by faith alone, but grace alone. It's all God's work, but **it's grace through faith** and that *through faith* means that it goes beyond believing and simple confession of faith, and I believe that Jesus is Lord. In James 2, he says, Even the demons believe and shudder. And then James goes on and he mentions that phrase *faith alone*, the only time in the Bible (James 2:18-26).

Now the Reformation was built on **Sola Scriptura, scripture alone**. The problem with that is that Luther wanted *faith alone* and in Romans, he actually inserted into the text in italics, *by faith alone we are saved*. We do not believe that we're saved by faith alone. In fact, James goes on and he says, *you're not saved by faith alone*. So, does it come as any wonder that Luther wanted that taken out of the canon, along with the seven Deuterocanonical books like Maccabees and Baruch and Sirach and those that we have in the full canon? You see, **we're saved by grace through faith**. And in Ephesians 2:8 ... *and this is*

not your own doing, it is the gift of God. Not because of our works, which is dealing with the works of the law back in Leviticus, Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, excluding the moral law, which is the 10 commandments, which is for now and forever the moral law stance. Ephesian 2:9-10 says, *Not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* So true. Biblical faith is a faith that not only believes but it has works involved in it and James 2:18 said, *Show me your faith by your works.* Now most of Paul's major themes of salvation are present in the Ephesians 1:1-10, one of the best teachings of *salvation by grace through faith*. One of the other areas I want to bring out is what the Catechism talks about in article 2115. As you know, Ephesus was one of the major cities of magic and the occult, the magic arts. The Catholic Church has something to say about this in 2115. I'll just read this to you about divination and magic and you'll see several cross references to Ephesians here, so The Church even draws from Ephesians who are wrapped up in this magic and called to teach us in the Catechism (Article 2115-2116,

*God can reveal the future to His prophets or to other saints. Still, a sound Christian attitude consists in putting oneself confidently into the hands of Providence for whatever concerns the future and giving up all unhealthy curiosity about it. **Improvvidence**, however, can constitute a lack of responsibility. All forms of **divination** are to be rejected; recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future. Consulting horoscopes, astrology, poem reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomenon of clairvoyance and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and in the last analysis, other human beings as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect and loving fear that we owe to God alone.*

And some would, would take recourse and say, Well, we do we adjust for fun and entertainment, but do we pretend to commit adultery for fun? Do we commit fornication for fun and just play act? No, we would never think of doing that. We should never think of *just for fun* getting involved in astrology, not astronomy but astrology and horoscopes and things like that. He goes on and Article 2117,

*All practices of **magic or sorcery**, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others, even if this were for the sake of restoring their health, are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible.*

Now not a bracelet with your kids on there's; no charm don't even worry about that, but charms in the sense of true charms are reprehensible. **Spiritism** often implies divination or magical practices. The Church for her part warns the faithful against it, recourse to so called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another's credulity. A lot of rich stuff from the Catechism there about magic and the occult, which was very big in Ephesus.

The third part of the Ephesians I want to go through quickly is Ephesians 4:1-16, which obviously we're not going to read the whole thing. **No passage is more descriptive of the church in action than these verses and Ephesians 4:1-16** where Paul tells us to remember where we came from, what we used to be like, and remember what God has called you to now, that you're a new person, and in Ephesians 4:1-16, he talks about, about this *living worthy of your calling*, that you have received the imperative to remember; the calling that you have received. And in that he talks about a number of things. He talks about humility, to the Ephesians in Acts 19. No doubt when he was there for two years he taught humility, gentleness, patience, take a look at just a few of these,

Humility is essential for good relations and avoiding sin. So much so that St. Ignatius said, *by humility, the prince of this world is brought to nothing through humility. Egotism, on the other hand, an idolatry of the self, the failure to realize that God is the pattern for life, not us. In order to have humility, we must renounce self-centeredness.* That's one of the messages to the Ephesians. Another word that he mentions in Ephesians 4:1-16 is *gentleness*. He mentions gentleness that we must be gentle. In order to

have gentleness, we must renounce harshness and violence. You know that some Christians present themselves as so brutal and hostile, that no one wants to be around them. You ever known anybody like that before? They present themselves as so brittle, so black and white, so hostile, that nobody wants to be around them, even if they are right. They are repulsively repulsive? Right. I remember talking to a group of leaders a few years ago, apologetics national leaders, we were talking about this subject of people who their *goal in life is not to be holy but to be right* and they want to win is a battle and an apologetics panel. In the process, they are what I call **ugly Catholicism**. That is not attractive. It's not gentle. It's not beautiful.

GENTLENESS: I think gentle people are some of the most attractive people and we want to be like them. Because there's a strength and a gentleness about them. Frankly, that's what attracted me to my wife, besides those great big brown eyes. What attracted me was that she was strong, humble, gentle. She was very gentle; gentleness is needed most in families. Gentleness nurtures people, respects them and allows them to drop defenses and deal more objectively with the issues.

PATIENCE: Another word that he uses in Ephesians 4 is patience. We are to be a patient people to the Ephesians. Now why are we mentioning all this? This is part of the spread of the gospel throughout the world. These are the problems that Paul's encountering. What's he encountering among the Ephesians? They are impatient. They're not gentle. They could be filled with pride. Aren't you glad we don't live back then? We have a mess on our hands in order to have patience, we must renounce the tyranny of our own agendas at home, in our marriage. At work, we must renounce the tyranny of our own agendas. We are taught to want things in our culture. We're taught to grasp things as a culture, and we want it now. **We must be patient people**, if we're going to represent Christ in the kingdom. **A lack of patience reflects a narrowness of soul.** A lack of patience reflects a narrowness of soul. Patience is that largeness, which values other people enough to give them room and time to fail; learn and develop. And I have learned this, and most of you have learned it probably before I have learned it. It's something we must learn as parents. We must be patient, we must have largeness that values of other people is enough to give them room in time to fail, learn and develop. Because I have found that my life right now, I'm 48 years old, and some things I'm just learning in the last couple of years. You went from 46, 47, 48 years old and I'm finding that I want my seven-year-old to learn them now and I can become impatient, particularly as I see myself in my children, I have to be patient. While patience in daily schedules is important, it is especially necessary in allowing people space to mature at their rate, rather than expect them to do everything right and to do it now. St. John Chrysostom² said, *Patience means to have a wide and big soul. Patience is the exercise of a large mist of soul that can endure annoyances and difficulties over a period of time.* That's patience.

We're coming into the Lenten season now and what a great opportunity to become patient and humble and gentle and allow God to change us in those situations where we're constantly annoyed rather than expecting that everybody else has to change around me because I'm right. What a beautiful opportunity. A beautiful opportunity to allow the Lord to change us to have *a wide and big soul*. That's a nice thing to put on a little 4x4 index card. **Today I want a wide and big soul.** And I want it to be big enough to where every time I turn around, I'm not saying that person annoys me, because I'm not the center of the universe. I was listening to my 21-year-old daughter. And the last four years she uses a word, and her friends use a word that we didn't use in my generation. And that was the word *annoying*. We said we were bummed but they use the word *annoyed* now and they'll say *that person annoys me*. You really annoy me. The way that person dresses *annoys* me. The way they breathe *annoys* me. Where they eat *annoys* me. Well, if we're going to change the world, we're going to have to get beyond being annoyed by how someone eats because there are bigger crosses in life than the way your husband eats. We have to have bigness, magnanimous souls, large souls. He goes on in Ephesians about what's called the **unity of the Spirit**. *Living worthy of the call requires eagerness to keep the unity of the Spirit*. He mentioned this in verse three. He also mentioned this, I believe in verse 13, verse 13, he says, *We must be eager to*

335 *maintain the **unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace***; living worthy of the call requires eagerness to keep
336 the unity of the Spirit. He says, *Make every effort* (meaning be zealous or eager) *to keep the unity of the*
337 *Spirit*. We are asked to **value unity** if the gospel is going to go throughout the whole world. What is one
338 of the biggest hindrances to this early church growing in the book of ACTS? Disunity. How do we cause
339 disunity? How does disunity come about? We cause disunity because we're asked to value unity, to be
340 attentive to it, invest energy into it so that it is not threatened. Notice that the Spirit is unifying, and our
341 task is to keep it; the Spirit brings unity. The Spirit unifies automatically. The early church and our church
342 today are **unified by the Spirit**. We can do one of two things to preserve unity:
343 BE HUMBLE, PATIENT, GENTLE, etc.: OR we can break the unity of the Spirit by being the opposite of
344 these things.

345 So, the interesting thing about this is that **our job is not to invent unity**. We don't have to come up with
346 a plan and say, *We have a plan here at our parish. We're going to invent unity here.* **The spirit has**
347 **already united us in Christ**. So, our plan is, let's keep it; let's make sure we do everything we can to
348 preserve that unity so that we can go forth in the world and have an impact. And that's the hard part.
349 One of the hard parts about being a Christian. That's one of the hard parts about being a husband or
350 wife, or a mother or a father is preserving the unity in the family. And in most cases, that means I'm
351 going to have to change. I'm going to have to die to myself in order to preserve the unity here, rather
352 than insisting on my own way at every turn. It's going to be my channel tonight, my channel tomorrow,
353 my show that next day, what I want to eat today. After that I'm going to have disunity in my family. So
354 how can unity be established? It does not need to be established, for it already exists, given by God and
355 needs to be valued and maintained. Moving back to ACTS 19, those are just a few of the some of the
356 themes that we're to visit. You'll notice in verse 10, that all of Asia heard the word through the Apostle
357 Paul as a result of his teaching and preaching in Ephesus. That's an amazing thing; an extraordinary
358 thing. You'll notice in verse 11, extraordinary miracles took place even with Paul's clothing. The power of
359 God moved through Paul in verse 11. Even his clothes were used to defeat the enemy. The Catholic
360 tradition demonstrates and supports this idea that even the bodies of the saints such as relics, and the
361 material belongings of the saints can be the source of a miracle. I have a small piece of Cardinal
362 Newman's album, and at home others have a part of a bone maybe from St. Augustine or something. A
363 relic that reminds us of that Saint. But even people have been healed when the relics of St. Torres were
364 brought around the world and put on display. We as Catholics didn't make this up. This was happening
365 in the book of Acts. We didn't make it up and Benny Hinn didn't make it up on television, who will pray
366 over a piece of cloth and send it to your house so that you can be healed. So, we call them
367 **Sacramentals**. Other churches and denominations call them something else, but we have *Sacramentals*
368 in our church, whether it's holy water or oil, or it's a scapular, the rosary, whatever it might be,
369 **Christianity is incarnational**. God moves in and through the things of this world in powerful ways and in
370 and through people.

371 Now, another thing that's interesting in verse 14 is one guy kind of caught on to this because there was
372 a lot of magicians and there was Jewish exorcism around Ephesus, and one guy got a hold of this verse
373 13, some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of Jesus over those who
374 had evil spirits saying, *I adjure you by the JESUS whom Paul preaches*, a little distant and removed there.
375 It isn't the Jesus that I have studied, and I know that I walked with, and I pray, and I know intimately, it's
376 whatever Paul was doing, that's the name of Jesus. *I adjure you be cast out in that name*. Well, this
377 demon jumped all over these guys and says, *the seven sons of Jewish high priest named Sceva were*
378 *witness*, but the evil spirit answered them, *Jesus I know. And Paul, I know, but who are you?* And the
379 man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them so they
380 fled out of the house naked and wounded. Tough day at the office there for those guys. Well, the sons
381 were overtaken, and it's interesting because I was reading the commentary from the Venerable Bede
382 and he made this comment, *the seven sons of Sceva literally means yelping little fox*. So, when you got a

demon coming after someone who's playing around with Jesus' name, and doesn't really know Jesus, then that person is going to become a *yelping little fox* running away, naked, screaming and beat up. Because you don't want to be messing with demons in the name of Jesus if you don't know Jesus, and you don't have fellowship with Jesus. And so, the animal which is very shrewd with respect to deceit, and craftiness represents those who are always plotting against the Church of God and continuously making a racket with their babbling voices.

And then finally in verse 19, I want to make a comment on that. A number of those who practice magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all and they counted the value of them and found it came to 50,000 pieces of silver. The library was one expensive library to burn. Each piece of silver, there was 50,000 pieces of silver and each piece of silver was worth one day's wage. That's 50,000 days wages worth of books that were burned. Now when I came to Christ at 18 as an adult and had an ongoing conversion experience, one of the first things that we did with all our friends who also had this experience was we went and took our *KISS* albums along with a lot of our other albums and we burned them as a way of saying, *I renounce this I'm not a part of this anymore*, and that's what this early church is doing, they are burning their horoscope books, they're burning their Ouija boards, the burning all of these things that are involved in the occult and will have nothing to do with it at all. The Venerable Bede brings out an interesting point. There were 50,000 days earnings and the scripture says that but there's an interesting point that the **number 50 is often associated with repentance**. So, I imagined in two years from now, that will be my great birthday of repentance, but he mentioned 50 is a number of repentance and Psalm 50 is a Psalm of repentance and the number 50 is related to the Jubilee which every 50 years they would repent and pardon.

And finally, in verse 21, Paul is fixed on going somewhere, where does he want to go? Rome. He wants to go to Rome and the key to understanding why he's so intent on going to Rome is Daniel 2 because on Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of the statue head of gold, breast of silver, loins of bronze feet of iron. Daniel gives the interpretation that it's four kingdoms, Babylon with the head of gold, it's Persia with the breasts of silver, Greece with the bronze loins, and these the clay and the iron feet is Rome, but after that is going to come a fifth kingdom, which starts as a small stone that grows and topples these four kingdoms and grows into a large mountain that covers the world. That fifth kingdom is the kingdom of Jesus. Paul knows Daniel 2. He knows Rome is the fourth kingdom. He's on his way to Rome. Rome is going to fall. Christianity is going to spread and it's going to happen the same way as it happened with his master by giving it all and he dies in Rome. We're going to also see in just a few lessons from now that Peter dies in Rome. So, Rome is the goal for Paul. So, we learned so much in here just by stopping and reading Ephesians for a moment where he spent in chapter 19 the lion's share of over two years in Ephesus, teaching them about who they are. So, I'll just conclude by saying this, **like the duck, get a new imprint of who you are. Go to adoration. Read God's word. Say no to those lies. You're not a calling and you're not a loser. You're a son of God, you're a daughter of God, you have a destiny, you're adopted as a son and daughter, and he has lavished you with all the spiritual blessings**. Let us pray. In the NAME of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus, we love you. Thank you for bringing us into your family; into the citizenship of heaven. Help us, Lord, to really believe this and see ourselves this way so that we can walk in this ; we'll remember where we came from, but we can walk in our newness of life for you have made all things new. We thank you for this in Jesus NAME we pray. Amen. In the NAME of the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen



427

428

429 ²**John Chrysostom** (/ˈkrɪsəstəm, krɪˈsɒstəm/; [Greek](#): Ἰωάννης ὁ Χρυσόστομος; c. 347 – 14
 430 September 407)^[6] was an important [Early Church Father](#) who served as [archbishop of](#)
 431 [Constantinople](#). He is known for his [preaching](#) and [public speaking](#), his denunciation of [abuse of](#)
 432 [authority](#)^[7] by both ecclesiastical and political leaders, [Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom](#), and
 433 his [ascetic](#) sensibilities. The epithet Χρυσόστομος (*Chrysostomos*, anglicized as Chrysostom)
 434 means "golden-mouthed" in Greek and denotes his celebrated eloquence.^{[2][8]} Chrysostom was
 435 among the most prolific authors in the early Christian Church, although both [Origen of](#)
 436 [Alexandria](#)^[9] and [Augustine of Hippo](#)^[10] exceeded Chrysostom.

437 He is honoured as a saint in the [Oriental Orthodox](#), [Eastern Orthodox](#), [Catholic](#), [Anglican](#),
 438 and [Lutheran](#) churches, as well as in some others. The Eastern Orthodox, together with
 439 the [Byzantine Catholics](#), hold him in special regard as one of the [Three Holy](#)
 440 [Hierarchs](#) (alongside [Basil the Great](#) and [Gregory of Nazianzus](#)). The feast days of John
 441 Chrysostom in the Eastern Orthodox Church are 14 September, 13 November and 27 January. In
 442 the Roman Catholic Church he is recognized as a [Doctor of the Church](#). Because the date of his
 443 death is occupied by the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14 September), the [General](#)
 444 [Roman Calendar](#) celebrates him since 1970 on the previous day, 13 September; from the 13th
 445 century to 1969 it did so on 27 January, the anniversary of the [translation](#) of his body to
 446 Constantinople.^[11] Of other [Western](#) churches, including [Anglican](#) provinces and [Lutheran](#) churches,
 447 some commemorate him on 13 September, others on 27 January. John Chrysostom
 448 is [remembered](#) in the [Church of England](#) with a [Lesser Festival](#) on 13 September.^[12] The [Coptic](#)
 449 [Church](#) also recognizes him as a saint (with feast days on 16 [Thout](#) and 17 [Hathor](#)).^[13]

450 He was allegedly responsible for leading a mob that destroyed the [Temple of Artemis](#), one of the
 451 Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, for the second and final time. ^[14] [Cyril of Alexandria](#) attributed
 452 the destruction of the temple to John Chrysostom, referring to him as "the destroyer of the demons
 453 and overthrower of the temple of Diana". A later Archbishop of Constantinople, [Proclus](#), praised the
 454 actions of John, saying "In Ephesus, he despoiled the art of Midas", although there is little evidence
 455 to support this claim.^[15]

456 ³ Sacramentals

457 ⁴ Incarnational Church