

# A Practical Study of ACTS:

## Take It To Them!

### “Putting the GO Back in the Gospel”

#### Study Number Fifteen – Acts 19:1-41

J. I. Packer in one of his books says:

(Keep in Step with the Spirit by J. I. Packer)

Modern Christians tend to make satisfaction their religion. We show much more concern for self-fulfillment than for pleasing our God. Typical of Christianity today, at any rate, in the English-speaking world is its massive rash of how-to books for believers directing us to more successful relationships, more joy in sex, becoming more of a person, realizing our possibilities, getting more excitement each day, reducing our weight, improving our diet, managing our money, licking our families into happier shape, and whatnot.

For people whose prime passion is to glorify God, these are doubtless legitimate concerns, but the how-to books regularly explore them in a self-absorbed way that treats our enjoyment of life rather than the glory of God as the center of interest.

(source unknown)

The tragedy of what’s gone on in the body of Christ is we have

a breed of selfish Christians who are more concerned about what they're getting than what they're giving to people. And the critical issue is right in the heart of where we are.

In our last study we left Paul leaving Ephesus and going on back to Antioch to report. While he was gone Apollos came through, an Alexandrian Jew, who was a student of John the Baptist.

Priscilla and Aquila helped him to an understanding of salvation by grace through faith and receiving Christ. He had a longing to go to Corinth where Priscilla and Aquila and Paul had a successful ministry. He left from Ephesus to go to Corinth.

Meanwhile up north, geographically, Paul having made his report at Antioch immediately starts back over the old second missionary journey, heading through the upper country. He goes to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch of Pisidia and he's coming down from the north, southwest over country as the scene of our study opens into the city of Ephesus. So it is God's will for him to come back to that town.

This passage is the one passage that is the heart of the charismatic movement.

It's the fastest growing movement in the United States today. And these people are brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

If we were to take three words to summarize the charismatic movement, it would be:

1. SEEKING,
2. SUBSEQUENCE and a
3. SIGN.

1. SEEKING—they believe that we seek an experience in the Holy Spirit after we become a Christian.

2. SUBSEQUENT to salvation we have this experience in the Holy Spirit.

3. SIGN for having sought this experience and having the subsequent experience is speaking in tongues. And the sign that we do have it is that we are now able to speak in these languages.

And they also have books on how to do it that fit well into what J. I. Packer has at the beginning mentioned in our study.

Now let's look at it together as we pick up in Acts 19. Remember, we're in TRANSITION and that helps explain some of the things we're going to be facing.

**v. 1 Now it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples,**

“Now it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples,”

Apollos has gone to Corinth.

Paul comes to Ephesus, and the text tells us that he “found some disciples.”

Now people take the word “disciples” and they equate it to Christians. That is not true.

Just because we have the word “disciples” does not mean that we have Christians. What we have here in this passage is exactly what we had back in our last study.

Priscilla and Aquila had to take Apollos’ side and explain to him what happened when Jesus died on the Cross. And Paul has to do that with this group of people here in Acts 19.

It’s very important for us to understand:

Acts 2 is the beginning of salvation by grace through faith for the Jews,

Acts 8 for the Samaritans,

Acts 10 for the Gentiles, and

Acts 19 for the disciples of John the Baptist who have not heard the work of Christ upon the Cross.

And the beautiful thing is, if we'll see it on God's time schedule it'll be wonderful. It's understanding the context of the book.

Ron Dunn in his book *The Faith Crisis* says:

(The Faith Crisis by Ronald Dunn)

The psalmist tells us that waiting for the Lord is like waiting for the sunrise (Psalm 130:6). In waiting for the sunrise, you can always count on two things:

1. You can't rush it. Nothing you can do will hurry it. Setting your clock ahead won't cause it to rise ahead of schedule. You must wait for it to rise in its own time.
2. The sun does rise. It always has and it always will. Those who wait for the morning are never disappointed. Neither are those who wait for the Lord.  
(source unknown)

We're at the point right now where we're experiencing the last group of people coming to an awareness of salvation.

**v. 2 and he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him: “No, we did not even hear that there is a Holy Spirit.”**

“and he said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ And they said to him: ‘No, we did not even hear that there is a Holy Spirit.’”

Now this is a very normal question under the circumstances. It is a pre-New Testament question.

We ask the question: “Have you received Jesus Christ by faith?”

And when the answer is: “Well I don’t really know.” We have a pretty good idea that they probably haven’t. And it’s time to sit down and talk about what’s one relationship to Christ.

The question obviously tells us that in a normal experience they would have received the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus.

“Did you...when you believed?”

It didn’t mention Jesus but only—SINGLE CONDITION—“when you believed?” And they’re honest! They say, “No, we didn’t even hear that there is a Holy Spirit.”

What we’re guilty of doing is we’re using our modern

technology and putting it on the book of Acts and we can't do that.

One guy tried to describe it this way:

Let's say for instance that a family decides it was too crowded on the east coast in 1775 and they headed west. And they got to Ohio and they found some land and they settled there and in 1785 the first family comes in contact. And their question is, "How are things back east? Is the king still alive? We've been praying every day, God save the king."

And they're saying, "Didn't you hear? We are now a republic. We have a president. George Washington is our president."

They say, "Oh man, we've been praying all the time for the king! And we've got a president."  
(source unknown)

Now we're beginning to understand that there are people who are alive in an age of non-communication who don't hear what happens in Jerusalem instantaneously after it happens. And here's a pocket of 12 men who were probably the students of Apollos, before Apollos had his visit with Priscilla and Aquila. Because all he knew was the baptism of John and needed to have help.

Now the problem that we face at this point is the problem of sequence, which is the whole thesis of the movement. And that doesn't hold water.

In John 7, when Jesus is talking at the great feast, this is what He says: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.” In other words, at the minute they receive Christ and believe, out of their innermost being flows “rivers of living water.” And He said this as He goes on to say, “He said this about the Holy spirit which those who believed in Him would receive.” (ref. John 7:37-39)

And so there is no sequence. The moment we come to know Jesus Christ as Savior, the Spirit of God comes in and does some major work in our heart.

1. He is the **REGENERATOR** or the **GIVER OF LIFE** so we can't have life without the Holy Spirit.
2. He comes to **INDWELL PERMANENTLY**.
3. He **SEALS US** for the day of redemption—that's the eternal seal.
4. He **BAPTIZES US** into the body of Christ when He takes us out of Adam. “We are all baptized by the Spirit into one body.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

So it's a total misunderstanding of this in using these terms.

**v. 3 And he said: “Into what then were you baptized?”  
And they said: “Into John's baptism.”**



“And he said: ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ And they said: ‘Into John’s baptism.’”

That solves the whole problem right there.

Alright, they’ve been baptized into John. What did we learn about that?

They knew who Jesus WAS, they knew what Jesus SAID, but they didn’t know what Jesus DID.

These 12 fellas need to know that John the Baptist has been beheaded, Jesus died on a Cross, He’s risen from the dead, He’s gone back to Glory, and the Holy Spirit has now come to put people into the body of Christ. God’s program for the Kingdom has been set aside. It’s no longer the Kingdom now, it’s the CHURCH. And people come to know Him on an individual basis by faith. And so this last group now begins to understand about Jesus.

Paul understands that he begins to build a bridge between John and Jesus in the very next verse.

**v. 4 And Paul said: “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the One who is coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”**

“And Paul said: ‘John baptized with the baptism of

repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the One who is coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”

Paul looked at them and said, “You know, John baptized in a baptism of repentance, saying that the kingdom was at hand.” And it was while John was alive. But when they rejected the King and nailed Him to the Cross, God’s program now is by personal relationship by faith.

John said the One coming after him would be preferred before Him. He’s not the bridegroom, he’s the friend of the bride.

“And so your leader was pointing everybody to Jesus! Fellas, it’s time to get on with it. It’s time to go on to Jesus now and leave John’s baptism behind.”

These fellas respond. They understand that.

**v. 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.**

“And so when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Quickly SUBMISSIVE and OBEDIENT.

**v. 6 And after Paul placed his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying.**

“And after Paul placed his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying.”

Why?

Tongues are an indication of languages. It is languages of the whole world that have been manifested.

These disciples of John the Baptist are thinking only of the Kingdom. But God’s program is for the whole world now, not just the followers of John the Baptist.

The program in Acts 2 is for the whole world, not just the Jews anymore. God’s now going to the Gentiles—to everybody. And thank God they spoke in languages. As a sign of judgment upon the nation Israel and upon the kingdom promises, they’ve been set aside by John the Baptist and now were ready for everyone. And we can offer salvation to whosoever will, may come. Thank God for that!

And the fact that they speak in these languages is only an indication of God’s judgment in setting these other programs aside in order that this new program, the church, might flourish.

The tongues pass off the scene, just like 1 Corinthians 13 said they would. The marks are now gone!

There are four groups:

1. Jews,
2. Samaritans,
3. Gentiles and
4. the followers of John the Baptist.

So now we're not going to see them anymore. They're gone. It's past.

Now lest we hold to the position yet of SEQUENCE and CIRCUMSTANCES, which one of the four illustrations of it are we going to choose?

Acts 2 is different from Acts 8.

Acts 2 and 8 are different from Acts 10.

Acts 19 is different from Acts 2, Acts 8 and Acts 10.

The circumstances determine the sequence. And because of that, there is no established procedure yet. This is bringing people into the body of Christ.

**v. 7 And there were in all about twelve men.**

“And there were in all about twelve men.”

There are TWO THINGS and then we're going to put this aside:

1. This is NOT A PRECEDENT. Only "twelve men" are involved.
2. It's NEVER MENTIONED AGAIN. So obviously the apostle Paul did not think that this was the program.

We don't find it in any of his epistles. He doesn't say, "Hey! We finally got it all together in Ephesus. When those disciples of John the Baptist came down, we put it all together now. This is the program for the church. This is what y'all are supposed to do from here on in."

This is just a passing experience and encounter with twelve men who were followers of John the Baptist, probably students of Apollos, while he was there in town before he got his act together. And these twelve men need help and the apostle Paul takes care of it.

This letter from one of Charles Swindoll's books shows a real mark of maturity.

(Are Tongues and Prophecy for Today? by Charles Swindoll)

Dear Pastor,

I have wrestled several months with the following conflict:  
Was the Holy Spirit in the charismatic movement in a greater

way because they manifested unintelligible sounds, raising their hands in praise, an entire church on its knees singing psalms with their eyes closed, tears, and other emotions that seem to spell out a latter-day outpouring that the evangelical churches were missing?

I tried to conclude that our church was not having this because we were not yielding to the Holy Spirit's moving. In acting like my Pentecostal friends, the following results were achieved: I was accepted socially, and I felt accepted by the Lord because I fell into the flow of this latter-day movement, trying to believe that this was God's highest desire for Christians everywhere. However, I could never be satisfied that God's Word taught this.

My private study of the Bible did not coincide with the attitude of Christians who claimed to have this baptism. When they told me that I had received the baptism because I uttered any syllable that came to my mind, it didn't fit with the record of Acts 2. They told me to speak anything by faith. Their counselors said they got the witness that I received the Holy Spirit because they claimed to hear me speak in a tongue. I was relieved to be accepted by what appeared to be live Christianity and was also attracted to their many celebrities. Desiring to fully please God and seeking for signs to confirm a fulness of the Spirit, I found some satisfaction.

The jolly times in their fellowship and afterglow filled the psychological need for belonging and acceptance. I was looking for a feeling or an experience that I could be sure would place me above the dead churches. The jolly times would give way to discussions of our depressions and personal unsolved problems and then we would lose ourselves by speaking in our

“heavenly language.” This was a necessity for real communion with God and to get release. It was also called “a new dimension.”

All of this finally compelled me to meditate on God’s Word daily as never before. I started attending your church and still going to my charismatic meetings and gradually I became aware that I was spiritually starving [to death]. I found that something more was really something less.

The final break came and was accompanied by a deeply-rooted joy and reverence that far excelled any periodic ecstasies that I had experienced in my ten years with the charismatic movement, for my focus was taken off the purity and simplicity of the Scriptures and my completeness in Christ. My days are now as exciting and fulfilling in Christ as anyone could [ever] imagine.

In His love,  
(source unknown)

**v. 8 And having entered the synagogue, he was speaking boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the kingdom of God.**

“And having entered the synagogue, he was speaking boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the kingdom of God.”

Now he’s going to the normal program. In our last study they wanted him to stay at the synagogue and he said, “No, I’ve got to go home—go back to Antioch.” Now he’s back and he’s right

back in the middle of it with these Jews.

**v. 9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the crowd, having withdrawn from them, he took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.**

“But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the crowd, having withdrawn from them, he took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.”

What happens when we preach the Gospel?

1. Well we get some people who become “hard.” They’re not going to let anything get through to them.
2. “disobedient” or
3. “speaking evil of the Way.”

And they did and they were doing that. And so Paul is not going to waste time. He takes a group of disciples out of this time of several months here where he has been working with them—the three months—and he pulls them aside to the “school of Tyrannus.”

These Jews did not listen to:



## Hebrews 3:12

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, and departing from the living God.

They're resisting it. They're opposed to it. So instead of fighting it, he goes to the "school of Tyrannus."

What kind of a schedule would allow Paul to teach the "school of Tyrannus" and continue to make his tents? Well let's look at the daily work schedule. It would be so wonderful if that happened.

First of all, everybody got up in the morning and went to work at 7:00 in the morning.

They'd work from 7:00 until 11:00 and then they were off from 11:00 until 4:00 in the afternoon. And then they went to work at 4:00 and stayed working until 9:30. Then came home and went to bed.

Paul would go build tents from 7:00 until 11:00. He'd whip down to the school of Tyrannus and teach from 11:00 until 4:00.

Realize how many hours of lecture are involved in three years? Six days a week, five hours a day, 52 weeks a year for three years? Three thousand one hundred and twenty hours. That's 130 days lecturing continuously for 24 hours a day.

It gives us an idea of what this man had to share. And what did he share with these students? He shared with them all the truth that we get in Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians—and our completeness in Christ. All the great truths of the book of Romans—justification by faith, victory over the old nature. All of the great themes of prophecy woven together as he speaks of it in 1 Thessalonians.

It was forging the first great theological textbook of God's program for the church.

**v. 10 And this went on for two years, so that all those who are living in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.**

“And this went on for two years, so that all those who are living in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

A lot of writers believe that it was right here that the ministry to the seven churches actually began. In Revelation 2 and 3 Jesus speaks letters to the seven churches. He starts with Ephesus, then He goes to Smyrna, then to Pergamus, then Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia and to Laodicea. On the map it's kind of like a great big arch right out of Ephesus.

All of those churches were established out of the school of Tyrannus and out of this ministry. As a result of Paul disciplining these people on a regular basis, it just spread out in all these towns and these churches actually began.

The apostle Paul gave what he could and he was unselfishly teaching them at least five hours a day.

**v. 11 And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,**

“And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,”

Notice God is only using him as an instrument. He doesn't have to try to do it. God is doing it through him.

**v. 12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even being carried from his body to those who are sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.**

“so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even being carried from his body to those who are sick, and the evil spirits went out.”

We can receive water from the Jordan, splinters from the Cross, autographed pictures of Jesus, anything else that we want to mention in the mail. And we will be deeply blessed if we'll just send a \$20 offering in response to what has been mailed.

And it all comes out of this passage. This is the sweatband, not a handkerchief. And this is a leather apron used by a tent-maker. They are the symbols of God's blessing on hard work. There aren't any free lunches in the New Testament.

Copyright © 2024 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Genevieve Martin.

God chose to make the apron and the sweatband a mark of something which could convey supernatural power because of the humility of the apostle who would work from 7:00 until 11:00 every day to make his own living.

Just like God blessed the rod that Moses had in his hand, and threw it on the ground and it became a snake and he picked it up; parted the Red Sea, and got water out of the rock. He made tremendous things happen because of the presence of God using the rod of Moses and bringing the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt.

So in this portion, God chooses to convey supernatural blessing through a sweatband and an old leather apron that a man uses when he's making tents.

**v. 13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who were going from place to place, attempted to be naming over those who were having the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I am imploring you by Jesus whom Paul is preaching."**

"But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who were going from place to place, attempted to be naming over those who were having the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, 'I am imploring you by Jesus whom Paul is preaching.'"

Some of these fellas say, "Hey, this is no big deal! All you have to do is learn the little magical formula and when somebody's

sick or possessed of the evil one, we just come out with the word Jesus and everything will be great. We don't have to go through all of this stuff in our personal lives and become a channel of His blessing, we can just go do this.”

We read in 2 Timothy:

### 2 Timothy 3:5

They have a form of godliness, but they're denying the power thereof.

### **v. 14 Now there were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish chief priest who were doing this.**

“Now there were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish chief priest who were doing this.”

These seven fellas—we can just see them. They're thinking, “Oh man, this is so easy. We don't need to go through all this stuff that Paul's talking about. Man let's go out and become supernatural channels that cast out evil ones.”

So they find out about this guy who is possessed by an evil spirit. And five of them decide to stay outside because it's not going to take all seven of them. Two of them go into the house.

“Now there were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish priest who were doing this.”

**v. 15 And the evil spirit answering said to them: “I am recognizing Jesus, and I am knowing about Paul, but who are you?”**

“And the evil spirit answering said to them: ‘I am recognizing Jesus, and I am knowing about Paul, but who are you?’”

”You don’t fit in this thing at all! ‘Who are you?’”

**v. 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit was leaping upon them, having subdued both of them, overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and having been wounded.**

“And the man in whom was the evil spirit was leaping upon them, having subdued both of them, overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and having been wounded.”

Imagine being the five guys outside. They’re waiting to see what’s going to happen and all of a sudden two naked, bloody brothers come blowing out of the front door, streaking into the middle of the suburbs? And they’re thinking, “Hey! There’s something pretty wild in there.”

What does that teach us? That teaches us the awesome power of the evil one.

What is it that Peter says in 1 Peter 5:8?

## 1 Peter 5:8

Satan is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

We're no match for him by ourselves. Jesus in Mark 5, comes to the wild man of Gadara. He's possessed by an evil spirit, had been chained on many occasions, he literally broke the chains. He cut himself with stones and they found the shackles broken in pieces, and no was strong enough to subdue him. (ref. Mark 5:1-5)

The evil one is terribly powerful and fully capable of destroying. But we have great news. "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world." (ref. 1 John 4:4)

And if we'll just remember to send Jesus to the door when the evil one comes knocking, we've got it. We're on the way and everything's going to be alright.

These fellas are only a tremendous demonstration of the power of the evil one and how inadequate we are in our own strength to do battle against these kinds of things. Take heed lest you fall.

**v. 17 And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who were living in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.**

"And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who

were living in Ephesus;”

And isn't it great how God can just turn things around and bring blessing out of something like this? Look at it! It's just fabulous!

“and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.”

That's what real Christianity is—Jesus magnified through us as a person. And that's where we can take issue with the charismatic movement. It is not magnifying the Holy Spirit. It's magnifying Jesus, and the Spirit was given for the purpose of bringing glory and honor and praise to the Lord Jesus, and His name is “being magnified.”

**v. 18 Many also of those who had believed were coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.**

“Many also of those who had believed were coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.”

Notice we have the single condition—they're believing.

As a result of coming to faith, they're “coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.”

There's a Haitian prayer that is very penetrating:

(God Is No Stranger by Wally & Eleanor Turnbull)



No one keeps on trying something  
If he never makes any progress Lord.  
If Satan keeps tempting us,  
It's because we keep giving him  
Some encouragement.  
(source unknown)

And another writer said:

“The people who are operating on the proper principle of the Christian life, when you are fleeing from temptation, you don't leave a forwarding address.”  
(source unknown)

These people are dealing with some problems in their lives. And they're “confessing and disclosing their practices.”

We see the power of God working in the church here to the point where these people are beginning to deal with the deep problems that they face in their relationship with the Lord.

### 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, says the Lord. And do not touch that which is unclean; and I will welcome you. And I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

A powerful moving of the Spirit among believers will always

be accompanied with confession of sin and reconciliation of relationships.

**v. 19 And many of those who practiced the magical arts, having brought their books together, were burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.**

“And many of those who practiced the magical arts, having brought their books together, were burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.”

They brought all their rock records, their pornographic literature, their drug paraphernalia and piled it out there and it was a big bonfire of eight to ten thousand bucks—is basically what it was—that went up in smoke.

God is bringing blessing to Ephesus because they are dealing with their problems!

Ruth Harms Calkin says this in one of her books:

(Lord, Could You Hurry a Little? by Ruth Harms Calkin)

Free Me Completely

O dear God, this aching desire,  
My heart cries for it, longs for it

With deep, throbbing intensity.

Yet in the depths of my soul I know  
That what I ask is not your highest  
Or your best for me.

I cannot come to you boldly,  
Nor can I make my request in the name of Your Son.

I dare not ask for a stone  
When you offer me bread.

And so my Lord, though the longing clutches my heart,  
I yield it to you totally.

I ask not that you grant my desire, but that you  
free me completely from desiring it.  
(source unknown)

That's beautiful. That's what's happening in Ephesus. These people are getting their desires in line with the Lord by delighting in Him. And He's bringing great blessings to them.

**v. 20 So according to the power of the Lord the word was growing and gaining strength.**

“So according to the power of the Lord the word was growing and gaining strength.”

We don't need another experience! We need to just get our

heart right with Him and let His Spirit probe deep within and deal with those things and clean them out of our life. And we're going to start growing and gaining strength in the Lord as His power is unleashed through that clean vessel.

**v. 21 Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the spirit, after having gone through Macedonia and Achaia, to be going to Jerusalem, having said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."**

"Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the spirit, after having gone through Macedonia and Achaia, to be going to Jerusalem, having said, 'After I have been there, I must also see Rome.'"

It is spiritual to set goals.

Some people have the idea that when we're a Christian we have to sit around and wait for the Lord to open the door and we don't set any goals and we don't have any objectives. And to do all that is to be secular.

Here the apostle throws us the blueprint for the remaining years of his life. That we have to witness before he goes home to be with the Lord. He already has it figured out, what he wants to do.

Ted Engstrom wrote a book called *The Pursuit of Excellence*. It's very tiny but it tells the story of people who really make it.

To summarize the book, he has 11 qualities of an effective, successful person in their walk with the Lord:

(The Pursuit of Excellence by Ted Engstrom)

1. PERSONAL DISCIPLINE
2. VISION
3. OPTIMISM
4. A SENSE OF ADVENTURE
5. COURAGE
6. HUMILITY
7. HUMOR
8. CONFIDENCE
9. ANGER [being able to get mad at the right things]
10. PATIENCE
11. INTEGRITY  
(source unknown)

Then he uses Babe Ruth as an illustration of what all of this means when we put it together.

(The Pursuit of Excellence by Ted Engstrom)

Babe Ruth had hit 714 home runs during his baseball career and was playing one of his last full major league games. It was the Braves versus the Reds in Cincinnati. But the great Babe Ruth was no longer as agile as he had once been. He fumbled the ball and threw badly, and in one inning alone his errors were responsible for most of the five runs scored by Cincinnati.

As the Babe walked off the field after the third out and headed toward the dugout, a crescendo of yelling and booing reached his ears. Just then a boy jumped over the railing onto the playing field. With tears streaming down his face, he threw his arms around the legs of his hero.

Ruth didn't hesitate for one second. He picked up the boy, hugged him, and set him down on his feet, patting his head gently. The noise from the stands came to an abrupt halt. Suddenly there was no more booing. In fact, hush fell over the entire park. In those brief moments, the fans saw two heroes: Ruth, who in spite of his dismal day on the field could still care about a little boy; and the small lad, who cared about the feelings of another human being. Both had melted the hearts of the crowd.

That's being above average!  
(source unknown)

Paul says, "These are the things I've got yet to do before I'm through." And that's totally in light with spiritual things:

## Philippians 3:14

I press toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

**v. 22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who were ministering to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.**

“And having sent into Macedonia two of those who were ministering to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.”

**v. 23 And about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning the Way.**

“And about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning the Way.”

Isn't God wonderful about what He brings into our lives at the most unexpected moment because He wants to teach us something?

Harry Ironside put it this way:

I asked the Lord that I might grow  
In faith and love and every grace,  
Might more of His salvation know  
And seek more earnestly His face.

‘Twas He who taught me thus to pray,  
And He I trust has answered prayer.  
But it has been in such a way  
As almost drove me to despair.  
(source unknown)

He sends Timothy and Erastus away and the city blows apart here. We have a problem on our hands. Paul’s going to learn some things.

**v. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who, making silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no small profit to the craftsmen;**

“For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who, making silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no small profit to the craftsmen;”

They worshiped the goddess Artemis in Ephesus. Artemis was the great mother. She was a huge 9-foot ugly statue of a woman who was covered with hundreds of breasts. And she was black—the bronze was solid black. And it was in this magnificent one of the seven wonders of the temple in Ephesus. And everybody came to worship Artemis.

Demetrius thought if he could cast a little actual silver god of Artemis, the travelers coming to town are going to buy souvenirs and they’re going to have a bird nest on the ground. And sure enough he did.



And before long it was wrong to have a chariot without a little silver fetish hanging on the rearview mirror. And the women always had them in their kitchen windows so they were really making a great profit on this.

So he gathers together the craftsmen here.

**v. 25** **whom having gathered together also the workmen of similar trades, he said; “Men, you are knowing that we are getting our prosperity from this business.**

“whom having gathered together also the workmen of similar trades, he said; “Men, you are knowing that we are getting our prosperity from this business.”

**v. 26** **And you are seeing and hearing that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul, having persuaded them, turned away a considerable number of people, saying that ‘they are not gods, those being made by hands.’**

“And you are seeing and hearing that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul, having persuaded them, turned away a considerable number of people, saying that “they are not gods, those being made by hands.””

**v. 27** **And not only is there danger that this trade of ours may come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis being**

**considered as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the inhabited earth is worshipping should even be suffering the loss of her magnificence.”**

“And not only is there danger that this trade of ours may come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis being considered as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the inhabited earth is worshipping should even be suffering the loss of her magnificence.”

What does he do? He takes Artemis, puts her in the temple and puts Paul blowing away both of them. He has a very emotional scene on his hands.

Now this is not a labor union. This is strictly unions gathering together because they were a similar profession. Gathering for social reasons, not for wages and that sort of thing like we have today.

The very fact that this guy makes a statement about this, it stirs them up.

**v. 28 Moreover, also having heard these things, having become filled with a boiling rage, they were crying out, saying: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”**

“Moreover, also having heard these things, having become filled with a boiling rage, they were crying out, saying: ‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!’”

**v. 29 And the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, Paul's traveling companions.**

“And the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, Paul's traveling companions.”

They rushed down to the theater, they grabbed Gaius and Aristarchus on the way.

**v. 30 And when Paul was wanting to go in to the people, the disciples were not letting him.**

“And when Paul was wanting to go in to the people, the disciples were not letting him.”

Why? He wanted to go in because two of his buddies were there. He wanted to go in because he had a chance to preach to a big audience. He just doesn't know anything about selfish thinking at this point.

**v. 31 And also some of the chief officers of Asia, who were friends of his, having sent to him, were urging him not to venture into the theater.**

“And also some of the chief officers of Asia, who were friends of his, having sent to him, were urging him not to venture into the theater.”

What does that tell us? That tells us that his ministry touched some of the upper echelon. There are “chief offers” and people in government who have responded to Christ because of his ministry. So his ministry has been attractive to these people.

**v. 32 So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know on whose account they had come together.**

“And so then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know on whose account they had come together.”

Isn't that the way a riot is? Some people say, “Whose side are we on? Why are we here? What are we rooting for?”

**v. 33 And some of the crowd instructed it was Alexander, since the Jews were putting him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the people.**

“And some of the crowd instructed it was Alexander, since the Jews were putting him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the people.”

The only Alexander we have is mentioned in 2 Timothy as

Timothy is the bishop of Ephesus. “Alexander the coppersmith has done me great harm.” (ref. 2 Timothy 4:14)

Evidently this fella is the same one who later turned against the apostle.

**v. 34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, one voice arose from them all, as they were shouting for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”**

“But when they recognized that he was a Jew, one voice arose from them all, as they were shouting for about two hours, ‘Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.’”

That’s worse than a football game. The human wave around the stands! “Great is Artemis! Great is Artemis!” And the guy can’t even hear the signals down on the field. He can’t talk. He can’t communicate. He’s totally frustrated.

But, what happens? God has a town clerk to settle them down.

**v. 35 And after having quieted the multitude, the town clerk is saying: “Men of Ephesus, who is there then of men who is not knowing that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, and the image fallen from heaven?”**

“And after having quieted the multitude, the town clerk is saying: ‘Men of Ephesus, who is there then of men who is not

knowing that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, and the image fallen from heaven?”

Obviously it must have been a meteorite.

**v. 36 Since then these are undeniable facts, it is needful for you to restrain yourselves and to be doing nothing rash.**

“Since then these are undeniable facts, it is needful for you to restrain yourselves and to be doing nothing rash.”

**v. 37 For you brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blaspheming our goddess.**

“For you brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blaspheming our goddess.”

**v. 38 So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him are having a complaint against any man, court sessions are now going on and proconsuls are [available]; let them bring charges against one another.**

“So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him are having a complaint against any man, court sessions are now going on and proconsuls are [available]; let them bring charges against one another.”

**v. 39 But if you are wanting anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.**

“But if you are wanting anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.”

**v. 40 For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's affair, since there is no real cause for it; and with reference to it we shall not be able to give an account for this disorderly gathering.”**

“For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's affair, since there is no real cause for it; and with reference to it we shall not be able to give an account for this disorderly gathering.”

**v. 41 And after having said these things, he dismissed the assembly.**

“And after having said these things, he dismissed the assembly.”

Quiet now comes back to Ephesus through the speech of a town clerk.

We have several lessons that come out of the text.

Lesson #1: The disciples in verse 1 are not New Testament Christians.

Lesson #2: What we are witnessing in the first 7 verses is not a New Testament precedent.

It is never mentioned again.

Lesson #3: God is the One performing the miracles in this passage.

Lesson #4: Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. (1 John 4)

Recognize the fact that Jesus Christ is capable of giving the victory.

### 1 Corinthians 10:13

There's no temptation taken you but such is common to man. God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that you may be able to bear up under it.

God is faithful and He can deliver if we'll just trust Him and His strength.

Lesson #5: The purpose of our ministry is that the Lord Jesus might be magnified.

Lesson #6: CONFESSION and CLEANSING lead to greater power and fruitfulness.



Because they deal with these problems in their lives, there is greater power and fruitfulness in the city of Ephesus.

Lesson #7: Paul is a goal-oriented leader.

It's not wrong to sit down, and in the presence of the Lord, set goals and objectives for our life that will constantly be rearranged. But make them.

Lesson #8: God uses a simple town clerk to accomplish His purposes.

John DeLorean is probably one of the most controversial figures in the history of automobile making. He has written his own book now called *DeLorean* and he gives his witness in the book:

(DeLorean by John Z. DeLorean)

The only pleasures I had were from the one-hour volleyball game I enjoyed with my fellow inmates each day and my intense study of the Bible. In fact, I found myself reading, thinking, and praying from six-thirty in the morning until it was time to turn out the lights at night.

In addition to my personal study, the young seminarian—who was so determined to help those of us who would listen understand the Bible, the Word of God—would visit me each day that he could. In a simple manner he talked with me about Jesus Christ, the Son of God, telling me the story of His

life on earth as a man and His death that was a once-and-for-all payment for the sins of mankind. There was no magic, no mysticism, no rituals. There was no blind devotion in his worship of Jesus. There was none of the exotic spiritualism Sonja had presented. He spoke of feelings, of course, but also of actions and a personal commitment that could be achieved in prison as well as in a palace. When he spoke of Jesus, his face would glow—a characteristic I was to later recognize in other devoted Christians.

As he spoke, I came to the slow realization of how wrong my past had been. Who I had been did not matter. My money, my success, or lack of it, my business reputation—all these superficial values were meaningless. I did not have to be special to obtain God’s love. I did not have to do a certain number of “good works” to earn God’s approval, nor was there some form of special payoff God made when my actions somehow met with His approval. I was loved as a child of God. I was accepted, as God accepts all of us, and loved by Him without condition. All I had to do was ask for His forgiveness and His salvation and they would be given.

This message was so simple. It was also a little frightening. I had spoken rather glibly of Christianity for many years without truly letting myself be open to Christ as a person I could know, as the Son of God who was my personal Savior. I had always felt that being a Christian meant acting in a special manner to somehow earn His love. At the same time, I had been so arrogant; I wanted to be in charge of my life. I was the classic example of a person who saw himself as “captain of his fate and master of his soul.” And hadn’t I done a great job of it! Of course, the reality was that I never had to

do it alone. God was there all the time. I had just refused to reach out and let Him give me what is available to all of us if we only ask.

(source unknown)

Father, we pray that Your Holy Spirit out of this passage of Scripture can bring some lessons to the hearts of each one who hears Your Word. Thank You for the opportunity to share Your Word. Now may Your name be glorified, Your name magnified in the hearts of those who know You. And may You find an open heart that does not know You who will invite Jesus Christ to become their Savior. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.

# A Practical Study of ACTS:

## Take It To Them!

### “Putting the GO Back in the Gospel”

#### STUDY NUMBER FIFTEEN – ACTS 19:1-41

#### NOTES

v. 1 Now it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples,

v. 2 and he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him: “No, we did not even hear that there is a Holy Spirit.”

v. 3 And he said: “Into what then were you baptized?” And they said: “Into John’s baptism.”

v. 4 And Paul said: “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the One who is coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”

v. 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

v. 6 And after Paul placed his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking with tongues and prophesying.

v. 7 And there were in all about twelve men.

v. 8 And having entered the synagogue, he was speaking boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the kingdom of God.

v. 9 But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the crowd, having withdrawn from them, he took away the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

v. 10 And this went on for two years, so that all those who are living in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

v. 11 And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul,

## NOTES

v. 12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even being carried from his body to those who are sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out.

v. 13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who were going from place to place, attempted to be naming over those who were having the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, “I am imploring you by Jesus whom Paul is preaching.”

v. 14 Now there were seven sons of a certain Sceva, a Jewish chief priest who were doing this.

v. 15 And the evil spirit answering said to them: “I am recognizing Jesus, and I am knowing about Paul, but who are you?”

v. 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit was leaping upon them, having subdued both of them, overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and having been wounded.

v. 17 And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, who were living in Ephesus; and fear fell upon them all and the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.

v. 18 Many also of those who had believed were coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.

v. 19 And many of those who practiced the magical arts, having brought their books together, were burning them in the sight of all; and they counted up the price of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.

v. 20 So according to the power of the Lord the word was growing and gaining strength.

v. 21 Now after these things were finished, Paul purposed in the spirit, after having gone through Macedonia and Achaia, to be going to Jerusalem, having said, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

v. 22 And having sent into Macedonia two of those who were ministering to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

v. 23 And about that time there arose no small disturbance concerning the Way.

v. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who, making silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing no small profit to the craftsmen;

v. 25 whom having gathered together also the workmen of similar trades, he said; “Men, you are knowing that we are getting our prosperity from this business.

## NOTES

v. 26 And you are seeing and hearing that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul, having persuaded them, turned away a considerable number of people, saying that ‘they are not gods, those being made by hands.’

v. 27 And not only is there danger that this trade of ours may come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis being considered as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the inhabited earth is worshipping should even be suffering the loss of her magnificence.”

v. 28 Moreover, also having heard these things, having become filled with a boiling rage, they were crying out, saying: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

v. 29 And the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, Paul’s traveling companions.

v. 30 And when Paul was wanting to go in to the people, the disciples were not letting him.

v. 31 And also some of the chief officers of Asia, who were friends of his, having sent to him, were urging him not to venture into the theater.

v. 32 So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority did not know on whose account they had come together.

v. 33 And some of the crowd instructed it was Alexander, since the Jews were putting him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the people.

v. 34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, one voice arose from them all, as they were shouting for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

v. 35 And after having quieted the multitude, the town clerk is saying: “Men of Ephesus, who is there then of men who is not knowing that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, and the image fallen from heaven?”

v. 36 Since then these are undeniable facts, it is needful for you to restrain yourselves and to be doing nothing rash.

v. 37 For you brought these men here who are neither robbers of temples nor blaspheming our goddess.

v. 38 So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him are having a complaint against any man, court sessions are now going on and proconsuls are [available]; let them bring charges against one another.

## NOTES

v. 39 But if you are wanting anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.

v. 40 For indeed we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's affair, since there is no real cause for it; and with reference to it we shall not be able to give an account for this disorderly gathering.”

v. 41 And after having said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

## QUESTIONS:

1. Read Acts 19:1-41 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

---

---

---

2. When Paul came to Ephesus, what kind of disciples did he run into there, according to verse 3 and following?

---

---

---

3. What did the evil spirit in verse 15 say to the seven sons of Sceva?

---

---

---

4. What did those who are practicing magical arts do when they became Christians, according to verse 19?

---

---

---

5. What is Demetrius concerned about in verses 24 and following?

---

---

---

6. What is the response of the city of Ephesus to this problem, according to verse 28?

---

---

---

7. How does the town clerk solve the problems in verses 35 and following?

---

---

---

8. What danger are they facing, according to verse 40?

---

---

---



9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

---

---

---

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

---

---

---

**LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: These disciples in verse 1 are not New Testament Christians.

LESSON #2: What we are witnessing in the first seven verses of the chapter is not a New Testament precedent.

LESSON #3: God is the One performing the miracles in this passage using Paul as an instrument.

LESSON #4: Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world.

LESSON #5: The purpose of our ministry is that the name of the Lord Jesus might be magnified.

LESSON #6: Confession and cleansing lead to greater power and fruitfulness.

LESSON #7: Paul is a goal-oriented leader.

LESSON #8: God uses a simple town clerk to accomplish His purposes in this passage.