

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer ways for you to grow personally as well as in community through Personal Growth Guides and Summer School @ The Gathering. Personal Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and will be available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online. You may sign up for Summer School any Sunday between now and June 9.

## COMMUNITY GROUPS WILL BEGIN AGAIN THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 15TH

### Consider...

Use the summary and discussion to review and apply this week's message:

#### Message Summary

In the middle part of Acts 19, we find three amazing events that challenge us to consider first, how we respond to the unseen world of angels and demons, and second, how close we are to Jesus. There are two extremes when it comes to demonic activity: those who never see demons and those who see demons everywhere! But one thing is true: there is an unseen world that is more powerful than we are, and **fakers can't be shakers** of those powers! Three events drove that point home:

1. **Event #1: Handkerchiefs and healings.** After over 2 years of preaching, someone picked up one of Paul's tent making rags and got healed! In a bizarre, supernatural way, God allowed these points of contact to help spread his healing power farther than Paul could have ever gotten as one man. Unlike the preachers you see on TV, Paul never tried to profit from this act of God.
2. **Event #2: Seven can't beat one.** Anytime there is power that can be used for profit, you can be sure that fakers will come out of the woodwork to try and capitalize on it. First century times weren't any different. 7 sons of Sceva (a high priest) tried to drive out a demon in the name of Jesus without being followers of Jesus, and they found themselves beaten up and running from a house naked and bleeding. Spiritual powers aren't something to be taken lightly, and we would be wise to learn that from these guys.
3. **Event #3: A multimillion dollar bonfire.** The result of the beatdown was that the entire city was paralyzed with fear. Unbelievers realized that they were powerless against demonic activity and believers realized that God wasn't a power to be treated lightly. Many believers brought the things they used for witchcraft and burned them in a bonfire fueled by 7.1 million dollars worth of stuff. In short, revival broke out because the church repented for dabbling in things that didn't honor God.

#### Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- What was one helpful, eye-opening, or troubling insight or principle from this week's message?
- How do you respond to the reality of demonic activity? Head in the sand or demon hunter?
- Perhaps the biggest lesson we can learn from the 7 brothers being beaten up by a demon-possessed man is that we dilute the power of God when we dabble with evil. What are some ways that you play around the things that you need to put down?
- Read Ephesians 6:10-18. Which parts of the armor do you wear well? Which parts do you typically leave off?
- Paul made this statement in his teaching: The more we value Jesus, the less we worry about the cost of following him. How have you found that to be true in your own relationship with Jesus?
- If we're going to do great exploits for the kingdom then we can't afford to try to use a power that we don't have personally. Read Philippians 3:10. How does being near Jesus help his power grow within us? Read Psalm 119:28. What does reading the Bible do? Commit to reading daily this week.