

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. 10 - 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 a right to say?
 Dr: No, you have Egyptian blood
 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.

James & Ing. at sea - found vessel, long whaling voyage, came back, short of water
Near Ing. Port - wanted water, afraid to go in port, people saw their distress & signalled
The war is over, peace has been declared, couldn't believe it - did not dare go in -
finally, better go surrender, cargo & lives & money than perish at sea without water.
Arrived - found peace had been declared
Many not believe glad tidings, that peace has been made by Jesus Christ!