

The Gospel is Powerful and Persuasive
Acts 19:1-41

- I When the True Gospel is preached it is powerful and persuasive
- A. It was powerful and persuasive when it was preached by the 12 in Jerusalem.
1. The belief of the people in the promise of Jesus was powerful through prayer.
 2. Their prayer brought the Holy Spirit.
 - a) The people spoke and were heard in other tongues.
 - b) The people prophesied; they told others about the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- B. It was powerful and persuasive when preached by Peter to the Gentiles in Samaria.
1. Acts 10: Peter preaches to Cornelius and his house in Caesarea (Samaria).
 2. Acts 10:44: **“While Peter was still speaking...the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the word.”**
 3. Acts 10:46”...they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God,”
- C. It was powerful and persuasive when preached to 12 by Paul.
1. Paul explains Jesus to them.
 - a) They had been baptized “into John’s baptism.”
 - b) Clark Commentary: They were probably Asiatic Jews who had heard John the Baptizer preach some 26 years before.
 2. Paul explains that John baptized with water; Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit.
 - a) John preached a baptism of repentance and **preparation** for the Messiah.
 - b) Paul’s point is that baptism with water does not save. Only God, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit saves.
 - c) They were not **rebaptised**; they were baptized **Christians**.
 - d) Paul did not actually baptize them.
I Cor. 1:14-17: **“I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, That no man should say you were baptized in my name. Now I did baptize the household of Stephanas...For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel...”**
 3. Verse 6: When Paul had laid his hands on them...
 - a) The Holy Spirit came on them.
 - b) They began speaking with tongues and prophesying.
- II The Gospel is powerful and persuasive in the lives of all true believers.
- A. The Holy Spirit is given to all believers.
1. He is given by God as a pledge..
 - a) 2 Cor. 1:21-22: **“Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.”**
 - b) 2 Cor. 5:5: **“Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a pledge.”**
 2. He is given as a seal as promised by Christ.
 - a) Eph. 1:13-14 **“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation – having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance...”**
 - b) Christ promised the Spirit.
 - 1) John 16:7-14: **“But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment...He will guide**

you into all the truth...He will glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.”

2) Acts 1:5: “...**for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit...**”

B. Each of us must examine ourselves.

1. Do you have the Holy Spirit?
2. Was your baptism one of water only?

C. How do you know you have the Holy Spirit?

1. Do you demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit?
Gal. 5:22-21: **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...**
2. Are you led by the Spirit?
Rom. 8:14: **“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.”**
3. Do you walk by the Spirit?
Gal. 5:16: **“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.”**
4. Are you under the government of the Spirit?
 - a) Are you willing to submit yourself to God and His commands?
 - b) Or do you have a spirit of rebellion?
 - c) When confronted with your sin, are willing to repent and turn to God?

III The Gospel is powerful and persuasive in the world.

A. It is powerful and persuasive against diseases.

1. The Gospel or prayer is not a “magic” amulet.
2. It is the acknowledgment that God is the One who heals that is powerful.
3. Verse 11: **“And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul.”**
4. It was not the clothing of Paul; it was not Paul himself who was working miracles. It was God working through Paul.

B. It is powerful and persuasive against evil spirits.

1. The Jews were practicing exorcisms in the time of Jesus.
 - a) Matt. 12:27: **“And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out?”**
 - b) These were not true exorcisms.
 - c) Exorcisms by Jesus and Paul demonstrate that men can be possessed by evil spirits.
 - d) No Christian can be possessed by an evil spirit.
2. “in the name of” was a common form of putting under oath.
 - a) Since Jesus had expelled spirits in the name of the Father.
 - b) Since Paul expelled spirits in the name of Jesus.
 - c) Sons of Sceva assumed the name had some power or charm.

C. It is powerful and persuasive against those who practice magic.

1. Ephesus was known for “Ephesian letters”
2. They were apparently charms or spells used for various incantations.
3. The books that were burned may have been instruction manuals on how to use them.

D. The Gospel is powerful and persuasive against idol worshippers.

1. Verse 26: **“...this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people...”**
2. Paul’s message was that **“...gods made with hands are no gods at all.”**
3. Is. 44:16-17: A man cuts down a tree and **“Half of it he burns in the fire, over this half he eats meat as he roasts a roast, and is satisfied. He also warms himself**

and says, “Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire.” But the rest of it he makes into a god, his graven image. He falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god.”

- E. The Gospel is powerful and persuasive and creates division.
 - 1. It creates opposition in those who see it as a threat to their success.
 - a) Verse 25: “...**Men you know that our prosperity depends upon this business.**”
 - b) Verse 27: “...**there (is) danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute...**”
 - 2. It creates opposition in those who see it as threat to their own idols.
 - a) Verse 26: “...**gods made with hands are no gods at all.**”
 - b) Verse 27: “...**there is danger that...the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship should even be dethroned from her magnificence.**”
 - c) They understood that if God is true, Artemis; the Great Diana must be dethroned.
 - d) They understood that you cannot worship God and Mammon (whatever is not God).
- F. Let the Gospel be powerful and persuasive in your life.
 - 1. John 14:6: Jesus said, “**I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.**”
 - 2. You can listen to Jesus and follow Him to an eternity of glory.
 - 3. You can foolishly follow your own gods to an eternity of destruction.
 - 4. Listen to the Good News and let it work powerfully in your life.