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THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 19

INTRODUCTION:

There are several important facts about Paul's missionary work. First, he tried to persuade men to believe the Gospel and become disciples of Jesus Christ.

Second, he undertook a task of teaching his converts and to build up the church - accordingly, he wrote letters to the churches and visited and re-visited the churches.

Third, he liked to work in new territory. He liked to proclaim the Christian Gospel or message in the cities in which it had never been proclaimed before. He liked to plant the Gospel in new fields. Quite often, he planted, and others would cultivate, and God would give the increase.

Fourthly, he was a missionary statesman. A theological pioneer and a teacher of the churches who answered the call of Europe and knew how to present the Gospel in a persuasive way as a Jew, Greek, Judiasier, and Romans, or Latin.

Paul followed the best methods of evangelism. He worked on the plan - he sought to find those who would listen and those who were prepared to accept the message.

Note also, that the results of the Gospel everywhere is the same essentially. Men are transformed. 2 Cor. 6:17. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

And it is glorious to see how lives are changed after they are saved.

In the same way, it is vital today for us to go and to plant churches in new housing developments, new cities, new towns. Wherever the population migrates too - the church should go there. This was Paul's plan.

In our message this evening, we want to travel with the Apostle Paul on his third missionary tour or journey. He sets off from Antioch and this will be the last time that he goes out from this city. We back up to Chapter 18:23 where he begins this tour.

Now I want this message tonight to fix in your mind at least three things. First, spiritual power. Secondly, special powers. Thirdly, Satanic powers.

I. SPIRITUAL POWER

Paul begins by going through Galatia and Phrygia and strengthening the disciples in Acts 23:18-23.

V. 24 He then deals with a man by the name of Apollos in V. 24. Someone has mentioned that he was a half-way Christian. Now Paul had no Barnabas or Silas with him at this time. He was heading out on familiar group and his real purpose was to strengthen converts and to help the churches grow. He was involved in helping them mature in the Scriptures.

Apollos was a golden voiced orator. He was a powerful speaker, literally the

His message was basically incomplete. He announced the word about Jesus - but he said nothing about these three things -- the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

V. 26 - The most remarkable thing here - Aquila and Priscilla, fine Christian people, invite this man to their home. They must have had him in for dinner. And they decided to help him with this problem. And at this point, you really admire all three of these Christians. And it would be wonderful today if Christians would work in close harmony in this way. Here were two dear Christian friends, they had been in the Lord for several months. They had been led to Christ by Paul at Corinth. And now they heard this young man whose preaching was incomplete.

What do people do today if they hear some young preacher make a mistake. The first thing they do is write a letter to the editor of the state paper that is published for their denomination. Or they reject him, or they criticize him. Now, if instead, they would invite him home and lovingly and wisely - expound to him the more accurate presentation of Christ. As these two showed him how the Old Testament Scriptures fitting in with the death and the resurrection of Christ, and the coming of the Spirit.

Now it took a wonderful man of God, willing to sit here humbly and listen. What amazing news he was receiving. Here was the implication of the cross. The resurrection and the coming of the Spirit. All of this was explained. And he learned what he had heard. So he knew the Old Testament and now he learned more about it. So Apollos was able to go on and preach and go to another place. As we read in V. 26 - they expounded to him a more perfect way.

Scripture verse says here that he was a man mighty in the Scriptures - in the way that he could speak. But it also indicates that he was limited in his own knowledge and his own understanding. And in his own spiritual experience. He knew only the baptism of John. Which was a great deal because it was the truth about Jesus but it was not the whole truth.

When you think about the baptism of John, and the meaning of the message which John preached in the wilderness - and the people came out to hear him. They were startled at his message because he hammered away at two or three great truths.

First, he announced that forgiveness of sin was possible before God only on the basis of repentance. He preached this as a way of forgiveness.

Second, people could express their repentance in baptism - which was a symbolic act of cleansing. Now this too was something new to these people. There were certain laws of cleansing in the Old Testament. These were similar to baptism. But here he says, you repent, change your mind about sin. And you come and be baptized.

The third thing John announced was, the one that would complete the work that he had begun - that is repentance, is just a beginning with God. And something else is going to go and follow that forgiveness of sin. There is coming one after me, he said, who is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to carry. I have baptized ye with water as a symbol of forgiveness. God gives, but he will go further and baptize you with the Holy Spirit. He will put life into you and give you power to live as God asks. That I cannot do.

Apollos knew this much - but he knew (nothing) of the cross and the resurrection. He did not know of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

V. 1 Paul deals with 12 men. V. 1-7. Paul appears again at Ephesus. As he has promised on his second missionary journey, if God wills - I will return. Acts 18:19. But now he has fulfilled his promise - he has come back. And he finds immediately upon arrival that there are some people here who have been ministered too, by Apollos. And at least, to the extent of the baptism of John. And Paul arrives on the scene.

V. 2 - He asked a question. Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believe. He meant these men and was impressed by their lack of spiritual power. They did not look like Christians to him - so Paul asked them the question.

They reply, we have not even heard anything about the Holy Spirit. Paul was right - he thought something was lacking. That they seemed to be sincere - but something was missing.

They had not even heard about Pentecost.

This question indicates that the normal Christian pattern is that the spirit is given immediately upon belief in Jesus Christ.

There is no suggestion here that the spirit of God is given after a long period of belief in Christ. Jesus himself predicted that giving would be immediate in the 7th chapter of John. If anyone thirst, let him come to me and drink. He, who believes in me as the Scripture has said, out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. John adds, now this he said, about the spirit. Those who believe in him were to receive. John 7:37-39.

So it is, belief in Jesus which begins the Holy Spirit. And Paul met here in Ephesus, these people who knew something about Jesus.

But there was something missing - what it was, we are not told. Perhaps there was no joy in their lives. There came to be no peace.

John clearly taught the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit had come upon Jesus when John baptized him. And John knew this. They meant, we have never heard that the Holy Spirit is now given. He has come as John announced that he would.

Paul understanding that, asked them.

V. 3 - What were you baptized into. And they replied, into John's baptism. It was immediately clear that they were half way. They had come as far as repentance but they knew nothing of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Remember John's ministry was like a reformation. He came among the moral rottenness of Judiasm. And from the wilderness preached an inductory sermon on Jesus. He told his vast audience to believe in the one that was to come after him. John did not establish any religion of his own. Those who were baptized into something that was to come. He pointed men to Christ - the lamb of God.

John's preaching was very effective. Many were baptized. These were to look beyond this for Jesus.

There are multitudes of people in church memberships who are not Christian. They have John's baptism and no more. There are people today who have been baptized as babies. They had no opportunity to understand what the Christian message was all about. And they had no opportunity to exercise faith in the risen Lord.

Someone may ask me, do you think I should be re-baptized. Now that I have really come to know a risen Lord. On the basis of this text, I say to them, yes - you should. Because your baptism did not represent your personal faith. In a risen, abiding Lord.

When they come to understand that they were re-baptized by the Apostle Paul - who layed his hands upon them. Now we need to understand that he did not impart anything to them. That is never what the laying on of hands does.

Rather, it signifies identification. Paul is identifying these twelve people with the body of Christ. That new body found by the Holy Spirit - when he came on the day of Pentecost.

And by laying his hands on them - he signifies their union with the family of the Lord Jesus.

V. 6 - You will read this. We led them to understand and to receive the spirit. There can be no spiritual life or fruit in our lives if we stifle out the spirit.

What are the fruits of the spirit. Gal. 5:22,23.

If Paul should come today and say to you - did you receive the Holy Spirit.

A person's life is worldly, unforgiving, unfaithful. Prayerless.

The business of a fruit tree is to bear fruit. And what profit is a person to God if he is not bearing fruit.

The mark of the spirit's coming is here in spiritual gifts. It is strange to

me how often people read this passage, and note only that they spoke in tongues. They immediately think this is another Pentecost.

Two gifts are mentioned here. And these are spiritual gifts. He did say when he came into your life. And the whole aim and purpose of your redemption is to discover and to put to work those spiritual gifts which were given to you. They exercise these spiritual gifts and begin to speak, in tongues - as listed in I Cor. 12. It is very natural that this gift would be given on this particular occasion. For as Paul tells us in I Cor. 14, the gift of tongues is designed especially as a witness to unbelieving Jews.

V. 7 - These 12 disciples were Jews. They had listened to the teachings of Apollos. They lived in the Jewish community and they had become Christians. But their friends around them were still Jews. And now the Holy Spirit uses their gifts - that they praised God in languages they had never learned. They do so publicly - never privately, as a sign to unbelievers. That God is at work.

I Cor. 14 - This fulfillment of prediction and prophecy of Isaiah by men of strange tongues and by the lips of foreigners will I speak to this people. And even when they will not listen to me, says the Lord. When you see and hear men coming to you speaking of other tongues, you will know the hour has struck when God turns from Israel to the Gentile world. The Gospel is now to go out to the Gentiles as well.

To the unbelieving Jews.

Today, there is a imitation gift of tongues. Which has been known among men for centuries. Plato discusses this in his lectures to the Greeks in Athens 400 years before Christ. Frequently, it was heard among all classes of people,

and those who fall into it by mistake are misled. And become spiritually derailed.

Now, I think we can all understand the appeal that this makes to many Christians. It seems to offer such a wonderful experience. To be a short-cut to spirituality. It seems desirable.

You compare it with the Biblical description of the gift of tongues, and it is not the same thing today. The Biblical gift is a proper one which will bless - it will encourage and strengthen. A false gift leads only to spiritual

blindness. You say D.L. Moody said to young girl "She had said that she could not love God, that it was very hard to love him. "Is it hard to love your mother? Do you have to learn to love your mother?" - "I don't know." - "No; I can't help it; that is spontaneous." - "When the Holy spirit kindles love in your heart, you can not help loving God; it will be spontaneous." - "When H.S. comes into your heart & mine, it will be easy to love & serve God."

Along with this, was the gift of prophecy. The ability to open the Scriptures in power and truth. That is, to cause to shine or to make shine. So the prophets which stand as one before the word of God and causes it to shine. It illuminates people's lives with the power, and the truth of the Scripture - which shines as a light in a dark place.

Therefore one of these gifts was designed for the unbelievers. And the other for the believers. So the gift of tongues then at that time was for the unbelievers. I Cor. 14. But the gift of prophecy is for believers. So then in Ephesus, both groups were present. And these 12 people were filled with the spirit and there was a difference about their lives.

Boy turned Army - filling applications - Blank for Religion? - ask recruiting officer how to spell Presbyterian - Just put a P. - can't do that,

There are many people today who believe in Jesus - yet they do not show evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given upon the exercise of belief in the Lord Jesus. That they will think about a PISK-A-PETIAN!!

So what is wrong in our Christians if there is no evidence of the working of

the Holy Spirit. None of the ~~joy~~, the ~~grace~~, and the ~~power~~ - it is because we are not believing in him. We may say that we believe in Christ. But today there is no sense of expectancy. No living in Christ today. No signs of the spirit of God. No freshness, no vitality.

One more word - how shall we know whether the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us.
First, there will be a growing love for our neighbors. A growth of general love that leads us to love each other. And a passionate love for those who are lost in sin.

Second, there will be a hatred for sin. No longer can you dwell in fleshly lust. It will enable you to look back on the world and count it as nothing. The decisive sign is love of holiness. Love for holiness a reality, a heart that pants after the holiness of God. Your life will become a burning prayer to be sanctified - body, soul, and life on the altar for God. Now some Christians are afraid of the word holy.

But we are not called upon to do with as little Christianity as possible. It is not just to get over the line and that will do. It is this - be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect. Be ye holy as God is holy. Now that is good for every Christian and young person included.

Third, a love of Christ in God. Sincere trust in his son. The spirit will make Christ real. When I meet a Christian filled with the spirit - what is it that makes it a real delight to be around them. Christ is the nearest person to him. He talks to Christ. He dreads that he might offend Christ. He delights

to please Christ. The weariness and the drudgery of having to attend church or to perform some religious duty is taken away. By these things, you know whether the spirit dwells in you.

*Glass if full - What else can you pour in? Nothing
Life full of spirit - Devil not take advantage of you.*

II. SPECIAL POWERS

Now we come in V. 8 - and discover that Paul went to the synagogue and stayed there for the space of three months.

V. 9 The Bible tells us that he then took up his place in a rented school house. Where Paul instructed and worked for two years, teaching. And carrying on his ministry.

One of the major problems at Ephesus was witchcraft, superstition, demonism, astrology, occult, cracks of every description. It was a stronghold of darkness and the church begins to operate in this darkness. What a remarkable account as Paul uses the weapon of truth. That the kingdom of God must oppose here the kingdom of darkness. So every Sabbath day for three months - he opened the Scriptures.

And then of course, V. 9 = He went to the school house and he takes his disciples with him. And here he lectures daily in this rented place. They tell us that at that time, they closed up their shops and went home for a leisure meal. In the afternoon, they worked around the garden. And they opened up the shops late in the afternoon - perhaps around 4 or 5 o'clock and stayed open until 9:30 at night. So from 11 to 4 Paul had an opportunity to teach, the Gospel - and to train those Christians. Five hours a day, six days a week. 52 weeks a year for two years. This was a marvelous work.

V. 10 - The Bible says all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord - both Jews and Greeks, in the entire providence.

Now what happened, the Christians who heard him lecture and teach were captivated and they began to spread the word throughout the whole area. They also, we might say, began to establish churches on their own. And to evangelize and to build up other churches.

V. 11 - Special powers. We are not supposed - or we are not to suppose that the Apostles were always able to perform miracles. Power was now given to the Apostle Paul.

Today men claim to have power to do certain things. But Luke says that God walked - not Paul.

There would have been no miracle if they had looked to Paul instead of God.

You need to underline this word - (extraordinary). These miracles were unusual - they were different from any previous miracles that had taken place.

V. 12 - It tells us that even a handkerchief who had touched Paul or a sweatband - that he had tied about his head while he worked to make tents. Keeping the sweat from running down into his eyes. Associating with labor and toil. That he said, if somebody touches that band, some extra ordinary miracle would take place. Imagine that, a handkerchief that Paul used for blowing his nose.

Now the apron mentioned here, is not the apron that ladies wear in the kitchen. The aprons were made of leather - and he wore that leather apron in making tents. Not in making meals. And this was used again to perform miracles. God wrought special miracles - like the very magic which these people were acquainted with. Evil men often work wonders.

This was a time of emergency. And somehow, God gave a special power. As he did to Moses and his rod. There was nothing magic about that rod. God wrought the miracles of holding back the walls of water. But Moses used this rod before Pharaoh. And special powers were given to carry out these miracles. They were symbols - that God chose to employ in order to use as a channel of power. God honored these.

What today you hear some faith healers that will anoint a piece of cloth and mail it to you around the country. And that is a form of magic. And I don't think Luke is talking about that kind of a special power here in this.

III. SATANIC POWERS

V. 13 - It is very interesting now. A group of Jews tried their hands at the same thing of imitating Paul. They had witnessed the marvels of Paul and they tried their hand at the same. They heard Paul use the name of Jesus - and they would make this their magic formula. They called one to them possessed of an evil spirit. And exclaimed in the name of Jesus - come out. I rebuke you demon - come out of him.

V. 14 - The seven sons of Sceva knew a good thing when they saw it. They were

sons of the Jewish high priest. And they thought they could use this in their own religion to advance their own cause. So they attempted to jump on the band wagon. And they employed the two names they thought would be kind of a magic formula to cast out the devils, and evil spirits - I jure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches. It was a remarkable thing about these people. It helps us to know today there are many fortune tellers. They will say mis, mediums. They know enough about the occult to say impressive things. And they are fooling around with powers they do not understand. And they spoke to this evil spirit, that dwelt in him and the spirit cease him and empowered him to challenge these seven sons and to take them all on single-handedly.

V. 15 - The evil spirit said - Jesus I know. Paul I know. But who are you? The evil spirit was angry by the use of the name of Jesus. Jesus is threatening them. They knew Jesus and they knew him with deep knowledge. They were acquainted with Paul - they knew his name. But who are you - that was the signal for an attack.

V. 16 *Evil spirit jumped on sons of Sanna - this Jesus needed*
The incident is somewhat humorous and perhaps became a story well known all over Ephesus. It was impressive and the result was that the name of Jesus was magnified. That he had power in the realm of the invisible world.

And this was a sign that Jesus could crack the stronghold.

V. 18 - These people had been trusting in their own thing to ward off evil spirits. And to give them good fortune. Some think a rabbits foot in the pocket is very helpful. Others will tack a horseshoe up over the door for good luck. Now when they trusted in Christ - they ceased to need these magic books and papers. They begin to clean up their own lives. Those who had been in some sin, devulging in hidden practices, made confessions. V. 18. What they were doing in private. They were relatively new Christians - some of them.

Perhaps, they never thought anything was wrong. But as they sat under the teachings of Paul, they began to see that what they were doing with astrology and stars, and superstition was weak, fearful, upsetting, and distressing.

V. 19 - They participated in (another movement.) They get their lives straightened out by confession. But they brought their books together and their magic art and burned them. It was a beautiful illustration. Imagine the scene of gathering with their books. Somebody has estimated the cost of this at \$10,000. And placing them on the fire. They are convicted of their sins and conscience compels destruction. Some of these magic objects were valuable. They had been handed down from generation to generation - from loved ones that had used them and had touched them.

They could have kept them and not used them. And they could have sold them. At the bookstore. But their conscience said, lets burn them.

When the church begins to clean up its own life, then the world will begin to see itself as it is. And be moved to start straightening up and become what it ought to be. Then people will surrender this literature as costly as it is. 50,000 pieces of silver - a tremendous sum.

It is clear that the means by which witchcraft seizes and holds people - human beings are not easily invaded by demon forces. God has meant and made man to be a king. The demon cannot force his way into your life. He must do so by deceiving us. They find a way to trick you and they move into your mind and into your thoughts. And dominate your whole life.

Suppose the saloon keepers in our city came to church. And confessed that they had been living wicked lives and that they were determined to get out of the liquor business and live for Christ. That would be wonderful. But how would

that they were sincere. If the trucks came and took the liquor down to the river and poured it overboard, and if they dismantled the bars and said we meant business. We have been converted. There would be great excitement in this city. I'll tell you something else - it would have a great effect upon all of our people.

Conscience says burn your bridges behind you. Do not go back to the old way. Do not cross back to old sins. Makes a clean break.

The old farmer who came to town once a week, hitched his horse to the hitching post in front of the saloon and went in and became intoxicated. Then, one day was converted. The next time he came to town, the Christian friend noticed that he had hitched his horse to the same hitching post - near the saloon. I'm afraid of that he said - it was not long until the old temptation overcame the farmer. He went back to drinking just as his friend feared.

When a person comes to Jesus, he must change his hitching post. He must not go back into the Devil's territory.

A girl told a Dr. Steadman once of an experience she had once as a school teacher up in Alaska. During the long winter evenings - they whiled away their time with a ouija board. We were getting various answers and messages, and we thought that it was nothing but a game. Soon she said, we were aware that strange thoughts came to our minds. I'd go to bed at night and certain words would come. Gradually these words would insist that I pay attention. Inner voices would say - take a pencil and write them down. I would resist. It was always an obscene word. I talked to my roommate and she was having the same experience. Now she said, I can't go to sleep for hours thinking of these filthy things and voices that come to me. Now she said, is this God. The

preacher said, no - you have become a victim of the power of darkness. The Satanic powers that possess you. Deut. and read the warning - that these things are an abomination to the Lord. He showed her how to become a Christian and asked her to pray to God for help. To free her of these voices.

The whole business of the horoscope and the astrology, and the Eastern philosophy are done by means of Satanic forces. And the books on any of these subjects if you read them - all of them suggest that you are going to discover a hidden power that few people know about.

There are people who write books about this every week. You are going to discover something that contains the secrets of the universe.

Now Paul made an assault on this strong hold and cracked it wide open. The Bible says the word of God grew and prevailed mightily - V. 20.

Now this is how the church ought to operate - Satanic powers. Drugs, is one. Witchcraft, homosexuality is another. These trapped people into a philosophy. That they ought to accept their condition. And that this ought to be a normal and a natural way to live. But this situation needs the assault of truth. And God longs to deliver people from these strongholds.

A Christian, as somebody has described him - is somebody who is fearless, cheerful, and constantly in trouble. Paul was this way.

V. 21 - (It) seemed that if Paul's work had been over, like the Marines had landed - the situation was well in hand.

V. 22 - and in 21 - He talked about his future plans. He wanted to move to Rome if possible. He must see Rome - and then he had the care of the new Christians and the churches that he had started at Berea, Philippi, etc.

X V. 23 - The situation revealed three things. The manufacturing of things that were offensive to Heaven.

Second, the selling of things of evil for money.

Third, the revolutionary power of the Gospel - the word prevailed.

V. 24 - Demetrius, a silversmith speaks.

V. 24-25 - He first says our business is in danger. The temple of Diana - a great center for art and banking. The statue of Diana which was in the temple was said to have dropped straight down from Heaven. People worshipped this statue. The worshippers came and the silversmiths enjoyed a good business. They made small images of the goddess and sold them.

This was a profitable business. Now their business was ruined. People no longer wanted to buy these items and they blamed Paul. The tourists no longer wanted to pick up these items. These men had a right to fear their business. And if over 50 per cent of the people in America who are supposed to be Christians would refrain from evil things - if they would quit buying liquor, if they would quit gambling, if they would desecrating the Lord's Day, all of the shops and the businesses would close up on God's day.

They had been profiteering and who cared anything about the lives of people. They wanted to make a fast buck - and so they were trying to arouse a mob to

defend their interest.

V. 26 - He made a personal observation - ye see and hear that not alone at Ephesus. Now they had seen the change the Gospel has brought. They had denounced their old associations, their old habits, their old religion. They saw these changes and there was no denying them.

You have known a drunkard or a blasphemer - and by the power of the Gospel, he becomes reverent.

The change was that the religion of the city was threatening the temple. The Godly city.

Thirdly, he says that his general observation - ye hear. Some of our own town's people - Corinth, Philippi - idolators, thieves, fornicators, covetors, revilers. We hear about all of these who have been changed.

Fourth, the agency. This Paul - V. 26. Now not these angels - but this Paul. How did he do it. How did he do it - by civil power.

Persuaded by words of the Gospel. I think Demetrius was really blind to the significant way in which his trade had been ruined. And it was not by open attack. Paul never said anything really against their religion. The religion of Ephesus, or denounced the temple, or their pagan superstitions. He did not go around faultfinding. But Paul preached the positive new faith. With such tremendous power and such fantastic reality. That the Christians simply declared Jesus Christ and his availability to man.

As Thomas Chalmers put it, the explosive power of a new affection.

V. 28 - The crowd was confused. There was a mob. Many did not know why they were there for two hours. And this sounds very familiar doesn't it. How little human nature has changed in 2000 years. They were excited by false, emotional issues. The theatre which would seat about 25,000 people was perhaps crowded.

V. 30 - Paul wanted to speak to them. He was a fearless man. But his friends

recognized the mood of the crowd. They were ugly. And they were vicious.

Paul's life in danger;

*- Woman Do I have Asiatic Flu?
Dr. No, you have Egyptian Flu
Woman What is that?
Dr. you're going to become a mummy!
Paul was about to become a mummy*

V. 33 - The crowd took up a wild chant. And Alexander, one of the their number stood up and explained their attitude. And he made it clear to them that they were not the ones who brought about the problems.

You remember Paul wrote beware of Alexander, the coppersmith, who did me much harm.

I read somewhere where a preacher once commented on that text. That he too had been damaged by Alexander, the coppersmith. As he looked at the collection plate and saw all of the pennies there.

But the crowd refused to hear Alexander and drown out his words in V. 34 - the crowd was very emotional.

V. 35 The town clerk, V. 35. How important it was that the town clerk stood up. These men are not robbers. If they have done wrong, take them before the court. He was a great politician. For two hours he had listened to all of the others. He explained that if the goddess truly were God - that she would be able to take care of herself.

V. 37 - He said these men that you have brought here have not robbed our temple. And the courts are open if you would like to satisfy this thing by the legislature - it is available. V. 38.

V. 39 - He said, we are in serious danger of losing our freedom in this city, if we are not careful. Our Roman masters are going to question us about this disturbance.

V. 40 - 41. He gives advice that they should go home. And this was an intelligent point, he was after keeping the peace. I don't think the town's clerk cared very much about the issue. But he wanted to keep everything orderly.

And isn't it marvelous that God uses the government for channels of bringing about peace. And how the government is being used of God today. Some of the fear and the distress out of people's minds concerning the energy crisis. In this way, our Heavenly Father loves us when we put His will above everything else.

Do you know the last glimpse of the church at Ephesus is in the book of Revelation. They are steadfast. But they had left their first love. He talks about their patience and their labor, but he challenges them to come back and do their first works.

*(Saw & Eng. at sea) - Small vessel, long whaling voyage, came back, short of water
Near Eng. Port - wanted water, afraid to go in port, people saw their distress & signaled
To war is over, peace has been declared, couldn't believe it - did not dare go in -
Finally, better go surrender, cargo & lives of many than perish at sea with out water.
Arrived - found that peace had been declared
Many not believe glad fishing, that peace has been made by Jesus Christ!*