

## Acts 19

**Acts 18:18-21** So Paul God still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. **(19) And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. (20)** When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, **(21)** but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; **but I will return again to you, God willing.**" And he sailed from Ephesus.

God was willing.

And, God the Holy Spirit was there, doing perfectly the things He does; Let's go through our text today showing how the Holy Spirit was intimately involved in the lives of Paul and others. How He teaches, how He counsels, how He convicts and how He comforts, how He reveals Truth, how He bestows gifts to whom He wills.

**I felt that perhaps, as we walk along with Paul on his missionary journeys, that perhaps we might lose sight of the Holy Spirit and therefore incorrectly believe that Paul is the focus of all these stories!**

**(Acts 19:1)** And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples

Paul took the "high road" and very likely visited the churches in Lystra, Iconium and Derby, to name a few.

When he got there, he found some disciples. It appears that Paul operating in the gifts and anointing of the Holy Spirit, noticed something about these men. So, he asks a vital question.

**(Acts 19:2)** he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Someone was missing in their relationship with God. God must be known in His fullness as Father, Son AND Holy Spirit!

The debate, through the centuries has been whether or not these men were saved. They didn't know anything about the Holy Spirit. But Luke refers to them as "disciples". But, disciples of whom?

And, can you be saved and not know the Holy Spirit? The answer is Yes! For we are saved by grace through faith. We are regenerated (re-born) by the Spirit of God and even though He takes up residence in our hearts, we might be unaware of Him operating in our lives.

**(Acts 19:3)** And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism."

**(Acts 19:4)** Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

Ah, that explains it. They evidently knew of John and the baptism of repentance. One might surmise that they also knew of all of John's teachings, including his declaration of Jesus being the Messiah.

But, perhaps they knew **of** Jesus but did not know Him personally or fully. Paul clarifies this with them that it is of utmost importance to believe **in** Christ Jesus! Knowledge is ok **but not** if isn't directed at the Truth!

Some translations read "believe **on** Christ Jesus" or "believe **into** Christ Jesus". Any of these words are good as long as you understand that the word implies a knowledge that goes beyond the surface understanding to a deeper place in our hearts, that is, travels from head to heart.

(Acts 19:5) When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Hearing the complete story, their understanding is made complete. They were ready to be Baptized in the Name of Jesus fully identifying with His death, burial and resurrection.

(Acts 19:6) And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

And like the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit brought a fire into their lives giving them the power to spread the Good News and to live out the life of a believer.

BTW: This was the last time in the Book of Acts that the gift of tongues was mentioned. Speaking in tongues as a outward expression of the Baptism of Holy Spirit was only recorded 3 times in the Book of Acts: (2:3-4) when the Holy Spirit baptized the Jews at Pentecost; (10:36) when He baptized the Gentiles of Cornelius' household, and here with presumably disciples of John the Baptist.

(Acts 19:7) Now the men were about twelve in all.

Why this fact is important, I do not know...perhaps to show that there were a small group who didn't believe "ON" or "INTO" Jesus signifying that the relationship needed the fullness of the Holy Spirit's presence in order to run the race set before them by God.

Here we have seen the Holy Spirit working through the Apostle with wisdom, discernment and patience to work with disciples without putting them down, without rebuking them for not understanding the Holy Spirit – no he gently leads them to living waters and the Holy Spirit causes them to drink deeply of His power and presence!

(Acts 19:8) And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God implies a King; All throughout the sages teachings of the Law and Prophets were references to "King Messiah". They just didn't understand His first coming and only understood or hoped for a warrior King to free them from temporal bondage to man-made kingdoms ruled by tyrants. They never understood that freedom had to start from within! They had to be set free from sin and self, first! They had to move from outer religion to inner relationship with the True and Faithful King:

King Jesus;

(Acts 19:9) But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

Predictably, hearts were hardened, and some refused to hear the Way, the Truth and the Life! Paul did not stay and argue.

Paul simply stopped going to the synagogue. Along with the disciples and others, he “borrowed” the facilities at the School of Tyrannus. Some non-biblical writings have him teaching between 11 and 2pm; evidently this was a time of rest so that school was not in session;

(Acts 19:10) And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Imagine being in the School of Paul for 2 years! Oh wait, we can attend every day by reading his epistles! Cool.

Here we have the Holy Spirit fulfilling His role as a teacher:

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

(Acts 19:11) Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul,

(Acts 19:12) so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

The word “unusual” means just that: if any miracle could be called “usual” (things done prior to this time), then these were stranger than what we read about Peter’s shadow:

Acts 5:14-16 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, (15) so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. (16) Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Perhaps Luke thought that using Paul’s “sweat-bands” to heal the sick and exorcise demons was way out there – such was the anointing of Paul; and perhaps such was the faith of those who used them!

However, some believed that this was all indicative of the idolatry that existed in this city; Perhaps there was still superstitious believers who thought that a “thing” could heal; if so, did the sweat-bands heal? No! It was God’s grace! He allowed this to happen perhaps as a testimony to them to show the divine power **given** to Paul. (**God worked them by the hands of Paul**)

Here the Holy Spirit is pouring out His power, manifesting it to the believers “for the profit of all”

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: (8) for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, (10) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (11) But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

(Acts 19:13) Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches."

Unbelieving Jewish exorcists used the Name of Jesus in their work. I suppose, like Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8:

Acts 8:9-10 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, (10) to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."

Acts 8:18-21 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, (19) saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit." (20) But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! (21) You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

(Acts 19:14) Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. (Acts 19:15) And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

This speaks to what we've read before, even demons “know” Jesus and even Paul. But knowing someone doesn't make them a believer and child of God... Jesus the Savior was heard of, but not truly known to these men!

(Acts 19:16) Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Powerful!!!! 1 against 7...

To prove his point, the demon forces the one who he controls to beat them up, strip their clothes off and force them to run into the streets!

This is what happens when you use “religion” instead of “relationship” to do good. The “in the name of Jesus” became a incantation, a tag-line, like a magic spell.

Note also: we just witnessed unbelievers trying to engage in a spiritual battle; nobody can really win the battle without the Power of the Holy Spirit in them!

(Acts 19:17) This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

But the incident was useful in that showed the hypocrisy and stupidity of superstitions. Evil is real...it can't be fought without the power and authority given by Jesus.

Luke 10:17-20 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." (18) And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. (19) Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (20) Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

But as Jesus' name is lifted up, as He is proclaimed to be the Promised Messiah, as the Power of the Holy Spirit is demonstrated:

(Acts 19:18) And many who had believed came **confessing and telling their deeds**.

John 16:7-11 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. (8) And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: (9) of sin, because they do not believe in Me; (10) of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; (11) of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Responding to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, many believers came and confessed their ungodly deeds.

(Acts 19:19) Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver.

This was a magnificent expression of the power of the Holy Spirit to move in the lives of believers...reborn and the beginnings of the transformation into the image of Christ. They came to understand that there can be no Jesus +; It was ALL Jesus and there was no room for past idolatrous beliefs. Jesus wasn't just another "god" but the Living and True God of all Creation!

(Acts 19:20) So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

Throughout this entire section of chapter nine, we see the power of the Holy Spirit of God moving in both Paul, in unbelievers and believers.

God the Holy Spirit is always working!

1. The Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment
2. The Spirit guides us into all truth

3. The Spirit regenerates us
4. The Spirit glorifies and testifies of Christ
5. The Spirit leads us just as He led Paul throughout his journeys
6. The Spirit sanctifies us
7. The Spirit empowers us
8. The Spirit helps us to pray
9. The Spirit bears witness in us that we are children of God
10. The Spirit produces in us the fruit or evidence of His work and presence
11. The Spirit distributes spiritual gifts and manifestations of His presence to and through the body
12. The Spirit anoints us for ministry
13. The Spirit brings unity and oneness to the body
14. The Spirit seals us unto the day of redemption
15. The Spirit sets us free from the law of sin and death
16. The Spirit reveals the deep things of God to us
17. The Spirit speaks to, in, and through us