

Acts: What's in a Name?

(Acts 19:11-20)

Miraculous Workings (v. 11-12)

- As part of Paul's extended ministry in Ephesus and the surrounding region, God used him to perform miraculous deeds
 - Which would have confirmed the truth of the Gospel message he preached (Acts 14:3)
 - These would have included healings & exorcisms
- This led to some of items belonging to Paul being brought to those afflicted with physical & spiritual afflictions
 - This is like what happened with Jesus & Peter, because it is the same Spirit at work in them all

The Power of a Name (v. 13-16)

- These miracles led some Jewish exorcists to try to imitate Paul's activities
 - They invoked the name of Jesus to do so, understanding that it had power
 - However, they seemed to think it was a type of magic formula
- Included in this group were 7 sons of a Jewish priest named Sceva
- When they confronted a demon-possessed man with this 'magic formula', the demon's response is telling
 - "Jesus I know": Because He is Lord of all
 - "Paul I have heard of": Because he is a servant of God
 - "But who are you?": They do not have the authority to take the name of Jesus because they do not actually know Him
- The result is that the possessed man overpowers all 7 brothers
 - Who run from the man's house bleeding & naked
- This reflects what Jesus said (Luke 11:21-22)

Fear & Honor (v. 17-20)

- When this story spread it caused fear among those who did not know Jesus
 - And led to the name of Jesus to be honored publicly
- Many practitioners of magic repented, even destroying their magic items worth 50,000 pieces of silver
 - And many people came to know Jesus as Lord

So What?

- Faith in Jesus is not a magic formula
- We need to *really* know Him
- We need to make Him known
- Do we?

Meditation Verse: *John 14:12*