

Acts 19:8-20

READ ACTS 19:8-10

What are the mixed results we see here? How have you seen them today?

With Acts 1:8 in mind - What is Luke wanting to show us in v10? And what are the encouragements here for us from this section?

- *The gospel is advancing - just as Jesus promised - by the power of God. His gospel is unstoppable and irresistible to those he calls*

READ ACTS 19:11-20

What surprises you most in this episode?

What is the problem with what the sons of Sceva are trying to do? How does it work out for them? How would you have felt if you were them?

- *Using Jesus's name for their own ends and financial gain! They are utterly humiliated - to be naked in public in Jewish culture, is humiliating - so to be stripped is the ultimate shame and humiliation*

What is the result throughout Ephesus? (v17 onwards)

- *The name of the Lord Jesus is held in High Honour!*

Why do you think Luke tells us the value of the books burned in verse 19?

- *The value of what they burned testified to the power of the gospel and the preached word of God. The idolatry of Ephesus ended up in an ash heap.*

How does this event help us to understand what repentance is and what it looks like to hold Jesus in high honour in your life?

- *This is a profound demonstration of the nature of true repentance: it is costly and public and shows that Jesus really is no No.1 in your heart and life - you are transformed*

Acts 19:8-20

Compare verses 1-7, 8-10, and 11-20. Very different things happen in each of these passages. But what is consistent about Paul's behavior?

- *Throughout these verses we see how the message of Christianity spread—through the faithful, persistent preaching of God's word. Paul summons all to repent and believe. He continues to do this regardless of what happens, knowing that all will be held to account for their response to the gospel.*

APPLICATION

Are we faithfully and consistently holding out the truth of who Jesus really is? What pressures do we face in doing that? What will keep us going?

What is the danger of under-emphasizing the Lordship of Christ and the cost of repentance/discipleship?

- *We become 'Lord' rather than Jesus and so we call the shots not him - we'll follow him as long as he fits our agenda*
- *When hardship and suffering come our expectations can't cope and will shipwreck our faith*

What is the danger of under-emphasizing the Grace and Mercy of Christ?

- *We can either become proud pharisees relying on our own abilities and performance or the other extreme - despair at our wretchedness and helplessness and find no hope or peace*

Is there any way in which you're in danger of wanting a Jesus you can use, rather than a Jesus who will save and who is Lord?

- *The "prosperity gospel" movement invokes the name of Christ, prays in the name of God, and claims his promise and blessing all for financial security rather than eternal salvation.*
- *We can easily lose sight of the biblical expectations of Christian living, and think that because they follow Jesus, our life should exude peace and comfort. However, to follow Christ means denying ourselves, including our culturally-shaped expectations of this life, and taking up our cross.*

What do the Ephesian converts show us about repentance? Is this what repentance looks like in your life?