

# \*ACTS

The Continuing Work of Jesus

## \*The Gospel and Power

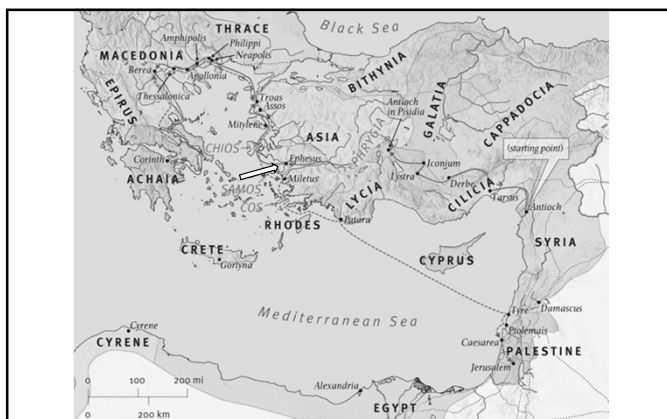
Acts 19:8-20

And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this.

But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.

(Acts 19:8-20)



## The Gospel and Power

1. Paul preached and all Asia heard (vv. 8-10)

Q: What was the message that Paul preached?

A: He "persuaded them about the kingdom of God" (8)

## The Gospel and Power

2. The gospel overcomes magic (vv. 11-19)
  - A. God stoops to confirm primitive faith (11-12)
  - B. Luke stoops to include primitive miracles in his history (11-12)
  - C. The name of Jesus is magnified over magic (13-19)

## The Gospel and Power

3. The gospel trumps magic and miracles (v. 20)
  - Luke highlights the message, not the miracles

When I have read or heard the shallow objections of irreligious scribblers and talkers, hinting that there was no reality in conversions, and that mission effort was but waste, oh, how my heart has yearned to plant them just one week on Tanna, with the "natural" man all around in the person of Cannibal and Heathen, and only the one "spiritual" man in the person of the converted Abraham, nursing them, feeding them, saving them 'for the love Jesus' - that I might just learn how many hours it took to convince them that Christ in man was a reality after all! All the skepticism of Europe would hide its head in foolish shame; and all its doubts would dissolve under one glance of the new light that Jesus, and Jesus alone, pours from the converted Cannibal's eye... Oh, Jesus! To Thee alone be all the glory. Thou hast the key to unlock every heart that Thou has created.

*(John G. Paton: Missionary to the New Hebrides, 1891, p. 107, 373)*