

uniting Ephesus politically with the many other cities of Asia. ACTS 19:27 notes that the great goddess Diana was worshipped by "all Asia and the world."

These Ephesians were caught up in idolatry and witchcraft, and the associated lusts of the flesh, very much like the world of today. Consider again what the Apostle Paul was inspired to write unto the churches of Galatia in GALATIANS 5. GALATIANS 5:16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. 18 But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. 19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* Note in verse 20 the words "idolatry," and "witchcraft." "Idolatry" means the worship of false gods, image worship, wholly given to idols, and the sin of the mind against God. "Witchcraft" means sorcery, magical arts, often found in connection with idolatry and fostered by it, and includes the use of drugs, medicine, spells, incantations, and such like. Look up the Greek word for sorcerer or sorcery, and it will lead you to the English word pharmacy, which signifies the use of medicine, or drugs. The point being is that the world we live in today is really not that much different than the world Paul witnessed when he came to Ephesus. Today we have the so called "American Idol." And the huge pharmacy companies advertise all the time in our media today. So again these Ephesians were caught up in idolatry and witchcraft, and the associated lusts of the flesh, very much like the world of today.

However there are many today, like in Paul's day who believed, and came and confessed their sins, and turned their lives wholly over unto the Lord. ROMANS 10:9 & 10 tells us: *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* This too is the doctrine of deliverance, for what greater deliverance is there than the deliverance from sin?

The Mighty Word of God

ACTS 19:20 sums up this doctrine of deliverance preached at Ephesus, stating: *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* This may be the most important verse in ACTS 19! Certainly there is much food for thought contained in these nine simple words. Of course we will examine this verse much closer.

The Greek word translated "mightily" here, (number 2904 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, *kratos* {krat'-os}), is only found in twelve New Testament scriptures, and is only translated one time as "mightily." Each time this word *kratos* is used, it shows the strength, and the power, and the dominion of the Lord, thus these words are used in the translation of *kratos* into English. Here are the twelve verses where the adverb *kratos* is found, and as we look at these verses note for yourself the mighty power of the Lord described in each of these twelve statements.

LUKE 1:51 *He hath shewed strength <2904> with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.* ACTS 19:20 *So mightily <2904> grew the word of God and prevailed.* EPHESIANS 1:19 *And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power <2904>,... .* EPHESIANS 6:10 *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power <2904> of his might.* COLOSSIANS 1:11 *Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power <2904>, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;... .* 1 TIMOTHY 6:16 *Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power <2904> everlasting. Amen.* HEBREWS 2:14 *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power <2904> of death, that is, the devil;... .* 1 PETER 4:11 *If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability*

which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion <2904> for ever and ever. Amen. 1 PETER 5:11 To him be glory and dominion <2904> for ever and ever. Amen. JUDE 1:25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion <2904> and power, both now and ever. Amen. REVELATION 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion <2904> for ever and ever. Amen. REVELATION 5:13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power <2904>, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* We have just noted how with much power and strength and dominion from the Lord that the word of God mightily grew, and prevailed here at Ephesus. The word "grew" here in verse 20 is the Greek word *auxano* {owx-an'-o}, (number 837 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), and is only found twenty-two times in New Testament Scripture. Twenty-two again is the number associated with LIGHT, thus pointing us once again unto Jesus, who according to JOHN 8:12 and JOHN 9:5, is the Light of the world. Thus we find the words "mightily" and "grew" once again magnifying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Back to the word "grew," it is used here to show growth, of course, but in this instance it seems that indicates unusual growth, especially spiritual growth, and is also used to show an increase in the faith of those new believers there at Ephesus. Further the word "grew" here also shows the breadth and width of the spreading of the word of God here at Ephesus, and this spreading of the word of God from the efforts of Paul at Ephesus continues even unto this day! In simplest terms the word "grew" here in verse 20 means: grow, increase, give the increase, and grow up. Our Greek translation of New Testament scripture has John the Baptist using this same Greek word *auxano* in a statement he made recorded for us in JOHN 3:30 *He must increase <837>, but I must decrease.* Here again we find this Greek word *auxano* used to magnify Jesus. More often than not this is the case when we find the Greek word *auxano* used in scripture, as the following texts also point out. ACTS 6:7 *And the word of God increased <837>; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.* ACTS 12:24 *But the word of God grew <837> and multiplied.* EPHESIANS 4:15 *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up <837> into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ...* 2 PETER 3:18 *But grow <837> in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Back to our text of ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* We have noted how the words "mightily" and "grew" as used in this text magnify "the word of God" in this text. Let us focus on the phrase "the word of God" in this part of our study. The phrase "the word of God" is found in 45 scriptures; 45 is the number of PRESERVATION. PRESERVATION means: to protect, to keep from harm, to keep from spoiling or rotting, just to name a few of it's meanings. If you think about it "the word of God" does all of these things, but it also does so much more. "The Word of God" is a comfort that offers hope to those that are in need of comfort, and hope. ROMANS 15:4 *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.* "The Word of God" magnifies our learning, builds us up, and is able to give all believers an inheritance among them which are sanctified. {Study ACTS 20:32.} "The Word of God" magnifies our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and allows Him to shine brighter in our own lives, and if you think about it some more you will find that "the word of God" does so much more, as we will see in this portion of our study.

In LUKE 11:28 we read these words of Jesus: *...blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* Thus we see the importance of "the word of God." In ROMANS 10:17 we see how faith comes: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* In HEBREWS 4:12 we see how minutely powerful and sharp "the word of God" is: *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* In HEBREWS 11:3 we find a hint at just how magnificently mega powerful "the word of

God" is: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. In 1 THESSALONIANS 2:13 we find the phrase "the word of God" used twice, showing how "the word of God" builds up the faith of believers: *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.* In 1 PETER 1:23 we find "the word of God" lives and abides forever: *Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

The phrase "the word of God" is probably best defined in REVELATION 19. REVELATION 19:11 *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.* In simplest terms "The Word of God" is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Himself! Do you want to know Jesus better? Then study and learn "the word of God." Those who achieve God's best will know "the word of God," not with a head knowledge only, but will have "the word of God" worked out in their lives with a heart knowledge full of faith.

What we have just learned is that the phrase "the word of God" really magnifies our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There are many other phrases used in scripture that also point to, or mean the same as the phrase "the word of God." For example we find the phrase "the word of the LORD" in 239 Old Testament scriptures. The phrase "his word" is found 37 times in scripture. 37 is the number that has to do with THE WORD OF GOD! Do you think that is a coincidence, or part of the plan of a superior being? JEREMIAH 23:18 *For who hath stood in the counsel of the LORD, and hath perceived and heard his word? who hath marked his word, and heard it?* Here are some other texts that contain the phrase "his word," which also reference Jesus: MATTHEW 8:16 *When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:...* LUKE 4:32 *And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.* 1 JOHN 2:5 *But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*

"Thy word" is another phrase describing "the word of God" in scripture. The phrase "Thy word" is found 35 (HOPE) times in PSALMS 119. Note a little how this phrase is used in PSALMS 119. PSALMS 119:11 *Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.* PSALMS 119:16 *I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.* PSALMS 119:28 *My soul melteth for heaviness: strengthen thou me according unto thy word.* PSALMS 119:38 *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.* PSALMS 119:41 *Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, even thy salvation, according to thy word.* PSALMS 119:50 *This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.* PSALMS 119:105 *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.* PSALMS 119:114 *Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.* PSALMS 119:133 *Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.* PSALMS 119:140 *Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.* PSALMS 119:160 *Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.* PSALMS 119:162 *I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.* PSALMS 119:170 *Let my supplication come before thee: deliver me according to thy word.* PSALMS 119:172 *My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.*

Jesus is also known as The Word as JOHN 1 clearly points out. JOHN 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him*

was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. ...14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

In total there are 455 scriptures that contain the phrase "the word," and most of them reference Jesus in one form or another. We have already mentioned how "the word" is found in phrases like "The Word of God," and "The Word of the LORD," but the phrase "the word" is also used by itself to reference Jesus in one way or another. For example we find the following account in DEUTERONOMY 30, where we find Moses speaking. DEUTERONOMY 30:11 *For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? 14 But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.* The word Moses is referencing is the word of the Lord, or the word of God, and the Apostle Paul references this same portion of DEUTERONOMY 30 in a statement of his found in ROMANS 10, where Paul plainly shows that this phrase "the word" is also used by itself to reference Jesus. ROMANS 10:5 *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. 6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

Here are some of the 455 other scriptures that reference Jesus with the phrase "the word." PSALMS 17:4 *Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.* PSALMS 68:11 *The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.* PSALMS 105:8 *He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations.* PSALMS 119:43 *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.* PSALMS 119:49 *Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.* PSALMS 119:123 *Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.* PROVERBS 13:13 *Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.* ISAIAH 40:8 *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.* EZEKIEL 3:17 *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.* EZEKIEL 33:7 *So thou, C son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.* EZEKIEL 33:30 *Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the LORD.* DANIEL 4:17 *This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* JOHN 2:22 *When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.* JOHN 12:48 *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* JOHN 14:24 *He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.* JOHN 15:3 *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.* JOHN 15:20 *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.* JOHN 15:25 *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They*

hated me without a cause. ACTS 4:4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand. ACTS 11:19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. ACTS 13:26 Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent. ACTS 14:3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. ACTS 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. GALATIANS 6:6 Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. EPHESIANS 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. PHILIPPIANS 1:14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. PHILIPPIANS 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. COLOSSIANS 1:5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;... 1 TIMOTHY 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. 2 TIMOTHY 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 1 JOHN 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 1 JOHN 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

Let's examine 1 JOHN 1:1-3 a little closer, for it is a remarkable, thought provoking portion of scripture. 1 JOHN 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Note, of course, that the subject of this portion is Jesus Christ. But more importantly is the fact that the Apostle John wants each and every reader to know that he personally has been an avid follower, and personal witness to the many things Jesus said and did. John wrote it this way in his own words in JOHN 21:24 & 25 -- *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.* It is thought that the Apostle John wrote these words more than fifty years after Jesus died and rose again. How John missed being with Jesus, and yet he still lived with Jesus every day of his life even after Jesus died, but still there was nothing like physically being with Jesus. For John these years with Jesus here on earth truly were precious memories, and priceless moments, which he treasured the rest of his long life.

Then a few short years later after writing The Gospel According to JOHN, John the Apostle wrote these words of 1 JOHN 1-3 which we just read. Especially note in verse 1 this phrase concerning Jesus: *...which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life...* To "handle" means: to touch, or to feel with ones hands. Imagine what it would have

been like to touch Jesus with your own hands! To stare into His loving eyes with your own eyes! To hear His kind and gentle voice with your own ears! To hold His hand, to hug Him, to feel His loving arms wrap around you, and to enjoy His fellowship while He was here on earth! To have a meal with Jesus! To watch Him perform His first miracle, and to drink of that most wonderful wine! Imagine what it would have been like to lay your head on Jesus breast like John did! (Study JOHN 13:23; 13:25; and 21:20.) All of this is hard for us to imagine what any of that would have been like. The Apostle John didn't have to imagine this, he did all of this! He got to handle the Word of life!

In LUKE 24 on the day of His resurrection, Jesus appeared unto his disciples, and encouraged them to "handle" Him. LUKE 24:39 *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.* 40 *And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.* The Apostle John records this same event like this in JOHN 20:19 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.* 20 *And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.* ...24 *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.* 25 *The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.* 26 *And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.* 27 *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.* 28 *And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.* 29 *Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.* 30 *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:* 31 *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Put yourself now back into the thinking of the Apostle John, after holding Jesus, and after handling Jesus, after living with Jesus some three plus years, and then to realize like John did ...*That which was from the beginning,... ...our hands have handled.* What an awesome fact to be the Apostle John and know ... *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled...* . The creator of everything, was manifest in flesh and blood, ...*That which was from the beginning,... ...our hands have handled...* ! It took John some fifty plus years to put this fact into proper words, and then he expressed it like this in JOHN 1, with the help and inspiration of the Holy Ghost: JOHN 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* 2 *The same was in the beginning with God.* 3 *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* 4 *In him was life; and the life was the light of men.* 5 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* ...10 *He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.* 11 *He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* 12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:* 13 *Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* 14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

I imagine that John as he wrote this must have thought of it like this in his heart: JOHN 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word,* (and to think my ...*hands have handled...* Him, touched Him, and held Him), *and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...* (and to think my ...*hands have handled...* Him, touched Him, and held Him)! 2 *The same was in the beginning with God.* 3 *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,*... (and to think my ...*hands have handled...* Him, touched Him, and held Him)! 4 *In him was life; and the life was the light of men,*... (and to think my ...*hands have handled...* Him, touched Him, and held Him)! 5 *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* ...10 *He was in the world, and the world*

was made by him, and the world knew him not,... (and to think my ...hands have handled... Him, touched Him, and held Him)! 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and to think what a privilege was mine to have my hands handle Him, to touched Him, and to hold Him)...(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

So we note that the Apostle John wrote that the creator of life ...was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us... ...which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life... (1 JOHN 1:2 and then 1.) In other words John wrote that creator of life was also known as ...the Word of life,... which is Jesus. John witnessed the life of Jesus, and thus had a better appreciation for ...the Word of life... as we have been noting in this portion. Let us each ask ourselves this, how much do I appreciate ...the Word of life,... and the creator of life? None of us this side of heaven will with our own hands handle ...the Word of life,... that is, Jesus Himself, like the Apostle John did, yet every day each of us get to handle His creation, and remember what we just read in JOHN 1:3 above: *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

Now focus on His most magnificent creation that ...the Word of life... created, which is life itself. And then think of the special life ...the Word of life... gave man. The Apostle John describes it like this in 1 JOHN 5:12 *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.* The special life that ...the Word of life... gave man is eternal life, and everlasting life, but there is only one way a man can receive eternal life, and everlasting life. JOHN 3:36 tells us: *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* Earlier in JOHN 3 we read these words of Jesus: JOHN 3:13 *And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. 14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.* In JOHN 6:47 & 48 we read these words of Jesus: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. 48 I am that bread of life.* In JOHN 10:10 we read of the abundant life that believers have in Christ Jesus: *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.* Our text of 1 JOHN 1:1-3 also focuses on life, the importance of Christ's life, and again reads: *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* And then John the Apostle concludes his book of 1 JOHN with this statement concerning eternal life in 1 JOHN 5:20 *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.*

How do we handle life, the special life ...the Word of life... gave man? Do we really appreciate His creation, man, for whom God ...gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life? Each one of us have known someone, and many someones, ...which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled... who are no longer with us, whom we loved. And how we miss them. How we miss hearing their

voice, looking into their eyes, and hearing their thoughts, and giving them a hug, or telling them how much we love them, and appreciate their prayers. Did we truly appreciate their lives, and the fact that our hands got to touch, and handle them in one loving way or another? And do we appreciate each other now as we should? Do we appreciate His most magnificent creation, man, as a unique and marvelous creation ...*of the Word of life...*? May each of us realize more and more how fearfully and wonderfully made we are, {PSALMS 139:14}, and marvel at this most wonderful creation that ...*the Word of life...* created, which is life itself. May the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us {ROMANS 5:5}, and may others feel it. May we live our lives in true appreciation of Him who died for us. 1 JOHN 4:9 *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.*

Recall also these words of Jesus recorded by the Apostle John: JOHN 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* 35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* Thirteen times in scripture we find the phrase "love one another;" ten times in the writings of the Apostle John! Ten is the number of RESPONSIBILITY ACCORDING TO ABILITY. The Apostle John remembered his tremendous responsibility that was his as a result of being privileged to witness first hand Jesus, to handle *the Word of life*, thus he wrote much concerning eternal life, everlasting life, and the life of Jesus. 1 JOHN 1:1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;* 2 *(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)* 3 *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

When we went off onto this side track concerning Jesus being "*the Word of life*," we were talking about ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed,....* and were giving examples of how many times the phrase "the word" speaks of Jesus as being "the Word of God." In 1 JOHN 1:1 we find Jesus being called "*the Word of life*," and the Apostle Paul is the only other author in scripture to use this phrase, which he does in PHILIPPIANS 2. PHILIPPIANS 2:16 *Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.* (Additionally on your own study the parable of the sower, who soweth the word, found in MATTHEW 13:1-23; MARK 4:1-20; and LUKE 8:4-15, where many more references are made to the phrase "the word," and speaks of Jesus as being "the Word of God.") {See LUKE 8:4-15 on the next page of these notes.}

This brings us to the book of REVELATION. How many times do you think we find the phrase "the word" used in REVELATION? Would it surprise you to find the phrase "the word" used in REVELATION seven times? There are so many things found in REVELATION seven times to emphasize to us the meaning of the number seven, which shows us SPIRITUAL PERFECTION, or SPIRITUAL COMPLETION. One of the seven representative churches in REVELATION, in which are found the full overcomers, the spiritual perfect and complete Saints from this church age, is the church Philadelphia, to whom the Lord Jesus Christ Himself made the following statement in REVELATION 3:10 *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Previously in REVELATION 3:8 the Lord had noted this fact concerning the church of Philadelphia: *I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.* Note the fact that they of Philadelphia have ...*kept my word...* . What a vast difference we find here in the church of Philadelphia when compared with the previous three churches of Pergamos, Thyatira and especially Sardis; churches who knew very little of the word of God. Jesus emphasizes the fact that the Philadelphian Saint knows the word of God, and even more importantly has kept the word of God, for He twice makes note of this fact: first in REVELATION 3:8 ...*and hast kept my word...*;

and second in REVELATION 3:10 *...thou hast kept the word of my patience...* . These are high water mark statements made by the Lord concerning the New Testament worthies of faith. The Lord doesn't waste words or use words loosely, and wants those who have ears to hear, to note what His word is, and what it states. ROMANS 10:17 reads: *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* My opinion, and your opinion don't count, for it is the word of the Lord that really matters.

It is the mighty word of God that makes the Philadelphian Saint the full overcomer he or she becomes. All the Old Testament worthies of faith believed the mighty word of God. We have already read the following two scriptures: PSALMS 33:6 *By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Further the word of the Lord is enduring as noted in ISAIAH 40:8 *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.* The Philadelphian full overcoming Saints know the word of the Lord, and have patiently received it, and further have yielded to the mighty working power of the active Holy Spirit to be a hundred-fold fruitful. MATTHEW 13:1-23, MARK 4:1-20, and LUKE 8:4-15 all tell of the parable of the sower, which is about the sowing of the word of God, where the importance of knowing the word of the Lord is emphasized. We will read this story from LUKE 8. LUKE 8:4 *And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: 5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. 6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. 8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. 9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? 10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. 11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. 14 And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. 15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

Now back to what Jesus says unto the church of Philadelphia. REVELATION 3:8 *...for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word...*; and REVELATION 3:10 *...thou hast kept the word of my patience...* . Fifteen times in scripture the Lord uses the phrase "my word." Fifteen is the number of REST. The Philadelphian Saint rests in the word of the Lord. In the following portions of scripture note the importance emphasized by the Lord of knowing His word, called my word in the following texts. In 1 KINGS 6 we read of Solomon building the temple, also called the house which king Solomon built for the Lord, which took Solomon seven years to build according to verse 38. Let's read 1 KINGS 6:11-14 -- *And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, 12 Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father: 13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel. 14 So Solomon built the house, and finished it.* Turning next to ISAIAH 55 we find the phrase "my word" in the following portion of scripture: ISAIAH 55:6 *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth*

forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. In JOHN 5:24 we read: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Hopefully these facts from REVELATION 3 will help encourage each and every one of us to get more of the word of God into our own hearts.

Back to our text of ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* Jesus, The Word, and The Word of God, is also magnified in scripture as The Word of Truth, The Word of Life, The Word of His Power, and many other such titles as the following scriptures also point out. PSALMS 119:43 *And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments.* 2 CORINTHIANS 6:7 *By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,...* . EPHESIANS 1:13 (speaking of Christ) *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,...* . 2 TIMOTHY 2:15 *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* PHILIPPIANS 2:16 *Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.* 1 JOHN 1:1 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;... .* (Can you imagine what that was like?) HEBREWS 1:3 *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;... .*

JEREMIAH 9:20 *Yet hear the word of the LORD, O ye women, and let your ear receive the word of his mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and every one her neighbour lamentation.* ACTS 13:26 *Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.* ACTS 14:3 *Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.* ACTS 19:10 *And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.* ACTS 20:32 *And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.*

ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* The Greek word translated “prevailed” here is *ischuo* {is-khoo'-o}, number 2480 in the Strong's Greek Concordance, and simply means here to be strong, or powerful. It is the second time Luke has used this word in five verses. In ACTS 19:16 we find that the man possessed with the evil spirit “prevailed” against the seven sons of Sceva. Here in verse 20 we find that “the word of God” “prevailed” against all the opposition that was found in Ephesus. The same fact will be true in the life of every Philadelphian full overcomer, that is “the word of God” will “prevail” against all the opposition that comes against us. So let each of us ask ourselves, doest the word of God mightily grow and prevail in my life? Again what a high water mark scripture is this verse of ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.* May we each attain unto God's best! An expounded translation of ACTS 19:20 reads like this: ‘So irresistibly did the word of the Lord spread, and continued to spread, and demonstrate its power more widely and effectively and triumph.’

Paul's Future Plans Revealed

As we get to this part of our study of the life of the Apostle Paul, Luke gives us a little insight in the future plans, and thinking of the Apostle Paul. These future plans are found in ACTS 19:20 & 21.

ACTS 19:21 *After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.* 22 *So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered*