

The Threat of Truth

Acts 19:23-41

—Derek W. H. Thomas. Unbelievers in Ephesus perceived in the Christian community a shape that was definable, one they called the Way. It stood out and beckoned for attention. It pointed to a way of life that was different and a direction that was [opposed] to that of the majority. It was a different road than most traveled. It revealed a pattern of self-denial and cross-bearing. It utterly focused on Jesus Christ. It was patterned after an ethic alien to the natural man. And the worldly despised it!

Main Point: God's truth threatens everything that is opposed to God's glory.

I. Power

—Derek W. H. Thomas, There came a point when the Christians did not have to say anything at all; their absence from certain events, their refusal to enter into the customary gossip that social engagements typically engendered, their love of truth and righteousness—these things cast a shadow on those who still loved a way of life that Christians had turned their backs on. Unbelievers felt threatened and judged by it...Deep resentment [toward the Christians] had been brewing for many months.²

II. Pride

III. Peace

Close:

- Don't Think It's Strange (Persecution is to be expected).

I Peter 4:12-13, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice,

¹ Derek W. H. Thomas, *Reformed Expository Commentary: Acts* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2011), 553.

² Thomas, *Acts*, 554.

inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

- Don't Think It's Alright (We should pray for peace and be grateful for those who enforce the law).

I Timothy 2:1-2; cf., Romans 13, "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."

- Don't Think It's Final (King Jesus will make everything right in the end).

Romans 12:19, "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'"