

## **The Word Prevails**

Acts 19:8-41

This week looked at some of the events that marked Paul's 3-year ministry in Ephesus. Let's start by reading Acts 19:8-10.

- 1) What was it about Paul's preaching that was problematic for the Jews?**
- 2) In what ways might we be pressed to alter or compromise the gospel? How does God's work in Ephesus encourage us to press on?**

Continue reading Acts 19:11-20.

- 3) How do we see the name of Jesus exploited for purposes that are not his in our day?**
- 4) The Lord's turn the tables on those who were attempting to use Jesus for their own ends. How should this comfort and sustain us?**

Take a minute to skim through Acts 19:21-41, which is the account of the riot in Ephesus. Here we see God delivers his people through a scared pagan bureaucrat. God is not just at work through the seemingly miraculous, but governs even the smallest aspects of life through his providence. Read this section (5.1) from our confession (1689 LBCF):

*God the good Creator of all things, in His infinite power and wisdom does uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures and things,<sup>1</sup> from the greatest even to the least,<sup>2</sup> by His most wise and holy providence, to the end for the which they were created, according unto His infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of His own will; to the praise of the glory of His wisdom, power, justice, infinite goodness, and mercy.*

- 5) How does a rich understanding of God's providence help us navigate life in this world?**

We see God's word prevailing in the face of all kinds of opposition from the world – legalism, exploitation, persecution. But it also prevails over the opposition of our own hearts. We saw in this passage that the Ephesians were hedging their bets – holding onto their magic even after trusting Christ.

- 6) What is the problem with the view that we must totally repent/surrender before we can trust in Christ?**
- 7) Think about the ways you hedge you bets on Jesus – the other things you trust in. How does the kindness of God to us Christ help to loosen our grip on idols in a that "though shalt" never can?**

**Some things you can be praying about:**

- What can we praise God for? Sin to confess? Cares or burdens we can help carry?