

Sermon Discussion Questions

Speaker: Dr. Stephen Burrell

Topic: When the Gospel and Culture Collide

Scriptures - Acts 19:1-41

Opening:

Open your time in prayer by thanking God for the power of the gospel, asking for clarity in understanding what it means to truly follow Jesus, and praying for courage to live faithfully even when culture pushes back.

Give Background & Context:

Acts 19 shows three key moments as the gospel advances in Ephesus: new believers coming to a fuller understanding of Christ, the exposure of false faith, and a major cultural backlash against the gospel. The chapter highlights the difference between real and superficial belief, the power of true repentance, and the reality that the gospel will always confront culture at the level of allegiance.

- Read Acts 19:1-10
 - What stands out about the twelve men Paul meets in verses 1-3? What was missing in their understanding?
 - How does Paul clarify the difference between John's baptism and belief in Jesus? Why is it significant that they received the Holy Spirit after believing in Christ?
 - What does this section teach us about the difference between partial knowledge and true faith?
 - Where might people today have an incomplete understanding of Jesus, and how can we help clarify the gospel?
- Read Acts 19:11-20
 - What went wrong with the sons of Sceva, and what does their story reveal about using Jesus' name without a relationship with Him?
 - How do the believers respond after this event (v. 17-20), and what does that show about genuine repentance?
 - Why is it significant that they publicly confessed and destroyed their old practices?
 - What might "burning old practices" look like in a modern context when someone truly turns to Christ?
- Read Acts 19:21-41
 - What causes the riot in Ephesus, and what does it reveal about the economic and cultural impact of the gospel?
 - According to the passage, what is the real issue behind the conflict, ideas or allegiance? How does the gospel threaten idols without directly attacking them?
 - Where do you see modern cultural "idols" being challenged by the gospel today?
- Sermon Reflection Questions
 - The sermon emphasized the difference between real disciples and superficial belief. What are some signs of genuine faith versus borrowed or cultural Christianity?
 - The believers in Ephesus responded with deep repentance, not just belief, but action. What are some examples of "old practices" that believers may need to turn away from as they follow Jesus more fully?
 - The sermon said culture ultimately resists the gospel because it challenges ultimate authority. Where do you see that tension most clearly today?
 - If the previous question is true, how should the Gospel reshape the way we think about engaging culture?