

Confident Christianity

Acts 19:1-20

“The future is as bright as the promises of God.” Adoniram Judson

I. The Game Changer: The Holy Spirit. Acts 19:1-7

“And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ And they said, ‘No, we have not even heard there is a Holy Spirit?’” Acts 19:1-2

Faithfulness and Fruitfulness: The Holy Spirit was the guarantee that the church would stand firm, grow to spiritual maturity, and make a global impact.

John the Baptist's Message: Repent and be baptized. Get ready for the sacrifice of Jesus.

Paul's Message: Rejoice and be baptized. Get ready for the sufficiency of Jesus. (The Holy Spirit)

“Without downplaying individual experience, Luke's narrative emphasizes corporate experiences with the Spirit... That about twelve receive the Spirit might recall the original twelve in Jerusalem, showing geographic and temporal continuity in the work of the Spirit. God's people in every place need the Spirit for mission.” Craig Keener

“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:2,3

“So then brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” Romans 8:12-14

“Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills but the Spirit gives life.” 2

Corinthians 3:4-6

“When sinners repent and believe, Jesus not only takes away their sins but also baptizes them with his Spirit.” John Stott

II. The New Reality: The Kingdom of God is Here. Acts 19:8-10

“And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.” Acts 19:8

Matthew 3:1-2 “In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ‘Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

Matthew 4:17 “From that time Jesus began to preach, saying ‘Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.’”

The crucified and resurrected Jesus is now the King of heaven and earth and He has come to take possession of His people and His planet for His glory and for our good.

“The Lord says to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool. The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies! Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power.’”

Psalms 110:1-3

"Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying 'I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.' I will tell of the decree: 'The Lord said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will give the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.'" Psalm 2:5-8

"The Bible is a redemptive story of a crucified messiah who brings the kingdom through his atoning death on the cross". Jeremy Treat, Seek First

“If we’re honest with ourselves, the internal, silent prayer of our fallen hearts is ‘my kingdom come.’ We want people to follow our agenda. We want the world to praise the glory of our names. ‘Your kingdom come’ is a dangerous prayer because we’re stepping off the throne of our own lives and submitting to God’s agenda of bringing restoration and renewal in creation. To pray ‘your kingdom come’ is to ask God’s gracious reign to invade the sin-corrupted spaces of our lives and our world.” Jeremy Treat, Seek First

“Jesus didn’t come to make the world a better place. He came to make the world new by grace. Like rays of sun that pierce through the dark clouds, the healings and miracles of Jesus are God’s reign breaking in on earth as it is in heaven.”
Jeremy Treat, Seek First

The display of his kingdom authority is not through political displays of power or the ability to outwit and out-maneuver the great nations and rulers of the world. The display of his kingdom is through the lives of Christians living, loving, and sacrificing for His cause without fear in the midst of a hostile world.

III. The Name Above All Names. Acts 19:8-10

“And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.” Acts 19:11-12

What does the Name Above Every Name Produce?

Fear: “And fear fell upon them all.”

Praise: “the name of the Lord was extolled.”

Confession of Sin: “confessing and divulging their practices.”

Costly Repentance: “fifty thousand pieces of silver.”

The Holy Spirit, the gospel of the kingdom, the Name above every name produces people who are willing to forsake everything to have a part of the kingdom of God. It produces the Adoniram Judson's who leave everything and lay everything on the line ***to follow the One who did the same for them.***

Study Questions:

1. When you hear the word **confidence**, what do people usually base it on—and how is Christian confidence different?
2. Why do you think Paul's first question in Ephesus was, "*Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?*" (Acts 19:2)
3. According to Romans 6:2–4 and Romans 8:12–14, what does life in the Spirit look like in everyday obedience and identity?
4. Why is the Holy Spirit essential not just for personal growth, but for the church's **mission and fruitfulness**?
5. What does it mean to say that **the kingdom of God is here**, and how does Jesus' resurrection and reign make that true?
6. Why is praying "*Your kingdom come*" a dangerous prayer for our natural instincts and agendas?
7. How does understanding Jesus as reigning King give Christians confidence in a resistant or hostile world?
8. In Acts 19:11–20, what responses does the exaltation of Jesus' name produce, and which one stands out most to you?
9. Why is **costly repentance** an essential fruit of the gospel rather than a contradiction of grace?
10. What are some modern "magic books" that Christians may need to lay down in order to follow Jesus fully?
11. In light of this passage, where is God calling you to grow in **Spirit-dependence, kingdom submission, or bold obedience** this week?