

THE GOSPEL HAS THE POWER TO TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING ON MISSION / SERIES: ACTS

BIG TRUTH: THE GOSPEL HAS THE POWER TO TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

Romans 1:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Matthew 24:14; 2 Corinthians 4:4

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 17:6

“And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities shouting, “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also...”

BIG IDEAS

- The Gospel proclaims the kingship of Jesus.
- Some are persuaded by the Gospel.
- Some are disturbed by the Gospel.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 17:1-9

KNEEL: LIVING ON MISSION

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The gospel has the power to turn the world upside down.
- They are empowered and chosen to be a gospel witness in the world.
- Our salvation has come by grace alone.



Every student should feel...

- Comfort that the Lord is with them wherever they go.
- Hope in the God of salvation.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read, study, and meditate on the entire book of Acts.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Pray consistently for boldness to make Jesus known.



Every student should want...

- To pursue faithfulness in living on mission.
- To share the gospel with people in their lives who do not know Jesus.
- To sacrifice their personal freedoms for the sake of the gospel

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 17:6

“And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities shouting, ‘These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also...’”

The Gospel evokes a reaction from people.

“And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities shouting...”

- The Gospel is the power of God for salvation. When Paul and the other disciples spread the Gospel, it evoked a reaction from people. People either received the Gospel with joy or they were angered by it. The Gospel is offensive to those who do not believe. They find it foolish and reject it.
- The power of the Gospel moves throughout the world, drawing a response from those who hear it. The early disciples shared the truth of Jesus in Thessalonica, drawing a response from those who heard it. Today, all those who hear the Gospel respond to it in some way. They either reject it or receive it with gladness.

The Gospel enrages some people.

“...they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city authorities shouting...”

- The Gospel is God’s truth and His revelation to man. The Gospel is not always good news to those who reject it. For those who reject it, it enrages them, angering them because it reveals the sin in their hearts they do not desire to acknowledge.
- In Thessalonica, when Paul and Silas preached the Gospel, it enraged some of the people. They were so angry, they dragged some of the disciples from their homes and into the streets. The anger they felt was their pride. The Gospel shines a light on man’s inability to save himself and on his lack of righteousness. This enrages some people.

The Gospel changes people.

“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also...”

- When Jason and the others were dragged into the street, they were accused of turning the world upside down along with Paul and Silas. They had preached the Gospel and it had changed people.
- The Gospel changes lives and this change then changes the world. For the people angered by the Gospel, it felt like the world had been turned upside down, but in truth, the world is made right when people are changed by the Gospel. The Gospel has the power to make sinful people new and to turn the world upside down for the glory of God.

THE GOSPEL HAS THE POWER TO TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

BIG IDEA #1: THE GOSPEL PROCLAIMS THE KINGSHIP OF JESUS.¹

[THIS]

In Acts 17:1-9, Paul and Silas share the Gospel in Thessalonica. They went to the synagogue to teach and reason with the Jews who were there, spending three days doing so. During their time there, they proclaimed Jesus as King and the Son of God. The Gospel declares Jesus as the true King of the world. It reveals Him as the Son of God and the Savior of the world. This truth is good news to those who receive in faith and repentance. To those who reject it, it is foolishness. As Paul, Silas, and the other disciples traveled, spreading the Gospel, they proclaimed that Jesus is the true King, not Caesar. This angered many people who really did not want to acknowledge their own sinfulness. They also did not want to bow down to Jesus as their King. To believe the Gospel, one must believe that Jesus is Lord of all and the only Savior. When one believes this, we are submitting and surrendering to God's desires over our own.

[THEREFORE]

What other kings or king-like figures do we worship instead of worshipping Jesus as King?

We often worship kings of our making. We turn to idols or other things made by human hands and worship them, giving them our time and attention. Idol worship has been an issue for man from the beginning of our fall. Acts 17:23, Colossians 2:18, and Romans 1:23 show us the futility of idol worship and the natural tendency of man to turn to idols, turning almost anything, even ourselves, into the king of our lives.

[THIS]

When the Gospel is proclaimed, the kingship of Jesus is made known in all the world. Paul and Silas did not just tell people that Jesus came, lived a perfect life, and died for them. They declared that He is the Christ. By proclaiming to the people around them that Jesus is the Christ, they were pronouncing to them that Jesus is the one true King. To know Jesus and believe His Gospel is to know Him as King of all things. To trust Him as Savior is to make Him the King of our lives. In Acts 17:1-9, the Jews were jealous accused Jason and the others of turning the world upside down. What is actually true is that they were revealing the right truth about the world. Earthly rulers and kings are not the true authorities of Jesus' creation. He is the right only King, and He has the right to reign and rule in every person's life and heart.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it impossible to see Jesus as Savior without knowing Him as the King of our lives?

Ephesians 1:20-23 reminds us that God raised Jesus to life and seated Him at His right hand in heaven. Not only that, but God the Father placed all things under Jesus' rule and authority. Knowing Jesus as our Savior requires our submission to Him to have our sins forgiven and it also means that we submit to this rule and authority that has been given to Him by the Father. It also means that we live on this earth fulfilling our purpose by seeking His kingdom first.

Since the Gospel proclaims Jesus' kingship, why is it necessary to tell others that Jesus is Savior and King?

In Acts 17:1-9, Paul and Silas proclaimed the truth about Jesus. They did not hide any part of it even though it caused them trouble. It even caused the other disciples trouble. It is important to tell the whole truth about Jesus and not to water it down. We must tell others that Jesus is their Savior and He is their King.

1. Acts 17:7: *The Gospel declares Jesus is King and proclaims His kingdom.*

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BIG IDEA #2: SOME ARE PERSUADED BY THE GOSPEL.²

[THIS]

As Paul and Silas journey to share the Gospel, some of the people with whom they shared the truth were persuaded. These people believed the Gospel and joined with Paul and Silas to worship Jesus as the Savior and King. These people were made up of Jews, devout Greeks, and many women also. The Gospel is powerful and works in the hearts of those God is calling to Himself. It transforms lives and opens blind eyes to the truth. Because Paul and Silas were bold to share the truth of Jesus, these people heard it and believed. They no longer walked in darkness. Instead, they began to live a new life in Christ as redeemed people. They turned away from the lie they had been believing and believed the truth. The Gospel is powerful enough to turn even the most ardently opposed person in their opposition to God.

[THEREFORE]

Read Acts 17:1-4. How does the Gospel persuade people to turn from their sin to new life in Christ?

The Holy Spirit works in people's hearts to reveal truth to them. When a person hears the Gospel, the power of the Holy Spirit at work in them guides them to believe the Gospel. This means they no longer believe the lies of the ruler of this world; instead, they believe the truth.

What will keep some people from being persuaded by the Gospel?

Not everyone who hears the Gospel will be persuaded by it. Some will perish rejecting Jesus. Romans 10:16a and Galatians 5:4 reminds us that this is true. There will be some who refuse to believe the truth of the Gospel. Instead, they will reject what is true and continue to believe the lies of this world.

[THIS]

When we follow the example of Paul and Silas in sharing the Gospel with others, it will persuade people also. We will see people turn from the darkness of this world to the light of Jesus. Just as the Jews and Greeks were persuaded in Thessalonica, people around us will be persuaded, too. Often, we don't trust in the power of the Gospel to persuade people, so we do not share the truth with others. We just assume that they aren't going to believe it. Paul and Silas did not live this way. Instead, they lived believing in the power of the Gospel, and they shared the truth with everyone. Those who believed were given new life and those who did not believe faced eternal death. Our concern cannot be people's response. Instead, we must know and trust that the Gospel will persuade some and we must live in that truth.

[THEREFORE]

How has doubt in the power of the Gospel to persuade others kept you from sharing the truth with lost people in your life?

Many things keep us from sharing the truth with others. Fear, apathy, and doubt. We doubt that others will believe it. We presume their rejection before we even give them a chance to hear it. Romans 1:16-17 reminds us that the Gospel is the power of God for salvation. It is powerful and we can and should trust its work in people's hearts. It is not our job to convince people of the truth; it is in the power of the Holy Spirit that people believe. We do not have to trust in the power of our persuasive abilities.

2. Acts 17:2-4: As Paul and Silas declared the Gospel, many believed it and were redeemed.

THE GOSPEL HAS THE POWER TO TURN THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN

BIG IDEA #3: SOME ARE DISTURBED BY THE GOSPEL.³

[THIS]

Acts 17:8 shows us that not everyone who heard the Gospel believed it. Not everyone who heard it was persuaded. Some who heard it were angered and disturbed by it. They were so angry and disturbed, Acts 17:6-7 tells us they dragged Jason and some of the other disciples out of their house and brought them before the city authorities to accuse them. The Gospel is powerful and works in everyone's heart. People either believe it or reject it. No one is apathetic to it, and no one is untouched by it. People respond to the Gospel in some way. When the people in Thessalonica heard the Gospel, some of them rejected it and were disturbed that others accepted it. They moved to stop the spread of the Gospel. This is not to be unexpected. Jesus promised that persecution would come to those who spread His Gospel in the world. He promised that people would reject it and persecute those who shared the truth.

[THEREFORE]

What is offensive about the Gospel to those who are disturbed by it?

Matthew 10:22 reminds us that the Gospel brings persecution to those who spread it. Those who reject it are offended by it because it seems like folly, or foolishness to them. They are prideful and find it to be foolish. 1 Corinthians 1:18 and 1 Peter 2:7-8 also remind us that it is folly to those who reject it. They believe they are wiser than God and see themselves as above God, as Lord over their own lives.

[THIS]

Knowing Christ and following Him means that we spread His Gospel no matter how disturbing it is to others. We, like Paul, Silas, and the other disciples, choose to tell others the truth no matter what. Just as Jason and the other disciples did not deny the truth of the Gospel because they were dragged before the city authorities, we should not deny the truth of the Gospel when we are persecuted. Instead, we should know and expect people to be find it offensive. We should know that there will be times when we share the Gospel and people will be disturbed by what we say. Instead of expecting everyone to accept what we say, we should know that some people will be angered by the truth and others will find us foolish. As we live in this understanding, we can share the Gospel in any circumstance, knowing that it is the power of God for salvation to all who believe.

[THEREFORE]

What are some thoughts and ideas that keep you from sharing the Gospel with those you fear will be disturbed by the truth?

Romans 10:13-14 shows us the progression of the spread of the Gospel. A person speaks the Gospel and people hear it. Those who hear it either believe it and are redeemed or they reject it and are condemned. When we believe that our efforts to share are futile, or we believe that others will not listen to us out of a fear we will offend, we will not share.

What should be our response when someone is disturbed by the Gospel we proclaim?

When we read the story of Paul, Silas, Jason, and the other disciples in Acts 17, we are given an example to follow. Though people were disturbed by the Gospel, these men did not stop proclaiming the truth. They truly believed the Gospel saved people from their sin and because of their faith in the Gospel, they continued sharing in spite of the disturbance it caused at times.

3. Acts 17:8: *Some of the people in the city were angry and disturbed by the Gospel and persecuted the disciples.*