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## Sermon Text Discussion 2/11/18

Acts 18:23-19:41– “The Gospel and Power” by Drew Hunter

### Overview

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In Acts we've seen the message of Jesus spread from city to city, and Acts particularly tracks the ministry of Paul. This text is the climax of Paul's ministry of planting and strengthening churches. This is the end of what we call his third missionary journey. He went out from Antioch three times to spread the gospel and plant churches. Ephesus was his climactic stop in this work. He stayed there two years, which was the longest of anywhere. It was a major city in the Mediterranean world and a place of political power, economic power, social power, and religious and spiritual power.

So, when Paul brings the message of Jesus to Ephesus, what we see is a power encounter. This shows how God transforms people and culture through the gospel. This teaches us that when the gospel enters a place of power, it can powerfully impact it at every level.

The sermon outlined the three main events in this story as follows:

- 1) The Necessity of Truth (18:23-19:10)
- 2) The Power of God (19:11-20)
- 3) The Impact on Culture (19:21-41)

### Quotations

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“Christianity isn't just a little religious idea that some people can assent to in their private lives. It is a powerful, life and culture transforming force.” -Drew Hunter

C.S. Lewis noted that magic tries to use power without submitting to the god who owns that power. It's trying to gain power without submitting to the source of power. The *right* posture is not to reject the miraculous, but to reject magic.

“Don't be too sure that we don't do what the Seven sons of Sceva did. When we invoke his name and ask for his help and power while we are a) not enjoying him, and b) not obeying him--is magic” -Tim Keller

### Understanding & Application

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- 1) Acts 18:23 talks about Paul “strengthening all the disciples.” Paul was able to dedicate a significant amount of time to visit, strengthen and encourage churches and disciples. Can you think of some brothers and sisters in Christ that could use some encouragement? Make a plan to do something this week.
- 2) Apollos “powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that Christ was Jesus.” Our knowledge of the truth of the scriptures can allow us to be more powerful for ministry. How can we encourage one another in our study of God's word?
- 3) As believers in Christ, magic and superstition (horoscopes, prayer cloths that promise health and wealth, etc.) should not have a place in our lives. Upon learning this, the Ephesian Christians destroyed these things (Acts 19:19). Are there things that you rely on for some type of superstitious reason that you need to give up?
- 4) Consider the Tim Keller quote, above. How was Paul different from the sons of Sceva?
- 5) In Chapter 19:21-41 we see some of the impact the truth and power of the Gospel can have on culture. What would happen today if more and more people started to take Jesus seriously?