



Collision - Acts 19

Sep 29 - Dave Navarro

INTRO

Welcome to METROPOLIS. We know more about Ephesus than most ancient cities. Five books of the Bible are connected to Ephesus and its church. Its ruins are well-preserved and can be seen today. It was a cultural hub. Few cities could rival its size, wealth and power. And our study begins with a collision between the message of Jesus and the ideologies of this great city.

Open with prayer¹, then read all of Acts 19 together as a group. Consider dividing it by paragraph. It's helpful to use the same Bible translation. SLC preaches from the New Living Translation.

SERMON RECAP

1. What's the most impressive landmark you've ever seen? Mine is the Sydney Opera House...
2. Ephesus & Temple of Artemis
 - a. A world-class city. Centerpiece was the Temple of Artemis, the greatest of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
 - b. The Ephesians believed Artemis was *their* goddess in a special way.
 - c. A religious industrial complex around Artemis-worship.
3. Jesus, the Temple Challenger
 - a. The Jews had their own Temple system. Shared the Ephesians' worldview that there was sacred space (Temple) and common space (everything outside the Temple).
 - b. Jesus challenged this view. (John 2:13-22 / Mat 12:6 / John 4:21-24 / Mark 13:1-2)
4. Paul, the Temple Challenger

¹ Some groups prefer to begin with a longer time of sharing and prayer. This is a good instinct and ensures that prayer time doesn't get shortened by time constraints.

- a. Paul taught the Ephesians the “word of the Lord” (Acts 19:10, 20). We don’t know exactly what he taught, but we have his letter.
 - b. Key theme in Paul’s letter: Jew and Gentile are united into the new people of God, and that *people* group is the Temple where God dwells (Eph 2:19-22).
 - c. For both Jesus and Paul, sacred space reorganized. For Christians, the sanctuary is sacred, but so are the streets.
5. Demetrius & the Trade Guild
- a. Christianity disrupts the economy of Ephesus by confronting the things they worshipped and valued, and showing them how Jesus offers something better.
 - b. What if we let Jesus disrupt *our* economies?

BONUS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you’re covering 2 sermons in 1 Life Group meeting, skip to the Core Discussion Questions to save time. Otherwise, start here.

1. What’s the most impressive landmark you’ve ever seen?
2. Read Acts 19:1-7. Paul initially found disciples of John the Baptist, and converted them to followers of Jesus. How does this fit in with John the Baptist’s own sense of his personal mission (see John 3:26-30).
3. Originally, Christianity was called “The Way” (Acts 19:23). What might that tell us about how the first Christians understood following Jesus? How might that re-shape how we approach faith today?

CORE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What’s the most impressive landmark you’ve ever seen?
2. Read Acts 19:11-20. Consider the sons of Sceva, who were professional magicians around Ephesus. Consider also Demetrius and the silversmiths in 19:23-27. Based on these two examples, what kind of attitude did people in Ephesus have with religion and spirituality?
3. Paraphrasing Jesus and Paul, Dave said, “The sanctuary is sacred, but so are the streets.” All of life is holy, and contains God’s presence.
 - a. What are some ways that modern people treat some things as holy/spiritual, and other things as unholy/unspiritual?
 - b. What are some ways you can treat your everyday life as sacred (see Romans 12:1-2)?



4. The message of Jesus shook the economy of Ephesus by confronting the things they worshipped and valued, and showing them how Jesus offers something better.
 - a. Brainstorm some things that our culture worships and values.
 - b. For each item: how does Jesus offer something better?

ACT & PRAY

1. What is one key takeaway from today's study, which will cause you to think or act differently this week? (See Core Discussion Questions 3 and 4.)
2. As a group, share areas of praise and need. Write them down so you can be praying for them during the week.
3. Remind yourselves of your Adopt-a-Missionary, and any prayer requests you've seen from them.
4. Spend time praying, either all together, or in smaller groups. Feel free to experiment with silent prayer, written prayer, etc.
5. If appropriate, have someone close your prayer time with this prayer that acknowledges the sacredness of our everyday space, particularly our homes and workplaces:

May God give His blessing on our homes and workplaces.

God bless them from roof to floor,

From wall to wall, from end to end,

From their foundations and in their coverings.

In the strong name of the Triune God:

All evil be banished,

All disturbance cease,

Captive spirits freed.

God's Spirit alone

Dwell within their walls.

We call upon the Sacred Three

To save, shield and surround

Our homes and workplaces, this day, and every day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Congregational Meeting after church on Oct 6.
2. Christmas Tales Dinner Event is Nov 30. Tickets on sale soon. Reserved seating. Professional dinner theatre. Visitor-focussed, so invite friends!

