

In the early church, the value of the salvation offered in Jesus Christ is seen to be immeasurable.

The love response to God's salvation is demonstrated in the **burning** of extremely costly magic books.

If these coins were the denarius, each was approximately a day's wage. Fifty thousand days of payments is about 137 years. 137 years worth of salary...**BURNED!** (Estimated values range from **\$5 million** to **\$1.5 billion**.)

Yet those who had practiced magic took the unbelievable approach of utterly destroying these tools of Satan.

When we came to Christ, what did we do with our *magic books*? We all have strongholds. What did we do with ours?

Often we justify actions. Like Judas with the costly ointment, we think this could be sold and the profits used for God's glory.

Worse yet, Christians sometimes do not destroy *magic books*...but some actually purchase **new magic books, movies, or other such things**.

Have we renounced our past and given everything to Jesus?

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### The Word Of God Grew Mightily And Won

Such wholesale commitment to Jesus Christ was manifested in the overwhelming expansion of God's plans.

*"So mightily grew the word of God and*

*prevailed."* (Acts 19:20)

The abandonment of these believers to trusting in Jesus allowed the Holy Spirit unfettered access to their lives. This power of God in them enabled them to live in such a victorious manner!

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Conclusion:

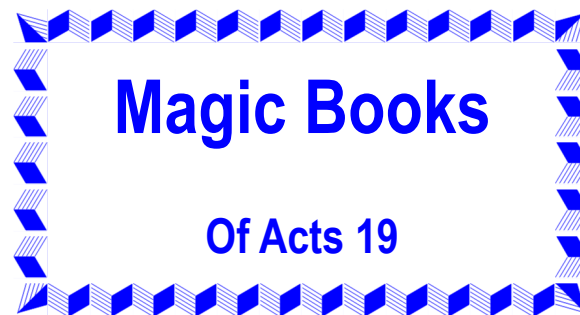
God is the same today as He was then. Do we honestly desire to see His Word spread throughout our area and the world?

Are we willing to give up **everything**?

What will happen if we do?

Let's purpose in our hearts to pursue only God...and **see what the Lord will do!**

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*"Beloved, when I gave all **diligence** to write unto you of the common salvation, it was **needful** for me to write unto you, and **exhort** you that ye should **earnestly contend** for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."* (Jude 1:3)

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Standing For The Truth

Contending for the truth of the Word of God is worth the *fight*! The following passage demonstrates the extent to which the Apostle Paul was willing to engage in battle for sound doctrine.

*"And he went into the synagogue, and spake **boldly** for the space of **three months**, **disputing** and **persuading** the things concerning the kingdom of God. (9) But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, **disputing daily** in the school of one Tyrannus. (10) And this **continued** by the space of **two years**; so that **all** they which dwelt in Asia **heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.**"*

(Acts 19:8-10)

Observations:

MAGIC BOOKS

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### Do Evil Spirits Recognize Your Authority

Trying to manipulate the demonic by using Jesus' Name as a magic incantation, **does not work!**

*"Then certain of the **vagabond Jews, exorcists**, took upon them to call over them which had **evil spirits** the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. (14) And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. (15) And the **evil spirit** answered and said, **Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?** (16) And the man in whom the **evil spirit** was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."* (Acts 19:13-16)

#### Observations:

- Vagrant Jewish exorcists attempted to cast out demons using the Name of Jesus Whom Paul preached,
- A chief priest named Sceva had seven sons that tried to exorcise a devil using this approach,
- The wicked spirit knew Jesus and Paul, but not these men,
- The man with the evil spirit battered the seven men, and they fled naked and wounded.

Satan will always seek to counterfeit and discredit the truth of Jesus Christ. God's Word is infinitely powerful; however, it cannot be used for self-glory or self-promotion.

Fascinating is the fact that the evil spirit **knew Paul!** It is not surprising that the devil knew Jesus, and it also knew Paul. The implication is that this spirit had some fear/respect for Paul.

We should seek to know Jesus so intimately that the demons know and fear us (being so yielded to the

Holy Spirit.)

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The Fear Of The Lord

Everyone in Ephesus heard of the beating the seven men took at the hands of the one demoniac. The **reality** of Jesus Christ spread and impacted people.

*"And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and **fear fell on them all**, and the **name of the Lord Jesus was magnified**. (18) And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds." (Acts 19:17-18)*

The fear of the Lord came upon the people. They did not fear Paul, but it was the Name of Jesus that was known to all.

Because of Paul's intense defense of the truth, because of the mighty miracles God manifested through Paul, imposters were exposed, and **God brought many to salvation!**

These new converts *confessed* Jesus **and demonstrated the reality of their conversion.**

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### The Truth Is Worth It

Look at how the Holy Spirit led them to display their new-found freedom in Jesus.

*"And many of those who **practiced magic** brought their books together and **began burning them in the sight of everyone**; and they counted up the price of them and found it **fifty thousand pieces of silver**." (Acts 19:19)*

- Paul spoke boldly at the synagogue for three months,
- His efforts were to dispute and persuade the attendees regarding truths of the Kingdom of God,
- After some of his audience became antagonistic and blasphemous of Jesus, Paul departed from the synagogue,
- Paul disputed daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years,
- Everyone living in Asia heard the Word of Jesus, both Jews, and Greeks.

Notice that Paul is mentioned as boldly disputing to convince people of the truth of Jesus Christ for a lengthy duration of time (approximately two years and three months in total.) During the time in the school of Tyrannus, these contentions took place daily. The result was that the Word of Christ spread throughout the entire region.

It is evident that **contending for Jesus** is vitally important!

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Truth Evidenced By Miracles

God deems the defense of the truth as being so imperative that He performed mighty miracles through Paul to further the spread of His Word.

*"And God wrought **special miracles** by the hands of Paul: (12) So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the **diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them**." (Acts 19:11-12)*

God and His truth are far more powerful than sickness or evil spirits!