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“Revival or Revolt?”

Acts 19:11-41

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Wherever Christ is preached there is usually one of two responses—revival or revolt. When the light of Jesus is turned on, it confronts the darkness of whatever it touches. If the response is contrition and humility, the result is revival, but if the response is confusion and hostility, the result is revolt. In Acts 19, we see both responses. Pastor Gary compares the revolt in Ephesus to our current culture, and highlights five points of revival that are still true today.

1. [Acts 19:11-41](#) – *“Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 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. 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.’ Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’ 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. 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. And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 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. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. 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.’ So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time. And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and*

said: 'Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 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. 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.' Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' 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. And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him. Then some of the officials of Asia, who were his friends, sent to him pleading that he would not venture into the theater. 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. 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. 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!' 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? Therefore, since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. For you have brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess. 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. But if you have any other inquiry to make, it shall be determined in the lawful assembly. 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.' And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly."

2. Revival and revolt in Ephesus
  - a. Christianity confronts darkness, and people typically respond in one of two ways
    - i. Revival
      1. A result of contrition and humility
    - ii. Revolt
      1. A result of confusion and hostility
    - iii. Both revival and revolt occurred when Christianity came to Ephesus
3. The revolt in Ephesus shares similarities to our current culture
  - a. A mob mentality
  - b. Often results in violence
  - c. A desire to silence Christians and cancel any opposing views

- d. A money trail that reveals the cultural agenda and what the culture worships
- e. An idolization of perverted sexuality foisted upon the culture

#### 4. Characteristics of a revival

- a. The people had a holy fear of God
  - i. **Acts 19:17a** - *“This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all.”*
  - ii. When he have a healthy fear of God, we will sin less
    - 1. **Psalm 86:11** - *“Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name.”*
- b. They had a reverence for the Name of Jesus
  - i. **Acts 19:17b** - *“And the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.”*
  - ii. When Jesus modeled prayer for the disciples in **Luke 11:2**, He opened with, *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.”*
    - 1. *Hallowed* in the Greek is **hagiazō**, which means, “to consecrate; to separate as holy and pure”
  - iii. There are more than 350 names and titles for God in the Bible that express God’s character, nature, and holiness
    - 1. **Psalm 8:1a** - *“O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!”* (1984 NIV)
    - 2. **Psalm 29:2a** - *“Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name.”* (1984 NIV)
    - 3. **Psalm 30:4** - *“Sing to the Lord, you saints of his; praise his holy name.”* (1984 NIV)
    - 4. **Psalm 34:3** - *“Glorify the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together.”* (1984 NIV)
- c. They believed in Jesus and confessed their sins
  - i. **Acts 19:18** - *“And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds.”*
  - ii. True belief in Jesus is always followed by sincere confession of sins
    - 1. **1 John 1:9** - *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*
    - 2. **2 Timothy 2:5** - *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.”*
      - a. Jesus is our high priest—we do not need another mediator to confess our sins
      - b. We can confess our sins to a trusted friend—not to have that person absolve us of sin—but for the purposes of accountability and prayer
- d. They purged their lives of ungodly influences
  - i. **Acts 19:19** - *“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.”*

1. Fifty thousand pieces of silver equates to about fifteen million dollars today
2. The people were more concerned about the spiritual cost of sorcery and occult influences than they were about the cost of destroying their books
  - a. Under conviction, the people removed things from their homes that were hindering their relationships with the Lord
    - i. It is important that we periodically take inventory of the things we allow into our homes and what we may need to get rid of
- e. They gave priority to the Word of God
  - i. **Acts 19:20** - *“So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.”*
    1. There are many benefits to knowing and obeying God’s Word
      - a. **Jeremiah 15:16a** - *“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight.”* (1984 NIV)
      - b. **Jeremiah 23:29** - *“‘Is not my word like fire,’ declares the Lord, ‘and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?’”* (1984 NIV)
      - c. **Ephesians 5:26** - *“That He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word.”*
      - d. **1 Peter 2:2** - *“As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”*
      - e. **James 1:22-25** - *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.”* (1984 NIV)
    - f. **Psalm 85:6** - *“Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?”*

#### Discussion Questions

1. Read **Acts 19:11-41** to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. How did the people of Ephesus react to the message of Christianity? (See #2a

above)

3. Where do you see similarities between the revolt in Ephesus and reactions to Christianity in our current culture? (See #3 above)
4. Read [Psalm 86:11](#). What are the benefits of a healthy fear of God? Where have you seen this principle at work in your own life? (See #4a above)
5. Read [Psalm 8:1a](#), [Psalm 29:2a](#), [Psalm 30:4](#), and [Psalm 34:3](#). Why is a reverence for the Name of Jesus important? (See #4b above)
6. Read [1 John 1:9](#) and [2 Timothy 2:5](#). Discuss the significance of confessing our sins. Who absolves us of sin? What is the purpose of confessing your sins to another person? (See #4c above)
7. Why did the people in Ephesus destroy their sorcery/occult books? What can we learn from their actions? Do you regularly take inventory of the influences you allow into your home? (See #4d above)
8. Read [Jeremiah 15:16a](#), [Jeremiah 23:29](#), [Ephesians 5:26](#), [1 Peter 2:2](#), and [James 1:22-25](#). Discuss the benefits of knowing and obeying God's Word. How do you see this principle operate in your life?
9. Read [Psalm 85:6](#). How can we encourage revival in our world today?
10. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)