

“These Men Have Turned the World Upside Down”

Sermon Notes

➤ **Let’s not be discouraged...**

1. God’s _____ works powerfully to save;

Let’s be _____ to proclaim the Word (1-4)

2. The _____ rebel against God’s messengers;

Let’s _____ the cost of discipleship (5-9)

Next Week: Acts 17:10-15 “Examining the Scriptures Daily”

MEFC Study Guide
For the week of June 2nd - June 8th

Context

1. What has happened so far in Acts? Have there been any major events, characters or themes?

2. What happened just prior, in Philippi (Acts 16)?

Observation

3. What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does Luke describe them? How do they describe themselves?
 - a. Identify who the “they” is in 17:1 (note: Start back in ch. 16 to trace the “they” and you’ll want to read through 17:15, about what happened in Berea)?

 - b. Who is Jason? Consider Romans 16:21.

 - c. What three groups of people respond in faith to the gospel (see 1 Th 1:9)? Consider Ac 20:4 and 27:2. There is a historical record of an Aristarchus, a major city official in Thessalonica.

 - d. The agora was the Greek marketplace or central public square. Common laborers, artisans and tradesman would gather there for work. A subset of them were evil, wicked men, ruffians, worthless. What is a mob of “wicked men of the rabble” like?

 - e. Who are city officials? Eckhard Schnabel helps in his commentary on Acts (Kindle 1243):
“The politarchs, a group of five or six senior magistrates, were responsible for convening both the assembly of the people and the city council, introducing motions and confirming its decisions. They were responsible to act for the people, carrying out the wishes of the assembly of the citizens. They possessed judicial authority, and they were responsible to maintain peace and order to ensure that the Roman authorities would not be forced to intervene in the affairs of the city.”

4. Is time or place significant in the events that happen?
 - a. What do you know, if at all, about Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica, cities of ancient Macedonia?

 - b. Was Paul in town for 3 weeks (i.e. Sabbaths)? or longer? Here are some factors to consider: Read Php 4:16. Read the Thessalonian letters, especially 1 Th 1:5; 2:1-2, 5-12. What time might it take to “set up shop” or “settle in” at Jason’s house?

5. What did Paul do in his public ministry? Reflect on what it means to “reason”, to “explain”, to “prove”. Paul reasons elsewhere, see Acts 17:17; 18:4, 19; 19:8, 9. To explain is “to open up”, like Jesus did with the disciples on the road to Emmaus (see Lk 24, especially verses 31, 32, 45; or Acts 16:14)
6. Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?
 - a. Name the many ways the opponents of Paul were lawless against God and wronged his messengers.
 - b. What accusations were alleged against Paul and friends? What is ironic about such charges? What is the measure of truth in the accusations?
7. What surprises are there?
8. What is a main point or theme in this section of the story?

Meaning

9. Are there any ‘editorial’ comments from Luke about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
10. What does the passage reveal about who Jesus is, and what he came into the world to do?
11. How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

Application

12. How does this passage challenge or confirm your understanding? What Bible passages on the gospel of Jesus do you want to be ready to reason from?
13. With regard to evangelism, is there some attitude you need to change? What keeps you from simply proclaiming the Word and the gospel? What makes it hard for you to bear the cost of following Jesus, especially in the face of opposition?
14. What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus? How does it change how you evangelize? How does it help you to weigh the cost of discipleship?