

# Daily Readings

*This week we cover the third missionary journey of Paul. Included in these readings are the narrative sections from the book of Acts that deal with this journey.*

**Monday, October 12 – Read Acts 18:23-19:7.** These verses summarize the first leg of Paul’s third journey. Apollos became a great leader in the church, and a friend of Paul’s, but notice that his understanding of the faith was incomplete. Thankfully he was teachable and willing to learn. Priscilla and Aquila, her husband, took the time to mentor him and help him grow in his faith. Consequently, Apollos went on to be a leading apostle. In Ephesus, we find 12 men who have an incomplete faith. We are not quite sure what the state of the faith was of these 12 men, but like Apollos, they did not fully understand the faith. They had not been baptized with Christian baptism, nor had they received the Holy Spirit. Each of us are in need of continually growing in our understanding of Christ, growing in our relationship with him, and opening ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit. The use of this study guide is one way we can grow in our faith. Spend time in prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to fill you and have full access to every part of your heart and soul. Are there people that God may call you to help teach or mentor?

**Tuesday, October 13 – Read Acts 19:8-22.** Notice the impact this ministry had throughout the region of Asia. Ephesus was known for the superstitions and belief in magic and incantations. How might the story of the seven sons of Sceva relate to our lives today? In what way do people try to use the Christian faith without really becoming Christians themselves? Are there any remnants (habits, attitudes or beliefs) of your life prior to Christ that you need to destroy as the Ephesians did here?

**Wednesday, October 14 – Read Acts 19:23-41 and II Corinthians 1:8-11.** The silversmiths were upset that the new Christian converts quit buying their pagan trinkets. The practice of Christianity was hurting their business. Here we see what continued over the next five hundred years in the Roman Empire — the gradual displacement of the old religion by the Christian faith. How might the spending habits and priorities of our culture change over time as more people become deeply committed Christians? When the church is having a dramatic impact on the culture, there will be some who rise in opposition. In what ways do we see opposition? Why or why not?

**Thursday, October 15 – Read Acts 20: 1-12.** This short passage covers several months of travel for Paul and his companions. First, notice that the believers gathered for worship and communion (breaking bread) on the “first day of the week.” Already Christians are beginning to worship on Sundays rather than the Jewish Saturday Sabbath. Sunday was the day upon which Christ rose from the dead, hence every Sunday is a celebration of Easter in the church. The story of Eutychus is a comfort to preachers who note that people fell asleep even under the Apostle Paul’s preaching! What do these verses tell you about Paul’s heart and his passion? Can you describe your passion for Christ and his church? Share this passion with someone close to you today.

**Friday, October 16 – Read Acts 20:13 – 21:16.** This section helps us see that Paul is beginning to hear from the Holy Spirit that this will be his last time to see these churches he visits. He will be arrested in Jerusalem upon his return home. Note the sadness and the heartache the Christians feel over saying goodbye to Paul. Notice the fact that this account is written in the first person plural “we” indicating that Luke was with Paul during this leg of the journey. Here we see Paul responding with courage to the knowledge of what is to come in Jerusalem. What qualities of character do you discover about Paul in reading these verses? Which of these qualities would you like to be a part of your life? Pray and ask for God’s help in this matter.



## STUDY GUIDE & DAILY READINGS

Sunday, October 11, 2009

### WONDER

#### STAGES *(Following the Journeys of Paul)*, Week 4 of 5

##### **Acts 19:1-7 — The Word from the Bible (Today’s New International Version)**

*While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”*

*They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”*

*So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”*

*“John’s baptism,” they replied.*

*Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.*

##### **Paul’s Third Missionary Journey**

The “third” missionary journey (18:23-21:16) starts in Antioch and ends in Jerusalem. After a reference to the “region of Galatia and Phrygia” which describes some of the details of this journey where the disciples were strengthened (18:23), and the introduction of Apollos and others who needed and received Christian instruction (18:24-19:7), the rest of the nineteenth chapter is devoted to events at Ephesus, where Paul stayed for two years and three months (19:8, 10). It is assumed that churches at Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis were founded by Paul’s disciples during this period, but Acts only summarizes by reporting “that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (19:10), by noting that Paul’s authentic miracles aroused the envy of Jewish exorcists (19:11), and by giving a full account of the riot of Ephesus (19:23-41). A visit to Macedonia and Achaia is given in very condensed form (20:1-6), and then the coastwise trip from Troas to Caesarea, amplified only by the moving words of Paul to the elders from Ephesus who came down to Miletus at Paul’s request to hear what was to be his valedictory (20:1-21:16). *The Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible*

##### **Scripture Notes on Paul’s Third Missionary Journey – Acts 19:1 - 21:16**

**19:1-7** — Paul returns to Ephesus, traveling overland through the interior of Asia Minor, the region of Galatia and Phrygia (18:23). In Ephesus, Paul encounters disciples who have not received the Holy Spirit. These 12 are members of a sect of John the Baptist. Paul characterizes John’s baptism as a ritual of repentance and shares with them the full message of Jesus as the risen savior. These disciples are rebaptized in the name of Jesus, and after the laying on of hands, receive the Holy Spirit.

**19:8-22.** Preaching the Word and Acts of Power. Again Paul preaches in the synagogue. He then moves his preaching and teaching to a hall (or school). Paul preaches from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. – the time of leisure when an audience is available. Paul stays in Ephesus for two years and three months.

While in Ephesus, Paul's encounters a group of Jewish exorcists. The story has parallels to the miracles of Peter (Acts 5:12-16) where handkerchiefs or aprons carried a healing power which exuded from Paul's body (literally "skin"). These exorcists want to use the power of Paul and Jesus for their own advantage.

The demon's response, ***"Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"*** indicates that the name of Jesus is powerful, but can not be separated from faith. Only those who have accepted the name dare use it.

News of this bizarre incident brings about conversions among the magicians. The books (scrolls) which are burned probably record their charms and spells. Ephesus was famous for magical writings, some of which were called "Ephesian scripts or letters." A precedent for burning unfavorable books had been established by Augustus. The total value of the literature is said to be 50,000 pieces of silver – presumably drachmas – or in today's currency about \$5 million.

**19:21-22** — Paul's travel plans are disclosed in what is almost an outline of the rest of the book. His trip to Macedonia and Achaia takes place in 20:1-2, and his journey to Jerusalem in 21:17. The purpose of the latter is to take an offering to the Jerusalem church (Romans 15:22-29).

**19:23-41** — This extended section is full of local interest. Demetrius is presented as a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis. More accurately, he and the other local silversmiths made small souvenir temples used as amulets. In addition, they probably made miniature images of the goddess Artemis. Artemis was the Greek hunting goddess and the deity of fertility. The temple dedicated to Artemis was the largest structure in the Roman Empire. About 340 feet by 160 feet, it displayed over 100 columns some 60 feet high. Its marble blocks, according to some reports, were cemented together by gold instead of mortar.

The riot stirred up by the silversmiths was massive, filling the whole temple. The plan was to arrest Paul and his companions or at least to run them out of town. The chief town authority breaks up the gathering with a speech in Paul's defense. The main point of the speech is that Paul and his companions are guilty of no civil offense. They are not sacrilegious or blasphemers of the goddess. If Demetrius and the other silversmiths have valid charges, let them follow legal procedure (24:19).

**20:1-22** — Paul's trip to Macedonia and Greece fulfills the plans of 19:21 (I Corinthians 16:5). His route is via Troas (II Corinthians 2:12-13) to Philippi (II Corinthians 7:5-7) and through Macedonia to Corinth. During his stay of three months in Achaia, he writes Romans.

Paul's original plan seems to have been to sail from Corinth directly to Palestine to take the collection from his churches to Jerusalem. Since Macedonia and Achaia have already made their contribution (Romans 15:25-26), a trip through these provinces is not needed. According to Acts, Paul sailed past Ephesus because he was hastening on to Jerusalem in order to arrive by Pentecost. He does take time at both Tyre (21:3-4) and Caesarea (21:10) probably to take another offering.

**20:22-27** — Next is Paul's future trip to Jerusalem, under the guidance of God (Acts 19:21). Up to this point, the reader has not been told of the spirit's prediction that imprisonment and afflictions await Paul; this will be disclosed in 21:4, 10-14.

Paul is ready to lay down his life to testify to the gospel. This idea, together with the statement that ***they should see his face no more*** (verse 38) indicates the author's knowledge of Paul's death.

**20:32-35** — Finally, Paul shares a farewell in the form of a last will and testament. He commends the church to the grace (favor) of God. He commends them to help the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus.

**20:36-21:14** — The farewell scene is portrayed with affection. After prayer, the elders embraced Paul, literally ***"fell on his neck"*** – an Old Testament expression used in the parable of the lost son (Luke 15:20).

While Paul is moved by the concern of the Christians, Paul is ready not only to be imprisoned, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name (or "sake") of the Lord Jesus. Paul, like Jesus, is determined to follow the will of God.

### ***Prayer Focus***

Trietsch is a praying church. This morning, as you worship, one of our prayer volunteers is praying for everyone in each section of our worship center. We believe that prayer changes lives and hearts for good and for God.

We invite you to join these volunteers by praying for those persons around you. We believe these prayers will have an immediate impact on those for whom you are praying.

Remember... someone is praying for you. Here a few prayers to guide you, written by some of our church members.

### ***Heavenly Father,***

***You have given me a community of supporters called the church. Let our fellowship be a reflection of the love we feel for each other and the love we feel for You. Amen***  
***(Published in the women's ministry newsletter)***

### ***Lord,***

***You offer many opportunities at this church to extend Your love. Everyone here needs to love and be loved, and everyone has the capacity to do both. Open our eyes to the needs around us, including our own. Show us how to open our hearts to give and receive love. Amen.***

### ***Heavenly Father,***

***The privilege of corporate worship is a gift you have given us. Not only do You care for us individually, you also care for us as a community of believers. Our worship experience is not complete when we isolate ourselves. show us how to receive the gift of corporate worship this morning. Amen.***