



The Riot In Ephesus

Series: Acts -- Worldwide Witness to the Worth of Jesus Christ

Acts 19:21-41

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The text that we are looking at this morning is quite different from everything that we have looked at in the Book of Acts so far. It is the story of a riot in Ephesus. There is no specific gospel teaching, no exposition of the cross, no exhortation to faith. It is the record of a riot, a riot that comes after 2 and ½ years of gospel preaching in Ephesus. We may wonder why it is that Luke would include this in his book? What is the point of this? There may be many reasons – Luke doesn't tell us. But I think one of the main reasons is that Luke records this unrest that takes place in Ephesus is that he wants his readers to understand the powerful way that the gospel turned Ephesus upside down, the way that it turns every human life upside down.

The gospel had taken powerful root in the city of Ephesus and in the region around it – Colossae, Smyrna, Sardis, Thyatira, Pergamum, Philadelphia and Laodicea, all these churches were the fruit of Paul's ministry in the Hall of Tyrannus, so that the Word of the Lord went everywhere bearing fruit. The name of Christ, the power of the gospel had flooded Ephesus. So great was the fruit that, as we look at this text, we see Paul making plans to leave Ephesus and strengthen the existing churches and to take the conquering power of the gospel to other fields. Look at it starting in verse 21:

“Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have 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.” (Acts 19:21–22, ESV) The power of the gospel having inundated Ephesus, Paul was being moved by the Holy Spirit to move on. He is motivated to do this by a few considerations. First, he was concerned, as he always was, for the spiritual growth and endurance of the Christians who had come to faith under his ministry – those in Macedonia and in Achaia. He desired to continue to establish them more and more in Christ and to teach them how to walk in the power and

communion of the Holy Spirit. Second, Paul was moved by a desire to take the gospel to the farthest reaches of the earth. He wanted to firmly establish the gospel in the capital of the Roman Empire, Rome itself, but even that was not his end game. Paul wrote in Rom 15: “But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while.” (Romans 15:23–24, ESV) The end game for Paul was Spain – that was what he had in view. Third, Paul was moved by the Spirit of God to move on from Ephesus in order to help the famine-stricken saints in Jerusalem by taking to them the collection taken on their behalf among the churches he had founded. He alludes to that in Romans 15 as well, saying: “At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.” (Romans 15:25–29, ESV)

So there are a number of factors at work as Paul makes plans to move on from Ephesus and he sent Timothy and Erastus on before him to prepare for his arrival. But before Paul can leave we read these words:

“About that time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way.” (Acts 19:23, ESV) That disturbance that Luke will describe is the riot that took place in Ephesus, a riot in response to the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the region. Beloved, make no mistake; the riot that took place in Ephesus was a direct result of the power with which the gospel of Jesus Christ had taken root in the city. It was a direct result of the transforming power of the gospel. When Paul had come to Ephesus, it was a city held in the thrall and sway of pagan superstition, of black magic, heavy demonic activity, the occult arts, spiritual darkness and the sensual worship of the goddess Artemis. It was a city in bondage. Paul recognized that. Paul understood the reality of spiritual warfare, understood that in any city, in any culture, there is more at work than meets the eye. That’s why he would write in Ephesians 6: “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12, ESV) And Paul engaged that darkness with the most powerful weapons in God’s universe – divine truth boldly preached, true righteousness in Christ – both

positional and practical – that comes through faith, real peace with God, faith in Christ and in the power of God to intervene and move for the sake of His elect, the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, and prayer – earnest, dependant, faithful prayer to the God who answers for our good and for His glory. Paul understood the truth that he so clearly expressed: “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.” (2 Corinthians 10:3–4, ESV)

Paul came to Ephesus armed with the weapons of God and the forces of darkness were no match for God’s power unleashed in their midst. When Paul came preaching the good news of salvation through faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ; when he came preaching the love of God to us when we were still sinners, made manifest in the fact that God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins; when he came preaching the grace of God in that although all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God we can be justified through faith in the redemption that is found in Jesus; when Paul came preaching the mystery of God whereby we who are sinners by nature and guilty before God can be forgiven our trespasses and made holy and blameless and adopted as the sons of God; when he came preaching Christ, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”” (1 Corinthians 1:30–31, ESV); when Paul came preaching the truth, refusing to practice cunning or to tamper with the God’s Word, but openly preaching the truth as it is in Christ, preaching the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God, the light shone in the hearts of those in Ephesus who had been chosen for eternal life, giving them saving knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 4:1-6). And the stronghold of spiritual wickedness was broken over the city.

The results were unmistakable. Through the God-blessed and fervent and faithful preaching of Paul, a multitude of people turned from idols, turned from superstition and spiritual darkness to serve the Living and the True God. A multitude came to the realization that the glory of the goddess Artemis was an empty sham. They came to realize that this idolatry and obsession with demonic spiritual darkness was a banquet in the grave. They came to realize the glorious purpose of the human life, the redeemed human life, to glorify God. That the reason that we exist is to glorify God -- tongues is to sing God’s praises, hands to serve God’s will, hearts to love God, minds to think with the mind of Christ, strength to serve God.

The gospel had a profound effect in the hearts and lives of those who believed. No longer would they serve a grotesque and lust inciting goddess. No longer would they give themselves to spiritual wickedness and demonic practices. Their repentance and faith was powerful and palpable. Remember how they gathered all their books of witchcraft and spells and burned them in the sight of all. The gospel had changed everything for these believers in Ephesus and the impact was felt throughout the city.

The lives of those who had embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ changed, they had a different principle for life and it confronted and convicted those who remained in the darkness. When people who once were caught up in revelry and lust, who once were partakers in the fruits of darkness –when they suddenly stopped doing these things because they trusted in Christ and repented of their sins, it threatened those whose lives were still caught up in such sinfulness.

This was a people that had heard the message of Paul and taken it to heart. Listen to this later exhortation of Paul to the Ephesians in his own words, an exhortation that is no doubt representative of what he shared with them while he ministered amongst them. Just listen to this. Knowing their background, knowing the city of Ephesus, listen to these words: “Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But sexual immorality and all impurity or

covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partners with them; for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.” (Ephesians 4:17–5:11, ESV) They heard these words and obeyed them. When you follow Jesus, it makes a mark, it shows; it shows in your lifestyle. It shows in the choices that you make. It shows in what you value, how you think. It shows in the things you do and what you no longer do. And that Way, that pattern, that lifestyle had penetrated the city of Ephesus and as a result, there was a violent response from those in the culture that still obstinately rejected the truth. It isn’t surprising. After all, Jesus said: ““Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter.” (Matthew 10:34, ESV) And that is exactly what happened in Ephesus. Look at it with me.

“For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. These he gathered together, with the workmen in similar trades, and said, “Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth. And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship.”” (Acts 19:24–27, ESV) Now let’s dissect the anatomy of this incendiary speech by Demetrius. Demetrius was a silversmith, probably the chief or president of the guild of silverworkers and he called all the craftsmen together and got right to the point. Their wealth was tied directly to the support of Artemis cult. Patrons of Artemis would purchase these silver shrines, like votives – you know guys like the little glass cups your wives put candles in – people would buy these silver votives and use them in the worship of Artemis in the temple there in Ephesus, trading them for a variety of fleshly indulgences and sins. It was a lucrative business since you had to keep buying these votives in order to get your desires fulfilled at the temple. If Artemis lost patrons, they lost wealth. And this is exactly what was happening. As people were being saved and leaving the Artemis cult, these guys were being hit hard in the wallet and that didn’t sit well with them.

“Paul,” Demetrius said, “has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods. Now I want you to think for a moment about the foolishness of what Demetrius says here. His accusation against Paul is that he is saying that gods made with hands are not gods. Now can I just get a “duh” beloved? You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to see the foolishness of what Demetrius is saying. Even a child knows that if you make something with your own hands that it cannot be a god. How can something that you make with your own two hands be a god? It can’t. You can see how irrational idolatry is. Isaiah mocked the foolishness of idolatry when he wrote in Isaiah 44: “All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit. Their witnesses neither see nor know, that they may be put to shame. Who fashions a god or casts an idol that is profitable for nothing? Behold, all his companions shall be put to shame, and the craftsmen are only human. Let them all assemble, let them stand forth. They shall be terrified; they shall be put to shame together. The ironsmith takes a cutting tool and works it over the coals. He fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water and is faint. The carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. He shapes it with planes and marks it with a compass. He shapes it into the figure of a man, with the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house. He cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it. Half of it he burns in the fire. Over the half he eats meat; he roasts it and is satisfied. Also he warms himself and says, “Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire!” And the rest of it he makes into a god, his idol, and falls down to it and worships it. He prays to it and says, “Deliver me, for you are my god!” They know not, nor do they discern, for he has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand.” (Isaiah 44:9–18, ESV)

Then in chapter 46 Isaiah writes: ““To whom will you liken me and make me equal, and compare me, that we may be alike? Those who lavish gold from the purse, and weigh out silver in the scales, hire a goldsmith, and he makes it into a god; then they fall down and worship! They lift it to their shoulders, they carry it, they set it in its place, and it stands there; it cannot move from its place. If one cries to it, it does not answer or save him from his trouble.” (Isaiah 46:5–7, ESV) That is the foolishness of idolatry and it is plainly evident in Demetrius.

Now here's the thing. For all of his foolishness, Demetrius is a clever instigator. He doesn't just bang the drum on the loss of income, because some people who weren't losing money wouldn't care, so he enlarges the scope. He shifts the dot. He opines how if this continues, that Artemis would lose prestige and be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship. Do you see what he does? He appeals to Ephesus' heritage, to her history, to their culture, to their civic pride and he appeals to the glory of Artemis that needs to be defended. Smoothly, Demetrius moves the dot to something that everyone could get behind. Do you see it? He tailors his speech to play to the crowd most effectively. It is masterful manipulation of emotions. Only here's the glaring question that some thinking person should have asked. If Artemis was so magnificent, why did she need the city of Ephesus to take up for her? Shouldn't she be able to defend herself and uphold her own greatness? What kind of goddess worth her salt needs frail humans to uphold her majesty? It's a fair question, but when you are inciting a mob, you don't bog yourself down with logical inconsistencies or facts. Those things aren't very useful. Feelings are what matters; perception is what is most important. Truth isn't. Demetrius' speech had the desired effect.

“When they heard this they were enraged and were crying out, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's companions in travel. But when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him. And even some of the Asiarchs, who were friends of his, sent to him and were urging him not to venture into the theater. Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.” (Acts 19:28–32, ESV) The whole crowd gets fired up and all over the place people are crying out “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” A mob begins to form as confusion and provocation spread throughout the city. They all rushed into the great theater in Ephesus, an open-air amphitheatre that seated some 25,000 people, and since they couldn't find Paul, they dragged with them the only representatives of the gospel that they could find, Gaius and Aristarchus. Paul, to his credit, when he saw what was going on immediately wanted to go and address the crowd – he is the consummate preacher. There's a crowd, let me go preach the truth to them. Paul is ready to go, but the scene is so dangerous that the disciples won't let him go, fearful that he will be torn limb from limb.

Even the Asiarchs, men who were the political rulers of the province of Asia under the authority of the Romans and who were friends with Paul -- and that says something that Paul's character was such that even these men who were not believers and who were political rulers were

friends of Paul – even these men urged Paul not to go into the fray. This was an ugly situation, made all the worse by the fact that the mob had no real idea why they were there. They were just caught up in the demonstration, caught up in the tumult, using this as an excuse to explode into a frenzy. What happens next shows how futile it would have been for Paul to address the crowd anyway.

“Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander, motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd.” (Acts 19:33, ESV) The Jews, afraid of what might happen and wanting to get clear of any association with the Christians, after all they too were monotheists and opposed the idolatry of Artemis though not nearly as effectively, put forth Alexander to make their case that they were not part of the Christian rabble. But he never got the chance to speak.

“But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all cried out with one voice, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”” (Acts 19:34, ESV) Seeing that Alexander was a Jew and probably associating him with the Christians, the mob refused to listen to anything he has to say and it resorted to the only thing that a mob, minus the truth has as a defense, sheer volume and foolish repetition. For two hours and with one voice, they scream at the top of their lungs, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” Over and over again. The scene is incendiary and threatens to blow into uncontrollable fury. That is the nature of irrationality. Just say it over and over again, louder and louder and maybe you can force someone to believe it. Just when you think it will not end without violence, the town clerk, something along the lines of a mayor in our day, steps in.

“And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky?” (Acts 19:35, ESV) The town clerk successfully quiets the crowd – probably they were exhausted after roaring for two hours. He appeals to the legend of Artemis – the figure of which fell from the sky, a meteorite that had some distorted shape of multi-breasted goddess. In essence he is saying, “The great goddess can defend herself.”

“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 nor blasphemers of our

goddess.” (Acts 19:36–37, ESV) The second thing that he says to this group, in essence is, “You have no case.” He says that these men are neither sacrilegious -- the idea is that they had not stolen from the temple – and they had not openly blasphemed Artemis. Instead they simply lived and preached the gospel and trusted in God for fruit for their labors. They really had no charge.

“If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.” (Acts 19:38–39, ESV) There were other more sensible and more proper ways of dealing with whatever issues had stirred everyone up into an uproar. There was a right way to do this and this was not it. Then last, the city clerk said:

“For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.” And when he had said these things, he dismissed the assembly.” (Acts 19:40–41, ESV) We are on the brink of real trouble here. If the Romans get wind of this, we are in danger of losing the right to rule over ourselves as a free city in the Roman Empire. There was simply no rational excuse for what was taking place. The reason of the town clerk prevailed and the crowd dispersed and what could have turned even worse was put to rest.

It is strange that Luke would include a detailed description of a riot in Ephesus in a record of the spread of the gospel throughout the known world, the expansion of the gospel of the glory of God in the person and work of Jesus Christ. But it is clear that he does so for the purpose of instruction and exhortation. So what are we to glean from this account?

Primarily this – The way that the gospel affected the people of Ephesus is the way that the gospel should change all of us. When you follow Jesus, it makes a mark, it shows; it shows in your lifestyle. It shows in the choices that you make. It shows in what you value, how you think, how you feel, what brings you joy, what grieves your heart. It shows in the things you do and what you no longer do. And the gospel, by its very nature, because it proclaims the uniqueness and supremacy of God the Father and of His Son Jesus Christ as only Savior and Sovereign Lord, confronts powerfully and unapologetically the emptiness and worthlessness of idols. The gospel

simply leaves no room for any other gods. What Paul preached disrupted the idolatry driven lives of the Ephesians; it upset the entire foundation on which the city had been constructed – physically and spiritually. As it was true in Paul’s day, it is just as true in our own. The gospel in our age confronts the idolatry of man, the exaltation of man and his accomplishments as the center of existence. It confronts our idolatry. Mankind today, for the most part, is too sophisticated to bow to physical idols of gold or silver or alabaster – although you do see that in Catholicism. Instead we bow to ourselves, serving ourselves – to wealth, ease, comfort, and security. We bow to technology, to intellectualism, to sex, to food, to sensual pleasures, to entertainment, to power, to fame, to human wisdom and genius, to athletic achievement. Anything can become an idol. A legitimate pursuit on balance, a hobby or a sport, can become an idol when we devote an inordinate amount of time or resources to it. A personal conviction can take on a life of its own and become an God-obscuring idol. Anywhere we attempt to find life, to find ultimate satisfaction, to find ultimate pleasure, to find ultimate purpose apart from devotion to Christ is an idol that does not give life but steals and ultimately destroys it.

The gospel relentlessly destroys all idols. Gods made with hands are not gods. Instead, the God who made the hands, the God who made this universe, the God who created us, He is God. The God and Father of Jesus Christ, He alone is God. He alone is to be worshipped. He alone should we glorify. He alone must be uppermost in our affections. He alone should we serve. In Him alone should we find our greatest joy. The gospel is about the glory of God, manifested in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It destroys all idols. And that is eternally great news, because our greatest need and our greatest joy is found in Him alone.

I am grateful that God is faithfully at work destroying idols and every argument and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and tak(ing) every thought captive to obey Christ,” (2 Corinthians 10:5, ESV) I am grateful that he is doing it everywhere that the gospel is faithfully lived and preached, and I am grateful that he is doing it, by His grace and out of love, in me and in you – in us. I need Him to. I need Him to destroy every idol in my life and draw my heart and soul to Him, more and more and more. I know enough of my own heart to know that if left to myself, I am an idolater at heart and if God does not labor faithfully and graciously to make Christ more and more to me, if He does not strip away everything that I attempt to hold ultimate trust in, that I place on par with Christ, I would be no different than these Ephesians that we read about.

In fact, this picture of the riot in Ephesus, is a picture of my own soul more often than I want to admit. I want to hold fast to the illusory idolatry of my strength, my intellect and reason, my wisdom, my reputation, my righteousness far too much. I will try to hold to something in me, something from me as of ultimate worth like a dog with a bone, but God does not stop chipping away at and destroying every idol and I'm grateful. Oh how I need Him to. Idolatry is foolishness and it is an illusion. And it is joy robbing and life stealing. And what is true of me, I suspect, it is true of all of us, beloved.

The gospel destroys idolatry and it must. For the sake of our souls, it must. Praise God that because He loves His glory and He loves us so much, He will not allow idolatry to go unchecked in our souls. He drags our idolatry out of our hearts and into the glaring light of His glory and He destroys it. Thank God. What love that is. Idolatry leads to the grave. Christ leads to life. And sometimes the hardest idolatry to die is the idolatry of ourselves. Paul learned that. In his famous words in the book of Philippians, he wrote: "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained." (Philippians 3:7–16, ESV)

The first idol that must die in all of us is the thought that in my own goodness I am fit to stand before God. I'm nit. My sin condemns me. It kills me. I need a resurrection. I need a Redeemer, a Deliverer, and no idol – not even me – can give me that. Only Christ crucified, buried and risen from the dead.

Beloved, our idols, wherever they are found, need to die. May God put every idol to death in us so that the life of Christ may be manifest in fullness. May we be faithful to live and preach the

gospel so that the glory of God would descend on our church, on our homes, and on Salem in power and to the saving of souls and praise of His glorious name.

The words are true – that song that we sang today – they are true.

The gospel changes everything

The turning point in history

Even now it's changing me

From who I was

The story of my Savior calls

Me to the wonder of the cross

The gospel changes everything

And it is changing me

And may the gospel, through us, change everything and everyone that we come in contact with.
Let's pray.

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