



Cohort Conversation Guide

Week of October 28th: Pastoral Encouragement – Perseverance

1. **Connection Question for the week** – (Ask) What is something worth celebrating that has happened recently?
2. **Scripture Focus**— Read through Acts 19:21-41 together before praying
3. **Pray**—Using Acts 19:21-41 as a model, spend 15-20 minutes praying through this passage together popcorn style (each participant voicing short prayers based on the text), while being sensitive to how the Spirit leads. Break it down by guiding based on-

Upward Reverence- Who is God/Jesus? How and why does He deserve to be praised? Praise God for His sovereignty in being our protector even in the midst of difficulties. Praise Him that He is not like the other gods who are unable to save.

Downward Response- How should I/we respond to who He is? Belief in Jesus in Ephesus disrupted all of their industry and upset the idol maker's livelihood, what needs to be disrupted in your life? Ask God to reveal the things that need this type of stirring.

Inward Requests- Who/what should I pray for? Where is perseverance (even through difficulty) needed in your life or in the lives of those around you? Pray for the Lord to provide the necessary strength to endure.

Outward Readiness- Where do I/we go from here? Pray for boldness to confront the close held idols of our day and country with the truth of the gospel so that people are not content to believe they can have both Jesus and their idols.

4. **Discussion Questions:** use some or all of these questions to unpack what you read
 - Why do you think Paul remains in Ephesus even after he has resolved to Jerusalem and has even sent Timothy and Erastus ahead to prepare the way? What was a potential benefit to believers that Paul was still there when this unfolded?
 - What seems to be the connection between the size of the disturbance and the value of the trade that is at stake? Are there popular ideas/industries in our time that would cause great chaos to challenge because they are so widely accepted?
 - They give 3 reasons for what they fear in the spread of the gospel, that their work/livelihood would become an irreputable profession, that the temple would fall from its glory and cease being famous, and that people would realize that Artemis was not worthy of their worship. Which of these have you seen cause people to react strongly against the gospel? Why?



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- Where do you see evidence in this passage of God protecting Paul and the other believers? What do you think perseverance looked like to them in the midst of a citywide uproar? What can we learn from that?

5. **Application:** based on the discussion above help each other identify how God is leading

- What has this type of widely accepted/pervasive hold on our people, the culture in the US, and our communities? How can we as the church engage these issues with the gospel despite broad opposition and potential persecution?
- Pray for boldness to engage in this way and perseverance to stay the course despite whatever opposition occurs.
- Pray for one another.