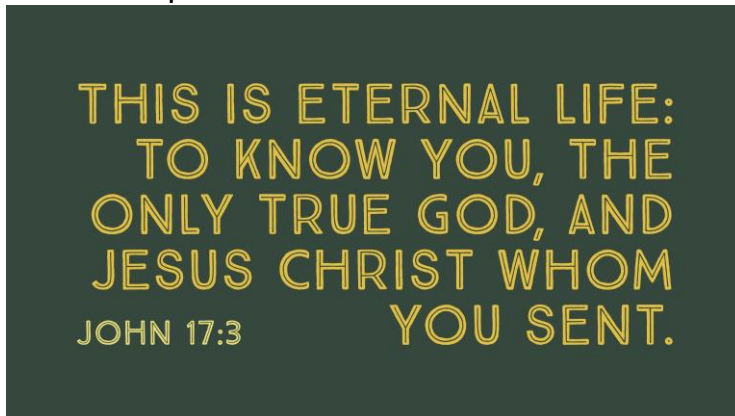


In Acts 19 three factors are identified as contributing to a spiritual awakening in the city of Ephesus, which spread out into the province of Asia and the greater region of Asia Minor.

1. First factor – the teaching of the scripture.

What was the goal of Paul's teaching?

We know from other letters he wrote that it was not just knowledge, but relationship.



What kind of knowing was Jesus speaking of?

It was a relational intimacy – a fellowship.

I John 1:3

“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ”.

But what kind of fellowship?
That of a family.

✿ Romans 8:15 - 17 ¹⁵So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. ¹⁷And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

It is in relationship with God...as our Abba... that we can come near to him.



To see and to contemplate the glory of our Lord impacts us - it results in our transformation into his likeness.

2. Second factor – extraordinary miracles of healing – done by God through Paul.

Why did God choose at that moment to do these things in conjunction with the daily teaching and discussion of the word?

Those miracles of healing ... tangibly demonstrated God's goodness, his power and his loving compassion ...

- as he cured illnesses of the body and mind caused by disease,
- as he cured illnesses of the body and soul caused by demons.

Jesus, the Son of God... came into the world to save sinners.
He came to bring life from heaven into the human experience.

3. The third factor – open confession of sin and public repentance - v.18-19

This third factor, along with the other two, is why, as verse 20 says "In this way ...



Romans 1:16 says

For I am not ashamed of the *gospel of Christ*,

for it is the *power of God* to salvation

for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

For in it the *righteousness of God* is revealed

from faith to faith; as it is written, "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Romans 1:16-17

Just how powerful is the gospel of Jesus?
Just how strong is the name of Jesus?
These questions are answered in today's passage.

Let's work backwards through the passage.
We've already taken note of the result described in v.20.



What specifically caused the word of the Lord to spread and grow?
Luke tells the reader in **v.18-19.**

Why did the believers openly confess and publicly repent?
Luke tells the reader in **v.17.**

What was it that became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus?
Luke tells the reader in **v.14-16.**

Why did the sons of Sceva invoke the name of Jesus in their attempt to drive a demon out of a person?
Luke tells the reader in **v.12-13.**

The name of Jesus was seen to be powerful.

Let's come back to v.17... and the twin responses that happened when news of the incident involving the sons of Sceva became known.

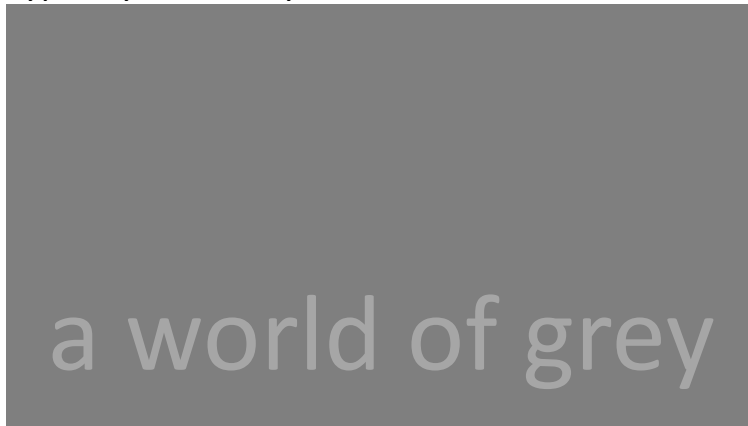
- All were seized with fear
- The name of Jesus was held in high honor

What do you think people were afraid of?

They were afraid of Jesus.

Those in Ephesus had never heard of anyone like Jesus, who was so powerfully present with Paul, in a way they had never ever seen any of their gods be present.

Typically, humanity lives in...



But in Ephesus... in those days... by the working of God, things were seen as they truly were.

The distinction between the fallen angels... and their nature... they stole, they killed and they destroyed...
...and the brilliant goodness of the God who healed and rescued in order to adopt men and women into his family...
...it couldn't have been made any clearer.

But fear of ...and high regard for Jesus... is not saving faith.

Jesus must be believed in... as one's Savior.
He must be received as... the supreme authority of one's life.

While the incident involving the sons of Sceva had effect on everyone in the city, it particularly impacted the followers of Jesus.

Specifically, as the authority of Jesus was manifested.... it exposed in those who had recently believed in and received Jesus, areas of their life not under his authority.

**Repentance is not just a one-time event.
It is a life-long, ongoing process.**

Consider the example of Isaiah in chapter 6.
He was a follower of God.

But in an encounter with God...he perceived in a fresh way the holiness of God and that sight caused him to cry out...

Isaiah 6:5

5 Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."

Through the Scriptures... and the ministry of the Spirit... we who follow Jesus are regularly reminded that...

- God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.
- the follower of Jesus is rescued from the dominion of darkness and brought into the kingdom of Jesus.
- righteousness and wickedness cannot dwell together.
- if a person claims to have fellowship with God and yet walks in the darkness, the scripture says they lie and do not live in the truth.
- to confess our sin and be forgiven and cleansed

J.I. Packer wrote:

The Holy Spirit is God's Prosecutor.

J.I. Packer

The Holy Spirit is a most wonderful gift.

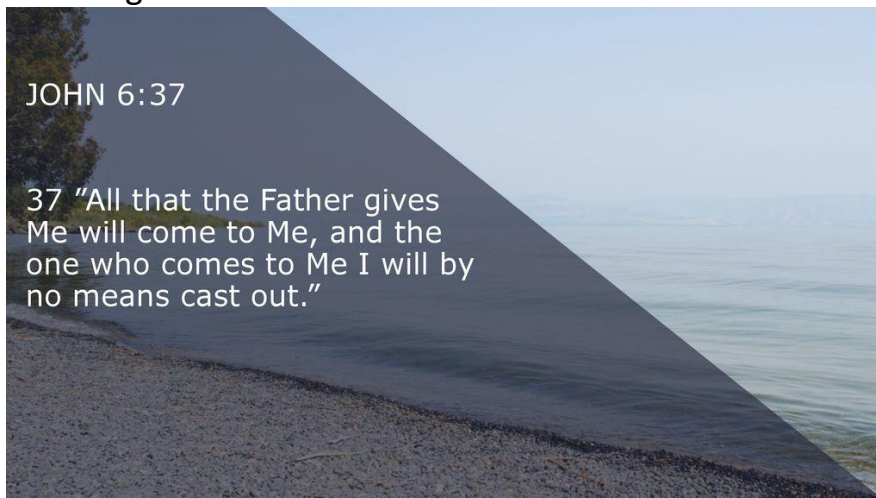
In addition to convicting us of our sin, it is through the Spirit that the love of God is poured into our hearts, as Romans 5 says.

The incident involving the sons of Sceva was used by the Lord Jesus to facilitate a fresh encounter with his people ...and in love for their Lord they dealt with their sin – calling it what it was.

- They made no excuses; they owned what they had done.
- Their heart desire was for Jesus...and only Jesus.

The work of the Holy Spirit, in addition to convicting a person of their sin, and pouring into their life the love of God....convinces one to lay hold of Jesus, confident that as they lay hold of him, he lays hold of them.

The Holy Spirit does so... because his work is to bring to our remembrance the things Jesus said.... and Jesus said in John 6:37:

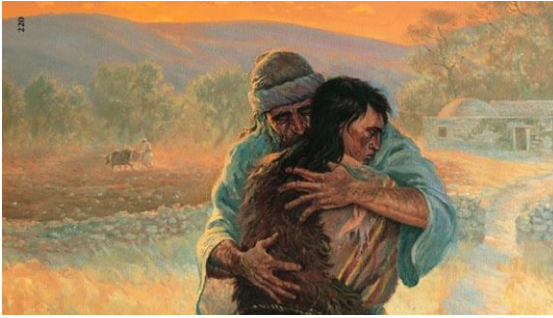


JOHN 6:37

37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."

The heart attitude of God towards a sinner who turns their life towards him... is like that of the father, in the story told by Jesus, who welcomed his wayward son home.

He saw his boy coming towards him.
He was filled with compassion for him.
He ran to his son.



He embraced him and kissed him.

It was in the arms of his father that the son openly confessed his sin –
“Father I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

Did the father drive him away?

No, he didn't.

He claimed him... again as his son.

He celebrated because his son who had been lost... was now found;
his son who had been dead... was alive again.

**This is the story of all who come home to God through faith in Jesus.
And this is the ongoing story of those who follow Jesus.
As we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us
from all unrighteousness.**

In Ephesus their open confession of sin was followed by public repentance.
Read v.19.

Jesus was always clear in his teaching...– there is a cost to following him.



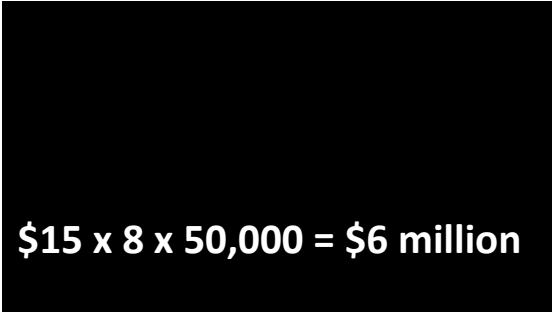
In the year 1519, **Hernán Cortés** arrived in the New World with six hundred men and, upon arrival, made history by destroying his ships. This sent a clear message to his men: There is no turning back. Two years later, he succeeded in his conquest of the Aztec empire.

<https://blog.thecenterforsalesstrategy.com/burn-your-ships-how-to-be-a-great-leader>

Those who burned their scrolls in Ephesus severed all ties with the life they had lived when they practiced sorcery.
There was no going back.

This is what repentance does.
It is an about face.
It is a radical change of direction in one's life.
Rather than moving away from God, one now moves towards him.

The scrolls burned were valued at 50,000 drachmas.
A drachma was a silver coin worth about a day's wages.
On the basis of our minimum wage...those scrolls were valued at...



\$15 x 8 x 50,000 = \$6 million

I'm certain some on-lookers might have asked –

- Why not sell the scrolls if you've decided to give up sorcery?
- Why not use the money to fund social work in Ephesus?
- Why incur such losses?

Those scrolls were not harmless books.
They contained the lies of fallen angels who hated God and mankind;
angels who were fiercely committed to the ruin of the human race.

The real question that needed to be asked was... what kind of God would ask for such commitment and inspire such devotion?

Paul would later speak of what he gave up to follow Jesus – see Philippians 3:4-6. This is what he said.

“Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.

...everything else is
worthless when
compared with the
infinite value of
knowing Christ
Jesus my Lord.

Philippians 3:8 NLT

... **I consider them garbage** that I may gain Christ and be found in him..."

Paul said that what he lost was nothing in comparison to what he gained.

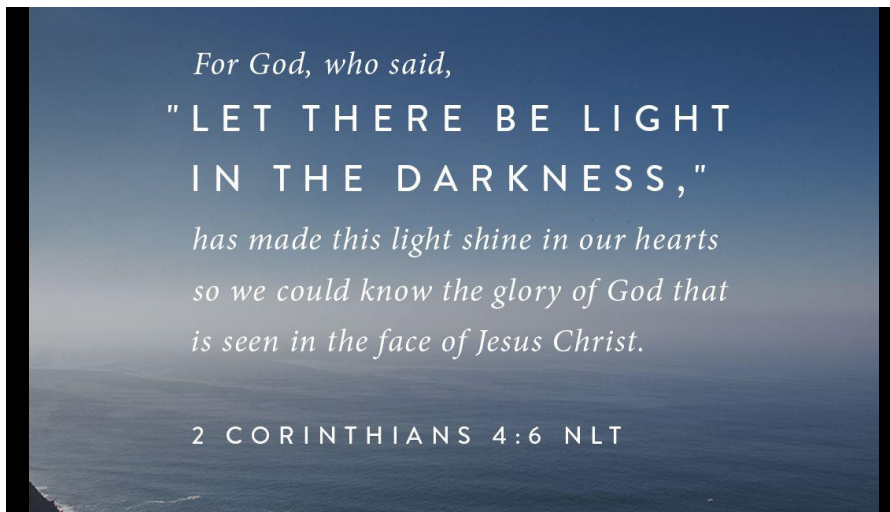
Jesus is the great treasure, he is worth losing everything to gain.
And it is only when you have laid it all down, that you know this.

It was that radical repentance...and whole-hearted commitment to Jesus Christ that set off a spiritual earthquake that rocked the people who lived in Ephesus to their core...and resulted in the word of the Lord... the fame of Jesus... spreading widely and growing in power.



How do we integrate this teaching into our lives?

1. 2 Corinthians 4:6.



I encourage you to ask the Father – “will you shine your light into my heart that I might see your glory in the face of Jesus my Savior?”

2. Be prepared...as God reveals his glory, areas of your life not under his authority will be exposed.

Lay these things down; turn from anything the Spirit exposes.
Be ruthless in your confession; make no excuses; sever all ties.

3. Lay hold of Jesus and his promise – in him every promise is yes.
He said he will never drive you away.
You cannot exhaust his grace, nor his love.

4. Let the Father embrace you; hear his words, “You are mine;” receive his kiss.

5. Enter into the fellowship of the Father and the Son – you have been adopted and are an heir of God.

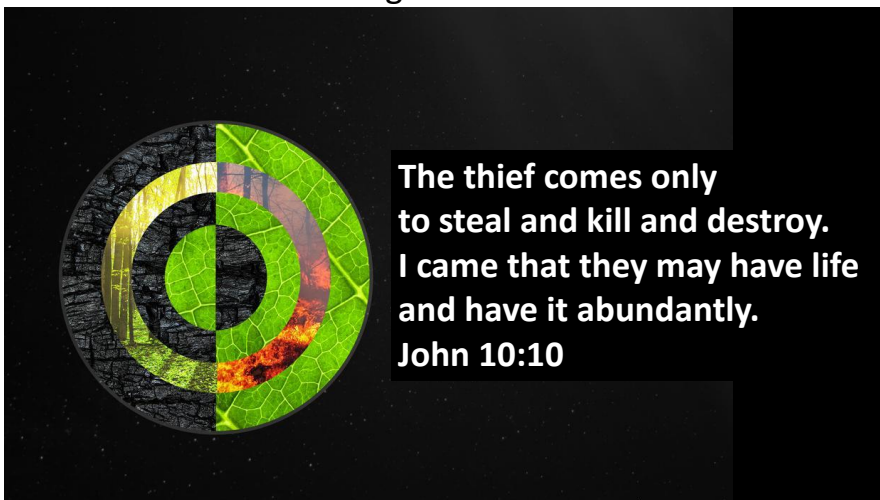
As his children, you and I are walking illustrations.



Of what?

Of the difference between life without Jesus... and life with Jesus... it is as stark as this picture portrays.

The word of Jesus to our generation is this – John 10:10



**The thief comes only
to steal and kill and destroy.
I came that they may have life
and have it abundantly.
John 10:10**

This is the news that was proclaimed to us.

This is the news we proclaim.

This is the life we live.

Moment of silence

He will not drive away those who

and through the Spirit had heard him say as he had said to the woman in Luke 7:48, “Your sins are forgiven,” and to the woman caught in adultery, John 8:11, “Leave your life of sin.”

... the believer experiences a profound conviction that compels them to confess and to rid themselves of anything that offends the One who gave his life for them.

Look again at v.18.

Why did they do this?

Why did they go public?

1 John 3:4 describes sin as lawlessness.

What does that mean?

Sin corrupts and influences us to do what we think is right, without regard for God.

Sin separates us from God – it blinds us to his love; it make us suspicious of him; it provokes in us hostility towards God.

Sin is misplaced love – where rather than loving God supremely, one loves created things, things given by God for pleasure; things that were never intended, nor are capable of being a substitute... of filling the place of God in one's life.

Misplaced love gives the devil an opening into one's life, which he often cruelly exploits and uses to enslave.

It's like leaving the doors and windows of our house wide open, and then being surprised when a thief moves in.

Misplaced love is like an addiction that provides diminishing satisfaction, thus fueling a never-ending search for something more.

But that something more doesn't exist – for there is nothing that is greater, or more satisfying than God.

Sin creates confusion and double-mindedness as it is loved and hated at the same time.

Sin thrives in hiddenness.

Sin creates guilt, for it violates one's conscience; and this guilt, then pushes one deeper and deeper into a prison of shame.

Only Jesus Christ can break the penalty and the power of sin.

He paid humanity's sin debt in full when on a Roman cross, the Father placed our sin on him, and he the innocent one became sin for us.

There is nothing we can add to what he did.

He did it all.

But in our passage, we are reminded of a necessary response to the gospel.

The Spirit not only reveals to a person who Jesus is, he also convicts one of their sin.

This was how they laid down their sin and took hold of Jesus.

As JI Packer writes, it is the Holy Spirit who opens our ears to hear, who applies truth to individual consciences as the gospel is proclaimed.

The believers in Ephesus who had believed in Jesus

shines light into our darkened mind, who quickens our dead heart

When the beauty of Jesus is revealed, and it is the Spirit of God who does so, he also will convict us of sin, causing us to see it for the horror that it is.

Human beings are prone to diminish the

the truth of who Jesus is, also will reveal we see the horror of our sin,

in that through faith in Jesus the debt of sin has been paid in full.
There is nothing we can do to add to the salvation which Jesus accomplished on our behalf.

It is sin that has separated us from God.
It is sin

v.18 describes what many who had believed now did.

the work of salvation is

There is only response that will remove the penalty and the power of sin from one's life.
It is to believe in Jesus and to receive him.

Jesus cannot be received as one's Savior unless one confesses the sin that made

not only the consistent response of those whose eyes are opened by God, it is the only appropriate response by which

When sin is perceived as the moral and spiritual cancer

They had looked to him in faith.

God had granted them faith

They openly confessed their sin.

The power of sin is in its shame.

But sin also loves secrecy.

They had perceive

They realized they had loved lesser things; they had not treasured God, but their sin

While fear and high regard may seem to be unlikely companions.

But not if we realize

These thres... impacted those who had believed.

These three things...compelled these believers to take drastic action.

To open confess and to publicly repent

The fallen angels do take people captive to do their will.

2 Timothy 2:26

They do not bring life – they are thieves who steal and kill and destroy.

And often they do so through illnesses of the body and soul.

Read again Acts 19:11-12

Jesus came to seek and to save those who are lost; to forgive sin; to set free those who are captive to sin and Satan.

Jesus is the greater one who, 1 John 3:8, who destroys the devil's work.

In the gospels in every encounter he had with a demon possessed person – be it a child, woman, man – Jesus drove them out with a word.
See Matthew 8:16, 32; 15:28; 17:18; Mark 1:25, 34; 3:11-12; 5:8; 9:25.

Jesus opens the prison cell a person was in.
Jesus unlocks the chains that held a person.
Confession and repentance is a person's response to what Jesus has done – it's how they walk out of the prison; it's how they shake off the chains.
While we cannot save ourselves, confession of sin openly acknowledges that we loved lesser things, and gave these things power over us.
Repentance breaks the power of who we were and what we do in secret, or not so secretly.

Confession and repentance is how the
we now treasure God (Matthew 5:21) and love him (Matthew 5:24)
supremely – doing so is how we break the power that sin holds over us; its
how we walk out of a prison cell; its how we shake off chains that held us.

our love of God and our commitment to follow him of our

The gospels do not focus on how it had happened only that it had.

But no one can use as their defense - the

Why did many who had believed... openly confess their evil deeds?
It really was a matter of love.

Didn't they care what others would think of them?
What mattered more was

Would they make themselves so vulnerable?

We cannot save ourselves – only God can.

Acts 19 describes the beginning of a gospel movement that resulted... as verse 20 says, in....

In addition to the power of God being at work at that time and in that region, Dr. Luke in Acts 19 identified, three factors that contributed to this awakening.

The first factor.



[Paul] took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

Through these discussions which took place over a two-year period God the Spirit was at work through his Word to transform, not only the mind, but the character of those disciples.

In the parable of the growing seed, Jesus described what God's kingdom is like.

Parable of the Growing Seed

"This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. ²⁸ All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. Mark 4:26-28

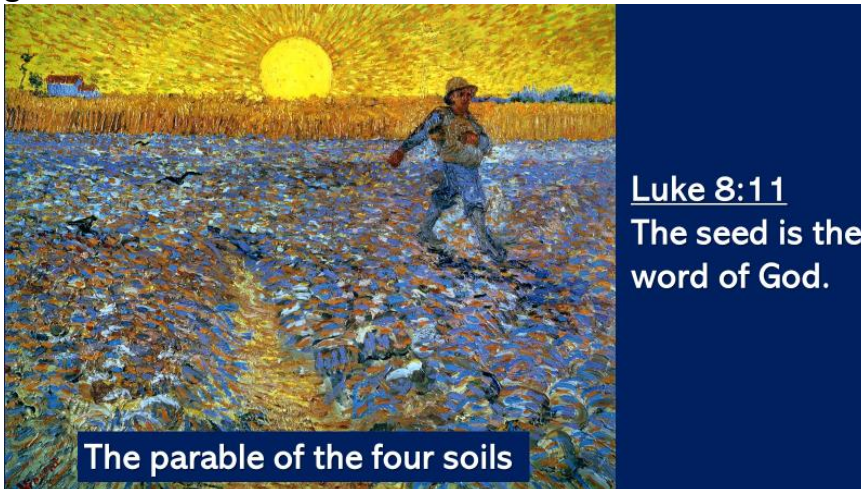
Typically, human kingdoms grow through conquest.

But the kingdom of God is different.

Jesus told Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36

We understand from this statement that the reign of God is not realized in some geographical location on the earth, but in the lives of people who have received and believed in Jesus.

We know from the parable of the soils, that the seed, which sprouts and grows and produces fruit... is the word of God... and the place in which it grows is a human life.



Luke 8:11
The seed is the word of God.

The parable of the four soils

2 Timothy 3:16-17 says...

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the servant of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Is it not incredible that Scripture is breathed out by God?

The Scripture is the spoken word of God that expresses his thoughts, his desires and his purposes.

The Scripture is useful to the follower of Jesus.

Useful in what way?

It teaches us – the truth of who God is – his three-personed-ness; the truth of who we were created to be and what happened to us; the truth of what God did to rescue us; the truth of who Jesus is – the God-man; the truth of what salvation in his name entails; the truth of who a person become in Christ when they believe in him; the truth of the hope we have.

It reproves us – it exposes where our thinking and behavior is wrong.

It corrects us – in that it is active to restores our character to who we were created to be.

It trains us in righteousness.

Righteousness is

righteousness is the fruit that the seed of

Like a seed it produces fruit

His life the impact that the breathed-out, living word of God has upon the follower of Jesus?

It teaches, it reproves, it corrects, and it trains us in righteousness.

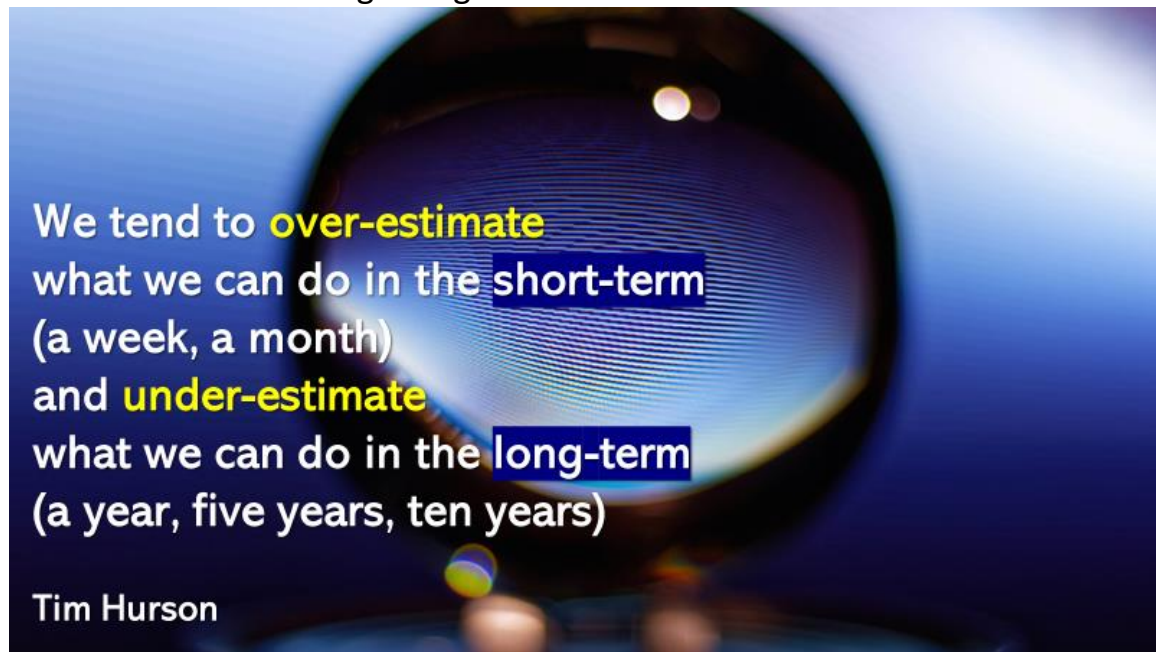
As its influences in us

The word of God as it is believed and integrated into the believer's life, progressively displaces...

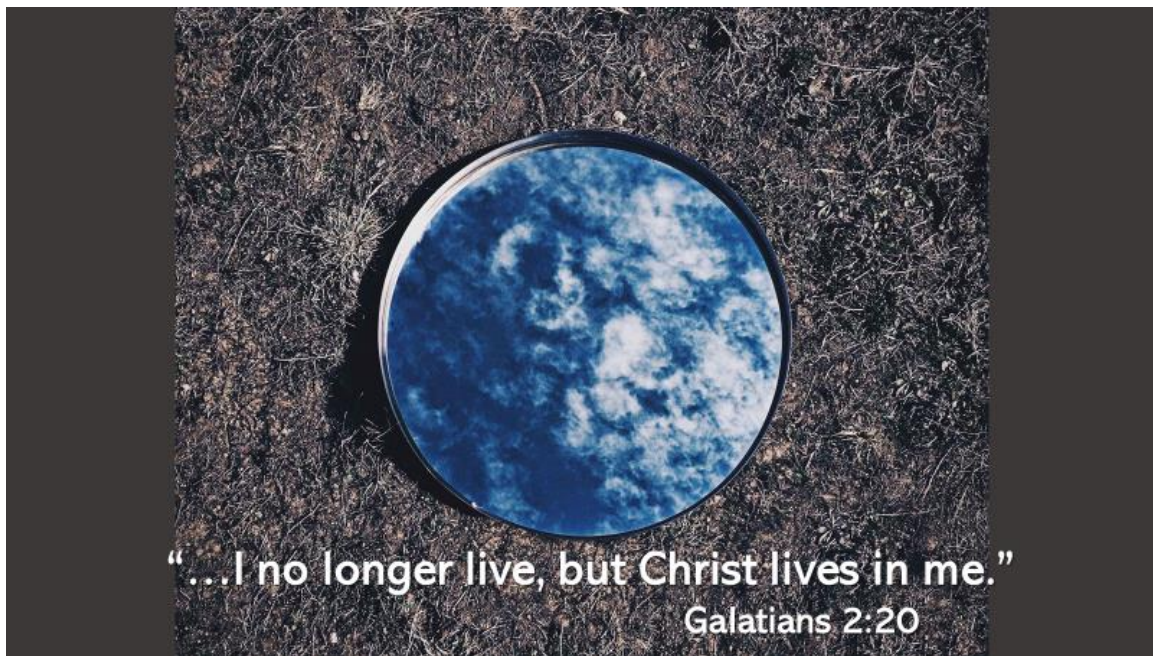
... the old... (that is, who we used to be without God) ...with the new... (who we now are, saved by Jesus and adopted by God into his family).

It was not an instantaneous transformation, but it was progressive, as daily... the Scriptures were read, discussed and then with the enabling of God the Spirit were integrated into the lives of those disciples.

Tim Hurson said this regarding business...



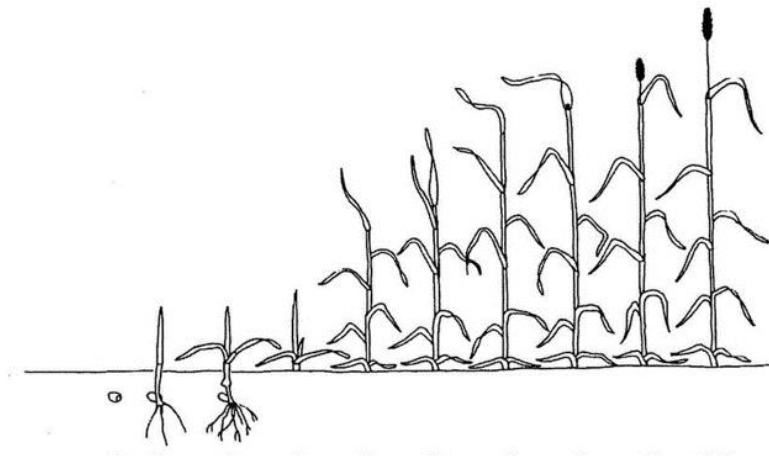
I see this statement having connection to the parables about the soils and the growing seed... and to our life with God.



Who here is not eager for an encounter with God that would decisively and dramatically rid us of a sin habit or resolve a difficult personal circumstance?

And sometimes... this is how God works.
ie. of my grandfather and his temper.

But I wonder how often we are disappointed with God that he doesn't work faster.... because we overlook this reality about God and his ways...



...that like a seed that sprouts and grows, first the stalk, then the head, then the kernel.... that God steadily and incrementally, with our willingly cooperation, transforms our lives through his word and by the Holy Spirit ...over months, years, decades.

Dr. Luke intentionally drew the link between those daily discussions and the result he stated in v.10.



Like the creation causes us to marvel at the handiwork of God – so does the re-creation of a human life catch the attention of those who see and interact with a person who has been reborn of the Spirit.

The word of the Lord is that Jesus Christ is humanity's rescuer; the word of the Lord is that in Jesus Christ God has begun to make everything new; the word of the Lord is that all who come home to the Father through faith in Jesus will be given the right to become a child of God.

The proof, in addition to the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead, is the resurrection of a person's dead soul when they believe in and receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

God the Spirit was at work in the city of Ephesus... in the lives of those disciples... who gathered daily and then through those disciples, God the Spirit was at work to spread throughout the province of Asia, the news of Jesus and his salvation.

The second factor that contributed to the awakening in Ephesus and in the province of Asia was the extraordinary miracles God did through Paul.

...even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched [Paul] were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

Acts 19:12

From this verse it would seem many of the miracles which God did through Paul, were miracles of healing... of illnesses caused by disease and evil spirits.

The verses we will study this morning explain how in an most unexpected way these miracles of healing from the oppression and possession of evil spirits, resulted in a very public outpouring of confession and repentance which served to further fuel and advance the word of the Lord.

Read v.13-17.

It is important that we consider what Jesus did when he first sent out the Twelve to serve others in his name.

Luke 9:1-6

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, **he gave them** power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, ² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick....

⁶ So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

The plan of the Father was that the news about the kingdom of God would be proclaimed in every village in Israel.

Luke 9 describes the point in Jesus' public ministry when he involved the Twelve to do what he had been doing.

This was when he gave to them what the Father had given him – power and authority...to heal the sick – to drive out demons and cure diseases.

Years later, on the very day Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared, not just to the apostles, but to all the disciples who were in that upper room, and he said to them, John 20:21, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." Then he endowed them with authority and power from heaven.

What he did was remarkable.

He breathed on them...

**Jon Bloom says that in doing so, Jesus was communicating something of astonishing, fathomless profundity...
The Holy Spirit, who proceeds only from God was proceeding from the Lord Jesus.**

We don't know how much the apostles understood of the Holy Spirit's nature in the moment Jesus breathed on them, but they would soon come to understand that the Spirit was also their Lord and their God.

He was not merely a vague emanation of the presence of God; the Breath of God was not like the breath of humans.

The Breath was not an *it* but a *he*.

He was not simply the *force* or *power* of God, but God himself.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/receive-the-holy-spirit>

The Holy Spirit is the breath of God personified and from him the follower of Jesus is given authority and power to carry on the mission of Jesus.

Open your Bibles to Acts 19.

I want to read verses 9b-20.

Last week we considered how God was active in the city of Ephesus
and why he was able to do
the miracles he did through Paul and other believers.

His glory was safe with them.

We asked ourselves the question of whether or not

the same thing that happened in the province of Asia
could happen here in Revelstoke –
that everyone could hear the word of the Lord.

We concluded that it wasn't a question of whether it could happen,
but rather why it wasn't.

** God doesn't change.

He still has a heart for the people of this world
who are estranged from him.

** The people of this world, including the people who live here in Revelstoke
are not any more sinful, perverted,
or hard cored committed to evil practices
than those who lived in the province of Asia
in that time of great spiritual awakening.

So we then asked ourselves
whether there was anything in us that holds back God's Spirit;
or diminishes what God would want to do with our lives
and through our lives.

How has your week gone as you have interacted with the Lord
regarding these questions?

What has he impressed upon your heart?

Has he revealed to you areas of your life

that need in a fresh way to be placed under his control;
or areas of your life where you need to make confession of sin
and take concrete steps of repentance.

What has the Spirit said to you and how have you responded to the Lord?

Today, we want to dig deeper into what happened in Ephesus
and in turn the province of Asia.

What we're going to see is how the authority and power
and majesty of Jesus was revealed to people;
and what happened when Jesus was lifted high.

In the city of Ephesus there were Jews who functioned as exorcists.
An exorcist was a person who would attempt
to drive a demon out of and from a person's life.

Because the emphasis of this passage
is not on the causes that result in demon possession,
or what these exorcists did,
but on the power of Jesus,
we're going to stay focused on this theme.

So we start first with the seven sons of Sceva.
They tried to invoke the name of Jesus when doing exorcisms.
It isn't clear how many times they had tried this.
But as verse 15 says, one day when they invoked the name of Jesus
while trying to drive out a demon, the evil spirit spoke to them.

What did the spirit say?
*Jesus I know, and I know about Paul,
but who are you?*

Let's consider the significance of this question.
The evil spirits obviously know who Jesus is.
Even when Jesus was incarnated,
while humans were slow to recognize who he truly was,
that was not the case with evil spirits.

Mark 3:11: *Whenever the evil spirits saw him,
they fell down before him and cried out, 'You are the Son of God.'*

In the book of Colossians, 2:15,
what's revealed to us, is a fact that is well known to every evil spirit.
Jesus through his sacrifice and his resurrection,
*disarmed the powers and authorities...
triumphing over them by the cross.*

How did Jesus disarm the fallen angels?
He took from them the weapons they had used.
What were those weapons?

Hebrews 2:14 says, *Since the children have flesh and blood,
he too [that is, Jesus] shared in their humanity so that by his death
he might destroy him who holds the power of death –
that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held*

in slavery by their fear of death.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve faced a test
that had implications for the human race.
When they did what God had said not to do
their choice released death into the human experience.
Death is a consequence of sin.

But humanity's fear of death was exploited by the demonic
to enslave the human race.

The Scripture says that Jesus by rising from the dead
destroyed him who held the power of death.
1 John 3:8 expresses this same truth: *The reason the Son of God appeared
was to destroy the devil's work.*

When Jesus sacrificed his life he paid in full humanity's spiritual debt.
Because he tasted eternal death,
all who trust in him, never will have to.
Jesus gives to those who follow him, the gift of life from heaven.

Do you remember what Jesus said?
John 10:10: *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;
I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.*

Jesus as the Son of God appeared to undo; to reverse; to renew; to re-
create all that sin, death and the devil ruined.

Jesus has triumphed and he now rules over all from heaven.
He holds all authority and power.
There is no human or fallen angel who can oppose him.

The evil spirit also said to the sons of Sceva,
...and I know about Paul.

What was happening in the city of Ephesus,
this great spiritual awakening,
this incredible turning of people to the Lord, that we read about in Acts 19,
was well known to the evil spirits.

They knew about Paul.

They knew he was one of the key persons
being used by the Lord Jesus
to upset the spiritual and moral status quo in Ephesus
and in the whole province of Asia.

But why was Paul so effective?
As we saw last week. God was able to use Paul as he did,
because his glory was safe with Paul.

But there is a second important reason.

We need to look back to what Jesus said to his first followers.
Luke 9:1-2: *When Jesus had called the Twelve together,
he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons
and to cure diseases, and he sent them out
to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.*

Whose power and authority were the Twelve given?
Jesus gave to them from his power and his authority.
They were to speak and to act as his representatives.

What were they to do with this delegated power and authority?
They were to preach the kingdom of God.
But there is an important conjunction in this passage.
They were to preach the kingdom of God **AND** heal the sick.

Some they would encounter would be sick of heart and soul
because they were afflicted or controlled by demons.
The disciples were given the power and authority of Jesus
to drive out all such demons.

Some they would encounter would be sick of body
and the Twelve were given
the power and authority of Jesus to speak words of healing
that would cure diseases.

These acts of healing and deliverance were intended by Jesus to confirm
the message the apostles would announce,
that the kingdom of God was at hand.

Was it only to the 12 that Jesus delegated his power and authority?
Look at Matthew 28:18-20.

Jesus delegates his power and authority
to every generation of Christians.
This included Paul.

Here's the second reason as to why Paul was so effective in ministry.
Paul stepped into ministry opportunities
to proclaim the good news of Jesus;
he spoke words of healing for those who were sick;
he commanded demons to leave a person's life;
because he knew and was confident
that he had the authority and power of Jesus to do so.

Let's connect to our lives today.

Not only are our sins forgiven through faith in Jesus.
Not only are we given a new life by the power of God's Spirit.
Not only do we have the hope of the new heaven and the new earth.

We too are commissioned by Jesus to act and to speak on his behalf.
Jesus has also delegated to us his power and his authority
so that we can do what he asks of us.

The last thing we need to see
is how the demonized man beating up the sons of Sceva,
affected both believers and non-believers.

Unbelievers, as verse 17 says, were seized with a fear of God.
But so also were the followers of Jesus.
However, Luke, here in chapter 19, prompted by the Spirit
has chosen to emphasize the impact upon believers.

The fear of God sparked a much needed revival of confession,
repentance and a conscious and deliberate separating from sin.

Verse 18 says that believers who had previously
been involved with occult practices openly confessed their evil
deeds.
This confession of sin led to very specific acts of repentance,

which severed all ties with one's old life
that had excluded the God who had revealed himself in the person of Jesus.

What happened as a result of this confession and repentance?
Verse 20.

What does this tell us?

Confession and repentance of sin always leads to personal renewal;
which results in the word of the Lord spreading widely
and growing in power as it increasingly impacts and transforms
the lives of more and more people in a city; in a region; in a nation.

Like last week, this passage compels us to ask questions of ourselves
and to take action in order to put the truth into practice.

Let's start with the obvious.

There is never any reason for a follower of Jesus
to engage in occult practices.

And if you are, the command of Scripture is to confess and repent.

There is a second implication that is more subtle.

Occult themes and practices are presented in our culture as entertainment.

What does God's word say to us, his followers,
when it comes to the things we allow to inform our minds
and in turn touch our hearts?

Ephesians 5:8-11

- live as children of light
- have nothing to do with darkness

As we apply the teaching of this passage,

I believe each of us needs to ask God's Spirit
is there anything I'm doing when it comes to what I permit my eyes to see,
my ears to hear; my mind to think upon,
that you don't like; that you want me to turn away from?

And if there is, we confess and we change.

The question never is how close

can we as followers of Jesus get to darkness and still be light.
As children of light God's word says to us

“have nothing to do with darkness.”

My challenge to each of us, myself included,
is to invite God’s Spirit to examine our lives with the understanding
that we will get rid of anything he doesn’t like.

Will we do that?????????

More specifically, will you do that????

The other point of application in this passage
has to do with the authority and power,
Jesus has delegated to us, his followers.

The sons of Sceva learned a very painful lesson
when they tried to tap into the power of Jesus’ name
without being in relationship with Jesus.

Jesus’ name is not a super powerful magic word.
The power and authority associated with his person,
cannot be accessed or used by anyone
who is not in a dynamic relationship with him –
where Jesus is Lord of that person’s life.

The example of Jesus – Luke 4:31-42

If the things that happened in Ephesus
and the province of Asia were to happen in Revelstoke,
you and I need to clearly understand this teaching.

Effective ministry is ministry done in the authority and power of Jesus.
But relationship with our God always precedes ministry.
And Jesus is our example of what that relationship looks like.

So as we close, what is God’s Spirit saying to you?
How do you need to respond to him?

The Blessing

Hebrews 4:12, 16:

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart...

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

May you know the blessing of God's living and active word penetrating your life.

May you know the blessing of God's living and active word judging the thoughts and attitudes of your heart.

For what reason does God penetrate our lives with his word?
Why does he use his word to judge the thoughts and attitudes of our hearts?

To uncover habits of sin; ways of thinking that exclude or diminish who he is.

The Lord uncovers such things in us in order to heal, restore, rebuild.

That's why the invitation is given in this same passage for us to approach God with confidence.
We will find when we do that he gives to us mercy and grace.

Mercy for the sin we've committed and grace to continue putting on the new person we've become through faith in Jesus.

May God bless you with his help!

Just as it is important to know who we are in light of who Jesus is;
so is it important to know just exactly what the church is,
in light of who Jesus is.

The church is not one of many social agencies that help people out.
We do help people.
But our resources are not limited to what we can collectively pool together
or even solicit from others.
We have the resources of heaven at our disposal.
Our God is the one who can do multiply little into much.

And the help we offer to people is not limited
to material resources; a listening ear or even good counsel.
We are in the life changing business.

This is why our understanding of who Jesus is and his presence with us,
must grow and be accurately informed by God's Word.
This is why our understanding of who God's Spirit is
and how he meditates to us the resources of heaven;
must also grow and be accurately informed by God's Word.
Do you see why our time on a daily basis

to read and think upon God's Word
and to listen to the voice of the Spirit is of utmost importance.

It is a primary means by which we are to grow
in the relationship we have with our God.

We often read the parable of the talents;
the story of the one servant who was given ten talents,
and another one who was given five
and lastly the one who was given one.
And then how they were held accountable by their Master
as to what they did with what they had been given.

How often do we think of these talents in the parable as being skills?
Somebody has been given an ability to teach;
someone else an ability to encourage;
someone else this or that skill or ability?

Have you ever considered that this parable could be speaking of
the delegated authority and power
given to the followers of Jesus?

You and I are responsible for what we do with the grace of God
that has been entrusted to us.
But I also believe we are responsible for what we do with
the power and authority of Jesus
he has entrusted to us as we go about sharing the good news of his gospel.

You are no ordinary persons

They were confronted with one who belonged to Jesus;
one who had come with the power and authority to Jesus to unseat
their reign in Ephesus.

Who did the people in Ephesus fear?

Not the demon, but Jesus.

What does this tell us?

We often fear the wrong thing.

Today occult practices are consumed as entertainment.

What stance did believers in Ephesus take towards occult practices?

Burn; separate; get rid of.

An empty house.

In other parts of our world today, it is also not an unusual occurrence.

Example in Venezuela – is it demon possession?

I can only really speak for the situation in our own culture.

While there is much more knowledge today of occult practices, than say 25 years ago, that knowledge still perceives

Luke 11:21