

**DAILY READINGS**

Sunday	Acts 19:23-41
Monday	Ephesians 1:1-14; Psalm 117; Proverbs 24:20-22
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:15-2:10; Psalm 118:1-8; Proverbs 24:23-26
Wednesday	Ephesians 2:11-3:21; Psalm 118:9-19; Proverbs 24:27-30
Thursday	Ephesians 4:1-32; Psalm 118:20-23; Proverbs 24:31-34
Friday	Ephesians 5:1-6:4; Psalm 118:24-29; Proverbs 25:1-2
Saturday	Ephesians 6:5-24; Psalm 119:1-8; Proverbs 25:3-5

**DEVOTIONAL: READ ACTS 19:23-41**

As the gospel continued to spread in the early church and more people put their trust in Jesus, everyday life was being disrupted. People were hearing about Jesus and their lives were being transformed. Cultural practices, business pursuits, and religious beliefs were being challenged by the Word of God.

Some people saw the gospel's influence as negative. The city of Ephesus was a center of commerce and well known for its temple of worship for the goddess Artemis. Many people made their living through the worship of Artemis, including the making and selling of idols. As people began to worship Jesus, the idol-makers were losing money and the gospel preacher, Paul, was the instigator.

The transformational power of Jesus gave Paul the courage to challenge

cultural influences and beliefs. Paul stood firm because he had personally experienced what Jesus had done in his life and was still doing in the lives of others throughout the region.

Believing in Jesus changes everything! It changes how we think, what we do, and the way we love ourselves and others. Just like in Ephesus, following Jesus is still counter-cultural and flows against secular beliefs and ungodly practices. Yet, just like it did with the Ephesians, the gospel continues to change people's lives, even in the midst of suffering.

Jesus offers us the same peace He gave Paul. A peace that transcends culture, circumstances, or feelings. A peace found only in Jesus Christ. Just as it did in Ephesus, this power continues to transform lives, churches, and cities today!

## REFLECTION

Have you experienced God's transformational power in your life? What is a way that you have seen your life or someone else's life changed by knowing Jesus?

How has the gospel affected the way that you work, parent, study, or engage with others daily?

What about Jesus do you cling to when life becomes difficult? Be specific and thank God for these attributes.

## DISCUSSION

How are you growing personally?

## PRAYER

Lord, I ask that You open my ears to the voice of Your spirit. Protect me from my selfish tendency to make everything about me. I repent from fighting to steal glory that only You deserve. The gods I have worshiped were made with human hands, but You, Lord, created the universe with just a few words, "Let there be light."

Please do not let my light fade into darkness. By faith and through the encouragement found in community with other believers, expose what I have been unwilling to surrender to You. Help me earnestly repent and turn again to the simplicity of my first days with You. Everything is empty and meaningless unless I find You in it. Give me eyes to see You and a heart ready to respond in gratitude and praise to all You do. Thank You for Your great mercy lavished on me. To You be the glory forever. Amen.