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Acts 19:11-41

Antinomianism - means "against the law," was a centuries-old heresy whose basic tenet held that Christians were not bound by traditional moral law, particularly that of the Old Testament.

This is an abuse of **Romans 3:27-28** *Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith, apart from works of the law.*

"Hyper grace" - my sin doesn't matter anymore. I don't even have to confess or repent of sin anymore. Jesus loves and accepts me anyway.

Acts 19:11-12 *And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.*

The people in Ephesus were very open to mystical things, to witchcraft, and especially to miracles. To them, the physical and the spiritual were not separate. They loved hocus pocus.

Their physicians were really shaman, really like witch doctors. Like these guys...

Acts 19:13-15 *Then some of the itinerate Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?"*

Acts 19:16 *And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

Matt Chandler: "if you go into a fight wearing pants, and at the end of the fight you aren't wearing pants, you lost."

Acts 19:17 *And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled.*

Acts 19:18 *Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices.*

Acts 19:19 *And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver.*

They didn't sell off the books, or give them away. They destroyed them.
They recognized that killing off their sin did not include spreading it to others

What does the truth and reality of the gospel of Jesus do to those who hear and believe?

They confess their sins openly

They reject (get rid of) things in their lives that prevent them and others from seeing Jesus

That can be antinomianism, and that can also be legalism

Acts 19:20 *So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily. Other people became believers seeing the radical changes in these people. It was the WORD of God, about God through Jesus. People were responding to the proclaimed good news about Jesus.*

Acts 19:21-23 *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. About this time there arose no little disturbance concerning the Way.*

Paul lingers to visit the churches in Macedonia and Achaia
To encourage the new Christians who have formed new churches
To collect the contributions for the starving Christians in Jerusalem

"the Way" - the way to freedom from sin, from hopelessness, from God's judgement, toward peace with God.

Acts 19:24-27 *For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the craftsmen. These have 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 disposed of from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship."*

The goddess Artemis (known as Diana in Rome) was the goddess of hunting
The Ephesian Artemis was the goddess of fertility

Their argument:
Paul is threatening our market, our profits and our reputation

Paul is threatening our religion
Paul is threatening our culture, our politics and even our patriotism
Essentially, to attack Artemis is to attack Ephesus and all of Asia

Here is where their reactions mirror the reactions in politics and culture today:
Acts 19:28 *When they heard this there were enraged and were crying out, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"*

If someone or a group of people do not agree with your position, they do not value or approve of you. You are right and good. Those who oppose you are wrong and bad.

If your political or social position isn't winning, just yell louder. Just disrupt others. Just cause a riot. Just commit crimes that get attention.

Acts 19:29-32 *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 19:33-34 *Some in the crowd prompted Alexander, whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander, motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd. 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 19:35-41 *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? 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. 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. 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.*

"Sacred stone" likely a meteorite that resembled a many-breasted woman that had fallen to earth in Ephesus.

Town Clerk (really the Executive Officer of the city) masterfully calms the crowd.
4 points:

- "if we have confidence in our goddess Artemis, then she doesn't need to be defended. She will defend herself."

- Paul hasn't sacrilegied (stolen from the temple) or blasphemed the goddess, so really, he's innocent of any religious crimes. If you're honest, this is really about economics
- If you have a legitimate problem with Paul, the lower court and then the appeals court are open
- We're in danger of rioting, and the Romans will come in and remove our freedoms

Jesus called Paul to take the gospel message into the secular world (rather than just talk about Jesus in 'church')

Jesus called Paul to reason with people (instead of simply appealing to their emotions without an adequate basis for really understanding how the gospel results in changed lives)

Jesus called Paul to faithfully proclaim and portray the gospel (instead of making brief encounters and expecting quick results)