

**Acts 19:8-20:6**  
**The Word of God Grew Mightily and Prevalled**

**When my kids were young - Walt Disney was a pretty cool company**

A)They were not marked by the liberal ideologies that plagues the company today

B)So my kids watched many Disney animated movies - and our family favorite was Beauty and the Beast.

C)I have probably seen it at least 12 times.

**I love the scene in the movie when the beast seeking to bless Bell – who loves books**

A)He shows her the Library.

B)Pulls back the curtain – her eyes light up –  
1)There are more books in that library than she has ever seen in her life.

C)Whenever I see that scene there are two Bible verses that come to my mind.

**D)The first is found in John chapter 21 - As John wraps up his gospel - he says this about Jesus in V. 25**

<sup>25</sup> And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. John 21:25

**So Vast was the ministry of Jesus that all the books in the world could not contain it all.**

A)The 2<sup>nd</sup> verse that comes to my mind is found in the book of Hebrews

Hebrews 4:12 **“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”**

B)So Imagine this **Sanctuary as a Library – 1,000’s of books –** Some where there is a Bible  
1)Only book in this room that you could say this about – **it is Living and Powerful – sharper – transform**

**You could say of other books – Insightful – changed my way of thinking – changed my attitude about...**

A)But the Bible is a book that doesn’t just change thoughts and attitudes, and perspectives

**B)It transforms the heart – Cuts deep into the soul – exposes – what is wrong – does surgery on us**

1)ALSO It ministers healing IN US

C)It is alive – living – it is has power **to change and transform** a person fully – Mind /soul /spirit

1)Because – It is the word of God

D)Not **just words on a page** – but words oozing with life and power because – it comes from God’s heart

**In our study this morning we are going to see the impact that the Word of God had on the city of Ephesus.**

A)In doing so we will draw some parallel conclusions concerning **the effect God’s Words can have in our lives.**

**B)Saw last week - Paul was in Ephesus**

<sup>8</sup> And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. <sup>9</sup> But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. <sup>10</sup> And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

<sup>20</sup> So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

**Acts 19 brings us to Paul’s 3<sup>rd</sup> missionary journey**

A)In his first two missionary journey’s Paul’s goal was to go further faster

B)He wanted to bring the gospel to as many people as he possibly could.

1)So he didn’t stay long in any one place

C)But the focus of this 3<sup>rd</sup> trip is different - it is to strengthen the churches

1)He is going back to the churches that were started on the first two trips

**Then Paul ends up in Ephesus where he will spend 3 years ministering in that city - longest stay anywhere.**

A)Ephesus was One of the largest and most impressive cities in the ancient world,

B)It was a political, religious, and commercial center in Asia Minor.

C)At the time of Paul, Ephesus was probably the fourth largest city in the Roman empire -

1)with a population estimated at 250,000.

**But Ephesus was heavily influenced by the worship of a goddess of fertility - the Greek goddess Artemis,**

A)Later the Romans renamed Artemis - Diana.

B)So Ephesus was a city that was given over to idolatry

1)And there was a strong Demonic presence there

C)Ever been to a place or city where you just sensed an evil presence -- Santa Cruz 20 yrs ago

1)Ephesus was that kind of place

D)Last week we saw how Paul arrives in the city and meet a group of 12 men - **Luke identifies as Disciples**

**D)Paul thinks that is what they are Disciples of Jesus**

1)But **something was missing** -

**Paul asked - Did you receive the Baptism of the Spirit when you believed**

A)We found out that Not only had they not been baptized in the Spirit they were not saved yet.

B)Paul preached Jesus - they were saved and baptized in the Spirit that day.

C)NOTE: The **work of God in Ephesus** began with a move of the Holy Spirit. -

**The work that God did through Paul in Ephesus could be summed up in two verses from our text.**

A)**V.10 all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.**

**B)The Word and message of Jesus spread from Ephesus all over Asia minor -**

1)300K sq miles ? Arizona, Utah, Nevada combined

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> Statement - V.20 The Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.**

A)Lives in that city were being transformed - the gospel was prevailing over lives & over the enemy

B)Recall in Acts Ch.16 Paul wanted to go to Ephesus and was forbidden by the HS to go there

1)WRONG TIME

**C)But now it was the right time.**

**D)Greg Laurie said - Effective ministry takes place when you have the right person at the right place at the right time.**

**It was the right time for Paul to be in Ephesus.**

A)God was blessing - the region was impacted.

B)The Word of God was growing / prevailing!

C)Two questions I want you to consider today.

**#1 Do you want the word of God to grow mightily in your life and prevail?**

**D)#2 What does it look like when that is happening ?**

**How can the Word of God grow mightily and prevail in our lives?**

A)#1 **It starts with a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. V.6 - LAST WEEK - online**

B)#2 It happens when we develop a consistency for being in the word.

1)**Paul spent 2 plus years there faithfully teaching the Word there.**

C)We notice in V.8-10 that Paul followed his normal mode of operation - Synagogue - Jews

**D)For a while the Jews were pretty receptive - 3 whole months**

1)there was more of an openness in Ephesus than most places where Paul preached -

**Three reactions to the teaching of the Word there some believed instantly and wanted to learn more.**

A)Others believed gradually - took some time

**B)V.9 tells us some were hardened**

1)The verb hardened is passive meaning this is something that happened to them over time

C)Think of it this way - if you put clay in the sun - something happens to the clay - hardens

1)But it doesn't happen all at once - happens over days

D)The same thing happens in a heart - the more a heart resist the HS - it starts to harden

1)AND Longer it resist the harder it gets.

**So some people were responding to the Word of God being taught - God was working**

A)Others were resisting - becoming hardened

B)Those whose hearts were being hardened began to speak evil of the Way

1)Name given the followers of Jesus - The Way of Jesus.

C)So those who were hardened began stirring up the Jews - to reject the Message

**So Paul does what we have seen him do now in almost every city he comes to -**

A)When the Jews reject he finds a Gentile place to meet and do his Bible studies

B)V.9b - He starts sharing at the School of Tyrannus

Interesting name – it actually means **Tyrant.**

C)Since most Scholars can't imagine parents naming their kid – The Tyrant –

1) Baby comes out – won't stop crying -The Tyrant –

D)Maybe in his terrible twos he got the nick name The Tyrant

**E)Most scholars believe this was a nick name his students gave him that stuck**

1)His school became known as the Tyrants School

**So Paul is showing up everyday at the Tyrants school to talk about a ruler who was not a Tyrant**

A)Telling people about Jesus - who seeks to rule in people's hearts not by force but by LOVE

B)V.9 tells us Paul taught there daily/ - everyday but the Sabbath day so 6 days a week for 2 whole yrs

C)One Greek manuscript adds a touch which sounds like the additional detail an eye-witness might bring.

1) It says that Paul taught in that School from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Now this makes perfect sense when you consider the way the culture functioned in the Middle East**

A)This is a desert region - afternoons are really hot year round - temps well over 100 degrees

B)So People would start working around 6am - work to about 11am

C)At 11am they would take a break - people would stop working from about 11am -4pm -

1)eat/ family time / might NAP

D)Then around 5pm they would go back to work and work until dark - 3-4 more hrs

**E)But during the hottest part of the day Paul preached 5 hrs a day -**

1)six days a week for 2 years - over 3,000 hours of Bible study

F)Ch.20 **I gave you the whole council of the Word....**

**I find that interesting for two reasons**

A)#1 It shows the eagerness of Paul to teach and the eagerness of the Christians to learn.

B)#2 It shows the believers and Paul were willing to sacrifice comfort and convenience

1)in order to give the Word of God an opportunity to grow in their lives.

**C)So When others were resting – they seized the opportunity to learn and to grow.**

D)That is how the Word of God grows and prevails in our lives - when we give ourselves to it consistency

E)That is why we place a huge emphasis on studying through the Bible here at CV

1)18 months through the book of Acts - Whole council of God's word.

**Think about this - Ephesus was this broken city marked by idolatry and Demonic influence**

A)What was God's solution?

B)Send a man to faithfully teach the word of God day after day - 5 hrs a day for 2 whole years.

C)Result the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed in that City.

1)Spread from there - throughout all of Asia Minor

**As we continue in this passage today we will see how God confirmed the Word by manifesting his power in different ways.**

A)V.11 Unusual miracles are happening.

**<sup>11</sup> Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, <sup>12</sup> 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.**

**B)Unusual miracles - other trans. Extraordinary**

C)AMP - **Unusual and extraordinary** - Not normal - out of the ordinary

1)Something that defies the laws of the Universe.

D)Moses touches the Red sea with his staff - the water parts - not normal - broom handle -pool

1)Jesus walks on water

E)Luke says - what was happening was unusual even for a miracle - not normal stuff seen before

**So Paul is working - hot - handkerchief - wipes brow someone sees - steals - goes home -kid healed**

A)Nothing magical in his hankies -

**B)Point of contact - ignite faith - Remember the woman with the issue of Blood?**

1)If I can just touch the hem ..... there wasn't any power in the hem of Jesus' garment

C)But the hem served as a point of Contact that triggered her faith.

1)These **handkerchiefs/ aprons** – were the same way.

**Here is what I want you to note: These miracles were not replicated**

A)This doesn't happen again -

B)Paul doesn't start selling his **handkerchiefs** online

**C)Paul doesn't start a healing ministry**

D)This was a weird thing that God allowed to validate the preaching of the word

E)The next thing we see that happened is even more weird <sup>13</sup> 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." <sup>14</sup> Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

**This is worth noting - the Demonic activity in Ephesus was so prevalent - Exorcism Business**

A)Professional exorcist - **The Seven sons of Sceva exorcism Business** – like a plumber

B)I Need an exorcism - look up online - call - please come out today

**C)These guys are hearing how Paul dealt with Demons in the name of Jesus -**

1)Pick up on that technique - "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches."

<sup>15</sup> And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

<sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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.**

**D)This is worth noting: The Demon says Jesus I know and Paul I know - but who are you?**

E)If you are a Christian - Demons - Know you! - Why do they know you? BC You belong to Jesus.

**It is so important to understand - Demons cannot inhabit a Christian.**

A)Last week Romans 8:9-16 - If you are a Christian - **the Spirit of God dwells in you?**

B) So if the HS is living in you - a Demon cannot be living in you as well

1) The Bible says that **God is light and in him is no darkness at all** - Can't Coexist

C) Plus in Ephesians 4:30 **We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption**

1) Seal was a mark of ownership and a mark of protection -

D) When an item had been sealed it couldn't be tampered with

1) God has sealed you - so a Demon can't tamper with that.

E) **Now Demons can harass us - and we do face spiritual warfare constantly**

1) But a Demon cannot possess a Christian

**I bring this up because the idea that a Christian can be possessed by a demon is an old teaching**

A) Gaining new popularity - There is a guy out of NY - deliverance ministry - Demon Chaser - movie

B) Not Biblical!!!!

1) Search the NT there is never a time when Jesus or one of the Apostles cast a demon out of a Christian

2) Doesn't happen

C) **People want to argue their experiences - but our experiences must line up with scripture**

1) When experience supersedes scripture - we can get in all sorts of trouble

D) People who run in these circles - Who believe Christians can be demon possessed - Extreme

1) Blame everything on demons - the demon of Anger - the demon of lust - Demon of Chocolate cake

**Here is what is really interesting to me - Ephesus was this city - where there was a lot of Demonic activity**

A) Paul writes a letter to this church - Ephesians

B) In that letter we have the most extensive teaching in the Bible on Spiritual warfare

C) Paul mentions nothing about Demon possession in the life of the believer.

**Now don't you think the God who loves us and wants the best for us -**

A) Would have had the HS inspire Paul to write about that

B) If it was a possibility for a Christian to be possessed

C) You know what Paul does write about - the Power of the word of God.

D) Exhorts us to stand strong in the Power of the Lord's might

1) Clothe ourselves with the armor of God

E) Starts with the Belt of truth - THE WORD

1) Specifically the truth about who Jesus is and what He has done for you. Who you are IN HIM

**Jesus said- You will know the truth and the truth will set you free**

A) **He who the son of man sets free will be free indeed**

B) Paul starts with the truth - and every other piece of armor is connected to that truth

C) Righteous in Christ - Peace through Christ

D) Faith in Jesus to block all the darts of the enemy.

E) Paul doesn't say one word about Demon possession

1) or the need to have a demon cast out of you

**The thing he points to is this: our strength over the enemy is directly connected to who we are in Christ.**

A) So again it is important to point out here - the Demons Know Paul and they knew Jesus

B) But these other guys who were not Christians - they didn't know them -

1) They were powerless over the demon - beat up

C) So the Word was prevailing - over sickness and disease

1) The word was prevailing over Demons

A 3<sup>rd</sup> way the Word of God was prevailing is THAT people's lives were being radically transformed

18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds.

A)The Believers came CLEAN concerning secret sin

B)Came is LITERALLY - They kept coming, one after another.

C)This was such a move of God's Spirit working through the word – no coexisting – no begging

1)Convicted and coming clean – clearing out the closets of their hearts

D)SO God was moving in such a powerful way through the teaching of the Word -

1)People were getting real - wanted to get right with him

The Believers CUT TIES with their past. V.19

“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.”

A)This is RADICAL - They brought their books on magic and spells and burned them all.

B)So this is what they were doing - They were BURNING all the BRIDGES to their past.

C)So when the Word of God grew and prevailed - the believers burned their junk.

APPLICATION FOR Us TODAY?

A)In the book of Hebrews the Christian life is compared to running in a race

B)Run laying aside the weights and the sin!!!

C)Sin we get - that which clearly goes against the Word of God - No compromise

1)God can't bless sin - or compromise

But the writer of Hebrews also mentions weights

A)Weights are things that are not black and white in Scripture

B)But they are things that still hold you down and hold you back in your walk with Jesus

C)Lay it aside - Run unencumbered - not weighed down - free

D)Is there something in your life today - Hidden sin ?

1)A weight the Lord has been telling you to let go of?

E)If you want the Word of God to grow and prevail in your life - you need to lay it down

1)Burn it - symbolizes permanent removal

Maybe the weight isn't a physical thing maybe it is a person - you need to break ties with

A)Maybe it is a LIE from the enemy - you have allowed to live in your heart

B)It has crippled you - wounded you - defined by that lie instead of by who you are in JESUS

C)BE DONE with that TODAY. / stand in TRUTH

So the Word of God was growing mightily and prevailing in Ephesus Miracles were happening

A)Demons were being overcome - people radically saved/ transformed / breaking from their past

B)But here is what is really interesting - there was still opposition.

1)We have seen this in practically every chapter in the book of Acts -

C)God starts working and the Devil seeks to oppose

Jesus said Satan is a thief and a robber who comes to kill and rob and destroy

A)He is hell bent on destruction/ he is not your friend

B)He wants to pull us down - Harass us and tempt us and discourage us

C)Not a Christian - he wants to do everything he can to keep you from Jesus

D)Jesus said: The devil is a thief..... Destroy

1)But I have come that you might have life and that more abundantly

**E) In Jesus we have the Power to stand against Satan - greater is he that is in you ..... the World**

### **Quickly notice the Opposition**

21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

22 So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.

### **So after 3 years Paul is thinking it is time to move on He sets his sights on Rome - Epicenter**

**A) He sends Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia - he is going to meet up with them later**

**B) Paul remains in Ephesus a little longer**

23 And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. 25 He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 26 Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. 27 So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship."

### **This guy Demetrius says - This dude Paul is bad for our idol making Business**

**A) We need to get rid of this guy - our business is going to fall into disrepute - lose all respect**

**B) We will be labeled as frauds and Diana - Fraud**

### **Revival broke out in Wales in 1904 called the Welsh Revival**

**A) God was moving so powerfully through the preaching of Evan Roberts**

**B) That every tavern and pub in Wales went broke**

**C) How many anti-alcohol sermons did Evan Roberts preach - NONE**

1) How many tirades against taverns? Zero.

**D) People simply lost all interest in alcohol when they got touched by the Lord and filled with the Spirit.**

**E) The same thing happened in Ephesus. When people got saved, the idol business dried up.**

1) So the Owners motivated by money – staged an uproar -

<sup>28</sup> Now when they heard *this*, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" <sup>29</sup> So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theater with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions. <sup>30</sup> And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. <sup>31</sup> Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater.

### **The believers are trying to protect Paul- don't go in this is getting crazy**

<sup>32</sup> Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together. 😊 <sup>33</sup> And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander motioned with his hand, and wanted to make his defense to the people. <sup>34</sup> But when they found out that he was a Jew, all with one voice cried out for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"

**(Picture this scene - Mob Rule)** <sup>32</sup> Some therefore cried one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

### **F) Hey what are we protesting? No idea**

1) Something about Diana - Great is Diana of the Ephesians - Yay - 2 hrs

<sup>35</sup> And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: "Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the *image* which fell down from Zeus? <sup>36</sup> Therefore, since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. <sup>37</sup> For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. <sup>38</sup> Therefore, if Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a case against anyone, the courts are open and there are

proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. <sup>39</sup> But if you have any other inquiry to make, it shall be determined in the lawful assembly. <sup>40</sup> For we are in danger of being called in question for today's uproar, there being no reason which we may give to account for this disorderly gathering."

**So this Roman official stands up and says - This needs to end.**

A) You keep this up - we are going to draw the attention of the big boys in Rome

B) That will not bode well for us <sup>41</sup> And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

C) So the riot is over - Quickly Chapter 20 -

**After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia Time to move on to the next assignment.**

<sup>2</sup> Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece <sup>3</sup> and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia.

<sup>4</sup> And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia— also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

**This is cool - Paul's team is growing - men from many of the cities he went through signed up to serve with him**

<sup>5</sup> These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas.

<sup>6</sup> But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days.

**Now this is where we are going to pick things up in the new year - Paul in Troas**

A) Next week - Christmas - Dec 31 Jason Duff

B) January 7<sup>th</sup> We are going to pick up our Study in the book of Acts - Ch.20 Incredible story

C) Asleep in the Light!!! Don't Miss it

**But as we close today - Question do you want the word of God to grow and prevail in your life?**

A) You need a fresh Filling of the Holy Spirit

**B) You need to be a person who is constantly surrendered to the HS**

C) You need to be a person who is consistently giving yourself to the Word -

1) Not just here but in person

D) When the Word of God challenges you to get rid of things in your life - do it - burn it

1) Make a permanent break

E) Let it do surgery on your heart - respond to it

**God's word is going to grow and prevail in your life and it will spread from you to OTHERS.**

A) Like the move of God in the city of Ephesus affected all of Asia Minor

B) Jesus in your life is going to affect those in your family - friends - work with / school with.

**AMEN!!!**