

Part 48 Miracles of Paul

A sermon series by Pastor Byron Chesney Wednesday, Aug 31, 2016

† Acts 19:8-20

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.
9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.
10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.
11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:
12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.
13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.
14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.
15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?
16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.
17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.
18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.
19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.
20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Last week we finished up Chapter 18 which dealt with Apollos the Eloquent speaker and the first 7 verses of Chapter 19 where Paul introduced Jesus to some of John's disciples. Tonight we are going to look at Acts 19:8-20 which covers Paul's time in Ephesus preaching, working miracles, driving out evil spirits and increasing the Word of God.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

So Paul enters into Ephesus after the baptizing of John's disciples on the coast and he does the same thing he always does when entering into a city, he finds the local synagogue and begins preaching. It says that he did this for 3-months **disputing and persuading** the folks there.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

And, just like in Corinth the Jews turned against Paul and the Gospel. It says they were "**hardened.**" When you see that word used in the Bible it is referring to someone whose heart is hardened against the Gospel. Much like Pharaoh was hardened against Moses and the Children of Israel. So because of this, Paul stopped preaching in their Synagogue and found another place to preach – the school of Tyrannus. Notice that it says he also "**separated the disciples.**" That means he also took all of

the newly converted Christians out of the Synagogue with him. He caused a Church split. He couldn't allow them to stay in the Synagogue getting influenced by the Jews who were hardened against the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Paul continued teaching and preaching for 2-years in this **school of Tyrannus**. We know absolutely nothing about this man Tyrannus. This is the only place he is mentioned in the entire Bible. His name means "**sovereign, controller, or supreme in authority.**" He was obviously some kind of teacher that held school in a building in Ephesus and he is allowing Paul to use his school. I love how the Lord always provides for the needs of those that are preaching the Gospel. Everywhere Paul has went God has had someone there to help out.

11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:

Just as God had given the other Apostles the super natural ability to perform miracles and signs, He also gave Paul this ability through the power of the Holy Ghost. It says these were "**special miracles.**" All miracles are special but these that Paul was able to perform were very unusual miracles, those that you would not normally ever see. Such as we see in our next verse.

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

This was really unusual. What is happening here is, Paul could touch handkerchiefs or aprons to himself and then these could be taken to where the sick people were and used on them to heal them from diseases and cast out evil spirits. I don't know how he did it, perhaps he wiped his forehead with the handkerchiefs or maybe all he did was touch them, but whatever method they made contact with his body to empower them to work miracles.

I am reminded of the lady with the issue of blood that touched the hem of Jesus' garment. There is no power in the material itself, the power comes from the Lord. He just uses the material as a means to do it. I don't know why He used the methods that He did. Sometimes He used something to perform miracles and sometimes he simply spoke the miracle and it happened. I'm sure it was for a sign that physical things were used. Since the Jews required a sign, this most likely was the purpose of using the handkerchiefs and aprons.

One thing that I notice in this is the number of miracles that were needed in that city. It is like that throughout the Bible when healings take place there are numerous people that need it. It would be like that here in our own city today. There is so much disease and sickness around here that if everyone was healed that needed healing it would be miracles of Biblical proportions.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

Now these wandering exorcists try to get in on the act. They see all of the attention Paul is receiving from the miracles so they pretend that they can heal the same as Paul does by calling on the name of Jesus. These exorcists did not have the power to do anything they only pretended to cast out devils and demons so they could get people's money and attention. They were the Benny Hinns of the 1st Century.

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

These seven sons of Sceva are some of these phony exorcists. We don't know who this Sceva is, nothing else is said about him in the Bible. They approach a man that is possessed by an evil spirit and pretend to be healers like Paul and call upon the name of Jesus to cast out demons, but it backfires on them. Look at the next verse.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

This is one of the funniest scenes in all the Bible. I'm glad the Lord puts things like this in His Word.

The demon inside of the man gets angry at the seven sons of Sceva and he tells them that he knows who Jesus is and he knows who Paul is but he doesn't know who they are. He gets angry and leaps out of the man onto them. I mean it must have looked like the Tasmanian devil just broke loose out of his box and began beating these men. Wouldn't you have liked to have seen that? He's beat them so bad that they have come out of their clothes. My dad used to tell me that he was going to whip my socks off, well this demon whipped these guys' clothes off! They ran out beaten, bloody, and naked.

Listen, you don't want to mess around with evil spirits. They are still out there too. Paul warns us about them over in Ephesians where he talks about putting on the whole armour of God: **Ephesians 6:11-13: Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

So there are demons and evil spirits lurking about still today. People are still possessed by evil spirits, you just don't hear about it because we just attribute things that people do to human behavior. I clearly believe that these people that go about murdering other people, shooting people in schools and such are possessed by evil spirits. One of the most memorable is that young man named Dylan Roof who went into that Church in Charleston and shot all of those people. He is clearly demon possessed. People that are demon possessed need Jesus.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

Because of these miracles performed by Paul, it caused many of the Jews and Greeks to fear the Lord. They could also see that the fake exorcists were unable to do what Paul did, therefore, proving to them that the Lord Jesus had all the power. Because it says that His name was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

Talk about a revival! One sure broke out in Ephesus. People under their guilt and shame of all of the evil things that they allowed into their lives, brought them out to destroy them.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Ephesus was full of witch craft and sorcery. People were into all kinds of dark magic and evil things. They had books which contained spells and incantations to be read for the purpose of calling out demons, speaking with devils, and performing black magic. It was a dirty rotten cesspool of a place.

I don't know if you know this or not but there is a lot of this kind of evil practice going on in the United States today. If you go to the mall right down the road here, there is a store in there called "Crystal Visions." I've never been inside of it but you can see inside from the front windows at all of the garbage they sell in there. I went on their Facebook page to see what their purpose is and this is what they state: *We have an eclectic mix of items from Swarovski Crystal to loose polished crystals and stones to tobacco pipes, incense, and books on the occult.*

They had pictures of their merchandise and it includes: crystals, dream catchers, tarot cards, incense and incense burners, magic books, witch paraphernalia, skulls, and sorcery items.

Listen, don't you think for one minute that a Christian can mess around with such things. God hates these things. Listen to what he told the Children of Israel in the Book of **Deuteronomy 18:9-12**

9 When thou art come into the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

10 There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

11 Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.

12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

The power of the Gospel is so strong in Ephesus that it is driving all of these demonic influences out. People are giving them up and burning. It would do us good to have an old-fashioned Ephesus burning these days. Where everyone brings anything that is not pleasing to God that they have allowed in their homes and burn them all up.

and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver

Somebody even took the time to figure up what all of this junk added up to monetarily. Depending on which coin they were using to add up the cost, it could be anywhere between \$2,000 to \$4,000 USD. Whatever it was it was a lot of money or it wouldn't have been mentioned.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Through it all, God's Word grew and prevailed.