

ACTS 18:22-19:7 "BOILING HOT!"

Paul's next stop was sin city – *viva Las Vegas* – **the capitol of carnality** - Corinth. At the heart of the city of Corinth was a temple dedicated to the Greek fertility goddess, Aphrodite. At night, 1000 priestesses flooded the streets and played the prostitute in the name of religion. Corinth was a perverted place, but it turned out to be fertile ground for the good news of Jesus. Paul stayed and preached in Corinth for 18 months. **Ironically, the wise and mighty Athenians laughed off the Gospel – while the foolish and weak Corinthians accepted it and embraced it.** **Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:26,** *"you see your calling brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish thing of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty."*

Paul with all his amazing knowledge and intelligence knew in order to be strong he had to be weak... His strength came from the power of the Holy Spirit. As Pastor Mike reminded us last week... Paul was **intentional**, Paul was **very encouraging** and Paul reminded us to **never give up!** **PRAY**

Acts 18 verse 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, **it means he went up to Jerusalem and fulfilled his Nazarite vow in the temple.**

John the Baptist... [John 3:30](#) He must increase, but I must decrease.

NAZARITE... only 3 who were **Nazarites for life** **Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist** usually it was a 60-100 day vow. This is what Paul had done and was coming to a close of that vow.

The **NAZARITE VOW** was a symbol of a life devoted to God and separated from all sin, **a holy life.**

(1) Abstinence from wine and strong drink,

(2) Refraining from cutting the hair

(3) The avoidance of contact with the dead.

Numbers 6:1-8 – Go there for further understanding of the **NAZARITE VOW**

Paul went down to Antioch. This concludes Paul's second missionary journey. **ENERGIZER APOSTLE... KEPT GOING AND GOING AND GOING... THE TIMEX DISCIPLE... TOOK MANY LICKENS AND KEPT ON TICKING.** Paul was the example of what an amazing God can do with ANYone willing to be used.

23 After he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia **"IN ORDER"**, strengthening all the disciples.

"IN ORDER", nothing haphazard; he planned every movement.

How could a **SICK** man accomplish so much? (Phil 4:12-13) *I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

24 Now a certain Jew named **APOLLOS**

APOLLOS • HE BECOMES THE SUBJECT OF SCHISMS (1 COR 1:10-17).

• **APOLLO WAS NOT THE CAUSE** (1 COR 3:6; TITUS 3:13). Apparently some who knew Paul and Apollos preferred Apollos, though both men rejected such foolishness. Paul commented on this, saying: **1 Corinthians 3:5-6** *“What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his tasks. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.”*

born at **ALEXANDRIA**, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus.

ALEXANDRIA Alexandria was the second largest city in the Roman Empire. 1/3 of the city was Jewish. It was a city of such intellectual wealth that recent excavations have uncovered an Alexandrian library of **700,000** volumes. **Apollos, a man mighty in the Scriptures and eloquent in speech, hailed from the learned city of Alexandria.**

Alexandria was on the southern shore of the Mediterranean in Egypt. Founded by Alexander the Great, it was a major Greek and Hebrew cultural center. Source of the LXX. Tertullian, and Augustine, 2 great men of the early church, came from there. Philo reckons the population at about 1,000,000.

Look again at verse 24... an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures,

John Broadus (one of the founders of the Southern Baptist Seminary and the author of the most influential book on preaching ever written in America) was lecturing his class just nine days before he died when he paused and said:



Gentlemen, if this were the last time I should ever be permitted to address you, I would feel amply repaid for consuming the whole hour endeavoring to impress upon you these two things: true piety, and, like Apollos, to be men “mighty in the Scriptures.”

Broadus then paused and stood for a moment with his piercing eyes fixed upon the class. Over and over he repeated in that slow but wonderfully impressive style that was distinctly his, **“Mighty in the Scriptures, mighty in the Scriptures, mighty in the Scriptures.” CALVARY CHAPELITES... MAY YOU BE “MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES!”**

25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord,

“...fervent” = boiling hot. and has the effect of *“bubbling over with enthusiasm.”*

25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.

HE WAS “ON FIRE” FOR WHAT HE KNEW.

John the Baptist = three great truths:

- 1) Forgiveness of sins (only) on the basis of repentance.
- 2) Expression through baptism.
- 3) One was coming who would complete their salvation.

Missing: 4) Cross. 5) Resurrection. 6) Holy Spirit’s baptism.

Hughes points out... “Apollos knew the Word. Alexandria, the place of his birth, rivaled Athens’ reputation for knowledge. The greatest library in the world was in Alexandria. Remember 700,000 volumes! Apollos represented an amazing synthesis of Greek and Hebrew learning.”

BUT HE DID NOT KNOW THE MEANING OF THE CROSS.

Jon Courson brings light to this verse “Apollos had never heard about the death of Jesus Christ nor of His Resurrection from the dead. All he knew at this point was what John the Baptist preached. That is, “Repent, Messiah is coming.” This encourages me greatly because, although there was a huge gap in his understanding, Apollos was commended for sharing what little he did know.”

He didn’t know about Jesus but what he knew he was excited about!

HE WANTED THEM TO BE READY FOR THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and

Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. **GENTLE AND RESPECTFUL...** **No public call out...** took him aside... **THERE WAS NO SCORN, CRITICISM, OR REJECTION. THEY DID NOT EMBARRASS HIM. (REBUKE IN LOVE!)**

How impressive that Apollos was open to correction. The teachable will be humble... He could have said, **"Do you know who I am?"** I have been instructed in the way of the Lord; and fervent in spirit, I speak and teach accurately the things of the Lord!

Every time we open the Word, we should be willing to hear and heed it.

 **Do you know the "Whole" counsel of God?**

27 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; 28 for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

HIS NEW FOUND FAITH AND SALVATION MADE HIM AN EVEN GREATER EVANGELIST. *Do we want people to overflow with the Holy Spirit? Then we must be full ourselves.* Can't lead where you won't go or teach what you don't know. Now he knew, now he had been... **SO APOLLOS WAS "ON FIRE"**

19 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. **And finding some disciples** **Now on his third missionary journey, en route to Jerusalem, Paul traveled through present-day Turkey and came to one of the major cities in the region—the city of Ephesus.** 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy

Spirit when you believed?"

R KENT... *"After coming into contact with the teaching of John the Baptist, these men in Ephesus had become spiritual **Rip Van Winkles.**"*

One man noted, "Keep in mind, Paul never questioned if they were true believers. He assumes the Spirit is **"in"** them – but they need the Spirit **"upon"** them. It reminds me of a New Year's Day at the Tournament of Roses parade. One of the gorgeous floats sputtered and choked out. **It was out of gas.** But the irony was the float was sponsored by the Standard Oil Company. Its owners had all the gas they needed at their disposal, but had forgotten to fill the tank. This is true of many Christians. We have all the power we need for any challenge we face, but have we filled the tank?"

So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

HOLY SPIRIT There are 5 verbs: • **(Singular)**
ONE TIME EXPERIENCE

- Born of the Spirit into the family John 3:6
- Baptized of the Spirit into the body 2 Cor. 12:13
- Indwelt by the Spirit, living in us Rom 8:9
- Sealed by the Spirit unto redemption Eph. 1:13; 4:30
- **(Frequent)** **Multiple Times** Filling by the Spirit Eph 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit... Be ye being filled... constantly seeking the filling... oh how we leak!

3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

*John's baptism was in preparation for the Messiah. **Jesus' baptism was in celebration of the Messiah. John's baptism was a sign of repentance. Jesus' baptism was a sign of regeneration.***

They were hungry for all that God had for them... Jesus never intended us to live the Christian life in human power... you can't do it!

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all. **This was a mini-Pentecost.** We see the Pentecost experience 4 times in the book of Acts: **to Jewish believers in Jerusalem, to the Samaritans through Philip, TO THE GENTILES BY PETER, and here to dispersed Jews through Paul.**

Ephesus, the city with everything, had never seen anything like this. This was springtime in the church.

Dynamic disciples or casual Christians Filled with the Holy Spirit or walking in the flesh

Dynamic Disciples KNOW GOD

Seek first "God's Kingdom"

"On fire" for God

Worship God from their "hearts"

Live by faith in God

Easily distinguished from the world

Bear fruit for God

Want to serve others

Willing to step out in obedience

Pray always to their Father

See God do miracles

Admit their weaknesses humbly

Have deep roots in God

Hate sin & flee from it

Study their Bible

Want to be more like Jesus

Witness without shame for Christ

Casual Christians KNOW About God

Seek first their "own" kingdom

Comfortable being "lukewarm"

Worship only with their "lips"

Live by what they can see

Look & act like worldly people

Bear no fruit at all

Want to be served

Never leave their comfort zones

Only pray at meals & crises

Never look for God's miracles

Hide their wrongs in pride

Are only spiritual on the surface

Hang around & "play with the fire"

Let their Bible collect dust

Want Jesus to be more like them

Never tell others about Jesus

Always eager to fellowship

Store treasures in heaven

Forgive always & forget

Love all other brothers & sisters

Deny themselves

Seek God in every decision

Rejoice no matter what

Know their Shepherd's voice

Always want God's best

Have abundant life

Love to be close to God

Go to church off & on

Store treasures on earth

Want to get even

Like only certain Christians

Think only of themselves

Make decisions without God

Let trials get them down

Wonder if it God's, Satan's, or their own voice

Settle for second best

Often seem lifeless

Feel like God is always far away

ARE WE ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF EASTER...

...but on the wrong side of Pentecost?

...ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF PARDON

...but on the wrong side of Power?

...JUSTIFIED... ...but not sanctified?

ARE WE A CONTRADICTION?

Union without Communion?...

Profession without Experience?

Movement without Progress?...

Battles without Victory?

Service without Success?...

Trials without Triumph?

The church of Jesus Christ desperately needs vitality today.

There are three kinds of people in our churches. There are non-Christians – the individuals who have not received Christ or the Holy Spirit, though they may have some degree of intellectual belief. They may, like John's disciples, have even manifested a willingness to repent, but they have not yet met the resurrected Christ. Such individuals need to receive him by opening their heart to him, believing on him as their sole hope for salvation. He will then give them the Holy Spirit, and they will know it!

There are also committed Christians who need to keep on believing. Continually believing in Christ means continually receiving the Holy Spirit's grace and power.

There are also Christians who used to believe. Such persons need the advice given by Christ to the church of the Ephesians when they left their first love and, a natural consequence, lost the vitality of the Holy Spirit: “Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first” (Revelation 2:5).

REMEMBER - REPENT - RETURN.

MY LIFE!!! Acts 18:22-19:7 Religious people who have not personally experienced the reality of Jesus Christ. “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” Paul asked in 19:2. As we preach the Word, we have no way of discerning if our hearers truly have the Holy Spirit. Hundreds of thousands of people profess some type of belief in Christ, display a reverence for God, go to church on Sundays, contribute to the offering, sit at the Lord’s Table, and admire the ethical teachings of the Lord – but are as lost as I was being “Religious”. They have no fire, no passion, no life because they do not have Christ. **THEY ARE “ICILY REGULAR, SPLENDIDLY EMPTY.”** They do not have the life and warmth of the Holy Spirit.



God always wants us to go deeper. We have sipped where we might have drunk deeply, we have drunk deeply where we might have waded, and we have waded where we might have gone full out and plunged in!

Do you know any bored again Christians? NO SPARKLE OR POP! WORSHIP IS A DRUDGE AND WITNESSING A CHORE. Maybe it’s YOU! Paul would probably echo the same question he asked of the Ephesian believers: “*Have you received the Spirit since you believed?*”

PRAYER:

O God, please work in each of our hearts. Help those who are yet outside your grace to come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and so to receive the Spirit as well. Help your people to keep believing and serving and worshiping, giving your Son preeminence day by day. Help others to come back to the place of truly believing the message with overflowing joy. We constantly need your sustaining, enabling mercy and power. Please open our hearts anew to receive all you wish to do in and through us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

SOUL ON FIRE!!!