

Sermon Outline: Resurrect the City

Series: The Formation Code (Part 6) **Scripture Focus:** Acts 19:8–20; John 7:37–39; Matthew 5:14–16; Isaiah 35

I. The Vessel of Living Water

- **The Foundation:** The journey begins by **resting in the Savior**, recognizing that we can do nothing apart from Him.
- **The Wilderness Purpose:** God leads us into the wilderness to show us His **transcendence and eminence**—that He is both holy and near.
- **Living Water:** In the barrenness of the desert, Jesus promises that out of the believer's heart will flow **rivers of living water** (John 7:37–39).
- **The Vessel:** We are the vessels God uses to bring life to places of death, light to the dark, and healing to the sick. This is how we **resurrect the city**.

II. Extraordinary Devotion (Acts 19)

- **Persistent Proclamation:** Paul spent **three months** reasoning in the synagogue and then **two years** daily in the Hall of Tyrannus.
- **The Reach:** Because of Paul's devotion, **all the residents of Asia** heard the word of the Lord.
- **Defending the Hope:** We are called to use our own testimonies to reason and persuade others about the Kingdom of God.
- **Overcoming Rejection:** When people are stubborn or speak evil, we must not fear rejection; if they reject the message, they are **rejecting Jesus, not us**.

III. Presence Over Performance

- **Ordinary People, Extraordinary Power:** God uses ordinary people in extraordinary ways when they have **extraordinary devotion** to Him.
- **The Caution of the Sons of Sceva:** Seven brothers tried to cast out demons using the "Jesus whom Paul proclaims" without knowing Jesus themselves.
- **The Scent of Jesus:** Evil spirits recognize the presence of God. They "sniff out" those who truly abide in Christ.
- **Power vs. Talent:** Natural gifts (like singing or preaching) are **powerless and in vain** if they are empty of the presence and person of God.

IV. Radical Repentance and Revival

- **True Revival:** Revival is not just long worship sets; it is worship paired with **confession and repentance**.
- **Public Acts:** The believers in Ephesus brought their magic books and burned them publicly, showing they were not ashamed to give up what led them away from God.

- **The Cost of Surrender:** The value of the burned items was 50,000 pieces of silver—roughly **\$6.6 million** in modern terms.
- **Unsubscribing from the World:** To see the city resurrected, we must stop giving our time, energy, and finances to things that draw us away from intimacy with God (e.g., pornography, social media, or excessive consumerism).

V. Conclusion: The Desert Blossoms

- **The Vision:** Isaiah 35 describes a desert that blossoms abundantly and a "Way of Holiness" where the redeemed walk.
 - **The Goal:** We want **Jesus's name to be extolled** and lifted high in our cities, not our own names or the name of a church.
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Congregational Worksheet: Resurrect the City

1. Personal Reflection: The Vessel Imagery The sermon describes believers as "vessels" through which living water flows to water a "barren and dry land".

- *In your current "city" (your workplace, neighborhood, or family), where do you see "death" or "barrenness" that needs the living water of Jesus?*
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2. Word Study: Reasoning and Persuading In Acts 19:8, Paul spent months **reasoning and persuading** others about the Kingdom.

- *The speaker notes that your testimony is your best tool for reasoning. Briefly jot down the "reason for the hope" that is in you—what is the specific freedom Jesus has given you?*
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3. The Devotion Audit Paul stayed in Ephesus for over two years, resulting in the entire region hearing the Word.

- *If you were to evaluate your own "devotion and dedication" to the proclamation of the Gospel, where is it lacking? How can sitting in God's presence help remind you of the "hope that is within you"?*
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4. Performance vs. Presence The Seven Sons of Sceva had a "ministry" but lacked the presence of God, leading to their defeat.

- *Are there areas in your life where you are relying on your "natural gifts" or "talent" rather than the "anointing" that comes from abiding with Jesus?*
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5. Radical Repentance: The "Burn List" The Ephesian believers burned \$6.6 million worth of "magic arts" to show their allegiance to Christ.

- *What is one thing in your life (a habit, a subscription, an entertainment source, or an addiction) that you need to "burn" or "unsubscribe" from to give power back to God?*

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6. The Isaiah 35 Promise Read **Isaiah 35:1–10**. The prophet speaks of a "Way of Holiness" where sorrow and sighing flee away.

- *How does the promise of "everlasting joy" encourage you to live a life of "relentless radical obedience" today?*

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Key Memory Verse: *"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."* — **Matthew 5:16**