

KINGDOMS COLLIDE TEACHING GUIDE

A companion teaching guide to Episode 2: “A War of Endurance”

Main Scripture: Acts 19:1–10

Companion Devotional: *Endurance Before Breakthrough*

Where We Are: Ephesus, approximately AD 53–55

Teaching Length: 40–55 minutes

BIG IDEA

God often produces extraordinary fruit through ordinary faithfulness repeated long enough for Him to multiply it beyond what we can see.

TEACHING AIM

By the end of this lesson, participants should recognize that Paul’s extraordinary influence in Ephesus did not happen overnight. Acts 19:1–10 covers more than two years of ministry. During that time, disciples grew in their understanding of Jesus, the Holy Spirit empowered believers, opposition increased, Paul changed his method without abandoning his mission, and sustained teaching eventually resulted in the Word of the Lord spreading throughout the Roman province of Asia.

The goal is to help participants distinguish between faithfulness and fruitfulness and ask:

What does God want me to remain faithful to even when I cannot yet see everything He may be producing through it?

LEADER PREPARATION

Before teaching, read Acts 19:1–10 slowly at least twice.

Then read Acts 20:17–35. This later passage is especially important because Paul looks back on his ministry among the Ephesians and describes elements of those years that Acts 19:1–10 summarizes much more briefly.

If possible, also listen to Season 1 - Episode 2 of *Kingdoms Collide*, “A War of Endurance,” and read the companion devotional *Endurance Before Breakthrough*. All of these resources can be found at www.KingdomsCollide.com/ephesus/episode-2

As you prepare, pay particular attention to the amount of time contained inside Acts 19:1–10.

The passage can be read in only a few minutes.

But the events happen over the course of 2 years and 3 months.

Paul encounters approximately twelve men.

He spends three months reasoning in the synagogue.

Opposition develops.

Paul withdraws with the disciples.

He begins teaching daily in the hall of Tyrannus.

That continues for two years.

Eventually Acts can say:

“all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

The temptation when teaching this passage is to rush toward the result.

Do not.

Let the class feel the duration.

Between the twelve men of Acts 19:7 and the regional influence of Acts 19:10 are months and years of repeated faithfulness.

Also notice what has **not** happened yet.

The extraordinary miracles associated with Paul have not yet been described.

The sons of Sceva have not attempted to use Jesus' name.

The magical books have not been burned.

Demetrius has not gathered the craftsmen.

The city has not erupted into the theater riot.

Those events are coming.

But Acts first gives us something much less spectacular:

Paul keeps teaching.

That is part of the lesson.

OPENING QUESTION

Begin by asking:

What is something worthwhile in your life that only became fruitful because you kept doing it for a long time?

Possible answers might include:

Parenting.

Marriage.

Education.

Learning a skill.

Building a business.

Prayer.

Exercise.

Discipleship.

Serving in a church.

Developing a friendship.

Allow several people to answer.

Then transition:

We naturally remember breakthroughs.

We remember when the prayer was answered.

We remember when someone finally changed.

We remember when the opportunity opened.

We remember when the ministry grew.

What we often forget are the hundreds of ordinary days before the breakthrough.

Acts 19:1–10 forces us to slow down enough to see those days.

We have the ability to read ahead and know where the story of Ephesus is going, but Paul did not. His life operated the same way ours does. To see what came tomorrow, he had to wake up and live the next day.

His life operated the same way your life does.

In order to see what comes with tomorrow; he had to wake up and live the next day.

And then the next one.

And then the next one.

READ THE TEXT

Ask the group to open their Bibles and read Acts 19:1–10.

Then ask:

What changes between verse 1 and verse 10?

Allow the class to identify what they see before beginning the lesson.

Possible observations include:

About twelve disciples become followers of Jesus with a fuller understanding.

The Holy Spirit comes upon them.

Paul teaches in the synagogue.

Some respond negatively.

Paul changes locations.

Teaching becomes daily.

The ministry continues for years.

The Word spreads throughout Asia.

Then tell the class:

The movement from twelve men to all Asia is the movement we are going to follow today.

SETTING THE SCENE — PAUL RETURNS TO THE SAME CITY

Paul has been to Ephesus before.

In Acts 18, his first visit was brief. He entered the synagogue, reasoned with the people there, and eventually left with a promise that he would return if God willed.

Now Paul returns.

The city around him remains recognizably Ephesian.

Artemis still dominates the religious identity of the city.

Rome still governs.

Commerce continues.

Pilgrims continue arriving.

Ephesus remains associated with magical practices.

The structures of the surrounding world have not suddenly disappeared because a few people have begun following Jesus.

But something has changed.

Paul is no longer walking into completely untouched ground.

Priscilla and Aquila have remained in Ephesus.

Apollos has passed through.

There are people in the city who have heard something about the coming Messiah.

And Acts introduces Paul to approximately twelve men.

Twelve people inside one of the great cities of Roman Asia.

From the perspective of the city, twelve men would have looked insignificant.

But one of the recurring lessons of Scripture is that God does not require impressive beginnings.

The Kingdom can begin smaller than the surrounding culture knows how to notice.

MOVEMENT ONE — THE TWELVE: ENDURANCE REQUIRES CONTINUED GROWTH

Read Acts 19:1–7 again.

Paul encounters men whom Acts calls disciples.

He asks:

“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

Their response reveals a significant gap in their understanding.

They have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.

Paul asks about their baptism.

They answer:

“John’s baptism.”

Paul then explains that John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance pointing people toward the One who would come after him:

Jesus.

The men respond.

They are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Paul lays his hands upon them.

The Holy Spirit comes upon them.

They speak in tongues and prophesy.

And Acts tells us there were about twelve of them.

WHAT SCRIPTURE TELLS US

Be careful here not to construct a backstory Acts does not provide.

Acts does **not** tell us how these men first heard John's message.

Acts does **not** tell us that they were disciples of Apollos.

Acts does **not** tell us that Priscilla and Aquila taught them.

Those are possible connections someone might imagine because of the preceding narrative, but Scripture does not make those connections for us.

What Acts wants us to see is sufficient:

Their understanding was incomplete.

Paul taught them.

They responded to the truth.

The Holy Spirit came upon them.

That teaches us something important about endurance before Paul's long Ephesian ministry has even begun.

People who continue with God must remain willing to grow.

These men could have protected what they already knew.

They could have treated previous experience as the boundary of everything God was allowed to teach them.

Instead, when they discovered that their understanding stopped short, they moved forward.

Christian maturity is not reaching the point where we no longer need to learn.

It is becoming increasingly willing to submit what we think we know to the truth God has revealed.

There is always more of Christ's grace to understand.

More of His Word to obey.

More dependence upon His Spirit.

More of our lives to surrender beneath His lordship.

ASK THE CLASS

Why can spiritual experience sometimes make us less teachable instead of more teachable?

Then ask:

What is the difference between pursuing "something new" spiritually and allowing Scripture to deepen or correct what we already believe?

Allow discussion.

Emphasize that Christianity is not an endless pursuit of secret knowledge or novel experiences.

The goal is deeper knowledge of and obedience to Jesus Christ.

TEACHING TRUTH

Enduring faith does not merely hold onto yesterday's truth. It remains teachable enough to obey what God is showing us today.

But these disciples will need more than information for what lies ahead.

God gives them His Spirit.

BEHIND THE BATTLE — GOD DOES NOT SEND HIS PEOPLE EMPTY

Before Acts describes the growing opposition in Ephesus, it shows the Holy Spirit coming upon these believers.

The order of these events matters significantly.

The Ephesian church will face resistance.

False teaching will eventually become a concern.

Economic pressure will emerge.

The surrounding culture will continue offering competing objects of worship, power, security, and allegiance.

But God does not merely give His people instructions and tell them to survive.

He gives them His presence.

The Holy Spirit is not presented here as a substitute for endurance.

Spirit-filled people will still have to learn.

They will still have to obey.

They will still face resistance.

They will still need courage.

They will still need patience.

The presence of the Spirit does not remove the battle.

He prepares God's people to live faithfully inside it.

That is important for the rest of this lesson.

Paul's endurance in Ephesus is not merely an impressive demonstration of human determination.

Christian endurance is dependence upon God expressed through repeated obedience.

MOVEMENT TWO — THE SYNAGOGUE: ENDURANCE DOES NOT MEAN REFUSING TO PIVOT

Read Acts 19:8–9.

Paul enters the synagogue.

For three months he speaks boldly.

He reasons.

He persuades.

And the subject that Acts emphasizes is significant: the Kingdom of God.

In a city shaped by Artemis, Roman power, commerce, magic, and imperial authority, Paul is speaking about another Kingdom.

But resistance develops.

Acts says some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of “the Way” before the congregation.

Paul now has a decision to make.

He can continue spending his energy fighting to preserve access to the synagogue.

Or he can recognize that the mission is larger than the room.

Paul withdraws.

He takes the disciples with him.

And he begins reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.

The mission has not changed; the method has.

That distinction is essential to understanding biblical endurance.

We sometimes confuse endurance with refusing to change anything.

But stubbornness and endurance are not the same thing.

Paul does not leave Ephesus.

He does not stop teaching Jesus.

He does not decide that opposition means he misunderstood God's call.

But neither does he treat one location as sacred to the mission.

He pivots without quitting.

That is a form of endurance.

ASK THE CLASS

How can we tell the difference between quitting something God has called us to do and changing the way we are doing it?

Then ask:

Have you ever had a closed door eventually redirect you toward a better way of accomplishing the same mission?

Allow discussion.

This is an important place to acknowledge that there is no simple formula.

Sometimes faithfulness means staying through difficulty.

Sometimes faithfulness means moving.

The question is not merely:

“Is this difficult?”

The deeper question is:

“What does obedience to Jesus require now?”

TEACHING TRUTH

Endurance remains loyal to the mission without becoming unnecessarily loyal to one method.

Paul loses a room.

What happens next will eventually reach a region.

MOVEMENT THREE — TYRANNUS: THE POWER OF SHOWING UP

Acts 19:9 says Paul begins reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus.

Then Acts 19:10 says:

“This continued for two years.”

Do not move past that sentence quickly.

Two years.

The words take two seconds to read but reflect a life that took two years to live.

Paul taught again.

Then again.

Then again.

Acts 20 gives us a fuller retrospective picture of Paul’s Ephesian ministry.

Paul tells the Ephesian elders that he served the Lord with humility and tears.

He says he taught publicly and from house to house.

He says he did not shrink from declaring what was profitable.

He reminds them that his own hands ministered to his necessities and to those who were with him.

When Acts 19 and Acts 20 are read together, Paul's Ephesian ministry does not look like a series of uninterrupted dramatic breakthroughs.

It looks costly.

Relational.

Emotional.

Physical.

Repeated.

Paul worked.

Paul taught.

Paul entered homes.

Paul wept.

Paul kept going.

And every morning he chose to do it again.

LEADER RESEARCH NOTE — RECONSTRUCTING PAUL'S DAILY RHYTHM

This is a useful place for historical context, but leaders should distinguish clearly between the biblical text and historical reconstruction.

Acts explicitly tells us:

- Paul reasoned daily in the hall associated with Tyrannus.
- This continued for two years.
- Paul later taught publicly and from house to house.
- Paul worked with his own hands to support himself and others.

One ancient textual tradition, preserved notably in *Codex Bezae*, contains an additional detail in Acts 19:9 that Paul taught in Tyrannus from approximately the fifth to the tenth hour—roughly 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

That detail is not included in most modern Bible translations because it is not considered part of the earliest recoverable text of Acts. It may preserve an ancient historical tradition, but it should not be presented to the class as though every manuscript of Acts gives us Paul's daily timetable.

Likewise, we should be cautious about reconstructing exact hours for Paul's work or house-to-house ministry.

What we can responsibly say is that Acts 19, Acts 20, Paul's known manual labor, and the ancient Tyrannus tradition together allow us to imagine an extremely demanding rhythm of:

work → teaching → personal ministry → repeat.

That reconstruction can help us feel the story.

It should not replace the story.

RETURN TO THE LESSON

Imagine what two years means.

Hundreds of mornings.

Hundreds of opportunities to become tired.

Hundreds of days when Artemis was still standing.

The market still opened.

Rome still governed.

People still practiced the religions and customs that had shaped Ephesian life long before Paul arrived.

Paul could preach Jesus one day and wake the next morning to a city that still looked overwhelmingly unchanged.

So he taught Jesus again.

That is endurance.

Not merely surviving one dramatic confrontation.

Remaining faithful through ordinary repetition.

We normally celebrate the breakthrough.

God also sees the Tuesday before the breakthrough.

The prayer prayed again.

The lesson prepared again.

The child taught again.

The person forgiven again.

The struggling believer encouraged again.

The Scriptures opened again.

The work done faithfully again.

Grace does not make faithfulness unnecessary.

Grace frees us to be faithful without using visible success to prove our worth.

Jesus has already accomplished the work that saves us.

Therefore, we do not have to turn ministry, parenting, work, service, or spiritual disciplines into performances through which we prove our value.

We can simply be faithful.

ASK THE CLASS

Where is repetition hardest for you spiritually?

Then ask:

Why are visible results so important to us? What happens to our motivation when we cannot see them?

Allow discussion.

TEACHING TRUTH

Endurance is often ordinary obedience repeated before the full result becomes visible.

Paul kept showing up.

But while Paul stayed in one place, something else began moving.

MOVEMENT FOUR — ALL ASIA: FAITHFULNESS CAN TRAVEL FARTHER THAN YOU CAN

Read Acts 19:10 again.

Paul remains centered in Ephesus.

Yet Acts says:

“all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.”

The scale has suddenly changed:

The passage began with approximately twelve men.

Now the Word has spread throughout Asia.

“Asia” here does not mean the modern continent of Asia. It refers to the Roman province of Asia in western Asia Minor, in the region of modern-day Turkey.

Acts does not give us a list explaining exactly who carried the gospel to every location.

What Acts gives us is the result:

Paul’s sustained ministry in Ephesus became connected to regional gospel expansion far beyond the room in which he was teaching.

Ephesus was especially suited for this kind of multiplication.

It was an important urban center connected to other communities through roads, commerce, travel, and its harbor.

People could come.

People could hear.

People could leave.

The infrastructure serving commerce and empire could also become pathways along which news about Jesus traveled.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT — USEFUL, BUT DO NOT OVERSTATE IT

It is historically reasonable to imagine merchants, travelers, households, and disciples carrying what they learned beyond Ephesus.

But Acts 19:10 does not tell us:

“This merchant went here.”

“This sailor went there.”

“This person attended Tyrannus and planted this particular church.”

Those images can help us visualize how information moved through the ancient world, but they remain reconstruction.

The biblical claim is stronger and simpler:

The Word spread.

And it spread far beyond Paul’s personal movements.

The wider New Testament eventually introduces people connected to this expanding network of ministry.

Tychicus becomes a trusted coworker and messenger.

Trophimus is identified as an Ephesian and travels with Paul.

Epaphras becomes deeply connected with the gospel’s spread in the Lycus Valley, including Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis.

We should be cautious about placing every one of these men inside the hall of Tyrannus unless Scripture explicitly does so.

But together they help us see the kind of multiplication that characterized Paul's wider ministry.

Paul could teach one person who could eventually teach someone Paul would never meet.

A conversation could travel.

A disciple could travel.

Truth could travel.

Paul did not have to walk every route that the gospel traveled down.

That remains true.

You may teach one child who carries the gospel into adulthood.

You may disciple one believer who eventually discipled a family.

You may encourage someone who later becomes the encouragement another person desperately needs.

You may faithfully teach a class without knowing what one person in the room will eventually do with what they have learned.

That should not inflate our sense of importance.

It should free us from needing to control the outcome by reminding us that God is capable of carrying faithfulness farther than we can.

ASK THE CLASS

Who invested something spiritually significant into you that traveled farther than they probably realized?

Then ask:

How would your approach to one person change if you stopped measuring that person only by what you can presently see?

TEACHING TRUTH

God can multiply faithful obedience beyond the servant's ability to see or control it.

Paul saw the room.

God saw Asia.

BEHIND THE BATTLE — LOYALTIES ARE MOVING

At the beginning of Paul's Ephesian ministry, the city still appears stable.

Artemis remains powerful.

Rome remains powerful.

The existing religious and commercial systems remain intact.

But something is changing underneath the surface.

People are hearing that Jesus is Lord.

And Kingdoms are ultimately built upon allegiance.

Every person who places his or her deepest allegiance in Jesus has begun relating differently to the surrounding world.

That change may initially be invisible.

But changed belief eventually affects behavior.

Soon Acts will show people abandoning magical practices.

Soon expensive magical books will burn.

Soon craftsmen whose income is connected to Artemis will become concerned.

Soon the city will erupt.

But none of that has happened yet in Acts 19:1-10.

For now, Paul is teaching.

That matters for the larger *Kingdoms Collide* story.

The public confrontation of Kingdoms begins with the private formation of disciples.

Before behavior changes publicly, allegiance changes internally.

Before Ephesus sees the consequences, people hear the Word.

Before the riot comes, the teaching comes.

Before the city notices, disciples are being formed.

The apparent quietness of Acts 19:1–10 is therefore deceptive.

Something revolutionary is already happening.

People are learning to belong to another Kingdom under the Lordship of Jesus.

MOVEMENT FIVE — FAITHFULNESS IS OUR ASSIGNMENT; FRUITFULNESS BELONGS TO GOD

Now look at the entire passage again.

Paul encounters twelve men.

He teaches them.

The Holy Spirit comes upon them.

Paul enters the synagogue.

He teaches for three months.

Resistance develops.

Paul changes locations.

He teaches daily.

He continues for two years.

And the Word spreads throughout Asia.

Paul has responsibilities throughout the passage.

But Paul does not control the result.

He cannot make the twelve respond.

He can teach them.

He cannot force the synagogue to believe.

He can reason faithfully.

He cannot prevent opposition.

He can decide how to respond to it.

He cannot personally preach in every community in Asia.

He can form people who carry the Word beyond him.

He cannot produce spiritual growth by human force.

He can plant, he can water, but only God gives growth.

That gives us one of the central truths of this episode:

OUR ASSIGNMENT IS FAITHFULNESS.

GOD'S RESPONSIBILITY IS FRUITFULNESS.

That does not mean results do not matter.

Paul clearly wants people to believe.

He wants disciples to grow.

He wants churches to become healthy.

He cares deeply about what happens.

But caring about fruit is different from believing we can manufacture it.

Faithfulness means doing what Christ has entrusted to us with everything we have.

Fruitfulness means trusting Him with everything only He can do.

That distinction protects us from two opposite errors.

The first is passivity:

“Results belong to God, so it doesn’t matter what I do.”

Paul’s life destroys that idea.

He works relentlessly.

The second is control:

“If I work hard enough, I can guarantee the result.”

Paul’s ministry destroys that idea too.

He teaches faithfully and some people still reject the message.

Christian endurance lives between those extremes.

Work faithfully and trust God completely.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Look again at the major movements.

The twelve men teach us:

To keep growing.

The synagogue teaches us:

That we can pivot without quitting.

The years in Tyrannus teach us:

To keep showing up.

The spread throughout Asia teaches us:

To trust God with how far obedience travels.

Paul did not take Ephesus by storm.

He took it by schedule.

Day after day.

Conversation after conversation.

Lesson after lesson.

House after house.

And eventually Acts can say that all Asia heard.

The miracle is not merely that the Word traveled so far.

Part of the story is that Paul remained faithful long enough to keep teaching it.

The first lesson of Ephesus was:

Be faithful when the beginning looks small.

The second lesson is:

Remain faithful when small beginnings become long assignments.

GROUP APPLICATION — TRY AGAIN TOMORROW

Ask everyone to identify one faithful practice that belongs to their present season but has become difficult because they are not seeing the results they hoped for.

It might be:

Praying for someone.

Teaching their children.

Serving their spouse.

Preparing faithfully for a church responsibility.

Checking on someone who is struggling.

Working with integrity.

Studying Scripture.

Discipling someone.

Continuing an important conversation.

Serving somewhere nobody notices.

Then ask:

“If I stopped demanding immediate fruit, what would faithfulness require from me this week?”

Give the class a quiet minute to think.

Then ask them to identify one action they can repeat at least three times during the coming week.

The goal is not endless activity.

The goal is not refusing to change methods when wisdom requires it.

The goal is not earning God’s favor through effort.

The goal is faithful obedience.

Encourage them to pray before each repetition:

“Jesus, my responsibility is faithfulness. The fruit belongs to You.”

Then encourage them at the end of the week not to begin with:

“What changed?”

But to begin with:

“Was I faithful?”

CLOSING DISCUSSION

Finish with these questions:

Where in your life are you most tempted to quit because you cannot see enough fruit?

Is there somewhere you need to endure—or somewhere you need to pivot without abandoning the mission?

Who might God have placed in front of you that you are underestimating because you cannot see where their story will go?

What is one faithful thing you can do again this week?

Encourage participants to make the final answer concrete.

CLOSING PRAYER DIRECTION

Invite the class to pray around four ideas:

Lord, keep us teachable when You show us where we need to grow.

Fill us with Your Spirit for the work You have placed before us.

Give us wisdom to pivot when methods need to change without abandoning the mission.

Give us endurance to remain faithful when we cannot yet see the fruit.

Close by thanking Jesus for finishing the work that accomplished our salvation.

Ask Him to free the group from needing visible success to prove their worth.

Ask Him to make them faithful with the people, responsibilities, conversations, and opportunities already in front of them.

And ask Him to take whatever faithful obedience they offer and use it wherever He chooses.

LOOKING AHEAD — EPISODE 3: THE DOOR OPENS

For more than two years, Paul has taught.

People have listened.

Disciples have formed.

The Word has spread throughout Asia.

And underneath the surface of Ephesus, loyalties have begun to move.

Now the quiet season is about to become visible.

Acts will describe extraordinary miracles.

The name of Jesus will confront counterfeit spiritual power.

Seven sons of Sceva will discover that Jesus' name cannot be manipulated like a magical formula.

Fear will fall upon the city.

People will bring out the books connected to their magical practices and burn them publicly.

What Paul has been teaching for years is about to begin costing people something.

Episode 2 asks:

Will we remain faithful when we cannot see the full result?

Episode 3 will ask:

What happens when the gospel becomes powerful enough to change what people trust, practice, and value?

The years of quiet endurance have prepared the ground.

Now the door opens.

A Note from the Author:

I sincerely hope that you have found something of value in this teaching guide. Kingdoms Collide is a ministry passion project from a guy that loves Jesus. If you need prayer or if you want to share a kind word with me, I would love to hear from you. Everyone needs prayer and encouragement. I would love to be that for you and for you to be that for me. Feel free to email me at KingdomsCollidePodcast@gmail.com

Every prayer request is confidential and will not be used in any media or promotional material.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler Henderson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.