

Slide 1



Turning the World Upside Down
Acts 17:1-6
517 My Faith Looks Up to Thee
572 Give of Your Best to the Master

Slide 2



Please open you bibles... this morning...

I'm sure... there is some word... or phrase... you will want to underline... for future study...

Some point... or reference... you will want to record... as the Spirit speaks... to our hearts this morning... through His word.

It could easily be said that Jesus... rocked the boat... upset the apple cart... challenged the status quo... especially of the... Religious leaders of his day

Certainly... the disciples walked in his steps... they... as was said by... their enemies in Thessalonica... Were about the Lords commission... Of "turning the world upside down"

1Co 1:27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

When many... meet Jesus... for the first time... It turns their world upside down... his ideas... his ways... his call to discipleship...

Are so radical... and world shattering... because in many ways... they run not only counter culture... against the grain... of most everything we've been taught

But against our very nature... God wants to... needs to... Turn Our World Upside Down... so we can finally... see things right side up

How's your world been?

Has it been smooth sailing?

Sometimes... we rock our own world... cause our own problems

Sometimes... we avoid the rough seas... and stay anchored down... in the calm harbors... of our own creation...

But to get to the other shore... we have to set sail... by faith onto turbulent waters... trusting that God... will make us walk on water

My world... was been upside down... a lot lately...
Sometimes the world... gets spinning... seemingly out of control

We just want to say... Just let me off... this not so “merry” – go – round

But in those... quite times... when it’s just me... and the Lord

I recognize... that if I’d simply let Him... He’s trying to... set my world aright

Have you ever... as a parent said something... you know is right... to your children.... just to hear that... still small voice say

Yeah! That right... are “you” listening to you own advice? ... that’s what it’s like often to preach

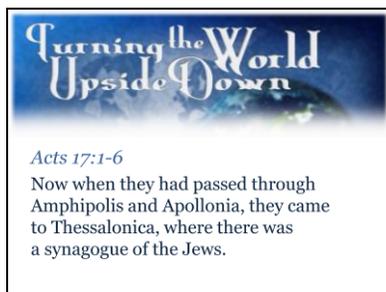
So... I hope you... will gain something... out of my... lecture in front of the mirror

Today I want to... look at an element of discipleship... illustrated in the... lives and ministry of Paul and Silas

So that by... their example... we might just gain... a little insight into... this life changing adventure... called following Jesus

Our text starts... in Acts 17:1... with these words:

Slide 3



Amphi – “around” ... like Amphitheater... and Polis – “City” From which... we derive the word Police... those who protect the city...

So named... because the river... Strymon split and flowed... around on both sides... of the city.

Apollonia – meaning belonging... to Apollo... the Greek god of light and the sun... the son of Zeus and Leto... twin sister of Artemis... goddess of the moon

Then... “they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.”

Note how they... Paul and Silas... simply passed through...
Sometimes there are... places in life...
God has no intentions... for us to stop

Talk about... turning ones world upside down...

Paul and Silas... had just left Philippi...

where they had been... “beaten with many strips” ...
Then traveling about... 100 miles away... probably on foot...

They came to Thessalonica... only to encounter... more opposition and threats... to life and limb

It was perilous... even life threatening... just to be a believer... in those days... and even more so... to be a preacher... of the truth of Jesus

How different today... when we worry about... stepping on someone’s toes... or endangering a relationship... with a friend... family member... or co-worker

Paul and Silas... both had had... their world turned upside Down

By encountering Jesus... it was earth shattering... life changing... they would never... be the same

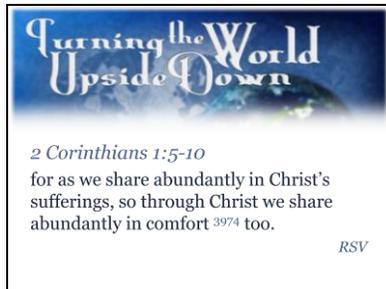
To Paul and Silas... sharing the transformational “good news”... was worth risking... their very lives for

They were... turning the world upside down...

Because that’s what... Jesus does inside His believers... turns their world upside down... for the better

Look at Paul’s word’s... to the Corinthian believers:

Slide 4



What was that joy? It was you and me... in heaven with Him
In other words... It was worth it

Paul says... in His experience... so though Christ... we also share... abundantly in comfort too.
Comfort... 3974 par-ak-lay-sis... akin to par-ak'-lay-tos... the comforter... Christ promised

We share... How Much?

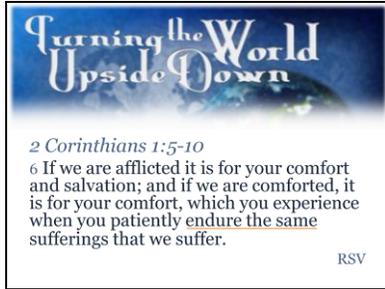
Abundantly... in Christ’s suffering...

Christ says Paul... Heb 12:2 “...for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame...”

The word means... we share abundantly in... drawing alongside... Christ or He us... through the abiding presence of... His par-ak'-lay-tos

Paul continues

Slide 5



rather than... to be upset... to take comfort... because he... understood Why... and counted the cost

Remember how... they sang in prison... after their unjust beating?

Remember the results... how it literally... rocked the world... of the Jailer and His family... with eternal consequences

Paul and Silas... had learned to... trust God explicitly... So... they could patiently...

If we are afflicted... it is for your comfort and salvation

Paul had a... heavenly vantage point... from which he... viewed his afflictions... That allowed him...

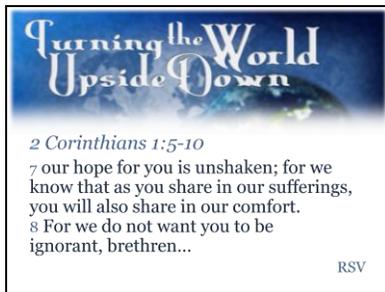
endure the sufferings... because of their vantage point

Their... other world perspective... that set the upside down things here... In a right side up... heavenly perspective... of trust and obedience... to a God of love

Notice how Paul... bids his readers... to have the same perspective... and more the... same sufferings... for the sake of the Christ

He continues:

Slide 6



As you... Paul's spiritual offspring... share in our suffering... you also share... in our comfort

How do you... deal with suffering... if you're like me you avoid it... it's not something... we usually... willfully share in.

But when the... cause is worth it... take

As you share... in our sufferings... you will also share... in our comfort

As we... Paul says... share in Christ suffering... so we share... in His comfort

Child rearing for example... It's not always pleasant... In fact sometimes... it can be the source... of downright physical... and emotional suffering...

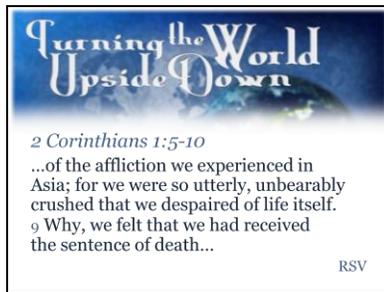
Yet we take solace... In the fact... that in love... we willingly sacrificed... time... energy... finances... investing in life... comfort... and joy

Such was Paul's... heavenly perspective... for all the children... of God around him

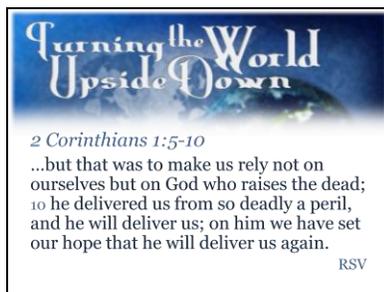
For we do not... want you to be... ignorant, brethren:

And as a... spiritual father... and brother in Christ... he wrote –

Slide 7



Slide 8



What turns your... world upside down?

What gets your goat... Ruins your day... Sets you off?

Why do those things... turn our world upside down?

Attitude... do you think... Paul liked to suffer?
I'm sure... that he didn't... in fact at times... in Acts... we see him... leaving a place
Such as here... in Thessalonica... to avoid trouble

From the day... he first met Christ... on the Damascus road... until he died... at the hands of... a Roman executioner... for being a Christian.

Attitude...

But what was... Paul's attitude toward... the suffering he received?

It's a choice... The bad things... that happen in our lives...

"Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation"

The illnesses... that befall us... or those we love... the way others treat us... The bad choices... of others that affect us... our reaction is a choice... how I choose to think... how I choose to respond... is a choice...

To Paul... the mission was everything... spreading the good news... of how Christ... had died for all men... drove Paul

And I think... that our response choice...

is based strongly... on our view of God... the meaning of life.... and his purposes for us

How did... Paul and Silas... choose to react... to what happened to them...

It might have... been easy to give up... or to blame God... for their trials... but they didn't... Why not?

Primarily... I think because... they viewed the gospel... in light of the Great Controversy

Spreading the message of hope to a dying world... everyone around them was in the war weather they knew it or not

Just like everyone we meet today everywhere we go

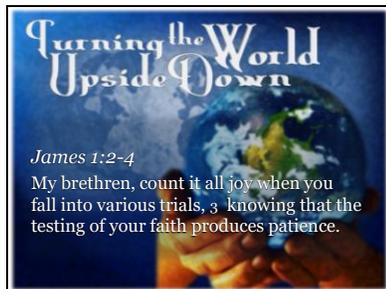
Jesus had... turned Paul's world upside down... everything he thought was right... the things he put his trust in... he found to be worthless... void

So when he realized the truth... that set him free... he set off to turn the world around him upside down too.

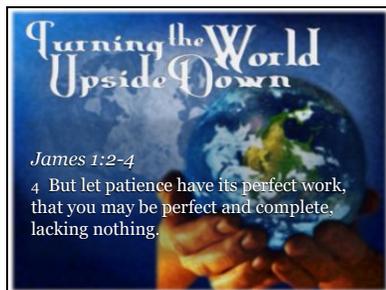
And Jesus... continued to Turn their world upside down... to make them... rely not on themselves... but on God

James had a similar experience:

Slide 9



Slide 10



“Let”... indicates that... the choice is ours

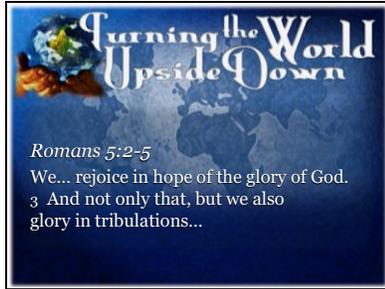
We either... let the trouble... perform its perfect work

Or we avoid it... or seek to lesson it... and reap... an imperfect work

Thus we as Christians... are not perfected... complete... and lacking

Paul... speaks similarly... from his experience:

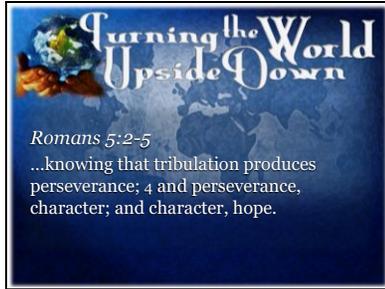
Slide 11



Glory in tribulation?

Why?

Slide 12



Paul understood... that if he were...
totally dedicated to God... and working
in... service to Him

That the things... that befell him...
would result in... making a stronger
servant... so he could therefore... glory
in tribulation

He ends this verse saying... as you may
know:

Slide 13



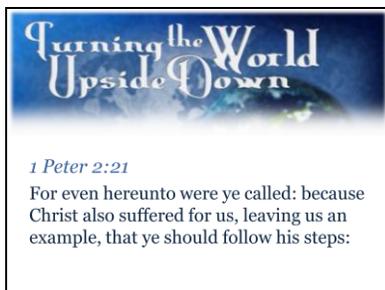
It was... the Love of God... poured out...
in the heart... by the Holy Spirit...

That was at the root... of Paul's attitude
and reaction...

To the things... that befell him... and he
was willing... to suffer...

Like Peter says:

Slide 14



Remember what... Paul said to the
Corinthians... that the afflictions they
suffered... "was to make us... rely not
on ourselves... but on God who raises
the dead... he delivered us... from so
deadly a peril... and he will deliver us...
on him we have... set our hope... that
he will deliver us again."

That was what drove them... trust...
experience... and the certain... love of
God

Christ's... suffering and dying... for them was... the story worth suffering... and even dying for

Christ dying for me... should mold me... change me... motivate and inspire me... to action

Making me willing... if need be... in God divine providences... to suffer for Him... because of... what He did for me

But... in our culture today... sharing the gospel... is not life threatening... like it was... for the apostles

Or the other Christians... or the Martyrs... so why don't we do it more? Why aren't we... more bold... more active?

Is it because... our culture is not... antagonistic against Christianity... or is it deeper?

Could it be... that we lack... the driving motivation... that actuated Christ... Paul and the others...

Is it worth it?....

Is Christ's sacrifice for us real to us?

What turns... your world upside down?

Where is your focus... What gets you best energies... When things happen... do you see them... in the context... of a spiritual battle?

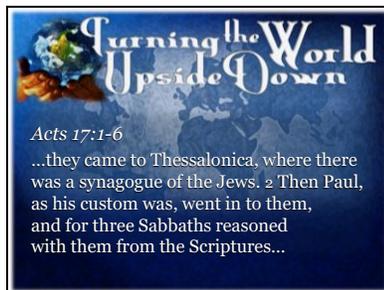
One that Christ... has already won?

Are we so self-focused... do we spend... so much time... on the mundane... routine... business...

That we have... little time to do... what's most important?

Back to Acts

Slide 15



And as they did... we will meet... with opposition... stubbornness... unwillingness to listen and learn...

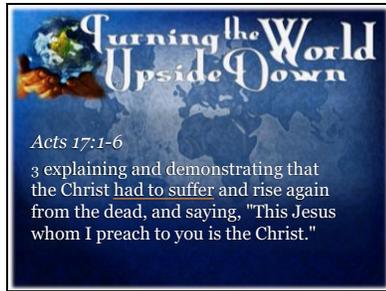
The world is... full of opportunity... This shouldn't surprise... or discourage us!

They went were... they would most likely... to find those... who should be... most open... because of their foreknowledge

God's commission... is to... Turn your world upside down

How?

Just like they did:



In today's world... its still the same... if we share... the truth of the scriptures... some will believe... and some will not... And a lot of times... it will be those... who should know better... that will oppose the truth

But some will not...
What makes the difference?...

First it describes... the Greeks who believed... as devout...

And the women... as leading woman... often it is harder to persuade men... Perhaps there was... something macho... about being right... and not conceding... appearing to loose... in Paul's day too

Notice also... that it uses the... descriptive terms... "a great multitude"... and "not a few"

Paul's presentation... of the bible truth... in Christ was persuasive... for two reasons.

Vs. 4 And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas.

Vs. 5 But the Jews who were not persuaded...

First Paul knew his Bible... so that he could explain... the truth to others... but equally... if not more importantly

He was connected... to the Holy Spirit... a cursory review of the stories... throughout the book of Acts....

Will reveal... right from the onset... that the success of the gospel... was preceded by devotion... consecration... and prayer.

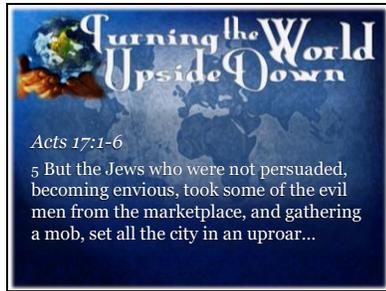
If we want... to be motivated... to work for Christ... we must have... a burning love response... for the gift of eternal life and...

If we want... to be successful... in sharing the gospel message... of God's love... we must know... His word and be... connected to him... through prayer

The alternative is... to be imperfect... incomplete... and lacking

Verse 5 says:

Slide 17



I see... in the events of the world... and in the call to consecration... and revival... a call from the Spirit... to get serious

Perhaps you've felt it?... there is a danger though... a great danger!... and that danger is...

Not that we will be persecuted... but that we won't... because we are... asleep at the wheel

I've felt the call... to get closer to Christ... than I have ever been before...

I've been praying... for a renewed... deepening for the salvation of others... and a greater willingness... to be spent... in service to Christ.

This was the root... of Paul's physical afflictions... for the great commission

They ...attacked the house of Jason... one who had... learned from... Paul's example and message... and sought to bring them... out to the people.

I've also asked... for a changed attitude... away from the... creature comforts of this culture... and new eyes... that view the tribulations... of life as Paul did

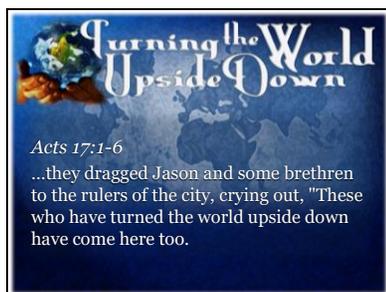
Perhaps... you have felt the same... urging of the Spirit?

Don't dampen the flame... draw closer to Christ... as Paul counseled the Corinthians:

"our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort. "

Look at this testimony:

Slide 18



The verse starts out... "But when they did not find them..."

This time Paul and Silas... had fled the scene...

We don't always... have to put ourselves... in affliction... reasoning that this... is where God wants us... We are to be wise... as serpents and harmless as doves

But my problem... is the exact

opposite... I avoid suffering... to the peril of the gospel... and I fear too... my own soul

What a testimony... from their enemies... they meant it as slander

Would others say... this about us... concerning our Christianity?

That we... Turn the World Upside Down... turn it on its head... for Christ

This is... what we should... be doing in our community

But before we can... turn the world upside down... we need to let God... do the same in our world

These two ideas... are so intricately woven

Our own experience... with Christ... How much we... have let him... upset our apple cart... and turn our world upside down

How connected... we are to Him... and how much... we are about His business

And then... how we respond... based on our focus...

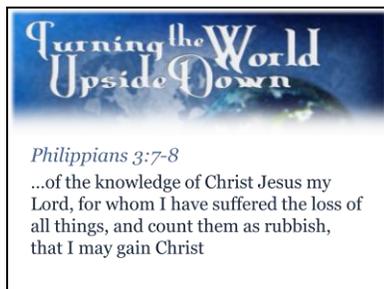
Determines... how dedicated we are... to working for Christ... in His commissioned task... of Turning the World Upside Down... around us

Let's end... with Paul's words... to the another set of disciples... those in Philippi:

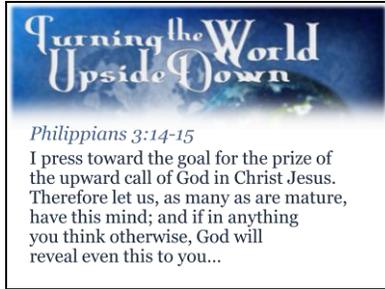
Slide 19



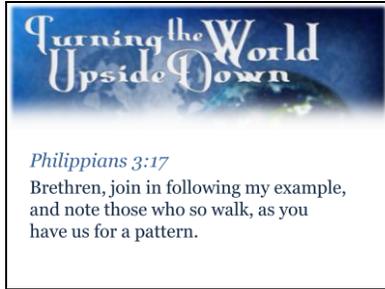
Slide 20



Slide 21



Slide 22



My prayer... for our church here... is that we might be... counted worthy... to have men accuse us... for Christ sake

Of being the ones who... came out of their shell... and turned... at least our corner... of the world upside down

Slide 23



572 Give of Your Best to the Master

I have heard your call and I want to be closer to You
Consecrate me to Thy will and service
I'll Commune with you in Prayer