

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 16th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: A Growing Church in Times of Opposition (Acts 19:21-20:6)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What was your reaction when you heard the Vols beat Alabama this weekend? Be nice. Remember, small groups are NOT a place of division.

Discussion Questions

God Changes Lives, and Not Everyone is Excited about It (v. 19:21-29)

- What did your friends and family say when you were saved? Were they happy, or were they upset that you had chosen this way of life?
- What did you have to walk away from in order to follow Jesus? What was it that being honest before the Lord cost you? How is following Christ more important than the losses you experienced?
- In what ways are you letting go of how you used to do things and are now letting God control what happens in your life? Are you struggling to give up control?
- How do you handle the pushback for being a Christian?
- How have you been focusing on the opposition instead of the good of Jesus?
- Can you identify with Paul when he wanted to jump into the protest? Can you think of a time when a situation would have been handled better if you stayed calm “during the protest”? Please share.
- What are your idols? Idols are anything that gets between you and God? People will fight for their idols. What are you fighting for?
- What the world would be like if those in power (politicians, industry leaders, etc.) were to submit to Jesus and abandon their current path of pursuing the things (idols) that are not of God? What would those

people do in order to keep their lives that are financed by these powerful people from changing?

Don't Chase the Drama (v. 19:28-41)

- In Acts 19:30, Paul was cautioned not to engage and not to jump in the middle of the drama of the city. How can you be like Paul and keep from being sucked into the drama of our world? What do you gain by not being a part of the drama?
- Have you noticed the lack of clarity in everything around us today? Did you know you can't fix this drama? So, how do you stay away from this confusion and stay focused on Jesus?
- What are you confused about? Is there anything in your life or happening around you that you need God to bring clarity to?
- How is the crowd described in Acts 19:33-34 any different from the "mob mentality" we've all seen on the news for the last several years?
- Think about a current situation in your life that you're handling. Are you chasing drama or Jesus to fix it? How do you know?
- Notice, a city official was able to come forward in Acts 19:39-41 and use wisdom and calm persuasion to calm down the drama. How are you praying for those who lead in our own local government?
- Are you praying for ALL people, even those you don't agree with, as Paul directed in 1 Timothy 2:1-3? How could you pray for someone in leadership that you don't like or agree with today?
- What is the value of praying for our city officials and other government leaders?

Belong, Be Encouraged & Stay Committed (v. 20:1-6)

- Paul had a crew that gave him wise caution and counsel during the uproar in the city. How does your "crew" advise you to deal with drama? Do they tell you to stand down or get involved? Is this the best advice?
- How do you stay encouraged while dealing with opposition?
- Staying focused on Jesus and out of the drama is easier when done

with other Christians. How can you set aside more time in your personal life to spend with fellow believers and Jesus in your life?

- What can YOU do to change the minds of those who disagree with you? This is a trick question, because you can do nothing. Only Jesus can change them. So, how can you pray for them, so that they might find and follow Jesus?
- How do you feel about the reality that there are groups of people who absolutely resist the Gospel and will resist you because you're Christian?
- What would it look like for you to hit "pause" and pray about how God can work in a situation, instead of running to social media, gossip, or confrontation? Do you already do this? If so, share how it's changed the way you deal with opposition.
- What do you need to do to make sure that you "don't lose your soul trying to chase the drama of our broken world?" Do you need a break from watching the news or from social media? Switch the music you listen to?
- Despite the growing opposition, Paul continued to let the Spirit lead him to new cities to gather and encourage other believers. How are you being an encouragement to others? How are you helping other believers stay focused on Jesus? Or, how can you start?

Now What?

Encourage: Pastor Mike shared the quote, "Anytime your change costs someone else their comfort, that becomes a problem." As Christians, we love hearing about life change, and we celebrate growth in the church; however, we have to remember that not everyone gets excited about the Gospel. As the Church continues to grow, expect opposition from those who don't yet get it. Opposition will try to sway you from faith and make you conform to the ways of the world, but we have to stand firm in following Jesus, no matter the cost. Don't let drama and confusion shake your focus on Christ. If there's confusion, then do as Paul's friends told him - Don't go there. We all need friends like Paul's - people that keep us safe and give us

wise advice and encouragement in times of chaos. Commit to belonging to the Body of Christ, stay encouraged, and keep sharing the truth.

Ask: What can you start doing this week to handle opposition better? What idols do you need to let fall, in your life, so that you can follow Jesus with your whole life? Is there an area in your life where you've been giving into confusion and drama? Is there something that God's put on your heart to do, but you've ignored it because you're not yet ready for that change?

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

1. Have you steered away from something God asked you to do because you worried about what the world might think? Remember, not everyone cares about what God is doing in your life. Follow Jesus anyway!
2. Do not get sucked into the drama of our culture and our crazy world. Clean up your social media. Stay focused on Jesus, and pray for those who lead in our messed up world. Keep sharing the Gospel! Colossians 3:15 says, "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as a members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful."
3. Belong to the Church. Belong to other believers. Be an encourager and encourage others. Hebrews 10:24 says, "Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." When we come to Jesus Christ, we don't only become connected to Him, we are also connected to each other. We are connected to other Christians who have put their faith and trust in Him, and we need each other and the accountability this brings. Recommit to small group if you've been missing, or ask Him to lead you to a group where Christ is preached and taught, and where people are seeking to live for Him. Not only can you find peace and friendship, but small groups will provide you with the spiritual nourishment for your soul we ALL need.

Closing Prayer

Lord, we thank you for this passage and the guidance it provides us on how to live in a world that opposes the growth of the Church. Lord, we know and see that You're working, but we also know that not everyone celebrates the life change that You bring. Help us stay strong, bold, and wise in the face of opposition. Give us the power to walk away from any idols that stand in the way of pursuing Jesus. Help us resist the world's drama and confusion by staying focused and centered on the Gospel. You bring peace, clarity, and truth, and help us see that anything outside of that is the enemy's strategy to get us off track. And in this world of craziness and confusion, we pray for our leadership. Thank you for their willingness to step into these positions, their hard work, and for the sacrifices they've made to be leaders. Bring them wisdom, guidance, and truth as they continue to lead and be the peace they need to bring order to the chaos. Amen.

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 9th, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: Our God is an Awesome God! (Acts 19:11-20)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- What would a Nashville traffic jam be like if all our horns sounded like the horn on a toddler's tricycle?

Discussion Questions

God Can Do Anything (v. 11-12)

- Do you truly believe that God still does miracles? Do you downplay the existence of miracles?
- Have you ever experienced a miracle in which God used you? How did you feel after it?
- If you haven't experienced God using you to do a miracle, do you still have faith that He will use you?
- Have you ever been disappointed when God healed someone, but didn't restore you in the same way? Why did you think he would do it the same way twice, when He didn't always do the same thing twice when He walked the Earth?
- Would you follow and subscribe to God on social media?
- Sometimes God speaks through means that are completely unexpected. Describe a time when God answered your prayer with a miracle that was completely unexpected.

You Can't Fake the Funk! (v.13-16)

- Which do you seek more, the miracle itself or God?
- Are you truly devoted to Jesus and is He the Lord of your life?
- Describe a time when you tried to fake something. How did it turn out?
- Faking it until you make it does not grant you salvation. Are you simply name dropping God to others to fake your relationship with God?

- How can you grow in your authenticity and devotion to God?

God's Power Prevails, and the Gospel Will Win! (v. 17-20)

- What's the cost of following God? Is it worth it to you?
- Read Acts 19: 17-20. The Jews brought their old ways and physical possessions that caused them to sin and threw them in the fire. What physical things do you need to toss in the fire and give up? (i.e. books, movies, video games, etc.)
- They came forward in AWE and REVERENCE for God! They came forward to confess JESUS as Lord, and repent from EVIL WAYS! What would our city be like if everyone in it responded like this? How would they report it in the newspaper, on Fox News, or on CNN?
- If you are begging God for a miracle, make sure it's for HIS kingdom, not for yours. Have you ever asked God for something for selfish reasons? How did He answer you? How did it serve His kingdom?
- Think of something you've been asking God about – something you've earnestly prayed for. What if God is answering you, but you're not listening?

Now What?

Encourage: Remember, God does the miracles and uses us as vessels to carry those miracles through. We are not God, but have access to His throne as His children. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you, ALWAYS. Know and believe that there is power in His name! God does miracles and moves to make His name known. You have access to the power to make His name known! Seek those opportunities every day!

Ask: What is a miracle that you have been wanting to ask God for? Ponder over that question this week and seek God for His view on the topic and listen to what He has to say about it.

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

1. Ask for Miracles, but SEEK GOD more!

2. Be HONEST and AUTHENTIC in your devotion to Jesus!

3. Trust God that HIS GOSPEL Still Changes People!

From the Small Groups Team: Listen and worship to the song, Our God is an Awesome God by Rich Mullins

Closing Prayer

God, you are an awesome God! Thank you that you still do miracles and that you are still moving, even when things seem hopeless. Lead us this week as we grow in our devotion with you and that we may seek more opportunities to be vessels for your miracles. May we seek you whole-heartedly and without doubt that you are moving always. If there is any way that we are faking our faith, please reveal it to us this week. Lord we love you, we praise! In Jesus's name, AMEN!

Sunday Sermon Review: Week of October 2nd, 2022

Sermon Series: The Book of Acts

Sermon: The Gospel Changes People, For Real! So Stay Focused on It!
(Acts 19:1-10)

Guest Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette

Icebreaker

- Salty, sweet, or sour? Why?

Discussion Questions

Clarity in Christ is Very Important! (v. 1-4)

- We all know good people who think the way to Jesus is wanting to DO RIGHT and LIVE RIGHT, but that ISN'T enough to ensure our salvation. Being a fan of Jesus is not the same as following Jesus. How would you show them the way to Jesus?
- What is the difference between believing in God and following God? What about knowing of God versus knowing God?
- Do you crave the Gospel? Why or why not?
- Have you ever had a time when something EXCITED YOU so much, you couldn't help but tell others about it? When was the last time you got really excited about your faith in Jesus? What holds you back?
- Is the Holy Spirit telling you to tell people about God? If not, why not? Are you REALLY listening?
- What's the role of the Holy Spirit in your life? How would you bring clarity to this?
- Do you think that you can have clarity without repentance? Why or why not?

God Really Changes Lives! (v. 5-7)

- Why is it not enough to just know what the Bible says? Why do we need to keep reading it?

- What does it mean for God to change lives? Is it a one-time deal or a process? What do you need to really be transformed?
- Think of a time when you may have hesitated to tell someone about Jesus and the Gospel because you thought it might offend them. What would the Holy Spirit want you to do?
- Do you feel qualified enough to tell people about Jesus? Why or why not?
- These twelve new followers mentioned in Acts IMMEDIATELY responded when the TRUTH of the Gospel was made CLEAR and PLAIN! How can you tell someone today about the Gospel, tell them about JESUS, tell them that GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT wants to LIVE ON THE INSIDE OF THEM so GOD CAN CHANGE THEIR LIVES?
- How does it make you feel knowing that the Holy Spirit desires to dwell in us? What does that tell you about your importance to Him?

Stay Focused, and Don't Waste Time! (v. 8-10)

- Sometimes it's OK to withdraw like Paul did. You will never be able to change some people, so you just have to walk away and leave that to God. Who do you know who "became stubborn and continued in unbelief" and couldn't be convinced of the Gospel? Did God ever change them, or is He still working on them?
- In this passage, we're told not to waste time on stubborn unbelievers? Is that any different from a believer who refuses to repent?
- When do you know when to move on from stubborn people? Even if it's a stubborn person, do you have a willingness to pray and the obedience to move if God calls you to?
- When you're faced with opposition, how do you stay focused and encouraged to keep sharing the truth?
- What would it look like for you to be reasonable and persuasive in leading others to Christ? What's the danger of being offensive or antagonistic about the Gospel?

Now What?

Encourage: As Christ followers, we have the best news, the most powerful story to tell! We get to tell others about the gospel, a story that holds the power to change lives. This is such a great gift, which is why it's so important that we get it right. Our friends, family, coworkers, neighbors need clarity about Christ, and God wants to use us to bring it to them. When we can clearly communicate the importance of truth, God can start working in their hearts. When people understand what God wants to do for them, they will respond, go all in with Christ, and allow God to transform their hearts. And remember, we don't seek clarity to change lives because that's God's job. We seek clarity to share the truth of the gospel, so that when people choose to follow Christ, they have the right story. Not everyone will understand our passion for this, and that's okay. Our job is to plant seeds, help water them as we're called, and God brings their growth.

Ask: When was the last time I got excited about what God's doing around me? How is my passion for Jesus right at this moment? What would reignite my passion for sharing The Word? Is there anything I'm lacking clarity about when it comes to sharing Jesus with others? How can I get better at talking about the Gospel with people?

Challenge: As Pastor Mike challenged us in the message:

Do what you can to stoke the flames of passion for Jesus? What will it take for you to be excited about Jesus again?

Ask God, "Who can I tell about Jesus this week?" Pray for them and pray for your opportunity.

Believe God to show up in a major way and change someone's life!

Refuse to get discouraged and keep telling people about Jesus!

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank you for giving us the best news to share with others. Thank you for the gift of a life giving message in this world. Lord, we're ready to reignite passion for You again. Holy Spirit, come into our hearts and burn inside of us like never before. Give us clarity of the clarity of the Gospel that we need to confidently and boldly speak about Christ to those around us. We don't want to be people that know of You, we want to be people that know You. Use us to speak Your truth so that others can come to know you as well. Help us remember that as long as we just help plant seeds, You'll come and make them grow. Open our eyes and hearts to the person in our lives that desires You and how we can help. Not everyone will understand our passion and what we speak, and we ask that You keep us encouraged to keep going.