

STUDY NOTES

The Acts of the Apostles

A MESSAGE SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH (Summer 2016)

WWW.NEWCITYPHX.COM/SERMONS - BRIAN KRUCKENBERG

The following content is based on the message “The Centrality of Jesus” spoken on 06/26/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

PRAYER

Pray that God teaches us and leads our discussion as we each get to share.

THE SCRIPTURE: ACTS 19

ACTS 19:1-10: REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

The disciples of John that were living in Ephesus hadn't heard of Jesus' death and resurrection. They had turned from their sins, but hadn't confessed Jesus as Lord. Repenting means to turn from our old way. Confessing means grabbing on to something new. We are to repent from the old way, and to confess Christ—not confessing legalism or a license to do whatever we want.

Jesus is who we follow and who we worship

- *Why are both repenting of our old way **and** confessing Christ important?*
- *How have you experienced someone who preaches repentance, but confesses a form of legalism?*
- *How can someone repent, but still confess a license to do whatever they want?*

ACTS 19:11-20 RESPONSE OF THE MAGICIANS

In the next two sections, we are going to see two different responses from people who had their livelihood challenged by the message of Jesus. In this section, the power of Jesus is seen over magic and demonic forces.

The miracles done by the apostles are never presented as ends in themselves but always as opportunities to share Jesus.

- *Describe an opportunity in your life where God seemed to do extraordinary things, and you were able to share Jesus because of it.*

These people recognized the power of Jesus and praised his name. They gave up their businesses totaling 50,000 days wages. This could possibly equate to 5 million dollars.

- *Talk about the level of commitment these people had to give up their livelihood.*
- *How can we show a similar level of commitment to the message of Jesus?*

ACTS 19:21-41: RESPONSE OF ARTEMIS'S FOLLOWERS

In this section, we see a very different response to a similar situation above. Paul said that gods made from human idols aren't Gods. If the people of the city took Paul's message seriously, Demetrius's sales would plummet. In turn, Demetrius started up a riot, and people began to respond because their idols were threatened. They were not willing to give up their idols for the true God.

- *How would you define an idol?*
- *Why can money be such a dangerous idol?*

IDOLS AND THE CHURCH

Then: They said that there was a god behind everything—agriculture, sex, money, etc.
Now: We don't say there is a god behind something, we just say or act like it is god!

- *Identify some idols/false gods in your own lives.*

We have to be willing to put Jesus in front of everything—whether it be money, comfort, religion, or any of the false gods that we have in our own lives. **Most powerful idols are good things turned into ultimate things.** Idols (false gods) never give what they promise. Be careful because false gods, while empty, are extraordinarily powerful.

- *How have your idols given you fulfillment? How have they failed in giving you fulfillment?*
- *What is a good thing that you have turned into an idol/false god in the past? Talk about how you came to realize that it was an idol/false god.*
- *At what point do you think the good thing was turned into an idol/false god?*
- *What are some things in your life currently that you feel like might be an idol/false god?*
- *How do you think you can help prevent good things from becoming idols/false gods?*
- *Reflect on what Jesus has done for us, and pray. Ask God to help us identify idols/false gods in our lives.*