

Acts 19

When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he bumped into an unusual group of believers. These believers had not yet received the assets of the Church Age, the 40 things which the person receives when he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Three of which were specifically mentioned in the “Jewish Pentecost” namely the Indwelling and Filling of the Spirit and the distribution of a spiritual gift.) So, though living in the Church Age, they were operating under the assets of the Old Testament. This situation occurred because they had believed in Christ before the Church Age?

Ephesus was at the crossroads of the Roman Empire for it linked the orient with the west. Between its harbor and the main city was a boulevard seventy feet wide with beautiful pillars along its sides. Also, the city was famous for an open air theater carved out of the side of a mountain and seated 25,000 people. The Temple of Artemis with 120 pillars, one of the Seven Wonders of the World was also located in this city. (Each of these pillars, studded with gold, silver and various precious gems, was dedicated by a king or a famous prince and had been engraved with his famous deeds and accomplishments.) Ephesus was also the Roman headquarters for the province of Asia. Thus, there was a Roman garrison, governor and court there, and most importantly, it became the greatest church in the first few centuries of the Church Age.

19:1: And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul [53 AD] having passed through the upper coast [the highlands] came to Ephesus [from the northeast] and found certain disciples [Jewish Old Testament-believers who had believed in Christ under the ministry of John the Baptist].

The Lord led Paul to Ephesus after Apollos had left for Corinth for He was going to use Pricilla and Aquila to help Apollos, not Paul (Acts 18:27-19:1). When Paul left Ephesus at the end of his 2nd missionary journey to return to Antioch, Syria, Pricilla and Aquila remained behind (Acts 18:19). A short time later Apollos, a Jewish Alexandrian came to Ephesus and began to teach boldly and eloquently in the synagogue. After hearing him, Pricilla and Aquila realized that Apollos was not up to date on church age doctrines. So, they pulled him aside privately and brought him up to date on these doctrines. It was not necessary for Apollos to meet Paul at this time, but it was very important for him to have met Pricilla and Aquila.

The Holy Spirit led Paul in such a way as to avoid the cities of the Lycus Valley. When Paul came back to Ephesus on his 3rd missionary journey, he did not travel on the main highway which ran from Galatia to Ephesus, the most direct route from Galatia to Ephesus. (This would have taken him through the Lycus Valley in which were three cities: Colossi, Hieropolis and Laodicea. (It was God's will that his ministry to those in these cities would not be face to face, but would be handled through written epistles such as Colossians and Philemon.)) Rather, after departing Galatia he traveled northwest, and so when he was directed by the Lord to go to Ephesus, he merely came down the Cayster Valley from the northeast which is described by the phrase in this verse as, "the upper coast." (The Cayster River flowed into the harbor at Ephesus.)

19:2: he [Paul] said to them, "Having believed did you receive the Holy Spirit [the Indwelling and the Filling of the Spirit]?" And they said to him, "We did not so much as hear whether there was [a ministry related to the] Holy Spirit."

After Paul had a brief conversation with them, he became aware of their disorientation to the Church Age although the Church Age had begun some 23 years earlier. So, he asked a discerning question regarding whether or not they had been indwelt and filled with the Holy Spirit at the point of their salvation. This Indwelling and Filling would have been accompanied by the distribution of spiritual gifts.

19:3: And he said to them, "Therefore, on what basis did you receive [water] baptism?" And they said, "On the basis of John's baptism." (A pre-Church Age baptism to be distinguished from the pre-canon- baptism of the early church)

In the pre-canon period of the Church, in order to help Christians understand Spirit Baptism (identification retroactively with the cross and currently with Christ in heaven as he is seated at the right hand of God the Father), a ritual was performed: believers were immersed into water illustrating their identification with Christ on the cross; coming out of the water represented their identification with Christ in heaven. Of course once the epistle of Romans had been written, a new Christian no longer needed the ritual of water-baptism as a teaching aid since he could learn about Spirit Baptism through the teaching of Romans 6.

Regarding water baptism, if some pastor wants to use it as a teaching aid in explaining retroactive or current positional truth, it is quite okay. However, for a pastor to teach that water baptism is a requirement for salvation is just as blasphemous as to teach that circumcision or any other work is necessary for salvation.

19:4: Then Paul said, John baptized with a baptism characterized by a change of thinking [John only baptized those who had changed their mind about Christ and had believed], saying to the people that they should believe in the One coming after him [John, the Baptist], that is, in Jesus.

19:5: And having heard [what Paul had said], they were baptized [by God the Holy Spirit] into the person of the Lord Jesus [Spirit-Baptism: entered into union with Christ in heaven].

“For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized by the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” Just as this prophecy was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem so it was fulfilled with these twelve disciples in Ephesus. These believers had to be entered into union with Christ (Positional Sanctification) before their experiential sanctification i.e. the Filling of the Spirit and the function of their Church Age-spiritual lives etc. could become operational.

19:6: And as Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with foreign languages [a gift that allowed them to communicate the gospel in some foreign language] and prophesied [about the content of truth and material not yet put into book form: a communicational gift necessary since the Bible had not yet been completed and circulated]. 19:7: And there were in all about twelve men.

Since they had believed in Christ in the Age of Israel and so had not received the assets that a believer in the Church Age receives at the moment of his salvation, there had to be some protocol [in this case, the laying on of hands by some apostle] by which they would be incorporated into body of Christ with all the assets of the Church Age believer.

As soon as Paul, an apostle of the Church identified himself with these men, they received the Filling of the Spirit which was necessary for the function of the two spiritual gifts in context: the gift of a foreign language and the gift of prophecy. Based on this passage, identification with an apostle either by the laying on of his hands (Acts 8:17, 19:6) or by his presence (Acts 2, 10:44) was the protocol in receiving the Filling of the Spirit (This would include the indwelling as well.) in that first generation of church age believers.

The Filling of the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts are two different things. At salvation the Holy Spirit provides seven different things which are as follows: common and efficacious grace, indwelling, a spiritual gift, his sealing, Spirit-baptism: identification with Christ is heaven, regeneration, and his Filling. It just happens that when a person first receives the Filling of the Holy Spirit at

salvation, he is also given a spiritual gift. For example on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem there were many Jewish unbelievers speaking gentile languages. So, the gift of languages was given to most of the disciples in order to handle that situation. In Ephesus, both the gift of language and the gift of prophecy were both needed, so both were distributed.

So far, all Paul has done in Ephesus was to help a group of Jewish believers enter into the Dispensation of the Church. However, beginning with the next verse his teaching ministry will begin.

19:8: And going into the synagogue, he spoke with confidence for about three months, disputing [to argue from the reasonable standpoint of the Word] and persuading [influencing by presenting correct information] the doctrines concerning the kingdom of God [the kingdom of the regenerate].

The Greek noun “parresia” means confidence; the verb “parresiazomai means to speak with confidence. Since Paul knew the Bible and the spiritual life thoroughly, he could speak with confidence.

19:9: But when some [Jewish unbelievers in the synagogue] began to be hardened [by rejecting the gospel: the inceptive imperfect] and did not believe [in Christ], speaking evil of the Way [the Lord Jesus Christ as the way of salvation] before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples [must separate from apostasy], disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus [Tyrannus was a court physician in Rome who after his retirement founded a medical school in Ephesus].

Ephesians 4:17, 18. Therefore I communicate this and because of the Lord, I insist that you [Ephesian believers] no longer walk [have a lifestyle] even as the gentile's walk in the vacuum [futility] of their thinking [Because the unbeliever has very little truth, his soul like a vacuum sucks up a lot of false concepts.] having been darkened [by these false ideas and concepts] in their understanding and having been alienated [excluded] from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them [in their souls], because of the hardness [callousness, scar tissue] of their hearts [of the mentality of their souls].

Paul had a great response from the students and physicians in the medical school of Tyrannus, and some of those who had responded set up a class room for Paul, and so this is where Paul taught for two years.

19:10: And this happened for a space of two years [evangelizing and teaching the Word in this medical school], so that all those living in Asia [the Roman province of Asia] heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

They did not come to hear him while he was teaching in the synagogue, but once he separates from religion, and set up a classroom in a neutral area, people from all over the Roman province of Asia came to hear his teaching. (People who are truly interested in God's word will make the necessary sacrifices to get the truth.) This included such cities as Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira, Philadelphia, Sardis, Colossi, Laodicea and other areas and cities as well.

19:11: And God [God the Father incorporated these miracles into his plan in the Divine Decree] worked special miracles [each miracle had a purpose] by the hands [by the channel] of Paul [over that two year period to focus attention on the gospel and to prove to the Christians that he was an apostle ordained by God],

19:12: so that from the surface of his [Paul's] body, sweat cloths [used by tent makers or other workmen to remove the perspiration from their faces] or aprons [linen aprons used in tent making and other jobs] were carried away onto the sick [physiologically induced or demon induced illness] and the diseases [physiologically induced illnesses] departed from them, and the evil spirits went out from them [the demon possessed unbelievers with demon induced illnesses].

Some miracles are on a high plane; some on a lower plane. The greatest miracles of the highest plane are the salvation of individuals and the supernatural power of the spiritual life changing believers. Occasionally, God condescends to working miracles which are on a lower plane like healing the sick and the lame etc. like in this verse in which case people could touch Paul with a sweat cloth or a linen apron and then take it to someone with a physiologically induce illness or demon possessed and touch him with it. In the case of a physiologically induced illness, he would be healed of the disease; in the case of demon possession, the demon would depart and the unbeliever would then recover from the demon- induced illness.

After his two year ministry in Ephesus, God the Father no longer performed these miracles through Paul. At the highest point of Paul's doctrinal career which occurred during his first Roman imprisonment circa 61-62 A.D., he was not able to heal his friend, Epaphroditus who came very close to dying. The gift of healing had been removed from him. "For indeed, he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him and not on him only, but also on me so that I should not have sorrow upon sorrow." (Philippians 2:27) Later during his 2nd Roman imprisonment in 68 A.D., Paul writes that he was not able to heal

Trophimus. “Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.”
(2 Timothy 4:20)

Today, in the post-canon period of the church age, God no longer performs these types of miracles as we have in this passage. God works on a higher level today that is through the completed canon of Scripture. Pastors and Christians who emphasize emotion, ecstatic and miracles are totally disoriented and do not understand the plan of God and the wonderful spiritual life which he has given to them.

19:13: Then certain of the traveling Jews [traveled to make money], exorcists, undertook to name the name of the Lord Jesus over those having evil spirits, saying, “We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches”.

19:14: And there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did this [exorcism].

These sons traveled as professional exorcists [received pay] casting out demons via a magical formulae. Since there was a lot of demon activity in Ephesus they went there (a lot related to the Temple of Artemis just to mention one source). Seeing how successful Paul was in teaching about Jesus, they decided to change their incantation (the pronunciation of a magic formula usually repeated numerous times with a little showmanship) to include the names of Jesus and Paul. Their father was a well know religious person who ruled over one of the 24 priestly orders: See Acts series 402 lesson 84 of R. B. Thieme Jr.

19:15: But answering the evil spirit said to them [via the vocal cords of the indwelt unbeliever], “Jesus I know, and I know Paul, but who are you (plural: the seven sons of Sceva)?”

Obviously, Satan and all his fallen angels would know Jesus well, and rationally, they would focus their attention on the great believers as well and lesser attention on some great unbelievers. Thus, this demon knew about Paul, the greatest believer of his age, but knew nothing about these seven unbelievers functioning as exorcists (the family of Sceva were religious unbelievers) though they would have been well known by those who practiced Judaism.

19:16: And the man in whom the evil spirit resided leaped on [used for the spring of a panther or leopard] them, and overcoming them, he was strong against them [the abnormal strength that comes from demon possession], so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded [the Greek word “tramatizo:” received injury accompanied with trauma: the demon possessed man violently ripped off the young men’s clothes and beat them severely]

19:17: And this [the events of the previous verses] became known to all the Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus, and fear fell on all of them [believers involved in these kind of things], and the name of the Lord Jesus kept on being magnified.

It appears that the seven sons of Sceva were quite famous among not only the Jews, but among the Greeks as well. Apparently, most thought that these seven young men were doing a great work for God since they were in the business of casting out demons. However, when this incident became known, the reputation of the seven sons was smashed. Not only was the reputation of the seven sons destroyed, but many others questioned their own *modus operandi*.

This Satanic attack upon Paul's ministry was subtle and unsuccessful. It was obviously designed to draw the crowds away from the correct teaching of Paul to these seven sons. The next attack will be from mob action, not subtle but equally unsuccessful. However, the attack which will be successful will be related to Paul's *modus operandi* (overwhelmed by emotion for his countrymen: verse 21).

19:18: And many who had believed [the believers who were out of fellowship because they were involved in nonsense like exorcism and some of the things mentioned in the following verse] kept on coming, confessing [*eksomologeō*: confessed their sins related to this failure] and showing their deeds [amplified in the next verse: getting rid of all those things related to sorcery and incantations].

The perfect tense "who had believed" means that these were not new Christians, but Christians who had been believers for a long time. Unfortunately, for them, they had been distracted from the spiritual life by sorcery and other sensational things. The same is true of Christians today who are involved in exorcism, healing and the so called tongue's movement.

19:19: Also many of those practicing magical arts [related to sorcery], bringing together the books, burned them before all. And they counted the prices of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.

This passage is not dealing with a magical show where the magician produces a rabbit. This is dealing with demon activity. The believers involved in these things became afraid when they heard what had happened to the seven sons of Sceva. Thus, they confessed their sins to God the Father, and made decisions to get rid of all the materials which were related to sorcery such as exorcism and magical incantations.

19:20: In this manner on the basis of power from the source of the Lord [Acts 1:8, the filling of the Holy Spirit] the word kept on spreading and kept on having power.

Verse 20 was the peak of Paul's ministry prior to his reversionism.

19:21: Now after these things were finished [his ministry in Ephesus], Paul purposed in his [human] spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, 'After I have been there [Paul will go to Jerusalem in 58 AD], I must also see Rome.'

Paul understood that his ministry in Ephesus and Asia Minor was coming to a close. (After Paul had completed his 3rd missionary journey and thus having completed his ministry in Asia and Greece, the Holy Spirit wanted Paul to go unto Rome and then to Spain: Romans 15:22-24.) Verse 21 was inserted to show us Paul's future plans, a plan which was in violation of his past statement and a violation of the Holy Spirit's leading. It was not God's purpose for Paul to go backwards to Jerusalem [Acts 20:22-23] where both the Christians and the unbelievers were negative, but to continue on to Rome and then to Spain where there was great interest in both the gospel and Bible teaching.

After Paul had finished his work in Asia Minor and Greece, it was the will of the Holy Spirit for Paul to go to Rome, not to Jerusalem since he was the apostle to the gentiles. Romans 11:13 states, "But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am the apostle to the Gentiles [not to the Jews], I magnify my ministry." (Paul was thinking straight when he wrote this and was confused in his thinking by the time he got to Romans 15:25, "but now, I am going to Jerusalem . . ." Instead of magnifying his ministry he went to Jerusalem on an emotional jag. Romans 15:20-25 provides more amplification.

20: In fact, my standard operating procedure: I consider it a point of honor to proclaim the Gospel not where Christ has been mentioned [Jerusalem], in order that I might not build on a foundation belonging to another [Peter and James were ministering in Judea.] (Paul's honor code for missionaries)
21: And not only this [application of the honor code] but just as it stands written [Isaiah 52:15], "They [the gentiles] shall see [Christ: the predictive future anticipates the 2nd Advent], that is, those to whom it was not reported concerning Him [The world is full of gentiles who have not heard about Christ: a missionary challenge], and they [the gentiles] who have not heard will comprehend [These will be the gentiles who will ignore the great evangelistic thrust in the Tribulation]."

22: For this reason [Paul responded to the missionary challenge and ministered in Asia Minor and Greece to the gentiles] I also have been hindered many times from coming to you [in Rome],

23: But now, no longer having a place of ministry in those regions [had established local churches with native pastors], and having a desire to come to you for many years,

24: whenever I go to Spain (for I expect to see you when passing through, and by you be assisted to that place [Spain], if first I am satisfied with you in part) [Paul intended to finish his ministry in Rome before leaving for Spain],

25: But now [Paul changes his mind because of an emotional pull.] I go to Jerusalem to minister to the saints [Paul will have no ministry there since the pastors and believers in Jerusalem were legalistic and not interested in Paul's explanation of the spiritual life.],

Paul was warned by the Holy Spirit, by some disciples at the city of Tyre, by the prophet Agabus at Caesarea and by other believers as well not to go to Jerusalem. Paul acknowledges he is receiving direct messages from the Holy Spirit not to go to Jerusalem, Acts 20:22-23, "And now, having been chained by the agency of the Spirit [a warning that he would be in chains], I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there [because he was out of God's geographical will], except that the Holy Spirit has already warned me, saying that chains and stress wait for me in every city." Paul's first human warning not to go to Jerusalem is found in Acts 21:4, "After finding the disciples [in Tyre], we stayed there seven days; and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit [These believers filled with the Spirit knew that Paul was not to go to Jerusalem] not to set foot in Jerusalem." Paul's second human warning is in Acts 21:8-11,

8: On the next day we departed [from Tyre] and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven [one of the original seven deacons responsible for the daily distribution of food to the earlier believers in Jerusalem], we stayed with him.

9: Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses.

10: As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

11: And having come to us, he took off Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: "In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

The third human warning is found in Acts 21:12-14 from the believers who traveled with Paul and the believers of Caesarea.

12: When we heard this, we as well as the local residents attempted to persuade him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13: Then Paul answered, 'What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be chained in prison, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' [This was an emotionally stupid statement for it was not God's will for Paul to die in Jerusalem, but in a gentile capital.]

14: And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, saying to ourselves, 'Let the will of the Lord come to pass!'

Up to this point, Paul's entire ministry has been east of the Adriatic Sea (which divided the Roman Empire) where Hellenistic culture dominated. It is important for Paul at this time to have a ministry west of the Adriatic Sea where the Latin language and Roman culture dominated. However, Paul became emotional over his fellow Jewish brethren and convinced himself that he could have an impact there. As it turned out, he had no impact there since the Jewish unbelievers did not desire the gospel message, and the pastors in Jerusalem were not in his explanation of the spiritual life (Acts 21:15-36). As a result of Paul disobeying the will of the Holy Spirit, Paul spent four years in prison (two years in Caesarea and two years in Rome). During his two year imprisonment in Caesarea, he had no ministry at all except to a handful of dignitaries (Felix and his wife Drusilla, Festus, Herod Agrippa and his sister Bernice). In his house arrest in Rome, cursing was turned into blessing, and the Lord gave back to Paul his writing ministry (the prison epistles: Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon).

19:22: And sending Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, two who ministered to him [in Ephesus], he [Paul] stayed in Asia for a time [Now three years is up and his ministry is complete. All the same, Paul needs to remain in Ephesus long enough for the opposition to foment a riot and for the local government under Roman law to step in and put it down. This will allow the Ephesian Church to function peacefully in the future. If Paul had left, the opposition would not have been able to stir up the riot (Acts 19:26), and the fear of Roman law would not have been felt (Acts 19:35)].

A short brief on Timothy and Erastus: Timothy, a half Jew, half gentile from Lystra was probably converted during the first missionary journey and joined the team during the second missionary journey having first been circumcised according to Acts 16:3. (Being an uncircumcised Jew would have been a hindrance to the ministry). Erastus, a Corinthian believer came to Ephesus to report to Paul about the terrible situation in Corinth which report resulted in the Corinthian epistles.

19:23: And about that time there was not a small stir [idiom for a great catastrophe] about the Way [Paul's teaching about Christ and his work on the cross].

19:24: For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines for Artemis which brought a fantastic profit [no small gain] for the craftsmen.

Demetrius attempted to destroy Paul's ministry in Ephesus. Demetrius was the head of the silversmith's union in that great city, and the silversmiths had been making a great profit from manufacturing and selling these silver figurines of Artemis (the Greek for Diana), and since Paul's ministry was having a negative effect on their business Demetrius wanted to wipe it out.

Just why were the figurines of this goddess so popular? Well, although Artemis was the goddess of the hunt, in Ephesus she was worshipped more as a goddess of love and sex. (In the temple of Artemis there was approximately 5000 dancing priestesses which served the goddess for that purpose.) Beautiful women, erotic dancing and sexual promiscuity have always held great sway over men under the influence of sexual lust. Many of these men wanted a souvenir in remembrance of what they considered a great time of promiscuous worship. (See Acts series number 402, lesson 85, by R. B. Thieme Jr.)

There is an interesting story about the Temple of Artemis in relationship to Alexander the Great. The Temple of Artemis was 425 feet long and 270 feet wide with a beautiful statue of Dianna in its center. Though one of the wonders of the world, it was burned down in the same year in which Alexander the Great was born, 356 BC. The story went like this: the goddess, Artemis had traveled to Macedonia to celebrate the birth of Alexander, and while away, a person seeking historical fame burned it down.

19:25: whom [the silversmiths] he [Demetrius] called together with the workman of the related industries and said, 'Men, you know that by this craft we have our wealth.

The union of the silversmith contained not only the artisans, but those who prepared and molded the silver as well.

19:26: Moreover, you see and hear that, not alone in Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia [the Roman province of Asia], this Paul [well known person] having persuaded [by clear presentation of the gospel, many have responded], he has turned away [from purchasing these silver figurines etc.]

many people [by teaching the Word to the new converts, and by application of doctrine, many are no longer buying the shrines], saying that there are no gods made with hands [Apparently, Demetrius listened to a few messages himself].

19:27: And not only is this dangerous to us, our share [a reference to their craft] coming into dispute [the discrediting of our silver shrines will cause us to lose a lot of money], but also the temple of the great goddess, Artemis will be counted for nothing, and her magnificence is also about to be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worship.”

19:28: And when they heard [these things], and having become full of anger [the weapon used to form mob violence], they kept shouting out, saying, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians”.

Demetrius knew what he was doing. He brought them together to stir them up emotionally. The craftsmen, the dupes of Demetrius became angry about losing their income and about the offense to Artemis and kept on shouting in emotional outrage. (When the emotions take over, one cannot think. Many of the ancients especially in this part of the world were great thinkers. However, in a mob emotion takes over and mental ability is lost.) Demetrius very cleverly has converted these individuals into an irrational mob. However, though five weapons (organization, emotion, religion, mob violence and shouting slogans: a form of self-hypnosis) were used against Paul and his ministry, it did not succeed.

Summary statement: Demetrius first of all recognized the effectiveness of Paul’s teaching, and the loss of business. Apparently, he went to the meetings, but could not argue down the words of Paul. So, Demetrius decided that mob violence, an under handed tactic was the only solution left to him.

19:29: And the whole city was filled with confusion, and having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, traveling companions of Paul, they rushed with one accord into the amphitheater [where they kept the wild animals].

It appears that they intended to feed these men to the animals in the arena for such an arena did exist in Ephesus. “If from human motives, I fought with the wild beasts at Ephesus what does it profit me?” (1 Corinthians 15:32a)

A small organized group can use a mob to gain its purpose. However, nothing honorable or lasting is ever accomplished by a mob. Rather, all true problem solving involves thinking, not emotion. Group, city and national problems etc. must be discussed and debated. (This is why England became so great for issues were always debated in Parliament.) There must be rational, logical,

incisive debate. Mob activity forestalls any such activity, but only produces mass hysteria. In hysteria, mobs destroy property, privacy and lives. Mobs are anti-freedom, and their cause no matter how just becomes evil.

Apparently, Demetrius led the mob to the home of Priscilla and Aquilla where Paul was resting or sick in bed in hopes of seizing and murdering him. At that point, it appears that Priscilla and Aquila went out from their home and faced down the mob to save the life of Paul. “Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus who for my life risked their own necks to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the gentiles.” (Romans 16:3)

19:30: And Paul intending to go in to the mob, the disciples would not allow him.

19:31: And some of the chief men of Asia, being his friends, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the amphitheater.

A small group of believers, friends and disciples loved Paul and did everything they could to protect him. They appreciated his dedication and his teaching of the spiritual life. They knew that no one was as prepared and dedicated as was Paul.

When violent mobs are formed, it is the responsibility of government to bring law and order back. Apparently, when Paul heard that some of his traveling companions had been seized and dragged into the amphitheater, he wanted to do something to help even if it meant losing his life. In fact there was nothing that Paul could have done. Rather, the Lord used the city government namely the city mayor to rescue the companions of Paul and to bring the individuals in the mob back to reason.

19:32: Then indeed some shouted one thing and others shouted another thing for the assembly was confused, and most of them did not know why they had come together.

As the mob went down the streets, many got swept up into it without even knowing why the mob formed in the first place. This demonstrates just how ridiculous and irrational mobs are.

19:33: Then, the Jews [the Jews not associated with Paul] pushed Alexander, a lawyer forward out of the crowd. And motioning with his hand for silence, Alexander desired to defend [the Jews] to the mob.

Many Jews were in the amphitheater and could see and hear that the mob was becoming anti-Semitic. These Jews were not associated with Paul and didn't want to be associated with Paul and his ministry. So, they pushed forward a Jewish lawyer by the name of Alexander in hopes of restraining the anti-Semitic trend of the mob.

19:34: But when they recognized that he [Alexander] was a Jew, all with one voice kept on shouting out for two hours' time, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

This demonstrates just how insane a mob can get. These irrational beings shouted for two straight hours! After they had exhausted themselves, the city mayor stepped forward.

19:35: And when the city mayor [of Ephesus] had silenced the crowd, he said, "Men, Ephesians! For which of you does not know that the city of the Ephesians is official place for the worship [the Greek word "neokoros:" the official place of worship] of the great goddess, Artemis, and of the image that fell down from Zeus [Greek word "tou diopetes:" tou=of the (image); Dio=Zeus (Greek) or Jupiter (Latin); petes: that fell down from]

19:36: Therefore, since these things are undeniable [cannot be contradicted], you ought to be quiet and to do nothing rashly.

19:37: For you have brought these men, who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of your goddess.

It is interesting that Paul neither denounced the Temple of Artemis nor the sex orgies that took place within the temple. Paul just taught the Word of God.

19:38: Therefore, if Demetrius and those craftsmen with him have a matter against any person, the court days are kept [the law court is open], and there are proconsuls [to judge the cases]. Let them [Demetrius and the craftsmen] plead [bring charges] against these others [Gaius, Aristarchus]. (ἀλλήλοις: allelois does not always function as a reciprocal pronoun)

The Greek word "allelon" is not reciprocal in this context. If the reciprocal pronoun were reciprocal in this verse, it would mean that Demetrius and his craftsmen should bring charges against one another.

Also in James 5:16, the Greek word "allelon" is not translated like the English reciprocal pronoun (confess to each other; pray for each other), though there is reciprocation in the sense of one party is confessing his sins while the other

party reciprocates by praying for that person. “Therefore, acknowledge your sins [the believers dying the Sin unto Death must acknowledge their remembered sins] to others of the same kind [to their respective pastors] and you [the pastors involved] will offer prayer on behalf of the others [each pastor will pray for the respective member of his congregation: the pastor functions as a “Rebound” agent for the reversionistic believer] so that you may be healed [each believer dying the Sin unto Death will be healed through the prayer of his pastor]. The prayer of a righteous believer [the one who is very advanced in the spiritual life] has much power when it is put into operation.

19:39: But if you ask anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

Government is not a Christian institution, but a divine institution for believers and unbelievers. Its laws are to protect all within its jurisdiction. In this case, it was a brilliant mayor, an unbeliever who allowed the crowd to exhaust itself through shouting, and then he delivered a rational speech explaining the system of law and order, and in so doing protected these two individuals from this lawless mob.

19:40: For we are in danger of being accused [by the Roman authorities] of a riot [revolt, rebellion] concerning today’s events since there being no cause by which we may give an account for this unruly gathering.”

The Roman Government was tough on public disorder and did not permit mob violence and murder. If the Ephesian mob had killed these two men without proper judicial procedure, they would have been punished severely by the Roman government, and this is what the mayor feared.

19:41: And saying these things, he dismissed the assembly.