

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

DATE: September 13, 2020

SPEAKER: Joe, Aaron

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 19:1-12

### Family Dinner Table

Acts chapter 19 is as action-packed as any chapter in the Bible. We'll be spending three Sundays altogether in this chapter because there's a lot to take in: people speaking in tongues, incredible miracles, seven men overpowered by an evil spirit, a book burning, and a massive riot. If everything in this story got made into an action movie like *Black Panther*, you'd be on the edge of your seat watching it.

Ephesus, where all the action takes place, was a major commercial and religious center in the 1st century Roman Empire. If you want to get a sense of what it looked like, take a moment to watch this brief [video](#).

Here's a topic for dinner-time discussion: in verse 9 (and in verse 23), we're told that there's a whole lot of opposition to "the Way." Have you heard someone say, "Well, that's just the way we do things"? (What does that mean exactly?) "The Way" seems to have been what people called Christianity at this time. Why did you think some people hated the Way so much? And how do you think being a Christian should affect the way you think? The way you live?

**PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS**  
RUF at UT-Knoxville

**PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS**  
Ryan and Nelle Caitlin Potter  
serving with CAJ in Japan

## "GOD'S KINGDOM CHANGE MEETS CONFLICTING PUBLIC RESPONSE"

### For individual study or discussion

In the last few weeks we've spent in Acts, we've traveled with Paul to two major cities in the 1st century Roman empire: Athens and Corinth. Now we arrive in Ephesus, at that time a port city like Corinth and a major commercial center.<sup>1</sup> (If you want to get a glimpse of what Ephesus looked like, here's a brief [video](#).) As will be made clear as we proceed through the entire chapter, 1st century Ephesus also teemed with religion, both the religion of Greek mythology and the various practices of magic and the occult that flourished at that time. One of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the temple of Artemis (goddess of hunting, wild nature, and chastity) was located in Ephesus. Paul did not encounter secular or irreligious people in Ephesus. He met zealots of other faiths.

- 1) Like Apollos (see Acts 18:25), there were devout men in Ephesus who only knew about the baptism of John. In our own time, with instant communication from around the world, we forget how often people in the past failed to hear what had transpired in other places.
  - How would you characterize these "disciples" mentioned in verse 1? Were they believers?
  - What did they know, and what did they not know?
  - What should be the normal experience of every person who comes to faith in Jesus Christ? What would you say makes a Christian a Christian?
- 2) For the first time in Paul's ministry, he speaks to people in a lecture hall (see v. 9). We're told that he moved to the hall because of obstinate opposition to "the Way" in the Ephesian synagogue (see vv. 8-9).
  - Why the opposition?
  - How would you sum up the Way of all ways that Christians walk?
  - What can we learn about sharing our faith as we consider Paul's methods in the synagogue, lecture hall, and marketplace?
- 3) There have been 20th century televangelists who encourage people to send money and receive a "prayer cloth" with the purported power to heal the sick and take away suffering.
  - Are the miracles accomplished through Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons presented as something that we could reasonably expect to be duplicated? Why or why not?
  - Are miracles important, and if so, why? Does it matter whether we believe they really happened or not (what's your answer to a skeptic)? Read Romans 15:17-19 for Paul's view of his ministry, signs and wonders included.

<sup>1</sup>At this point, Paul is on his third missionary journey. To see a map of the entire trip, click [here](#).