Acts Chapter 19 Verses 8 – 10

* Christianity in it’s earliest mentions is called by this rather peculiar phrase, *“The Way.”* It’s interesting that it wasn’t an *“ism,”* but rather it was observed and described as a **both an object and an action.** *“The Way”* speaks of a path **and** a place and this *phraseology, terminology*…this ***name*** shows that Christianity is not a philosophy or even a truth to be agreed with…but rather it is an **entire world view** and way of life.
* There was a day on which Jesus was talking about heaven. Speaking about the Father, heaven and how He (Jesus) and the Father are One…and in John 14:6 Jesus said, *“I am* ***the way****, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*
* If we were to remove **all of the noise** and get down to the most simplistic and all-encompassing descriptive statement about God, if we asked, *“After it all, who are You, God…?”* The answer would be that **He is Life.** He said that He is the Great I Am…all that ***is***…the ***“Am”*** is all of creation, all of life. God Himself, boiled down to the simplest and final descriptor…He Himself is all that is and could be ever known and ever anything about and concerning…Life.
* ***Without God there is nothing.*** It’s like The Never Ending Story! The Nothing! Yes!! *Atreyu!!!!* He is Life! He is the Creator, the Contemplator, the Author. Peter called Jesus the *“Prince”* or the *“Author”* of life in Acts 3:15…now check this out…this may blow your mind…***if God is the Author and Creator of life, then He is something MORE than life.*** The author of a book is not a book. The creator of a painted portrait is himself more than a portrait…and so have we even begun to glimpse and understand what God Almighty actually is…? **No.**
* And so we must choose the only descriptor possible to perhaps glimpse Him and Jesus did it for us…***I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*** Now check this out…at the dawn of time…*in the perfection of the cresting of creation*…when sin defiled the heart of man and drove a wedge between heaven and earth…Genesis 3:24 tells us that God placed a cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard…watch this…***the way…to the tree of life.***
* The tree of life was that tree that God protected because if man ate of it then he would become immortal. Locked into a *sinful state* and separated from God for all of eternity…and God locked it down…yet even ***in the revelation of what happened there is a prophetic revelation of the coming fix.*** The way would once again open…but this time, through Jesus, man would take from the Tree of Life washed clean from sin and unrighteousness and in restored fellowship with God and heaven…and thus Jesus spoke of heaven, and the Father…and said, ***I am the Way.*** So that’s what they were called then and in truth, that’s what it still is all about.

Acts Chapter 19 Verses 11 – 12

* I like that Luke called these *“unusual miracles.”* Truly, there were **usual miracles.** Like Crispus and Apollos and Saul of Tarsus, every believer who found the way to fellowship with God through Jesus…I am telling you, even today…everyone who turns their life over to Jesus…***they are a walking miracle!*** Oh, not just the fact that they are saved…although that’s miraculous for sure – intervention of God on High for sure – but man their lives…you need a miracle? *Are you ready for a miracle!?* Surround yourself with people who bear fruit…you’ll wait about a minute, maybe an hour…perhaps a day if it’s a Monday because you know…nothing good happens on a Monday…HA! But you won’t wait long…miracles are usual in the *days, lives, actions, thoughts, happenings* of a believer!!
* But Luke says these miracles were **unusual** which means there WERE usual miracles…although in the entirety of the Book of Acts we are only privy to 30 miracles over 30 years…so it’s not the *miraculous signs and wonders* we are to concentrate on…it’s the Person of Jesus Christ. But this does go to show us that God can work in mysterious ways!
* Ever hear that saying, *“God’s works in mysterious ways!?”* I have a **love/hate** relationship with that saying! HA! Why? Read your Bibles! Know your Word and God working in your life will be *not so mysterious!!* He makes it CLEAR exactly how He works…SO…I like, *“God CAN work in mysterious ways”* much better!

Acts Chapter 19 Verses 13 – 16

* So these were like *exorcists for hire* and they saw real power in the presence and preaching of Paul. They heard about the sweat bands…and so, being good business men, began to copy what they probably perceived as a trend. *It’s working for them, our competitor, let’s do it here!* In 1952 a company called Kirsch Bottling in Brooklyn, New York released a sugar-free ginger ale called *“No-Cal.”* It was a local hit…and so in 1958, Royal Crown Cola launched Diet Rite. Then in 1962, Dr. Pepper launched Diet Dr. Pepper and then in ’63, Coca-Cola and Pepsi joined the fun! ***It’s just good business!***
* But notice this crazy odd scene. The demon wins! There’s a bit of a pattern here…**a lesson**…in truth, what they were proclaiming, what they were using, ***they had no part in and so it was powerless against evil.*** You may have experienced this in the past or may be experiencing this perhaps even right now! Saying the right things, even believing the right things….but you have not given yourself, **committed fully** and so evil is just plain overpowering you in aspects and avenues of your life.
* Check this out…first the demon ***mocks and discourages***…, *“Who are you? Others can do it, others have power…but who are you!?”* Then the demon ***attacks***…launches a full-on offensive…and eventually overpowers them… I want to have power in my walk and power to overcome evil. Takes faith to do that…these were ***faithless***…right thoughts, right beliefs, right words, **no faith…no power**…and they end up *buck neked*…HA

Acts Chapter 19 Verses 17 – 18

* Ephesus was THE center of pagan worship in the ancient world. The temple of Diana was *more magnificent* than the Greek Parthenon. *More vast* than the Colosseum! Ancient records written by visitors to Ephesus described Diana’s temple (that sat on a hillside overlooking the city) as a building that reached to the clouds, grandiose and unmatched. Every teenage girl had to serve for a time as a temple priestess…and worship of Diana was ***entirely accepted in that culture and place…***
* And so as people were coming to Christ it is evident in these verses that they were accepting Jesus and yet *living their lives, going with the flow*, as they always had…but as God worked in their lives and in that place…they began to feel the weight of what sin does…***tears your mind and heart away from the God you do so love***…they didn’t know what they were doing was entirely demonic! It was what they had been taught…but as the Word of God took root in their hearts, one by one, they came confessing and coming clean. Revival broke out…

Acts Chapter 19 Verse 19

* A picture of repentance and revival…they come to God to be made clean and ***leave their junk behind***…burn it up…costs them greatly…but its not who they are anymore.

Acts Chapter 19 Verse 20

* How will the Word of God grow mightily and prevail in **your** *heart, mind, house and church?* Love the Lord your God, man. What does that look like!? **Put Him first!** Whatever it is that keeps you from Him, ***burn it!*** Turn from it…even if it costs you…it’s a *simple simple simple* truth…yet many times a ***drastically difficult deed***…but you have to ask yourself…whom do I love? This false god, or God. This passing pleasure or Jesus…***what or whom are you burning in your life?*** There’s your answer.