Acts 19:11-20 (NIV)
11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them. 12 Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, "In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out." 13 Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. [One day] the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?" 14 Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. 15 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. 16 Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. 17 A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. 18 In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

44-19-02-Undoing Life’s Undoing
miracles, exorcism, authority, occult, repentance, testimony
Acts 19:11-20
By grace and truth, Christ unravels the realm of darkness.

INTRODUCTION:
The enfolding of Pentecost happens as the Spirit releases the power of our indwelling Lord. When we repented of our old life and trusted in Christ, our bodies became “temples of the Holy Spirit.” Our hearts became Christ’s home. Jesus doesn’t want to be inactive there. He wants to live His abundant life through us. Pentecost begins the Spirit’s unleashing of Christ’s life within us, because Jesus isn’t done yet! He is still working in and through us to undo life’s undoing.

1 John 3:8b tells the Incarnation’s purpose: “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.” He overcame Satan’s deceitful and hateful “work” by God’s eternal truth and the loving grace of His Cross. Jesus is still “full of grace and truth,” but is incarnate in a new way. His presence in us is still destroying “the devil’s work.” Being “filled with the Spirit” energizes the release of Christ’s authority, so that HOM.idea.

I. In Union with Christ, Believers Can Be Channels of Grace—v.11-12
11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

A. We are uniquely individual, with special personalities (So, when God does His works through us, they’re always “extraordinary.”)
   1. Religion gravitates toward uniformity, and it can stagnate our full humanity. (But God liberates us by producing a united variety.)
   2. So, unless He directs you, don’t try duplicating unique “miracles.”

B. But how these “miracles” occurred isn’t unique: the “grace” of Jesus live in Paul, as it does in us. (The Spirit was releasing “grace” from him in a “greater” way than when a sick lady touched Christ’s robe and was healed. Jesus told us that would happen—John 14:12, I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.)

TRANS: Never doubt that the “grace” of Christ in us can heal “illnesses” and defeat “evil spirits.” (God’s grace was uniquely present in Moses’ rod, and in
II. Disconnected from Christ, a Knowledge of Truth Is Dangerous—v.13-16.

1. Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, “In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.”

2. They shouted, “Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?”

3. Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. [One day] the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?”

4. Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

By grace and truth, Christ in us can still unravel the realm of darkness. However...

TRANS: Never doubt the power of Christ’s grace and truth to undo life’s dark undoing. Grace may bring in big-gun angelic help or an episode of healing hankies in order to contrast true Gospel grace with powerless religionism. But (v.17) 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. But Gospel grace must stand on Gospel truth.

III. Dedication to Christ Destroys the Inroads of Darkness—v.18-19.

1. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds.

2. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. [about a million dollars in today’s currency]

A. When people truly receive Christ, and His “grace and truth” unravel their obsessions with satanic deceptions, they must discard every avenue that led them into darkness, whatever it may cost them.

B. Selfish pride, that seeks power, prestige or possessions, is usually Satan’s doorway into darkness. (Bondage from such pride breaks, when it’s “openly confessed” and former bridges to it “burned.”)

CONCLUSION:

–God’s only plan for our sin-darkened world is “his only begotten son,” We see that plan’s goal in the prayer: “thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” For God’s will to be done, His Son had to become human “to destroy the devil’s work.” That plan originally resided only in Jesus, until He died on the Cross, arose from death and ascended into Heaven. Then His gift of Pentecost spread God’s plan all over the face of this earth through Christ’s indwelling presence in us.

–By grace and truth, Christ unravels the realm of darkness. He did it when He was on earth, and He’s not finished doing it now, through us. That plan flowed uniquely from Paul life. It says in v.20. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power. Now it’s our turn for the Holy Spirit to release Christ’s “grace and truth” uniquely from our lives.