

Sermon Notes
July 02, 2023
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
Acts: Paul's 3rd Missionary Journey // S3E5 Artemis Worship
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Acts 19:23-31

23 About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way. **24** A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. **25** He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. **26** And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. **27** There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty." **28** When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" **29** Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater. **30** Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. **31** Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

In Acts 19, Paul gives a master class on demolishing spiritual strongholds and taking cities for Christ.

What was Artemis Worship?

- **Who was Artemis:** The supposed goddess of fertility.
- **What was worship like?** Hundreds of eunuch priests, virgin priestesses, and religious prostitutes served her. Worship rituals were quite erotic.
- **How was it supported?** The cult brought great wealth to the citizens of Ephesus because the temple of Artemis became the world's largest bank during that time.
- **What was spiritual life like?** Devotees came from all over the world to worship and celebrate during her festivals. ' Huge processions honored her statues. Celebrations were held with music, dancing, singing, dramatic presentations, and chanting of allegiance.

1. Paul's effectual persuasion. Vs. 23 *About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.*

- **Vs. 26** *And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and **led** astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all.*
 - **Paul was accused of influencing and leading others away from paganism.**
 1. **peithō - to persuade- to induce one by words to believe to make friends of, to win one's favor, gain one's good will, or to seek to win one.**
 2. **Methistēmi- to transpose, transfer, remove from one place to another**
 - **Paul's message was incredibly simplistic.**
 - **Vs. 26b** He says that man-made gods are no gods at all.
 - A simple gospel is often the most effective.

Questions for small groups:

1. Paul is able to threaten a 700-year tradition of pagan Artemis worship and the whole spiritual life of a city in a matter of a few months, why do you think that was.
2. In vs. 26 we see that Paul persuaded others. How can we make the gospel persuasive and what might make it non-persuasive.
3. Paul preached a simple gospel. Define the gospel in its most simplistic terms.
4. Paul was accused of leading people astray. Do you actively try and lead people to Jesus? How?
5. Does Ephesus resemble our current culture and how might we be like Paul in leading it back to Christ? What can you do now?