

How To Start A Riot

Acts 19:21–41

INTRO / SETTING THE MOMENT

- Church is stepping into a historic season:
 - 15-Year Anniversary
 - Documentary: *I Met Jesus at the Mall*
 - Gathering at North Shore Music Theater
- This moment isn't about nostalgia—it's about **mission**.
- Acts 19 shows what happens when the gospel doesn't just change people privately, but **threatens idols publicly**.

RECAP: ACTS 19:1–20

- The gospel infiltrates Ephesus.
- People encounter Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit.
- Old identities and idols are burned publicly.
- Result: “*The word of the Lord increased and prevailed mightily.*”
- But when the gospel prevails, **resistance follows**.

THE GOSPEL MOVES WITH PURPOSE

Acts 19:21–22

- Paul is “*resolved in the Spirit*” to move toward Jerusalem.
- He isn't drifting, reacting, or being pressured by chaos.
- His direction is determined by the **Holy Spirit**, not opportunity.

Key Principle

- God's people are called to be **Spirit-led, not opportunity-led**.
- The Kingdom doesn't drift—it advances where Spirit-led disciples go.
- If church is optional, the gospel won't move through you with power.

WHEN JESUS ISN'T YOUR GOD, HE FEELS LIKE A THREAT

Acts 19:23–27

- Demetrius, a silversmith, starts the riot.
- His concern isn't theology—it's **money**.
- Artemis isn't just a goddess; she's an **industry**.
- The gospel disrupts desires, which disrupts economies.

Key Insight

- Every city has idols.
- Every idol is usually tied to **money, power, or control**.
- When people find identity in Jesus, systems built on idols begin to shake.

CROWDS DON'T CREATE TRUTH — THEY CREATE NOISE

Acts 19:28–34

- The city is filled with *confusion* (loss of clarity).
- People chant, rush, and riot—most don't even know why.
- Emotion spreads faster than understanding.
- Crowds amplify feelings, not truth.

Warning for the Church

- Any crowd that elevates emotion over truth is dangerous.
- Allegiance not anchored in Jesus will attach to:
 - Politics
 - Outrage
 - Movements
 - Fear of man

GOD CAN RESTRAIN CHAOS WITHOUT THE CROWD

Acts 19:35–41

- A pagan city clerk calms the riot through reason and law.
- God is sovereign over **all authority**, not just religious leaders.
- The gospel doesn't need panic, mobs, or aggression to prevail.

Key Observation

- Christians weren't known for vandalism or provocation.
- They were known for allegiance to Jesus.
- The gospel undermined Artemis **without aggression**—through faithfulness.

THE GOSPEL REMEMBERED

- Jesus didn't avoid chaos—He endured the cross.
- The cross looked like defeat, but the resurrection proved victory.
- Opposition doesn't mean failure—it often proves the gospel is working.

APPLICATION

- You can't follow Jesus casually.
- Cities are changed by **disciples**, not spectators.
- Comfort has never transformed a region.
- Faithfulness, obedience, and allegiance will.

BOTTOM LINE

When the church stays faithful—even when it costs something—
the word of the Lord continues to increase and prevail mightily.