

Acts 19:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

Analysis

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused—Luke's ironic observation: the ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia, assembly—the word for 'church') was συγκεχυμένη (sunkechumenē, thoroughly confused). Most participants **knew not wherefore they were come together** (οὐκ ᾔδεισαν τίνας ἕνεκα συνεληλύθεισαν, ouk ēdeisan tinos heneka sunelēluthēisan). This wasn't reasoned debate but mindless mob action—people shouting without understanding the issue.

Luke's satirical tone is unmistakable: calling this chaos an 'assembly' mocks pretensions to civic order. True ekklēsia (the church) operates by the Spirit with discernment; false ekklēsia (angry mobs) operates by emotion without understanding. The contrast highlights the church's countercultural nature—we gather around truth, not rage; we speak with understanding, not confusion.

Historical Context

Greek cities prided themselves on democratic assemblies where citizens debated civic matters rationally. Ephesus's descent into incoherent shouting exposed how quickly civic ideals collapse under economic threat and religious passion. The Roman Empire increasingly viewed such assemblies as dangerous and curtailed them—this riot vindicated Roman suspicions about mob democracy.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do modern social media mobs mirror this ancient confusion—people passionate about issues they barely understand?
2. What distinguishes Spirit-led church gatherings from emotion-driven movements that co-opt religious language?

Interlinear Text

ἄλλο	μὲν	οὖν	ἄλλο	τι	ἔκραζον·	ἦν	γὰρ	ἡ
Some	G3303	therefore	Some	one thing	cried	was	for	G3588
G243		G3767	G243	G5100	G2896	G2258	G1063	
ἐκκλησία	συγκεχυμένη	καὶ	οἱ	πλείους	οὐκ	ᾔδεισαν		
the assembly	confused	and	G3588	the more part	not	knew		
G1577	G4797	G2532		G4119	G3756	G1492		
τίνος	ἕνεκεν	συνεληλύθεισαν						
wherefore	G1752	they were come together						
G5101		G4905						

Additional Cross-References

Acts 21:34 (Parallel theme): And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.