Religious Confusion

Acts 19:32

Introduction:

A. Text describes a religious riot - could describe religion today.
   1. Some say one thing, some another.
   2. Most do not know what they believe.

B. Another text illustrates source of religious confusion. (Mt. 16:13-18)
   1. Ask mere men and get conflicting answers. (vv. 13-14)
   2. Ask inspired men and get truth. (vv. 15-17).

C. Confusion heard from religious people in a number of areas:

Discussion:

I. Confusion Over Authority.
   A. Human authority.
      1. Subjective: Inner voice, conscience, etc.
      2. Objective: human traditions, the church, respected teachers.
   B. Divine authority (2 Tim. 3:13-17; 2 Thess. 2:15; 3:6; Jude 3,4)

II. Confusion Over Salvation.
   A. A variety of plans: "Grace alone", "Faith alone", "Just pray".
   B. Simple Bible Plan: Eph. 2:8,9; Mk. 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:10; 1 Pet. 3:21)

III. Confusion Over Worship
   A. Often a matter of personal taste.
      1. If morally right.
      2. If fulfills felt need.
      3. If done from heart.
      4. If directed to God.
      5. cf. Mt. 15:9; Acts 26:9; Lev. 10:1-5).
   B. Should be a matter of divine truth. (John 4.24; Mt. 7:21ff).
      1. Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17,20,33,34; Matt. 26:26-29).
      2. Congregational singing. (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).
      4. Teaching/preaching (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 14).
      5. Collection (1 Cor. 16:1,2; 2 Cor 9.7).

IV. Confusion Over Organization.
   A. The standard for most church organization.
      1. Tradition
      2. Efficiency
      3. Expediency
      4. Visibility
      5. Strength
         a. Financial
         b. Civic
   B. The standard for God's people.
      1. Israel of old - give us a king. (1 Sam. 8:6,20).
         a. No Powerful denominational organization.
         b. Simple congregational organization. (cf. Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5; Phil. 1:1).
            (1) Nothing larger.
            (2) Nothing smaller.

V. Confusion Over Mission.
   A. "Social gospel" emphasizes temporal interests: Social; Political; Economic; Physical
   B. Gospel of Christ emphasizes eternal interests. (Eph. 4:11-16;1 Tim. 3:15; Philippians 4.10-20; Acts 11:29,30)

Conclusion:

A. Revelation brings peace and unity.
B. Human authority brings confusion.