**PP Acts: To the End of the Earth**

**Part 51-Acts 19:1-10, *God’s Plan for Success*  10/1-2/2022**

Imagine for a moment that **verse 10** said, **PP *“all the residents of* [the Lehigh valley] *heard the***

***Word of the Lord”* Acts 19:10**

The Lehigh Valley is 40 miles long and 20 miles wide with a population of 861,000 people

**Verse 10** actually reads, ***‘all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord’***

This is called Asia Minor and it is modern Western Turkey, which by AD 100 had 80,000

Christians which expanded by AD 200 to include most of the population

How did this happen and how could it happen today in our area as well?

**PP 1-Intentional Strategy**

***“And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.”* 18:19-21**

God did ***‘will’*** this as ***“it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the***

***inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples.”* 19:1**

Paul was intentional, he returned to Ephesusand there he ***‘found disciples’***

Think for a moment of your high school, your college, your job, your team, your neighbors

Many of us pray for God to help us share Christ if an opportunity comes up, but how many of us

move into a neighborhood with an intentional strategy, join band at high school with an

intentional strategy, take a job with an intentional strategy to win people to Christ?

Do you see the difference here?

It’s one thing to take a job primarily for the career choice, and hope spiritual opportunities come,

but it’s another thing to take a job because it is an opportunity for the gospel that will pay

your bills,,,and this absolutely seems weird to modern American ears

Why did you take the job you did, choose the school you chose, buy the house you bought?

For what it would offer you, or what you could offer it by way of gospel fruit?

One is a self-directed life, and the other is life lived with eternity in mind

Christian, while there must be in us, an intentionality in the mission of Jesus, more is needed

**PP 2-Unchanging Message**

***“And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.”* 19:2-4**

Paul met these 12 disciples, and the more he listened to them, the more he began to realize that

there was something seriously missing in their beliefs…the gospel

One of the great things about the book of Acts is that it is a book that bridges the Old Covenant

God made with Israel with the New Covenant in Jesus…it is a book of transition

It began in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and rippled out from there across the world

As the gospel went further out from Jerusalem, it encountered many who had heard John the

Baptist’s preaching but didn’t know of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus nor the

coming of the Holy Spirit

This is the case of these 12, who were believers under the Old Covenant but not the New, they

weren’t followers of the way **(19:9)**, they did not yet have the Holy Spirit in them

And that provides our next insight on how ***‘all the residents of Asia heard the Word’***

**PP 3-Divine Power**

In college I had a manual transmission Toyota Tercel with a rear Window sticker, *‘Powered by*

*Jesus’* but the car had a bad starter forcing me to get it rolling and pop the clutch to start

The window sticker didn’t match the car’s condition, and the same was true for these disciples,

but that was about to change

***“On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all.”* 19:5–7**

I have godly friends who believe that there is a second filling of the Spirit or second blessing

where a person is saved, but at a later time, baptized by the Holy Spirit

I don’t believe the book of Acts is telling us there is normally this type of experience

Recall that many across the Roman Empire had come to Jerusalem for its feasts, hearing John the

Baptist’s message, believe and repented, and gone home never hearing of the gospel

For these Old Covenant believers, the Holy Spirit would come and go upon a person, but not

settle into and dwell in God’s saints as He does under the New Covenant

**PP *“You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in***

***you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.”***

**Romans 8:9**

In the New Covenant, the Spirit comes and dwells in everyone who believes on Jesus Christ

And this my friends, is the divine power that enables us to be the witness of Jesus

In Acts, the filling of the Spirit is always linked with the power to be a witness of Christ

He will give us more confidence in God’s Word, the boldness to share it, greater focus on Jesus

Christ and the ability to communicate what we know

He’s chosen us to be His vessels to communicate the good news of Jesus, our next point

**PP 4-Hard Work**

***And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.”* 19:8-9**

For 3 months Paul taught and preached in the synagogue but many grew more and more

hardened as each week passed by, speaking evil of ***‘the Way’***, of the Christians

The same sun that melts the ice hardens the clay

So rather than throw the pearls of the gospel before swine, Paul relocated his teaching center to

***‘the hall of Tyrannus’***, believed to be a school building for philosophy

***‘Tyrannus’*** means tyrant, so if you think your teacher of professor is hard, Tyrannus was harder

But notice a footnote that may be in your bible, *‘from the fifth hour to the tenth’*, 11 am to 4 pm

In that heat, public life in these cities stopped between those hours for a siesta

But here is Paul, possibly making tents early in the morning, until siesta time, when he would

rent out the hall and preach, teach, and reason with anyone who’d listen

Friends, do we match that hard work for the gospel today?

Are we willing to sacrifice for the sake of reaching this area with the ***‘word of the Lord’***?

Or are we lazy, unmotivated, ineffective, or just as bad, have we given up, our final point?

**PP 5-Patient Endurance**

***“This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord,***

***both Jews and Greeks.”* 19:10**

We love quick results as Americans from the shipping of our purchases to medical lab results

Have you ever considered that perhaps we lose patience in spiritual matters just as quickly?

*I’ve been a Christian for 3 years, why am I still up and down in my spiritual life?*

*I’ve tried twice to tell my friends about Christ and they aren’t interested, I give up*

Paul stayed in Ephesus 2 years longer than anywhere else, making disciples who made disciples,

and what happened, ***‘all Asia heard!’***

The mission Christ has called His people to requires endurance and patience and readiness,

because what we will see next week lit the fire that spread the gospel through Asia

Might God do something similar in our area?

Brother and sister, do you believe it is possible that all of the Lehigh Valley can hear the gospel?

It will as the church, as we, have an intentional strategy, proclaim the unchanging message, in the

divine power of the Holy Spirit, working hard with patient endurance

Our strategy is to multiply worshipers, disciples and churches so that we become a family of

Multi-Planting churches that make disciples of Jesus who will live on mission for the

glory of God

Transition to the Lord’s Supper in **1 Corinthians 10:14-17, *“Therefore, my beloved, flee from***

***idolatry. I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of***

***blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we***

***break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we***

***who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.”***

Notice Paul’s warning to us before we participate in the Lord’s Supper, that we might ***“take heed***

***lest he fall.”* 1 Corinthians 10:12**

Is there in you, Christian, a life of idolatry of any kind?

He will tell us a truth 3 verses later, that behind every idolatry is a demon

The Christian must flee idolatry, for we are about to take the Lord’s Supper, and Jesus is our host

standing at the head of this table, and He wants no idol in our hearts

Idolatry in the Christian always leads to compromise with the world, where we are no different

One way to search your heart is to ask, *Am I different from those in the world?*

Do I love the same movies, the same music, the same pursuits as unbelievers?

Or do I have different goals, different ambitions, different loves that all center on Jesus?

Can we say that while we live in the midst of the world, the love for the world and the things of

the world is not in us?

Right now, at the Lord’s Table, we must begin to confess and repent and remember the grace of God that enabled Paul to say in this passage, ***“No temptation has overtaken you that is not***

***common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability,***

***but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to***

***endure it.”* 1 Corinthians 10:13**

We eat and drink with Jesus at the table, and with each other, to encourage each other to holiness

Take the break…

Take the juice…

***“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be***

***with you all.”* 2 Thessalonians 3:16**

Closing prayer