

# “CASTING DOWN THE GODS OF THIS WORLD”

Acts 19:21-27

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## INTRODUCTION

**Religion has often become big business.**

But, Paul busies himself with doing the work of the Lord while at the same time opposing the false ideas of the religious systems of his time. So must we. Artemis was in danger of “being dethroned from her magnificence” (v. 27).

## **WE MUST CAST DOWN THE FALSE GODS OF THIS WORLD AND EXALT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE.**

We see Paul doing this by 1) Putting down false doctrine while preaching the truth (23-27), and 2) Planning ahead for future Gospel advance. So must we.

### I. PUTTING DOWN FALSE DOCTRINE WHILE PREACHING THE TRUTH (23-27)

#### A. Preaching the \_\_\_\_\_—“that Way.”

1. “No small disturbance” means a great disturbance.
2. They were promoting only one Way of Salvation (John 14:6; Acts 19:9; 9:2; 18:25-26; 22:4; 24:14, 22)
3. Paul and his co-workers were spreading out beyond Ephesus throughout all of Asia Minor—the Roman province of Asia (v. 26).
4. Many new churches were started—such as Colossae, Hierapolis, Laodicea, Philadelphia, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, and Sardis.
5. “Considerable number of people” were **persuaded** (v. 26)

#### **OUR NBT CAMPAIGN IS ONE SMALL EXAMPLE OF WHAT WE TRY TO DO!**

#### B. Opposing False \_\_\_\_\_

1. “Gods made with hands are no gods at all” (v. 26)
2. A “considerable number of people were “turned away” from the worship of idols and Artemis (v. 26). One cannot **turn to God** without **turning away from idols**: “You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God” (I Thes. 1:9).
3. Idolatrous worship and all of its pageantry and paraphernalia was seen to be what it is in reality—worthless, cheap, soul damning.
  - “Our craft fall into disrepute”
  - “The temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless” In reality, it was regarded as one of the **seven wonders of the ancient world**. Four times larger than the Parthenon in Athens. More shrines to her throughout the Roman world than of any other god or goddess. Connected with fertility rites and prosperity. Note: ‘she to whom all of Asia and the world worship” (27).
  - Artemis was “dethroned from her magnificence” in the lives of thousands of the followers of Jesus Christ.

- **The bottom line was: we are losing money!**
4. Note who was behind this public gathering:
    - Demetrius, a **silversmith**.
    - He made silver shrines of Artemis to be placed in niches in homes for worship, or to be carried about as amulets or good luck charms.
    - His work and those of his fellow craftsmen was “no little business” or “profit” (v. 24).
    - He called a meeting of the Craftsmen of Ephesus and the surrounding area—a trade guild meeting! (v. 25).
    - Some shrines were made of terra-cotta and some of marble, but for the wealthy they were made of silver.
    - Demetrius’ statement was: “Men, you know **that by this craft we have our wealth**” (v. 25).

**How much impact are we making upon the world’s system of wealth out of corruption and false religious values? Or, are we propping it up by our participation. Do we worship at the shrine of Hollywood? Are we adopting the value system of the god of this world?**

Beyond all this, Paul was continuing to plan ahead for Gospel Advance (21-22).

- II. PLANNING AHEAD FOR FUTURE GOSPEL ADVANCE (21-22)
  - A. Build up the Established churches in Macedonia and Achaia
    1. This included Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, etc.
    2. Paul sent two of his best “advance men” in Timothy and Erastus (22).
      - These men humbly “ministered to” Paul (deacon type work).
      - They went to prepare the way for Paul and to build up the ministries of the churches.
    3. Paul stayed in Asia (Ephesus) for a while—for a great and effectual door had been opened there for ministry.
  - B. Carry the offering for the Suffering saints in Jerusalem
  - C. Begin plans for a trip to the head and heart of the Roman Empire: Rome
  - D. All these plans were made **In the Spirit**
    - The guidance and control of the Holy Spirit
    - Full participation and submission of Paul’s human spirit

## CONCLUSION

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We must do this by 1) Putting down false doctrine while preaching the truth (23-27), and 2) Planning ahead for future Gospel advance.

*We are involved in the best business in the world. WE MUST BE ABOUT OUR FATHER’S BUSINESS!*