

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD
Acts 19:8-12

INTRODUCTION:

- A. There are many pressing and important issues in our nation this day.
 - 1) A severe decline in morals and ethics
 - 2) An abandonment of the concept of personal responsibility
 - 3) Political corruption, near and far
 - 4) Selfishness, Egotism, Materialism, etc.
- B. This is encouraged by a great famine
 - 1) Not a famine of material things
 - 2) Amos 8:11-12
 - 3) Where is the Bible being taught today?
 - 4) A typical service is: 20 minutes of whining and apologizing, 15 minutes of "mind candy" for spoiled infants of God.
- C. Something happened at Corinth that is both admirable and educational.
 - 1) The power of God's word
 - 2) The word of God can be spread

I. The Power of God's Word in Corinth vs. 8

- A. Paul's ministry in the synagogue
 - 1) Paul went back to the Jews
 - 2) Paul spoke "boldly" = *parresiazomai* = "to speak freely or with fearless candor"
 - 3) Paul preached persistently, three months
 - 4) Paul preached pleadingly, "persuading"
 - 5) Paul taught broadly - "the things concerning the Kingdom of God"
- B. The rejection of the truth, God's only way to save sinners
 - 1) Some were hardened by the power of truth = "to make dry", "hard", "stiff" In medical terms it described a gristle. Here it was a slow process of several months.
 - 2) This led to rejection and unbelief
 - 3) They then took the offensive
 - a. "spoke evil" = *kakologos* = "evil speaker"
 - b. "that way" = The term for Christianity
- C. Paul separated the two groups
 - 1) "departed" = *haphistemi* = "apostasy", "to place away from"
 - 2) "separated" = *haphorizo* = "to set off by bounds, to limit off", "to set off apart"
 - 3) "disputing" = *dialegomai* = "to speak to and for alternately", "discuss", "to converse with"

- D. "daily" In the school of Tyrannus (en tei scholei Tyrannou). Schole (our school) is an old word from schein (echo) to hold on, leisure and then in later Greek (Plutarch, etc.) a place where there is leisure as here. Only this example in the N.T. This is the Greek notion of "school", the Jewish being that of "yoke" as in Matt. 11:29. The name Tyrannus (our tyrant) is a common one. It is an inscription in the Colunbarium of the Empress Livia as that of a physician in the court. Furneaux suggests the possibility that a relative of this physician was lecturing on medicine in Ephesus and so as a friend of Luke, the physician, would be glad to help Paul about a place to preach. It was probably a public building or lecture hall with this name whether hired by Paul or loaned to him. The pagan sophists often spoke in such halls. The Codex Bezae adds "from the fifth hour to the tenth" as the time allotted Paul for his work in this hall, which is quite possible, from just before midday till the close of the afternoon (from before the noon meal till two hours before sunset) each day. 11-5 or 6 hours

A.T. Robertson, Word Pictures In The New Testament

- E. Paul persevered in teaching
- 1) "And this continued for the space of two years"
 - 2) "This went on for two years"
 - 3) Acts 20:31, 18:19

II. The Power of God's Word in Asia vs. 10-12

- A. The word of God always spreads vs. 10
- 1) "so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks"
 - 2) This was indeed the church at work
 - 3) The reason our mission program is so weak that we primarily depend on missionaries. The primary thrust of spreading the word must be done by people as they go about their daily life.
 - 4) So that all they which dwelt in Asia heard (hoste pantas tous katoikountas ten Asian akousai). Actual result with hoste and the infinitive with accusative of general reference as is common (also verse 11) in the Koine (Robertson, Grammar, pp. 999f.). Paul apparently remained in Ephesus, but the gospel spread all over the province even to the Lycus Valley including the rest of the seven churches of Rev. 1:11 and chapters 2 and 3. Demetrius in verse 26 will confirm the tremendous influence of Paul's ministry in Ephesus on Asia. Forty years after this Pliny in his famous letter to Trajan from Bithynia will say of Christianity: "For the contagion of this superstition has not only spread through cities, but also through villages and country places."

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- B. The confirmation of Paul's preaching vs. 11
- 1) "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:
 - 2) "special" = tugchano = "to hit upon", "to happen", "not common", "extraordinary"

SPECIAL MIRACLES: (dunameis ou tas tuchousas). "Powers not the ones that happen by chance," "not the ordinary ones," litotes for "the extraordinary." All "miracles" or "powers" (dunameis) are supernatural and out of the ordinary, but here God regularly wrought (epoiei, imperfect active) wonders beyond those familiar to the disciples and completely different from the deeds of the Jewish exorcists. This phrase is peculiar to Luke in the N.T. (also 28:2), but it occurs in the classical Greek and in the Koine as in III Macc. 3:7 and in papyri and inscriptions (Deissmann, Bible Studies, p.255) In Samaria Philip wrought miracles to deliver the people from the influence of Simon Magus. Here in Ephesus exorcists and other magicians had built an enormous vogue of a false spiritualism and Paul faces unseen forces of evil. His tremendous success led some people to superstitious practices thinking that there was power in Paul's person.

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- 2) The special miracles described vs. 12
- a. "handkerchiefs" = soudarion = "sweat rags", "rags worn around the head and used to wipe the sweat off"
 - b. "apron" = simikinthion = "These were worn by men as they labored at their craft."
 - c. "disease" = nosos = "sickness", "confirmed diseases"
 - d. "departed" = hapallasso = "to remove one's self from", "to leave"
 - e. "and the wicked spirits were made to go"

III. The Word of God and This Church

- A. The word of God is powerful
- 1) It has not changed or diminished
 - 2) It will do what it has always done
- B. The word of God can be spread
- 1) We will teach the truth here!
 - 2) You must "gossip" it everywhere.