

Ephesians:

Introduction

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- Acquire a basic history and background of pre-christian Ephesus
- Observe the effects of the gospel in Ephesus
- By the end of this study we should be clamoring to find out what mighty and powerful teaching Paul delivered to the Ephesians.

Background

1. The Significance of the City

- Ephesus was an old city already. Had been established for 1,000 years already by the time Paul came to Ephesus
- Was the capitol city of the Roman province of Asia.
- A population of over 200,000 made it the 3rd largest city in the empire.
- Caesar Augustus declared it to be the "First and Greatest Metropolis of Asia."
- Ideal geographically
- Contained a huge amphitheater that was used for theater performances and for gladiator contests similar to the Coliseum in Rome
- Contained one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. The Temple of Artemis.

2. The culture

- Being a prominent port city it was naturally ethnically diverse
- Was a hotbed of pagan religious practices. The Temple of Artemis was a significant draw.

The Gospel comes to Ephesus--Acts 18-19

- ❖ Acts 18:18-21
 - Paul makes a quick pit-stop in Ephesus
- ❖ Acts 18:24-28

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- Apollos preaches John's baptism in Ephesus and learns "the way" from those whom Paul had left. He is converted and joins the team.
- ❖ Acts 19:1-34
 - v 1-7--though there were some who had received John's baptism, the Gospel had not yet really made it to Ephesus
 - v 8-9a--Paul brings the good news to the Jewish people in Ephesus but with little success
 - v 9b-10--Paul spends two years in Ephesus
 - v 11-12--Gospel is accompanied by miracles
 - v 13-17--God's power cannot be counterfeited. Though we see in Matthew 7 that there are some who will perform miracles in Jesus' name without being true Christians, it must be noted that it will always work out so well. Sometimes the evil approached can only be overcome by the true indwelling power of God.
 - v 17-20--The Word of God radically changes lives
 - v 21-34--The Word of God radically changes the 3rd largest city in the Roman empire.
 - v 35-41--There will be significant opposition to a people radically transformed by the gospel.



Closing

- What great and powerful teaching did the Ephesians receive that transformed them so? What was it that Paul taught that led to such radical abandonment in the lives of the believers? What were they taught that was so radical and powerful that it threatened a major world city's economy?
- FIND OUT 2 WEEKS FROM NOW as we begin our study of the book of Ephesians!