

## Dr. Craig Keener, Acts, Session 20

### Acts 18-20

### Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

#### 1. Abstract of Keener, Acts, Session 20, Acts 18-20, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. Craig Keener's lecture** analyzes Acts 18-20, focusing on Paul's experiences in Corinth and Ephesus. **Key events** discussed include Paul's trial before Gallio, the baptism of John's disciples, and the riot in Ephesus provoked by silversmiths threatened by Paul's teachings. **Keener explores the legal and social contexts** of these events, highlighting Roman law, Jewish customs, and the cultural dynamics of Ephesus. He also **examines the role of miracles and exorcism** in Paul's ministry and the impact of his teachings on the spread of Christianity. Finally, **Keener discusses Paul's farewell speech** and his impending arrest in Jerusalem.

**2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Keener, Acts, Session 20 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → Gospels – Acts → Acts).**



**Keener\_Acts\_Session  
n20.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document

#### Briefing Doc: Acts Chapters 18-20

**Source:** Dr. Craig Keener, Acts, Lecture 20, Acts 18-20

#### Main Themes:

- **Roman Legal System and Early Christianity:** The lecture highlights how the Roman legal system interacted with early Christians, examining cases like Paul's trial before Gallio and the riot instigated by Demetrius.
- **Paul's Ministry and its Impact:** Dr. Keener analyzes Paul's ministry in Corinth and Ephesus, focusing on his teaching, miracles, and the challenges he faced from both Jewish and pagan opposition.
- **Spirit-Empowered Ministry:** The lecture emphasizes the role of the Holy Spirit in Paul's ministry, particularly in the context of exorcisms and the growth of the early church.
- **Social Dynamics and Cultural Context:** Dr. Keener delves into the social dynamics of the time, explaining the significance of patronage, the influence of economic issues, and the role of honor and shame in shaping events.

#### Most Important Ideas/Facts:

##### Chapter 18:

- **Gallio's Judgement:** Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, dismisses the charges against Paul, recognizing Christianity as an internal Jewish issue. This sets a legal precedent protecting Christians from persecution.
- "Galileo regarded it as a Jewish sect in contrast to the way it was being accused of being dissociated from Judaism and contrary to their law. And he said this is supposed to be an internal Jewish issue."
- **Sosthenes' Beating:** The beating of Sosthenes, possibly a synagogue leader, illustrates the tensions within the Jewish community regarding Paul's message. Interestingly, Sosthenes later becomes a Christian.

## Chapter 19:

- **Apollos and the Disciples of John:** The contrast between Apollos and the disciples of John who received Christian baptism showcases the transition from John's ministry to the fullness of Christian belief and the reception of the Holy Spirit.
- **The School of Tyrannus:** Paul's teaching in the School of Tyrannus demonstrates his effective use of cultural spaces to spread the gospel. His ministry impacts Ephesus and the wider Roman province of Asia.
- **Exorcisms and the Power of Jesus' Name:** The incident with the sons of Sceva highlights the unique authority of Jesus' name for performing exorcisms, contrasting it with ineffective magical practices.
- **The Riot in Ephesus:** The riot instigated by Demetrius, a silversmith, underscores the economic threat Paul's ministry posed to those profiting from pagan worship. It also demonstrates the volatile nature of ancient urban society.
- **"Great is Artemis of the Ephesians":** This repeated chant reveals the deep-seated civic and religious loyalty to Artemis in Ephesus.
- **The Asiarchs' Intervention:** The Asiarchs, likely patrons of Paul, prevent him from entering the riotous theater, protecting him while maintaining their own social standing.
- **The City Clerk's Speech:** The city clerk effectively defuses the riot by emphasizing the rule of law and the potential consequences of unrest for Ephesus.

## Chapter 20:

- **Paul's Farewell Speech at Miletus:** This emotionally charged speech functions as a testament to Paul's ministry, urging the Ephesian elders to be vigilant shepherds and warning of future dangers.
- **"I am innocent of the blood of all men."** (Acts 20:26) This quote emphasizes Paul's dedication to faithfully proclaiming the gospel.
- **"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock."** (Acts 20:29) This quote reveals Paul's concern for the church's future and the threat of false teachings.
- **Eutychus Raised from the Dead:** This miracle further demonstrates the power of God working through Paul, even in mundane situations.

- **Journey to Jerusalem:** Paul's determination to reach Jerusalem despite prophecies of hardship reveals his unwavering commitment to his calling.

**Quotes of Note:**

- "This is supposed to be an internal Jewish issue." (Regarding Gallio's judgement)
- "I know Jesus. I've heard of Paul, but who are you?" (Demon to the sons of Sceva)
- "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" (Chant of the rioters)
- "I am innocent of the blood of all men." (Paul's farewell speech)
- "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock." (Paul's warning to the elders)

**Overall Significance:**

These chapters offer valuable insights into the challenges and triumphs of early Christian mission, the dynamics of Paul's leadership, and the complex social and political landscape of the Roman Empire. Through detailed analysis and relevant examples, Dr. Keener illuminates the historical context and enduring relevance of the book of Acts.

## 4. Acts Study Guide: Session 20, Acts 18-20

### Acts Chapters 18-20 Study Guide

#### Glossary of Key Terms

**Religio Licita:** A term used in Roman law to designate a religion that was officially permitted and recognized by the state.

**Maestas:** A Roman legal term for treason or actions that threatened the majesty of the Roman state.

**Syncretism:** The blending of different religious beliefs, practices, or traditions.

**Ephesia Grammata:** Ancient magical inscriptions, formulas, or spells often associated with the city of Ephesus.

**Demagogue:** A political leader who seeks support by appealing to popular desires and prejudices rather than by using rational argument.

**Asiarchs:** Wealthy and influential citizens who held high-ranking positions in the Roman province of Asia, often associated with the imperial cult.

**Pathos:** A quality in a situation, speech, or work of art that evokes pity, sorrow, or compassion.

#### Short-Answer Quiz

1. What legal strategy did Paul's accusers attempt to use against him in Corinth?
2. How did Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, respond to the charges against Paul?
3. Why did some Jewish exorcists try to use the name of Jesus to cast out demons? What was the result?
4. Describe the economic impact of Paul's ministry in Ephesus. Who were the main figures involved, and what were their motivations?
5. What was the significance of the burning of the magical books in Ephesus?
6. What role did the Asiarchs play in the events surrounding the riot in Ephesus?
7. Why did Paul choose to circumvent Ephesus on his journey in Acts 20?

8. What happened to Eutychus during Paul's sermon in Troas, and what does this incident reveal about Paul's character?
9. What key themes and warnings did Paul emphasize in his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders?
10. What evidence is there that the Holy Spirit was guiding Paul's journey and preparing him for what lay ahead in Jerusalem?

### **Short-Answer Quiz Answer Key**

1. Paul's accusers tried to portray Christianity as separate from Judaism, arguing that it was a new and potentially dangerous cult, hoping to strip it of the legal protections enjoyed by Judaism.
2. Gallio recognized the issue as an internal Jewish dispute and refused to get involved, upholding Roman law and setting an important legal precedent.
3. They witnessed the power of Jesus' name in exorcisms performed by Paul and his followers and sought to imitate them for their own gain. However, the attempt backfired, and the demon recognized they lacked true authority, resulting in their humiliation.
4. Paul's preaching against idolatry impacted the lucrative trade of silversmiths like Demetrius, who made shrines of Artemis. This economic threat fueled the riot incited by Demetrius, who feared losing his livelihood.
5. The public burning symbolized the Ephesian converts' rejection of their former occult practices and their commitment to following Christ. It demonstrated the transformative power of the gospel and the dramatic change it brought to their lives.
6. The Asiarchs, some of whom were likely Paul's patrons, intervened to protect him from the mob. They recognized the danger Paul faced and sought to de-escalate the situation, highlighting the influence Paul had gained even among some pagan elites.
7. While officially to save time, Paul likely avoided Ephesus to minimize potential conflict and embarrassment for the Asiarchs and the Ephesian church, demonstrating his sensitivity to the social and political climate.

8. Eutychus fell asleep during Paul's long sermon and fell from a window, appearing dead. Paul miraculously revived him, showing his compassion, power, and dedication to continuing his ministry despite the interruption.
9. Paul emphasized the importance of faithful shepherding, warning against false teachers who would exploit the flock. He highlighted his own example of sacrificial service and his unwavering commitment to fulfilling his calling, even in the face of danger.
10. Prophecies received in Tyre and Caesarea, along with the strong conviction in Paul's spirit, indicate the Holy Spirit's guidance and foreknowledge of the trials awaiting Paul in Jerusalem, preparing him and his companions for the challenges ahead.

## Essay Questions

1. Analyze the role of legal and political structures in Acts chapters 18-20. How do these systems impact Paul's ministry and the spread of the early Christian movement?
2. Discuss the significance of miracles and supernatural events in Acts chapters 18-20. What purposes do they serve in the narrative, and how do they contribute to the growth and credibility of the early church?
3. Compare and contrast the responses to Paul's message in Corinth and Ephesus. What factors contribute to the different reactions he encounters, and what do these differences reveal about the challenges of early Christian evangelism?
4. Examine the depiction of Paul as a leader and a pastor in Acts chapters 18-20. What qualities and practices characterize his leadership style, and what lessons can contemporary Christian leaders draw from his example?
5. Evaluate the significance of Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders. What are the key concerns and exhortations he expresses, and how do they anticipate future developments in the church at Ephesus and beyond?

## **5. FAQs on Keener, Acts, Session 20, Acts 18-20 Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**

### **Acts 18-20 FAQ**

#### **1. Why did Gallio dismiss the charges against Paul in Corinth?**

Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, dismissed the charges against Paul because he viewed the issue as an internal Jewish matter. The Jewish community accused Paul of acting contrary to their law, but Gallio saw this as a dispute within their own community and not a violation of Roman law. He believed it was the responsibility of the Jewish community to handle the issue internally. This decision set an important legal precedent in Roman courts, establishing that Christianity was viewed as a sect of Judaism and therefore protected under Roman law.

#### **2. What is the significance of the incident with the sons of Sceva and the demon?**

The incident with the sons of Sceva highlights the unique authority of Jesus' name and the power of the Holy Spirit. The sons of Sceva, Jewish exorcists, attempted to use Jesus' name to cast out a demon but were unsuccessful. The demon recognized their lack of genuine faith and authority, stating, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" This demonstrates that the power to perform miracles and exorcisms comes from a true relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, not simply from using a name or formula.

#### **3. Why did people burn their magic books in Ephesus after witnessing Paul's ministry?**

The public burning of magic books in Ephesus symbolized a rejection of occult practices and an embrace of the Christian faith. Witnessing Paul's powerful miracles and teachings, many people were convicted of the truth of the Gospel and the superiority of Christ over spiritual powers. Burning their magic books was a way of publicly confessing their past practices, demonstrating their commitment to following Jesus, and acknowledging that true power resided in Him.

#### **4. What was the primary cause of the riot in Ephesus?**

The riot in Ephesus was primarily fueled by economic concerns. Demetrius, a silversmith who made shrines of Artemis, saw Paul's preaching as a threat to his livelihood. Paul's message of one true God led many people to abandon their worship of Artemis, resulting in a decline in the demand for her shrines. Fearing economic hardship, Demetrius incited a riot, appealing to the self-interest of his fellow craftsmen and exploiting the city's devotion to Artemis.



### **5. Why did Paul choose to circumvent Ephesus on his journey to Jerusalem?**

Paul's decision to circumvent Ephesus was likely motivated by a combination of factors. While he officially cited the need to save time, other considerations likely played a role. The recent riot and potential lingering tensions made his presence in Ephesus potentially disruptive. He may have also wanted to avoid placing his patrons, the Asiarchs, in an awkward position, as they held prominent roles in the pagan society. Circumventing Ephesus allowed him to prioritize the well-being of the church and maintain peace within the city.

### **6. What is the significance of Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders?**

Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian elders is a poignant and powerful message emphasizing servant leadership, vigilance against false teaching, and unwavering commitment to his calling. He uses his own ministry as an example, urging the elders to shepherd the flock with humility, protect them from those who would exploit or mislead them, and remain steadfast in their faith even in the face of persecution. The emotional intensity of the farewell highlights the deep bonds of love and affection between Paul and the Ephesian church.

### **7. Why did the Holy Spirit warn Paul about dangers awaiting him in Jerusalem?**

The Holy Spirit's warnings about dangers in Jerusalem foreshadow the coming trials and imprisonment Paul would face. These warnings, often delivered through prophecies, serve to prepare Paul and his companions for the hardships ahead. Despite knowing the risks, Paul remains resolute in his determination to go to Jerusalem, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to fulfilling his mission and his trust in God's plan.

## 8. What key themes emerge from Paul's experiences in Acts 18-20?

Several key themes emerge from Paul's experiences in Acts 18-20:

- **The spread of the Gospel despite opposition:** Paul faces legal challenges, cultural resistance, and physical persecution, yet the Gospel continues to advance powerfully.
- **The power of the Holy Spirit:** The Spirit empowers believers to perform miracles, preach boldly, and endure hardships.
- **The importance of leadership and discipleship:** Paul establishes churches, appoints elders, and equips believers to carry on the work of ministry.
- **The tension between Christianity and pagan culture:** Paul's encounters with the worship of Artemis and the practices of magic reveal the clash between the Christian worldview and the prevailing pagan beliefs.
- **Sacrifice and commitment to the calling:** Paul's willingness to face danger and hardship exemplifies the dedication and selflessness required of those who follow Jesus.