

Sermon Discussion Guide:

Kingdom Advance

Sunday, July 30, 2023

Scripture: **Acts 19:21–41**

Series: **The Spirit & The Church**

OVERVIEW

Sometimes God's Word doesn't give us what we think we want—but rather what we truly need. This week's passage about the acts of the apostles is not an obvious, uplifting story about the victory of faith, but deals with a societal disturbance and riot that ensues in the wake of the preaching of the gospel. Many of the people of Ephesus were threatened by the effect of God's Word in diminishing demand for their made-made idols. This put their livelihoods and their sense of identity at risk. Though the crowd was angry, God protected his ambassadors through an ordinary, pagan clerk who made a simple plea for civility. God gives us the life and the power that our idols can never provide.

CORROBORATING TEXTS

Exodus 32, Ezekiel 14:3, Romans 6:6, Ephesians 2:12, Colossians 2:6, 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How often have you approached God's Word expecting some particular encouragement and found something altogether different? How do you handle that mismatch of expectations?
2. What is it about the gospel that often provokes a fight-or-flight response? Have you ever responded in this way to God's Word?
3. Our idols are often God's good gifts that are twisted and made into ultimate things. What are some good things that have become idols in your life?
4. How can you be about God's work of destroying idols while appreciating our God-given passions, interests, and gifts in a healthy way?
5. How does the intervention of a pagan town clerk in quelling the disturbance give you confidence in God's provision for His people?