

## Ephesus: Challenge for the Christians

### DAYLIGHT PREVIEW

#### No City Limits

You have to be impressed with a first-century city that had a library with 15,000 volumes. That's a lot of scrolls! But just outside this bastion of learning and education was another building that would make today's sexual liberation-based society seem tame. It was the Temple of Artemis, and it was a beacon of immorality. Imagine living in a city in which that kind of place affected everything in the community, as Joe Stowell points out: from theater to politics to sports. Imagine also how Christians—with their God-ordained moral standards—must have been viewed in that society.

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### COME TOGETHER

#### *Icebreaker Questions*

1. The Temple of Artemis in Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. What is the most impressive man-made "wonder" you can remember visiting?
2. Ephesus was also the home of a famous library, the third largest library in the world. When you were growing up, how much did you hang out in a library or bookmobile?

1:12:36

3. Tradition states that the apostle John lived in Ephesus during the latter part of his life. And since Jesus had left His mother in John's care as He suffered on the cross, Mary may have also lived out her days in Ephesus. Where would you like to live out the last of your days?



## FINDING DAYLIGHT

### Experience the Video

Feel free to jot down Video Notes as you watch the presentation by Joe Stowell. Use the space below for those notes.

### VIDEO NOTES

The city of Ephesus

Temple of Artemis

The influence of Artemis

The challenge of the early Christians

Fourteen days in May

## WALKING IN THE DAYLIGHT

### Discussion Time

### DISCOVER GOD'S WORD

#### *Discussion/Application Questions*

1. What reasons does Joe Stowell mention for Ephesus' status as one of the greatest cities of the ancient world?
2. What reasons does Joe mention for Ephesus' status as a significant center for early Christianity?
3. The Temple of Artemis was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. How would you describe the effect that seeing this structure—standing on a hill overlooking the city of Ephesus and gleaming in the sunlight with its marble-clad walls and 127 pillars over 60 feet high—must have had on people?

4. **Read Acts 19:8–10, in which Luke, the author of Acts, summarizes Paul’s time in Ephesus.**

Paul’s ministry of two years and three months in Ephesus was the longest that the book of Acts records him staying in one missionary location. What does that say about the significance Paul placed on Ephesus and about the fruitfulness of the Lord’s work there?

5. **Continue looking at Luke’s account of the impact of the good news on Ephesus by reading Acts 19:11–20.**

Joe notes that pilgrims and the citizens of Ephesus flooded into the courtyards of the Temple of Artemis because the goddess promised them healing. Specifically, pregnant women came to her, believing she held the power to protect them.

In the Acts account, how was Christianity proving to be much greater than that?

6. **Luke now turns his focus to the riot that broke out in Ephesus. Read Acts 19:21–34.**

Artemis was the Greek name for the Roman goddess Diana, although Artemis as seen by the Ephesians was quite different from Diana. The theater mentioned in verse 29 could seat 25,000 people, making it one of the largest outdoor theaters in the ancient world

- a. Why was Demetrius the silversmith upset?

- b. Why did the people respond like they did? What united them?

7. **Read the conclusion of this story in Acts 19:35–41.**

The city official referred to here was the chief executive officer of the civic assembly. Though not appointed by Rome, he was the liaison between Ephesus and the Roman authorities.

A meteorite may be the source of the claim he mentioned in verse 35 regarding an image of Artemis that supposedly had fallen from heaven.

How was the city official able to restore order?

8. **Joe notes that the worship of Artemis included ritual prostitution and public orgies, especially during the fourteen days in May when the entire city celebrated the birthday of Artemis.**

How challenging would it be for Christians to maintain their spiritual commitment when they would feel so terribly out of step with everything in this city?