

I. STIR ARISES

- A. What was it about? “That way.”
1. The way is the first name given to Christianity
    - a. ACTS 11:26 – “And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”
    - b. But even before that, Saul hunted them using this name
    - c. ACTS 9:2 – “And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”
  2. Makes sense:
    - a. JOHN 14:6 – “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
    - b. We have always taken our name from Him and His Word
    - c. We are Christians because we are to be CHRIST – LIKE
    - d. We are of “THE WAY” because HE is the WAY
    - e. We are SAVED because HE is the SAVIOR
    - f. We are His CHILDREN because GOD is our FATHER
    - g. We are His SUBJECTS because HE is King of Kings / Lord of Lords!
  3. Are you “in this way?” Are you SAVED today?
    - a. There IS no other way but by Him
    - b. He is the author and FINISHER of our Faith
    - c. JOHN 10:9 – “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”
- B. This was a city GIVE to pagan worship of the “goddess” Diana
1. She was considered in the Roman religion, the goddess of the hunt
    - a. Her name is mentioned 5 times in this chapter
    - b. She was supposed to have fallen from Jupiter (vs. 35)
    - c. They said that of Paul too, remember in ACTS 14:12 – “And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.”
      - i. It would be easy to blame them for being too superstitious
      - ii. Paul even said that himself in Athens! (Acts 17:12)
    - d. But are we any LESS superstitious?
      - i. Do you KNOW what the Bible says?
      - ii. Or do you work from Tradition?
      - iii. What do you know about the BIBLICAL nature of a church?
  2. The temple of Diana was the pride and glory of Ephesus
    - a. 425’ long, 220’ wide (larger by far than a football field)

- b. It had 127 graceful columns of white marble 60' tall
    - c. It took 220 years to build (the men that started it never saw it)
    - d. It was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world
    - e. It was the source of much that lasts even today
    - f. Horoscopes, Zodiac, and other "soft" occultism
  - 3. They considered it the locus of their worship of their goddess
    - a. It was a place that centered their religion
    - b. They had to GO THERE to worship
    - c. Again: What do you know about the Biblical nature of a church?
- C. Many people today (CHRISTIANS!) worship the building
  - 1. They say that is my church (the building)
    - a. A church is NOT a building! It isn't a PLACE
    - b. It is a PEOPLE!
    - c. It is made up of Saved People but not of ALL Saved People!
    - d. Just because you go to Ephesus doesn't mean you worship Diana!
  - 2. Or worse, they say, that is "Bro. So-and-so's" church
    - a. I fall into that trap often times too – Brother Sheppard's church
    - b. It's not his church and he'd be the first one to tell you that
    - c. This is not the pastor's church either! It's the LORD'S CHURCH!
  - 3. Not only that, this is ONE of the Lord's Churches
    - a. We are a local, visible body of baptized believers
    - b. Who have COVENANTED ourselves together
      - i. That means agreed, consigned, contracted
      - ii. That means we are BEHOLDEN to one another
      - iii. We are ACCOUNTABLE to one another
    - c. Why? To fulfill the Great Commission
      - i. The only work the Lord's Churches are given!
      - ii. To evangelize, baptize, and disciple
      - iii. No other work is detailed by Him and it's HIS CHURCH
  - 4. Bible Believers don't worship the building, but they did at Ephesus!

## II. SIMPLE AVARICE

- A. What was the hubbub all about? Simple greed – the silversmith's trade
  - 1. Their livelihoods were affected!
  - 2. They didn't care about their religion, only their pocketbooks
  - 3. Some people come to church to network and make sales contacts too!
- B. Demetrius was only the ringleader, but it always takes a ringleader
  - 1. He was no better or worse than the rest of them, just the one in front
  - 2. They made little idols you could take home and put in your house
    - a. Probably had the "Authentic Ephesus" stamp of approval
    - b. "My parents went to Ephesus and all I got was this dumb idol"
  - 3. They made MERCHANDISE of religion (it's no better if its Christianity)
- C. What do you know about a Biblical church? Do you think it's about money?

1. Many people do. “That’s all they care about up there at that church...”
2. Tithing and giving is IN THE BIBLE! Why? To support God’s Work
3. Look at those missionaries in the hallways! They count on you!

### III. SHOUTING AGAINST

- A. The TOWN CLERK declares that this in an “unlawful” assembly (vs. 39)
  1. This isn’t the way to decide matters – it should be done LAWFULLY!
  2. Shouting down people who disagree with you is what COMMUNISTS do
  3. They cannot abide by dissenting opinions; it is NOT allowed!
    - a. They didn’t even know what they were shouting about
    - b. Look at vs. 32 – the MORE part
    - c. But they still shouted for more than 2 hours (vs. 34)
    - d. You must all think and do alike, no one can be special
    - e. No one can be more talented or gifted, all must be the same
    - f. No benefit given to a BETTER idea!
- B. Worshipping God is a BETTER idea than worshipping Diana!
  1. God’s way is ALWAYS better! Always Higher! Always Best!
    - a. Only God knows how to make life work
    - b. Why? Because He created it! He designed it!
  2. So many today would say, but we don’t worship a pagan goddess
  3. But instead, we will worship sports, culture, pastimes, politics
  4. At camp, a young man said he was convicted that he knew more about professional football than he did about the Bible (a pastor’s son)
- C. Many people reject Bible Truth because of emotion or tradition. Do you?

### IV. SQUABBLING ASSEMBLY

- A. There is much to learn about the Biblical Nature of a church in this passage
  1. We see the same word used – Ecclesia here in Chapter 19:39 & 41
    - a. That is the word translated “assembly”
    - b. It’s the same word other places translated as “church”
    - c. MATT. 16:18 – “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
      - i. It was not a NEW word the KJV translators “made up”
      - ii. The disciples didn’t ask Jesus “what is a church?”
      - iii. They already KNEW the concept!
      - iv. He even had to DIFFERENTIATE it by using “my”
      - v. This is a car. THAT is MY car.
  2. The town meeting in Ephesus had several IMPORTANT characteristics
    - a. It was LOCAL in one place (vs. 29) the theatre in Ephesus
    - b. It was VISIBLE, Paul knew were to go! (Vs. 30)
    - c. It was made up of authorized members! CITIZENS of EPHESUS

- i. If a citizen of another city tried to vote on something...
        - ii. Would they be allowed? Did they have a say?
        - iii. If the mayor of another city came in, any authority?
        - iv. They didn't even suffer a JEW to speak (vs. 33)
      - d. It should be ORGANIZED – the clerk SENT THEM AWAY
        - i. An “ecclesia” can't be everyone doing what they want
        - ii. It can't be disorder and chaotic
        - iii. 1 COR. 14:33 – “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”
- B. Churches are no different today!
1. By NATURE, must have a: Local, Visible, Organized, MEMBERSHIP
  2. The Lord's Churches compare to a Body, a Building, and a Bride
    - a. No universal body, with parts strewn all over the world
    - b. No universal building, with bricks scattered haphazardly
    - c. No universal bride, without relation to the Bridegroom
  3. There is NO such thing as “the” universal church
    - a. It doesn't exist! It cannot be both invisible and visible
    - b. It cannot be both universal and local
    - c. It cannot be both organized and unorganized
  4. The ONLY way to JOIN a church is through Baptism
    - a. Either in one scriptural church or another (can be transferred)
    - b. ONE, not TWO - 1 COR. 12:13 – “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”
  5. Only ONE kind of church baptism – WATER baptism!
    - a. The word baptism is also a common word
    - b. Used throughout the NT to refer even to washing hands
    - c. But the Bible draws a CLEAR distinction between all of those “immersions” and CHURCH BAPTISM - EPH. 4:5 – “One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”
  6. If there is a universal church made up of all believers, then there is no local church because there's only one church baptism.
  7. It must be one or the other!
- C. The Bible is CONSISTENT in its use of the word Church / Assembly / Ecclesia
1. It is HIS institution! He can tell us what it is and what it isn't
  2. He also instituted the Family and Human Government
  3. Bible believers follow the Word of God on the nature of a church

## V. SALVATION ANNOUNCED

1. They made so much noise they couldn't hear the real message
2. There is a Hell to shun and Heaven to Gain, Sin is the problem...
3. Be Saved Today