

Sermon Handout

Order and Disorder

Acts 19:23-41

I. Artemis of the Ephesians

- a. “Diana” – Tyndale, *et al.*
- b. The Ephesian Artemis
 - i. The meteorite and the Temple v. 35
(*lit.* “fallen from the sky”)
 - ii. Worshipped in 30+ locations in the Roman world v. 27
- c. The cult of Artemis – a thriving economic force v. 24 *cf.* Acts 16:16-21
 - i. “Our living is in jeopardy” v. 27a
 - ii. “Our religion is discredited” v. 27b

II. Civil Disorder – A Protesting Mob

- a. The guild and the rabble stirred up by Demetrius (2+ hours v. 34)
 - i. The craftsmen vv. 25, 28
 - ii. A mob of the general population vv. 29, 32
- b. Gaius & Aristarchus apprehended by the mob v. 29
- c. Alexander representing the Jewish community vv. 33-34
- d. St. Paul’s reaction; intended to intervene
 - i. Restrained by church members v. 30
 - ii. Cautioned by the Asiarchs v. 31 (*see* III.a.iv below)

III. Civil Order is Restored

- a. The speech of the city official – taking charge v. 35*ff*
 - i. No direct harm to your religion is imminent vv. 35-36
 - ii. No crime is alleged (temple robbery, blasphemy) v. 37
 - iii. You have recourse to the Roman courts (proconsuls) v. 38
Take it to the law if you have a legitimate complaint
 - iv. Now go home and quit acting crazy v. 41 (*cf.* v. 36b)
Danger of incurring the wrath of Rome against the city.

IV. Lessons for the Church

- a. The Faith impinges false religion & wealth – expect resistance
- b. “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread” BUT:
Men who are **not** fools listen to wise counsel.
- c. God’s providence always prevails – our trust must remain in God
There are times for us to act and times to restrain ourselves.
Wisdom lies in knowing the difference.