

## **Reach Them With An Invitation**

In the recent movie *Silence*, the story of Christian missionaries bringing the Gospel to Japan in 1639 is told. Believers were under pressure to recant by stepping on a crude image of Jesus called a *fumie*. The movie was dedicated to Japanese pastors, many of whom were martyrs. *“It is he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service.” Ephesians 4:11-12.*

Although every Christian should be able to share their faith, God has given some (pastors, evangelists, etc.) special gifts. By inviting our friends to hear gifted Christian speakers, their faith can be strengthened and solidified.

### **Three Different Settings Where Paul Ministered:**

- 1. In the \_\_\_\_\_ (Synagogue)**
  - a.** *“Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God. But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe.” Acts 19:8-9.*
  - b.** A Christian must be prepared to share the Gospel with their seeking friends as well as their own testimony of coming to Christ (Romans 10:9,10; I Peter 3:15). Christian events provide additional opportunities for your friends to hear about Jesus. *“How can they hear without someone preaching to them?” Romans 10:14.*
  - c.** There should be urgency in our message about the Gospel. *“This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live.” Deuteronomy 30:19.*
  
- 2. In a \_\_\_\_\_ (Public Meeting Hall)**
  - a.** *“So Paul left them. He took his disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.” Acts 19:9-10.* Paul adopted the Socratic method of dialoging with his audience daily during siesta hours (11am-4pm).
  - b.** As Paul’s audience didn’t have Scriptural awareness, he likely used logic and evidence for establishing the true God as our Creator as he did in Athens (Acts 17:24-31). Today we have Christian speakers from many different academic disciplines as well as Christian movies and concerts, all pointing to Jesus as the hope for mankind.

**3. In the \_\_\_\_\_ (Outdoors)**

- a. *“When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.” Acts 19:17-19.*
- b. New Christians celebrated their freedom by burning their demonic materials (valued at \$5 million). They did this publicly even though it eventually led to a riot as the demand for demonic materials declined and certain businesses suffered.
- c. Since Paul and his friends conducted themselves in an honorable way (Acts 19:37), they weren’t arrested, and the Word of God continued to spread.

**When God’s people proclaim the Gospel in winsome, gracious, and honorable ways, a healthy fear and respect for God follows (Acts 19:17). In 1990, God moved thru evangelist Ed Silvano to bring 100,000 to Christ in Resistencia, Argentina.**

**At many rallies, people would throw their demonic materials in a large barrel where they were publicly burned. Four million Argentines have come to Christ since. Let’s pray this happens here!**

# Discussion Questions

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1. Have you heard about the movie *Silence*? Were you aware that up to 300,000 Japanese trusted in Christ in the 1600s? Why were missionaries so critical in the establishment and growth of the Japanese church? What is taught in Ephesians 4:11-12 about the importance of Christian leaders? What role has Christian events and Christian leaders played in your own spiritual health and growth?
2. Read Acts 19:8-20. Why do you think Paul went first to the synagogue whenever he would bring the Gospel to a new area? What are the pros and cons of ministering at a spiritual center (a synagogue for them, a church for us)? Why is it important for every Christian to be able to share the Gospel message (Romans 10:9,10), as well as their own journey to faith (I Peter 3:15)? Why do we often need the church and Christian events to bring someone to faith in Christ as well as the testimony of their friends? What does it mean to “argue persuasively” (Acts 19:8; Deuteronomy 30:19)? What is helpful and what may be confusing about the saying “Work as if it depended on you, pray as if it depended on God”?
3. Look at verses 9-10. Why would it have been effective if Paul taught daily during their siesta time? What can we learn from the teaching that God used Paul as the primary means to introduce the Gospel to the people in the province of Asia? Why was it important for individual Christians to also be sharing their faith with their friends? How may Paul’s teaching style have differed in the public meeting hall as compared with the synagogue? What lessons can we learn for public ministry today? How would you share with a person with some exposure to church versus a person without any exposure to a church?
4. What happened in verses 11-16 to cause a fear of God to descend upon the city in verse 17? What public event was held outdoors according to verses 18-19? Why do we know this was a large event? How did God use this event according to verse 20? What happened shortly after this event according to verses 23-34? Why were charges not brought against Paul and his friends according to verse 37? What lessons can we learn from this whole ordeal? Have you experienced or observed a “burning of demonic materials” event? What were your impressions of this?
5. Why is it especially critical that Christians are winsome, gracious, and honorable when they conduct public and/or outdoor events? What happened at the Ed Silvoso evangelistic rallies in Argentina in 1990? What has happened since in Argentina? Do you long to see this happen here? Will you pray for this?