

We know that in order for Demas to be a fellowlabourer with Paul, Demas would of had to have put Jesus first in his life. However later in life Paul wrote unto Timothy this concerning Demas in 2 TIMOTHY 4:10: *...Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world...* Demas had traded his preeminent love for Jesus by putting a love for this present world first. It is to those of a heart attitude like Demas that Jesus wrote in REVELATION 2:4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.* Again at one time Demas had shown his first love for Jesus in his ministering with the Apostle Paul.

Recently I talked to a man in Houston who told me that every day when he wakes up he asks God to help him have that wonderful feeling of Jesus being so close in his life. As we talked I realized that Jesus was the preeminent love in his life; the first love whom the Ephesians had left. May we all learn from the church at Ephesus and keep Jesus first in our lives. May He be our preeminent love. Jesus will be the first love of all full overcomers.

Paul at Ephesus

Having now a complete overview of what took place in Ephesus, let's go back and see how this assembly was established.

Recall from ACTS 18 that Paul had already briefly visited Ephesus when accompanying Aquila and Priscilla on their move to Ephesus. ACTS 18:19 indicates that Paul was in Ephesus long enough to attend at least one Sabbath's day service, where we are told he reasoned with the Jews. Of course we know this was Paul's custom everywhere he went. However these Jews of Ephesus were a little more receptive to hearing what the Apostle Paul had to say, thus in ACTS 18:20 we find that *...they desired him to tarry longer time with them.* We haven't read of the Apostle Paul getting this kind of reception anywhere else he has traveled to since leaving his home church in Antioch, Syria. The Apostle Paul wasn't able to stay longer with them at this time so Paul makes them a promise in ACTS 18:21 stating: *...I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.* Several months pass, and we find here in ACTS 19 that the Apostle Paul does return to Ephesus.

ACTS 19:1 *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, 2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. 3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. 5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And all the men were about twelve.*

What an important portion of scripture these first seven verses of ACTS 19 have become in understanding some fundamental New Testament truths. Yet the doctrines found here in are often twisted, or at least misunderstood by an innumerable multitude! Let's make sure we understand what is being said here.

As we go through these seven verses we find a mini New Testament. A snap shot (if you will) of Paul's gospel, and a snap shot of New Testament truths. Hopefully this will be evident as we go through this portion of scripture.

The Doctrine of Eternal Security

In verse 1 we find the Apostle Paul finding certain unnamed disciples upon his arrival at Ephesus. "Ephesus" is found seventeen times in scripture, and seventeen is the number that has to do with VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Simply put, all full overcomers have VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS, and those of "Ephesus" lead the way in this regard. This is even true in these first unnamed disciples that Paul found first here at Ephesus. They could have been well set in their ways, and not able to take instruction,