

Theme: The darkness of idolatry and unbelief leads to fear, confusion and unrest; the light of the gospel brings peace, persecution – and power.

Background & Introduction

1. Ephesus and the Temple of Artemis
 - one of Seven Wonders of the World
2. Paul's Plans
 - a. Ready to move on. v.21
 - b. "The Word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily"

I. A Clash of "Convictions"

- A. Believers – Under Conviction
 1. With conversion comes conviction regarding new life.
 - A total change of life (v.17)
 2. Gospel having impact on *the whole* culture. One person at a time!
- B. Demetrius – and his Conviction!
 1. Defending his livelihood and goddess?
 2. A good politician.
 - Make it a religious conviction! vv.27

II. Confusion - And Courage

- A. Why are we here??
 1. City filled with confusion! v.29
 2. Dragging Gaius and Aristarchus with them?
 3. Conflicting agendas
 4. Two hours of chanting??
 - Shouting down the opposition.

B. The Courage of Paul – Seeing the courage of those who trust in God!

1. Why such courage??

- Roman citizenship for protection? No.
- God's steadfast faithfulness!

2. Paul is restrained by his friends.

III. Wise Counsel and God's Control

A. Worldly Wisdom Prevails

1. The town clerk (Not a recording clerk!)

- Executive officer of the civic assembly

2. He reasons with them.

3. They reasonably disband!

B. Who is really in Control??

1. Easy to see the hand of the Lord.

2. The Lord's servants are delivered safely.

3. What Demetrius means for evil - God uses for good.

IV. Conclusion/Application

1. Sharing the gospel – one person at a time – can transform and entire culture.

2. It requires a life that truly reflects the work of Christ in us!

Example: Wilberforce and the Clapham Sect.

3. Expect the unbelieving world to protest when good news affects their personal agendas adversely.

4. Take courage! God is in Charge!

5. Rejecting the truth – leads only to confusion and destruction.