

Miracles, Signs and Wonders

Text: Acts 19:11-20

Introduction:

While facing some contention in a synagogue at Ephesus, where some of the unbelieving Jews spoke evil of, "The Way," and sought to "poison the well" that Paul was establishing, the Apostle Paul withdrew from the synagogue and continued his ministry in the school of Tyrannus. There, he continued for two years, and the Lord blessed his labors, such that, "all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

This morning, as we move on into verses 11 and following, once again, we find God affirming and attesting to the word preached by the Apostle Paul, through signs and wonders.

I. Miracles, Signs and Wonders

"Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 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" (vs. 11-12).

1) Read Acts 5:12-16. What was the purpose of these miracles, signs and wonders? Why might such unique and powerful signs be used by God here in Ephesus? [See vs. 19 also]

"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.' Also, there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?' 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" (vs. 13-16).

- 2) Why were these men unable to cast out the evil spirit? What would be the danger of them being capable of doing this? ["took it upon themselves"; motives were not to glorify Jesus but to exercise the power of Jesus; exploitation of Christianity] [The sign is attached to the message!]
- 3) What happened to them as a result of this? Can we apply this in any sense today?

"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" (vs. 17).

- 4) How did God exploit the exploitation of the sons of Sceva? What does this tell us about God's sovereignty even over the wrong intentions of men?
- 5) In what way did God's actions here further affirm the words of the Apostle Paul? How did the bad intentions of some, serve the good intentions of the other?

"And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds" (vs. 18).

- 6) How does this reality relate to the building of Christ's church today? What does this say about the foundation/infrastructure relationship of the church?

"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" (vs. 19).

- 7) What do we see happening here? How does this event relate to the broader picture of the work of the Gospel? How would this apply to us today? [Getting rid of "R" movies, bad music... etc]

"So the Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed" (vs. 20).

8) What is the significance of this statement? Comment on the working of God, throughout the entirety of these events. How can we apply this to us today?

Amen!!!