

# Exalting Jesus Instead of Idols, Part 2 - Acts 19:21-41

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Date: 12 June 2022

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[ 0 : 00 ] Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse was a pastor born in the late 1800s through the mid 1900s with a span of his life.

He pastored 10th Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and was a notable pastor. I have read myself some of his sermons and he was an influential figure in American Christianity.

He went to Europe after the signing of the armistice of after World War one and he was found himself in Belgium, Germany near a town called Mons and that city was a location where earlier the Allied forces had had to retreat and now it was the site where the Allied forces took a quick advance leaving a lot of artillery tanks trucks transport vehicles of the German forces lining a street for many miles and Dr. Barnhouse found himself walking this street with all of this artillery left there by the German forces in their hasty retreat.

A company this this street was where these towering trees and as he walked something interesting happened a leaf fell and he brushed it off of his clothing but it stuck in his near his belt and he went to go fling it to remove it from his belt and it crumbled in his hand and it was dead.

But he found it very interesting. This wasn't the fall when normally trees leaves would fall and so he found himself questioning what was it? What is this and you may know not all deciduous trees deciduous trees cause their leaves to fall in the fall some like some varieties of oak trees leave their leaves on until spring and he wondered and it dawned on him then what was the force that was causing all of these leaves to fall because it's spring and he recognized that deep with below but leaves the ground it was spring and that moisture and that life was being taken into its roots and through the trunk into the branches of the trees so little tiny branches pushing off the old dead leaves and having new life in the blossoms and I know know of no clearer and more beautiful illustration than how our new life in Christ expels the old as

[ 2 : 43 ] The seasons of life roll past We can try to throw off of all the leaves some hold fast But as that new life of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ grows within us those leaves will quietly and surely drop and This is precisely what is occurring in the church at Ephesus That we have been reading about for several weeks now Through the persistent labor of Paul He has been teaching for two years. His ministry has expanded expanded for three years there at Ephesus The church has begun to repent of its dead leaves that we heard of last week And so believers are starting to confess and divulge their old practices. The God's word says and Their lives were taking on such an authenticity that many in the town Came to Christ They fueled a great bonfire to their idols of their the things that they

Were convicted of now that they were sinful and Today we will look at when leaves fall away When one experiences conversion to faith in Jesus He or she possesses new affections Old leaves old desires old interests are replaced with new ones and When the new life in Christ is at work several things will result and so today I want to talk about four things that you can expect When one's change affections begin to change So let's look at the first one. It's the result of These new affections but before we do that I want to Look at our text and oftentimes I'll read the entire text at one time But today I just want to look at our text We read in verse 21 Acts chapter 19 if you have a copy of scripture with you acts chapter 19 We're going to look at verse 21 here in momentarily in 22. We're just gonna go through this passage in chunks

So today right now. I just want to share with you two verses In the and we find our first reason for Upon believing the gospel and its accompanying affections, what should we expect the first one is an increasing love for the church and for the lost and And you and you say, how do you get this? Well, let's read verses 21 and 22 now after these events And we'll talk about those events But

basically the event was the church began to confess their sin They revealed their practices dealing with magic arts and the things that were sinful They burned their books and the idols and and they repented and turned to the Lord these new affections were having their intended result And so after these events, that's what it's referring to Paul resolved in the spirit to pass through Macedonia and Ikea and go through Jerusalem saying after I've been there

I must also see Rome and having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers Timothy and Erastus he himself stayed in Asia for a while So what does Paul do he sins to Macedonia two people? Timothy and Erastus and he stays in Asia But you say Scott, how do you get that there's an increasing love for the church and for the lost? That these accompanying affections with the gospel is this increasing love and affection for the church and for the lost I want us to see It doesn't tell you why but he says I find it interesting in verse 21 now after these events the spirit has Resolved in this beer Paul resolved in the spirit to pass through Macedonia and Ikea to go to Jerusalem And and we're not told why but I want us to turn to Romans if you would look with me here at Romans 15 We shed a little more light. So this is on we're reading Paul's second missionary missionary journey here in Acts in Romans though We find that on Paul's third missionary journey. He goes through on his journey He finds himself in Corinth and there in Corinth on his third missionary journey. He writes

[ 7 : 15 ] The the letter to the church at Rome called Romans and so we find in Romans in a future time On his third missionary journey in Romans 15. We shed a little more light as to why he wants To go through Macedonia and Ikea on his way to Jerusalem. It says this at present. However, I go to Jerusalem verse 25 and bring aid to the saints for Macedonia and Ikea have been pleased To make some contribution to the poor among the saints at Jerusalem So why?

Why does he want to go to Ikea and in Macedonia? Because he cares deeply for the church in Jerusalem and he's gonna go through Ikea and And Macedonia to receive a financial contribution that he is going to then take to the church in Jerusalem And you say what's going on in Jerusalem? They said the among the poor in Jerusalem And so and why should they be motivated in Macedonia and Ikea? Paul answers verse 27 for they were pleased to do it They took up this offering and they were pleased to do it and indeed they owe it to them For if the Gentiles have come to share in the spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings church in Macedonia church in Ikea church in Spokane why In Macedonia in Ikea why should you receive this offering and take it to this church because the church in Jerusalem Is where the church began that's where Pentecost happened That's where the apostles are ministering from and then we have we have received a great benefit from the church of Jerusalem And so we ought to material be able to bless them because they're going through a hard time and Paul is eager to go through Ikea and Macedonia to receive this offering and bring it to Jerusalem. Why?

He loves the church He loves the church Secondly, he loves the lost and you say how do you get that back to verse 21? Saying after I have been there I will go I I must also see you Rome So he takes this offering in Ikea and Macedonia He takes it to the church of Jerusalem and he says now I'm headed to Rome But why is he going to Rome and why do I say that that's evidence of his love for the lost?

Look with me back in Romans verse 28 the last verse and therefore I have completed this and I have delivered to them What was collected? I will leave for Spain by way of you and he's writing to the church at Rome Why does he want to go to Rome? Why is he so concerned?

[ 10 : 05 ] About going to Rome because when he's at Rome not only is he going to encourage the church there He's heard of their faith there, but he's going to receive a contribution. He says I will leave for Spain by way of you Rome church at Rome what I would love for you to do is to participate with me the gospel Reministry of reaching those without Christ who have never heard the gospel over in Spain Would you would you participate in this with me Rome church at Rome and that's what he's asking so what is it that That is at work in Paul. He has these new affections as a result of coming to faith in Christ he is The dead leaves are falling off and what is replaced it a love for the church and a love for the lost You have already heard my disdain For those who may say I love the Lord, but I hate the church

Please never let that That is antithetical to God's word Please never let that come out of your mouth An increasing affection for the church an increasing affection for the lost is the is the evidence of Of God's work in one I Don't know all of the details, but let me share with you how this is that work

even in our own city There's a church that was struggling COVID was not kind and the church the pastor's name is David Hammond Dave Hammond and at Three Crosses and and he Went to the Indian Trail Church here in town Indian Trail Community Church and There in an elder meeting he was just sharing that If I leave this church it will likely implode and there will be no other church here And I'm struggling and I I have had offers to go other places, but I feel called to this place Three Crosses But Indian Trail elders I need help. I need help I can't do this and after that meeting and there was a sweet time of prayer in that elder meeting after that meeting Three elders called one of the other elders who's a staff pastor also and they said to him I think you're the perfect fit for what that church needs And After the first phone call that I was like, yeah, that's nice. Thank you. I love this church. I'm happy here The second elder called and asked that staff pastor elder. Hey The Lord put on my heart that you're the man that church needs you I feel like you should preferably consider going That's that's fine third elder called Hey when that pastor was sharing with us, I think you should preferably consider going And the Lord worked in his heart and so Indian Trail Church sends one of their pastors to the struggling church to partner in ministry with Dave and And then Kyle Schwann the past senior pastor of the church opens to his congregation And says all of those who feel compelled to help this church would you go and Many in the congregation have left in the last several months To go strengthen this church Why would you do that? Because you have a love for the church and why would you do that because you love the lost? You know the greatest evangelistic Tool is the church That's why you would do that I'm grateful to partner in ministry in a city where there isn't a lot of territorialism in churches and pastors love each other I'm grateful for that And how does this affect you?

[14:22] You know this this last year we added 1% of our annual budget to a group called the INC the inland Northwest Cooperative And that group is interested in revitalizing existing churches and planting new churches And of which we are part of that and this group is considering Contributing funding to this church to help it as well. And so you too are a part of this endeavor at Three Crosses in partnering with Indian Trail and so thank you and why would we do that?

Why would we do that? Why would we give 1% of our budget to that because we love the church? We love the loss so my question to you is this is your affection For the church increasing upon being redeemed of the Lord and being saved Do you find yourself considering ways each week to demonstrate your care for the body of it for the church at fourth?

And is your affection for the lost increasing upon being redeemed of the Lord upon being saved? Do you regularly and consistently pray for those without Christ and your family workplace friends and neighborhood And then do you dream and consider and look for opportunities to share your faith? Let me let me share Regardless of what the weather has been like summer is coming It will come And the summer provides an excellent opportunity to gather in backyards And if you like me and my wife We're wanting to have a neighborhood party in our backyard just for neighbors to get to know neighbors and We are dreaming and considering and looking for opportunities Of how we can engage those without Christ in our neighborhood And so why because I pray my affection for the lost is ever increasing

Secondly We see that upon believing in the gospel and it's accompanied to affections We expect an increasing love for the church for the lost But also we should expect persecution read with me What what happens first let's let's review real quick The result of this changing affections read with me in verse 17 Let's make sure we remind ourselves What just took place because the today's text is is dependent upon us understanding what occurred at Ephesus So read with me verse 17 will steal a little bit from last week's message for the jpeg breached And this became known verse 17 to all the residents in Ephesus both Jews and Greeks and the fear came upon them all And the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled Also many of those who were now believers came confessing and divulging their practices and a number of those who had practiced

Magic arcs brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all and they counted the value of the And found it to be 50 000 pieces of silver And so the word of the Lord continued and increased and prevailed mightily This is what just occurred and that is beginning to affect Some people at Ephesus not everybody is happy about these new affections Coming into the life of these new believers at Ephesus. So read with me now Verse 24 23 through 27 And about that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the way For a man named Demetrius a silversmith Who made silver shrines to Artemis brought no little business to the craftsmen They these he gathered together with the workmen who In similar trades said men you know that from this business we

have our wealth

[ 18 : 33 ] And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but Almost all of Asia this Paul is persuaded and turned away a great many people saying that God's made with hands are not God's And so here becomes this persecution I love in verse 23 how it says and about that time there arose no little disturbance and we will see how far This disturbance escalates. There is this hubbub that is going on But you see when we have our new affections it changes everything You say how does this work?

Well I was I was once a young man who Who didn't know that girls existed and then all of a sudden one day I noticed And all of a sudden I started cleaning my room. I started bathing regularly started washing my car I started putting deodorant on And Enough cologne to fumigate a department store Now why would I do that because now I had new affections Now that's a pretty lame example for what I'm talking about Because we're talking about our affection for the lord Jesus christ Who gave himself for us Who died for sin that we may go free But those new affections were causing no little disturbance in the town and there was one man in particular

Whose business is getting threatened his name is Demetrius verse 24 Demetrius he was a silversmith and he he was making shrines to Artemis And just to frame how big of a deal Artemis was I want to show you this picture It's an artist rendition of the temple at Artemis. It was one of the largest Buildings in in the Roman world It had a huge platform 127 columns 60 feet tall six feet in diameter columns were overlaid with gold 120 years to finish this thing Can you imagine five or six generations passing without ever seeing this thing completed To say the temple at Artemis was a big deal is an understatement And there was the whole economy was based on this temple that was at Ephesus And Demetrius and all of the friends who made a large hellhandsome wealth because of that god Little g god that lived in that temple

Artemis Artemis or Diana Is to say something small In verse 26 and you see in here he's he is giving this impassioned speech to his other union workers who are a part of this Group who are making shrines to Artemis and selling them. It was a big business and he's he's Persuading them in verse 26 pause persuaded and turned to great many people saying gods made with hands are not indeed gods Prior to the fresh power of the church local artisans had a good thing going it was big business idolatry is big business We meet one man in particular an artisan whose name is Demetrius who made silver shrines to Artemis I won't get into the details of what the idols look like, but uh, let's just say they are of a deviant nature These new believers had their new affections and they were affecting the backbone industry of Ephesus the economy of Ephesus was Built on the industry of idolatry and thanks to Demetrius the local artisan a clever antagonist the president of the local idolatry union persecution arose persecution was economically motivated In Demetrius's speech, let's listen to his speech in verse 27 listen to his reasons and he has three of them there in one verse And there is a danger not only that this trait of ours may become of disrepute Right now we have we're selling these shrines to Artemis these idols everyone can have one It's a big deal. It's big business and now this this this our industry is falling into disrepute It's no longer a reputation that you want to have is I make idols to Artemis That's his one concern how selfish is that?

[ 23 : 26 ] But also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing And now not only do we have concern for ourselves, but we have concern for Artemis herself that she may She may fall into hard times Thirdly And she may even be deposed from her magnificence She whom all of asia and the world of in the world worship Thirdly so the second reason if you will is our concern for Artemis the false god And the third concern is for the country listen if she falls in her magnificence and she's deposed then Then whom all of asia and the world worship it's god and country Selfish god and country Demetrius has no interest in trying to learn what paul is saying and paul is teaching He's been teaching for two years. Demetrius is driven ultimately by greed not for his love of the goddess Artemis

Which paul in his letter to the church at Colossia mentions that greed is idolatry. So you have an idolator producing idols Demetrius is driven by dollars not doctrine The gospel always is at its most controversial when it comes into conflict with economic interests Today many will not bow down to a statue, but millions will bow down to the idol of money When god's word is very clear Money can never satisfy or provide ultimate security Demetrius's experiences are very natural when idols are threatened people don't repent people get angry And this is true of Demetrius and it is true of saints I want us to notice that the gospel is impacting social norms What once was thought of as reputable

and something of good repute is now perhaps becoming frowned upon  
And Demetrius had no problem whipping up a crowd so now let's look at what Demetrius does and this crowd Of artisans verse 28 and when they heard this they were enraged and they were crying out Great is Artemis of the Ephesians So the city was filled with confusion and they rushed together into the theater dragging with them guys and Arrest Arista rock. I you know what?  
I practiced this so many times this week And so i'm just going to skip it because it's i'm already embarrassed They were Macedonians who were paul's companions in travel but when paul wished to go into But when paul wished to go In among the crowds the disciples would not let him and even some Of the asiarchs who were friends Of his set him and urged him not to venture into the theater For some cried out one thing and some another for the assembly was in confusion But most of them did not know why they had even come together some in the crowd prompted Alexander who The jews had put forward the an alexander motioned with his hands wanting to make a defense to the crowd But when they recognized that he was a jew and about two For about two hours. They all cried out with one voice great is Artemis of the Ephesians  
And i'm going to stop there And to kind of capture Your um to capture the scene I want us to maybe look at this image real briefly This is the amphitheater the theater that there's being spoken of at Ephesus. It's the largest Jay and his message last week mentioned some say that seating was 24 000 That's on the low end up to jay mentioned up to 50 000 was the seating capacity It was the largest theater in the roman world And it's quite a sight to behold and can you imagine?  
[ 27 : 47 ] so Gaius and that other guy he here he are brought in They are brought into here And and they are they're being accused Of wrongdoing they're threatening the economy They're they're causing a civil disturbance and everyone is being caught up in this and Paul is is uh encouraged not to go in by his disciples But also the asiarchs it mentions and those are the all around the modern-day turkey if you will there were asiarchs they were People of authority overseeing region the region and even those influential people Encourage paul who knew him who were his friends looking out for his behalf said don't go into the theater paul So now his friends are in there alone Paul's friends are in there alone and there's a guy alexander who is a jew they The crowd puts forward this jew to to um to try to help

Understand what's going on but alexander once they recognize he's a jew and he's motioning with his hand So imagine that guy he's down there alexander in my mind's eye. That's where I have him He's down there. He's motioning his hands trying to make a point trying to help Bring reason to why we're here and why this crowd is going back But once they notice he's a jew they don't want to hear from him anymore. They're done And so for two hours, can you imagine?

They're chanting great is artimus of the Ephesians And it says half the crowd doesn't even know why they're there one is group is saying one thing one group is saying another And the half the other group more than half are just saying I have no idea why we're even gathered here And this is the scene This is the scene And we get to our third point We should expect persecution but also peace and courage Peace and courage What I find interesting is when we compare and contemplate The first thing that I find interesting is when we compare and contrast Paul's response and those two brothers that were brought into the arena, the theater there, and I witnessed the community and how much of an upheaval there is.

There's quite a contrast. But let's remember this is not the first time persecution has come. If you remember in Lystra, Paul, after receiving his stoning, he got up and walked back right into the city. If you remember at Philippi, he was miserable after his beating and in chains, in prison, and what does he do? He begins to sing. He begins to worship. And here in Ephesus, he is like an immovable rock in the stormy sea, peace in the midst of hateful turmoil.

[ 30 : 40 ] How did Paul and his friends display such amazing grace? The gospel is bearing the fruit and is pushing off the old leaves of the fleshly responses and replacing it with a new life of Christ who is full of life, who is full of peace.

Their consciences were pure. Their hearts were pure. And when there are no walls between you and the Lord, you can rest assured that God is with you and standing with you in the midst of chaos, in the midst of turmoil, in the midst of persecution.

I received a text this week from a lady who works at a national department store, a clothing store. And she was given a list, because it's Pride Month, she was given a list of the dates through the month of June.

And each day, it accompanies what color they are to wear and what color, after the color that they are to wear that day, they are celebrating a sinful lifestyle, the culture.

And she writes to me and she says, would you just pray for me? And she is not unlike you. You work for companies and corporations, perhaps, where what are you to do?

[ 31 : 58 ] What are you to do to live a godly life while being pressured culturally with perhaps even your organization or who you work for or even within the culture?

What are you to do? My prayer for her this week, and so I sent a text in response. I said, this is my prayer for you.

And it began to be my prayer for you all as well this week. Isaiah 26.3, he writes this in Isaiah, you keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26.3, you keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you. In the Hebrew language, the word for peace there is shalom.

He keeps you in perfect shalom because his mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you. The way in the Hebrew language, though, to emphasize something, they don't have punctuation marks.

[ 33 : 05 ] So it's not like I could say, I'm really excited exclamation point. Without an exclamation point, how do you emphasize something in the text? And so how the Hebrew language works is they repeat a word.

So instead of you keep him in perfect peace, it would read, you keep him in shalom, shalom. The word shalom is repeated. And it's a way of emphasizing it.

So in English, we read, he keeps him in perfect peace. So how does the Lord keep you in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you because he trusts in you?

So my prayer for this young lady and my prayer for us as we face persecution is as we're in ethical dilemmas of what do we do? How do we stand for Christ?

In this current world is to be of courage, to have peace and may our minds stay on the Lord. Lastly, I want us to come to the fourth thing we can expect upon believing the gospel and its new accompanying affections.

[ 34 : 20 ] What can we expect? Assurance of his providential care. So how does this ruckus and this huge theater come to an end?

Verse 35. And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that this city of Ephesus is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and the sacred stone that fell from the sky?

Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious or blasphemers of our goddess.

If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open and there are procouncils. Let them bring the charges against one another there.

But if any of you seek anything further, it shall be settled in regular assembly. For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today since there is no cause that we give justification for this commotion.

[ 35 : 35 ] And when he had said this things, he dismissed the assembly. And that's it. You say the assurance of God's providential care.

We could expect that when we have these new affections for the Lord. He would have been in control even if his friends had perished.

While all the shouting is going on, God moved a local official like pieces on a chessboard. At the perfect moment when the crowd was shouting for two hours, had shouted itself out, a pagan city official here called the city clerk, the town clerk in verse 35, he's nameless.

He moves the secular city clerk, a stickler for the law and order to bring about this mob to its senses.

And it's just like God. Today many believers are in a frenzy.

[ 36 : 46 ] They spend more time consuming the news than delighting in the Lord. With concerns of war, globalization, sexualization of our culture, racial tensions, inflation, the price of gas, cost of living insurgents, increases resurgence of COVID or some other pandemic down the future, we can work ourselves into a frenzy.

But what is more true? What is more real is the reality of God. I have some homework for all of us. I would like for us to go home, turn off the news, put your phone down and watch some birds and enjoy some flowers.

And Matthew six, it says this. Before I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on is not life more than food and more than the body and more than clothing.

Look at the birds of the air, neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns, yet their heavenly father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Would we rest in God's providential care? Another set of instructions is go home, turn off the news, put your phone down, take your children outside and lay on the grass and look at the stars.

[ 38 : 14 ] Look what the stars did to David. Psalm eight, oh Lord, oh Lord, how majestic is your name and all the earth you have set your glory above the heavens.

When I consider the heavens and the work of your fingers, the moons, the stars that you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him or the son of man that you would care for him?

Would we be assured of his providential care? And thirdly, go home, turn off the news, put your phone down and open your Bible daily and read the true living, eternal, powerful word of God, the Bible, written for your good and it is useful for your edification, for your correction, for your training and righteousness and allow the God, God's word to be a lamp into your feet and a light into your path.

Something that I've observed in the years of ministry is this. We're coming upon and I'm being very honest and very truthful here. Isn't that bad when you have to say that?

What does that say about the rest of what I've just said? Anyway, every spring I get a little nervous because summer is approaching.

[ 39 : 43 ] And what I've noticed is that oftentimes when the church regathers in the fall, we're in a lesser spiritual condition than perhaps we were in the spring.

And so we're coming upon this summer time where schedules get a little more loose, disciplines become a little more loose, typically.

And so what I'm asking is this and what I'm sharing and offering is this. If we as a staff, if I as a person and we as a staff and elders can be of any assistance to you to having a plan, a summer reading plan of reading through God's word, if you're saying or getting into a group with other men or other women and saying, let's read together, let's get together and pray, let's read these books together somehow to advance us spiritually through the summer rather than regress through the summer.

I would love that. Why? Because I want to fuel these new affections that come with regeneration and be assured of his providential care.

So let's not miss the big picture, though. Do you see what happened in Ephesus? These new affections were affecting culture.

[ 41 : 06 ] They were affecting culture. New believers' lives were being transformed. These old leaves were falling off.

The new life of Christ was at work in their lives. The church was confessing sin. It was divulging and revealing their practices that were idolatrous.

The church had brought their objects of idolatry and evil practices and burned them. They were enjoying the new life of Christ. The new life was transformed and had a civic impact.

The impact of the city was good. It was for Ephesus good. Those who practiced evil were being impacted. The church was then the conscience of the city.

What about you? What about me? Is there sin to confess? Are there practices to give up, as Jay talked about last week?

[ 42 : 05 ] Would you tell someone this week, I am caught in this sin. I have been practicing it. And today I'm going to make a break.

And would you ask me about it next week and hold me accountable? Would we cultivate these new affections and feed them?

That is my prayer for us. Father, thank you so much. Thank you so much for this day.

I thank you that our new life in Christ comes with new affections. And upon believing the gospel, Lord, you have changed everything, as Josh mentioned earlier in the worship set of how we are dead to sin and alive unto God.

Lord, we thank you for this new life in Christ. We love you. It's in your name, Jesus. We pray. Amen.