

Devoted and Unshaken: The Book of Acts **Sermon Notes**
“The Gospel That Changes Culture” (#23) Acts 19:23-41
Cornerstone Church of Poway
Pastor Ed Turley
September 28th, 2025

“For the **grace of God** that brings **salvation** has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say “**No**” to **ungodliness and worldly passions**, and to **live self-controlled**, upright and **godly lives** in this present age, ¹³ while we **wait for the blessed hope**--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to **redeem** us from all wickedness and to **purify** for himself a people that are his very own, **eager to do what is good**. **Titus 2:11-14 (NIV)**

Big Idea: “The Gospel that changes culture transforms our **heart and habits**, it redefines our **identity**, and it transform **fear into courage**.”

How Does The Gospel Change Our Culture?

1. The Gospel Transforms Our Hearts and Habits

²³ About that time, **serious trouble** developed in Ephesus concerning the Way.

²⁴ It began with **Demetrius**, a **silversmith** who had a **large business** manufacturing silver shrines of the Greek goddess Artemis. He kept many craftsmen busy. ²⁵ He called them together, along with others employed in similar trades, and addressed them as follows: “Gentlemen, you know that **our wealth** comes from this business. ²⁶ But as you have seen and heard, this man **Paul has persuaded** many people that **handmade gods aren’t really gods at all**. And he’s done this not only here in **Ephesus** but throughout the **entire province!** ²⁷ Of course, I’m not just talking about the **loss of public respect for our business**. I’m also **concerned** that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will **lose its influence** and that **Artemis**—this magnificent goddess worshiped throughout the province of Asia and all around the world—will be **robbed of her great prestige!**”
Acts 19:23-27 (NLT2)

Notes: _____

2. The Gospel Transforms Our Identity to Belong to Jesus (Acts 19:28–34)

²⁸ At this their anger boiled, and they began shouting, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

²⁹ Soon the whole city was filled with confusion. Everyone rushed to the amphitheater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, who were Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia. ³⁰ Paul wanted to go in, too, but the believers wouldn’t let him. ³¹ Some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, also sent a message to him, begging him not to risk his life by entering the amphitheater. ³² Inside, the people were all shouting, some one thing and some another. Everything was in confusion. In fact, most of them didn’t even know why they were there. ³³ The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander forward and

told him to explain the situation. He motioned for silence and tried to speak. ³⁴ But when the crowd realized he was a Jew, they started shouting again and kept it up for two hours: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” **Acts 19:28-34**

Cultural Slogans vs. Gospel Truth

a) **“Be true to yourself.”**

Luke 9:23 Jesus said, “Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me.”

b) **“Follow your heart.”**

Jermiah 17:9 says, “The heart is deceitful above all things... Instead, Proverbs 3:5, “trust in the Lord with all your heart...”

c) **“Live your truth.”**

John 17:17 Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”

John 14:6 Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

Notes: _____

3. The Gospel Transforms Our Fear Into Courage (Acts 19:35–41)

³⁵ At last the mayor was able to quiet them down enough to speak. “Citizens of Ephesus,” he said. “Everyone knows that Ephesus is the official guardian of the temple of the great Artemis, whose image fell down to us from heaven. ³⁶ Since this is an undeniable fact, you should stay calm and not do anything rash. ³⁷ You have brought these men here, but they have **stolen nothing** from the temple and **have not spoken against our goddess**.

³⁸ “If Demetrius and the craftsmen have a case against them, the courts are in session and the officials can hear the case at once. Let them make formal charges. ³⁹ And if there are complaints about other matters, they can be settled in a legal assembly.

⁴⁰ I am afraid we are in danger of being charged with rioting by the Roman government, since there is no cause for all this commotion. And if Rome demands an explanation, we won’t know what to say.” ⁴¹ Then he dismissed them, and **they dispersed**.

Acts 19:35-41 (NLT2)

Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong. **1 Corinthians 16:13 NLT2**

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➤ Has the gospel truly taken root in you?

My Next Right Steps, I Will:

[] Accept Jesus as My Savior and Lord

[] Be baptized as a believer in Jesus Christ

[] Volunteer to help at our Kids Fall Festival October 25 from 4 to 6pm

[] Sign up for the Weekend To Remember Marriage Retreat Nov. 21-23



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Talk It Over

Welcome & Prayer: Invite God's Spirit to guide the discussion.

Big Idea: "The Gospel that changes culture transforms our **heart and habits**, it redefines our **identity**, and it transform **fear into courage**."

Opening Icebreaker: What's one cultural trend or habit you used to think was "normal," but once you followed Christ you realized it didn't fit with your faith?

Read: Acts 19:21–41

Discussion Questions

How Does The Gospel Change Our Culture?

1. The Gospel Transforms Our Hearts and Habits (vv. 21–27)

What economic changes did the gospel bring in Ephesus?

How can our spending habits reflect what we truly worship?

Porn and trafficking today reveal how money fuels idolatry. What's one way we can redirect our money toward kingdom purposes?

"The gospel redirects our wallets to reflect our worship."

2. The Gospel Transforms Our Identity to Belong to Jesus (vv. 28–34)

The Ephesians shouted for hours, "Great is Artemis!" What are some modern "chants" our culture repeats (e.g., success, comfort, image)?

Discuss these Cultural Slogans vs. Gospel Truth

A) "Be true to yourself."

Luke 9:23 Jesus said, "Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me."

B) "Follow your heart."

Jermiah 17:9, Proverbs 3:5 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things... Instead, Proverbs 3:5, "trust in the Lord with all your heart..."

C) “Live your truth.”

John 17:17 Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”

John 14:6 Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

Which cultural messages are most tempting or loud in your life?

“Cultural slogans may sound true, but when Jesus is Lord, we embrace his truth.”

3. The Gospel Transforms Our Fear Into Courage (vv. 35–41)

Paul’s companions were ready to face the mob. Why does following Jesus often bring resistance?

Where might God be calling you to stand courageously this week—in your family, workplace, friendships, or community?

How do 1 Corinthians 16:13–14 help us understand what courageous faith looks like?

“Courage is not the absence of fear; it’s faithfulness in spite of it.

Closing Reflection:

Of the three challenges—redirecting our money, resisting cultural idols, or standing with courage—which one is God pressing on your heart right now?

What’s one practical step you can take this week?

Prayer Time:

Pray for courage to confront idols in personal lives and in culture.

Pray for strength to use money and resources for kingdom purposes.

Pray for faithfulness to stand strong in Christ’s love when resistance comes.