



SERIES: ACTS - WHEN THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN
MESSAGE TITLE: "WHOLEHEARTED "

SPEAKER: BO STERN-BRADY
DATE: SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

MESSAGE SUMMARY

BIBLICAL TEXT(S): *Acts 19:23-41*

In Acts chapter 19, there are two things happening that are also happening in our own day: a fire and a riot. The beginning of the chapter tells about how many people in the city of Ephesus came to know Jesus. They were wholehearted in their desire to follow him, so much so that they burned all of their sorcery books (which were very valuable/expensive at the time). It was clear that they didn't just believe, they were living out their faith in every aspect of their life.

Pastor Bo explained in her sermon and that this transformation began to affect others. A craftsman named Demetirus managed to stir up the crowd and start a riot against the Christians. The problem was, they were half hearted. Half of them didn't even know what they were supposed to be rioting. Pastor Bo shows how the wholehearted devotion of the Christians in Ephesus can be an example of us today and how we can keep from being halfhearted in our following of Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. These can help your group understand and apply the teaching more profitably

LEAN IN

These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What example or story stood out to you in Sunday's sermon? Why was it significant to you?
2. How would you define the term "wholehearted"?
3. What the funniest/most ironic thing that's ever happened to you in worship or a church service?
4. What is one thing that you're looking forward to this week? What's one that you are dreading?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. From the verses right before verse 23, what had happened "about that time"? How might those events have influenced what happened in the following verses?
2. What was Demetrius' complaint against Paul? What was he afraid of?
3. How did the people of Ephesus react to Demetrius' words?
cont.

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4. Based on verses 32-34, how would you describe the crowd and the riot in your own words?
5. How did the riot end? What happened to Paul and the Christians in that city?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. In her message, Pastor Bo said that the burning of the scrolls shows the wholehearted nature of the new believers in Ephesus. What kinds of radical transformations have you seen in believers lives that demonstrate this same kind of wholehearted following of Jesus?
2. How have you seen believers have only a halfhearted devotion to God? What are some practical examples of what this can look like? What kinds of things have you seen divide people's energy and attention away from following Jesus wholeheartedly?
3. How have you seen Christians rely on other sources for things only God can give? What has been the outcome of that?
4. How have you seen people who follow Jesus care more about being right than about loving right? What effect has that had?
5. What do you think it looks like to experience spiritual, emotional, and relational numbness? How does that impact our effectiveness for God?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.

1. What changes have you made because of your wholehearted love and devotion for God? What changes might God be calling you to currently?
2. Have you seen halfhearted devotion in your own life? What kinds of things tend to divide your devotion? How have you learned to deal with those things over time?
3. What things have you relied on instead of relying on God? Is that happening in your own life right now, and if so, how does this message encourage or challenge you?
4. Have you ever found yourself wanting to be right more than wanting to love well? Have you struggled with that in our current season? How can you combat this in your own life?
5. How have you experienced numbness? What factors tend to lead to that? How have you overcome that in the past?

cont.

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LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. Right now, pray the prayer of Psalm 86:11: "Give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name." Commit to praying this prayer each day this week and giving God space to work in your heart.
2. Is there something that you need to do in your own life to demonstrate your whole hearted devotion to God? Pray that God would give you wisdom to know what you should do and courage and strength to do it.
3. Are any of the three signs of spiritual halfheartedness in your life right now (relying on other things for what God gives, caring more about being right than loving well, and/or numbness)? How can your family, small group, friends, etc., encourage you and pray for you as you seek to be a wholehearted follower of Jesus?

Thanks to Ashleigh Rich and the Adult Discipleship Team for this week's notes and questions, as well as Charissa Burns (@charissaburnsstudio on Instagram) for her illustrated notes, which normally appear on the following page.

