

# Paul causes problems in Ephesus

## Acts 18:24-19:41





Aquila and Priscilla had worked long and hard with Paul in Corinth, now at Paul's request, they had moved to Ephesus to help start the church there.

They settled in and began their trade of tent-making again. They joined the local synagogue, but missed meeting with other believers.

One day, a young Jew from Alexandria named Apollos came and started speaking at the synagogue.

“Let me tell you about Jesus. I was taught about him by John the Baptist. Jesus is the messiah, and he has performed many miracles. He healed people just like God said would happen. If you want I will tell you more about him later.” Then Apollos sat down and let others speak in the synagogue.



Priscilla and Aquila hurried over to Apollos after the meeting and said, “Where did you learn about Jesus? What do you know about him?”

“I followed John the Baptist, and he taught all about repentance. He told us Jesus was the Messiah God sent. Ever since John’s death I have been teaching about repenting and how Jesus is the Messiah.”

Aquila and Priscilla looked at each other. He was so close, he knew some of what Jesus taught, but not all of it.

“That’s not all,” they explained. “Jesus did come to save us, but we have to put our faith in Him, that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. He was buried, and then on the third day he rose again.”



Apollos was amazed, “This explains so much. Tell me all about Jesus.”

So they taught him all Paul had taught them about Jesus. He soaked it all up and each day he was out in the town square telling everyone about Jesus.

Everyone was amazed at Apollos’ speeches. He could out-argue the Jews using all he knew of the Old Testament. Then he would turn around and give persuasive arguments to the Greeks.

Finally, Apollos decided it was time to move on, and he decided to go to Corinth. Aquila and Priscilla gave him a letter of introduction to the church.





Meanwhile, Paul arrived at Ephesus and found 12 disciples of John the Baptist there.

“Have you received the Holy Spirit?” Paul asked. They looked at him in confusion, so Paul asked again. “What baptism have you gotten?”

“Oh!” they exclaimed. “We were baptized by John.”

“John’s baptism was one of repentance to point you to Jesus,” Paul said. “Let me tell you about Jesus.”

Then Paul explained all about Jesus, and they were baptized and the Holy Spirit came down on them. They began to speak in tongues and prophecy immediately.



From there Paul went to the synagogue and spoke for 3 months, every Saturday. The Jews eagerly listened to Paul speak about Jesus and all he had done.

One day however many of the Jews began to speak ill of Paul and all of the believers. “He is preaching blasphemy. Why are we letting him speak?”

Paul just stood up and shook the dust from his robes and took the believers to the house of Tyrranus who welcomed them to his home.

Paul was able to spend 2 more years there speaking to Jews, and Greeks. During that time Paul was able to disciple many people and they grew greatly in their faith.



While Paul was in Ephesus, God worked mightily. Many people Paul touched would be healed instantly. People were amazed and many believed in God because of what Paul was doing and saying.

But some of the Jewish mystics were jealous and wanted Paul's power. The Sons of Sceva saw the power Paul had over demons and tried to emulate it.

“In the name of Jesus whom Paul proclaims I call you to leave this body,” they cried.

But the demons did not flee like they did for Paul, instead the demon-possessed man grabbed them.

“Jesus I know, Paul I recognize, who are you?”  
The man yelled as he beat them.



The story of the demon-possessed man spread throughout the city, and the Jews and Greeks were afraid and many started to praise God.

One day a new believer came to Paul, “I used to be a magician. I have dozens of books and things I used to cast spells. I no longer want them, but I don’t want them to corrupt other people. I want to burn them.”

Inspired by his words many other new believers gathered together and they threw their books and scrolls and magic items into a big pile. The fires burned high and bright as the books were consumed.





Paul was encouraged by all of the new believers, but he still longed to reach Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire.

“If I could just reach Rome, then we’ll reach the world,” Paul mused. “Rome influences all of the empire.”

Then Paul looked over at Timothy and Erastus, “I am sending you on to Macedonia. I have two reasons for this, first to prepare you for leadership on your own, and second to gather funds for the believers in Jerusalem. I’ve heard there is a famine there and it will be a great help if we can return with money to buy grain for the believers without food.”



As Paul met with his friends, another meeting was going on. Demetrius a silversmith was meeting with many other craftsmen.

“We need to stop this Paul,” he told them. “He is turning people from the gods we worship to his God. If he does what will happen to Ephesus? Everyone knows about our great temple and the amazing statues we make to honor her. If he succeeds, no one will come here. Who will buy our statues? We will go broke.”

The craftsmen turned and started yelling, “Great is Artemis of Ephesus! She will prevail! We will crush anyone who is against her.”

The mob of craftsmen rushed out and moved to the center of town.

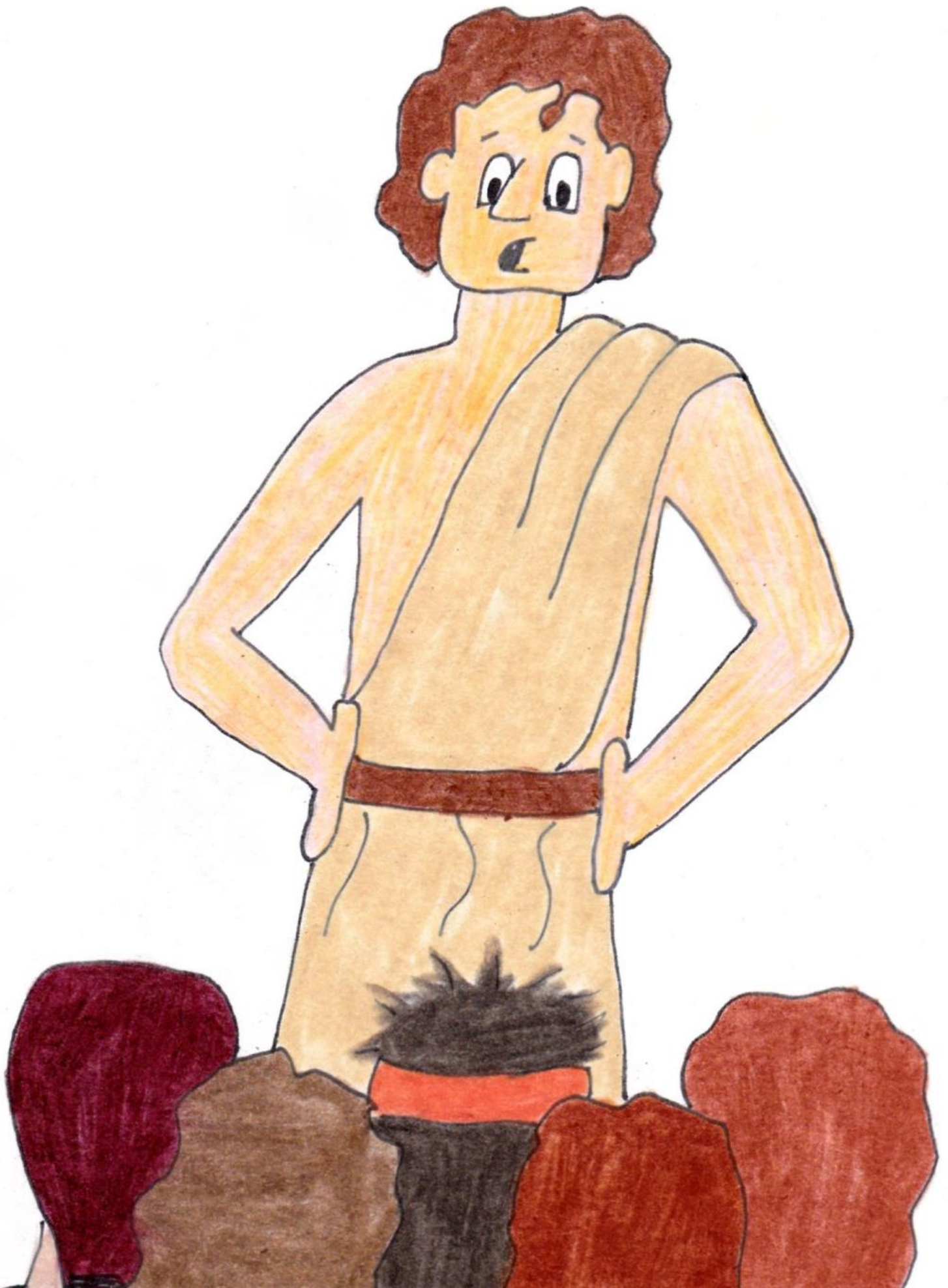


As they went more and more people joined, and all started yelling for Artemis.

They grabbed two of the believers and carried them to the theater. The crowd grew bigger and bigger as they went.

Paul tried to rush in to rescue his friends, but everyone held him back saying, “It’s you they want. If you rush in there, they will kill you.”

As time passed the mob grew confused and started throwing things. Alexander, a Jew, tried to quiet them, but they just started yelling again louder, “Great is Artemis of Ephesus!”



Finally the town clerk stepped forward and stood up on a table, “Citizens of Ephesus listen to me!”

The crowd grew quiet, and turned to the town official. “Everyone knows Ephesus is great because of Artemis. This can’t be denied. Can one man teaching about a God we’ve never heard of change this?” The crowd started to mumble again. “If he can’t change it, then why you are panicking? They haven’t broken any laws, they haven’t caused problems, let them be. If Demetrius has a problem with them, he can take them to court. The courts are open. Otherwise leave them alone. You could all be charged with a riot.”

The people in the mob looked at each other sheepishly, he was right. Slowly they left and started to wander home.





Paul looked around at the mess in the theater. “It is time for me to go. If I stay, it will only hurt the church here. Call the believers, I have some final words.”

So, he spent a few last days in Ephesus encouraging the believers and giving final instructions.

Then he took a boat to Greece and stayed in Corinth for 3 months, then retraced his steps and stopped at each of the churches he’d planted previously.

As he went, Paul met up with many of the men he had trained before and gave them more teaching to prepare them to lead the next generation in the church.

# Questions

## Younger Kids

1. What was Apollos teaching everyone? Did Apollos know what Jesus had done yet? Who taught Apollos about what Jesus did?
2. What is Paul's goal? Why does he want to go to Rome?
3. Why were Demetrius and the other silversmiths angry with Paul? Who was able to calm them down?

## Middle Kids

1. Read Acts 18:26. What does Apollos need to learn? Who teaches him?
2. What is the difference between John's baptism and Jesus? Reads Acts 19:4. Can John's baptism save? Is repentance enough?
3. Why weren't the sons of Sceva able to cast the demon out? Read Acts 19:15. Is it enough to know who Jesus is?

4. Read Acts 19:19. What are they doing in this verse? Why are they doing this? Is there anything you might need to burn (symbolically)?
5. Read Acts 19:35-6. Who is able to calm the mob down? Is he a believer? Can God use someone who doesn't believe in God to achieve God's purposes?

### Older Guys

1. Read Matthew 28:19-20. Then read through this section of Acts 18:24-19:41. As you read the passage note each verse that fulfills what Jesus said to do. How is Paul fulfilling the Great Commission in Ephesus?
2. Why is what Apollos says not complete? Read Acts 18:25. How could that lead to a works salvation?
3. Read Acts 18:26. Who is teaching Apollos? Is it significant that both Aquila and Priscilla are mentioned?
4. Read Acts 19:10-12. What comparisons do you see to Jesus' ministry and Paul's ministry? How long do both serve? What impressive things

happen? What happens at the end of both ministries?

5. In Acts 19:19, a young believer asks to burn all of the books from his former life of working magic. Reread Acts 19:17-20. Are his actions proscriptive (something we are called to do) or descriptive (a description of what he did, that is a possible example)? Are there things you might need to “burn?” Or is this just an example of one way to deal with a sin issue?
6. Read Acts 19:30. Why are the other believers keeping Paul away? Read Acts 19:31. Are they right to keep Paul away?

### Activities

1. Several times throughout the Bible God has used the number 12. Here in this story in 19:7, it says there were 12 disciples of John. Think back through other stories and come up with other examples of 12 being used.
2. During the early church, they did not call each other Christians (which means little Christ), instead they said they “followed the way.” Read

John 14:6. This is where “the way” came from, take a moment and illustrate this verse.

## Online

1. Paul in Ephesus lesson-

<http://missionbibleclass.org/1b0-new-testament/new-testament-part-2/acts-the-church-expands/paul-in-ephesus/>

2. Pictures of a trip to Ephesus-

<http://highhillhomeschool.blogspot.mx/2012/10/ephesus-turkey.html>