

Date: May 26, 2019

Text: Acts 19:8-22

Title: "It's (Not) Like Magic!"

Big Idea: Our Father is not a genie at our service to provide for our comfort and convenience when we do the right things or say the right words.

Extended Time in Ephesus (vv. 8-10)

Paul teaches in the Ephesian synagogue for three months, then in the school of Tyrannus for another two years. His previous record for ministry in one place was the eighteen months he spent in Corinth, and he was driven out of some cities within a single day. Why so long in Ephesus?

"Because God told him to stay there" is true, but can we discern some of the factors behind God's choosing to keep Paul there?

Twenty-first century Prineville is not first-century Ephesus, but this is where God has put each of us for right now. What do you know about our community?

How would you describe the spiritual climate?

How would you describe your situation within our community?

Within your circle of contacts?

(Not) Magic

Miracles (vv. 11, 12)

The concept of articles of clothing being used to obtain benefits or ward off evil would not have been strange to the Ephesians. What would have attracted attention to "the God Paul preaches"?

Can you think of any contemporary equivalents to these first-century Ephesian superstitious practices?

An Exorcism Gone Sideways (vv. 13-16)

Traveling exorcists were not uncommon in first-century Asia Minor. If the "seven sons of one Sceva" were Jewish priests, why were they invoking the name of Jesus?

How do you account for the outcome in verse 16?

How do we use the name of Jesus?

What do we need to keep in mind?

The Fear of the Lord (vv. 17-19)

Luke records that “the name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.” How do you explain this, given that invoking the name of Jesus had not worked for the sons of Sceva?

How about the fear Luke also mentions in verse 17?

Does fear have any place or role in our lives?

What makes the response of the Ephesian believers (vv.18, 19) significant?

Most of us do not have copies of *Magic for Dummies* or *DIY Sorcery* on our shelves at home. Is there a place for analogous repentance among believers in twenty-first century FBC-Prineville?

What might it look like?

The Word of the Lord (v. 20)

What does it look like when the word of the Lord grows mightily and prevails?

Advance Party to Macedonia (vv. 21, 22)

Paul is having an effective ministry in Ephesus, but he is not planning on staying indefinitely, he is already thinking ahead (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:5-9). Is this meant to be a pattern we are meant to replicate?

Or is this just for the missions committee?

Or is this a one-time event?

Apollos has already arrived in Macedonia (Acts 18:27, 1 Corinthians 16:12). Paul sends two more guys ahead in anticipation of his own arrival (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:10). Would I have someone to send ahead of me?