



The Acts of the Spirit  
FLIPPING THE GREEK WORLD  
UPSIDE-DOWN

# ACTS 17:1-9

"THE WORLD-TURNERS"

AUGUST 11, 2024

## SUMMARY

This week, we witnessed a familiar scene. Paul arrives in a Roman city, preaching and explaining the Gospel, and droves of people (Jew and Greek) respond in faith. This upsets the status quo, causing Greek and Jewish authorities to become angry and jealous and force Paul out of town.

Wash, Rinse, and Repeat.

Pastor Joey explained that this message upset both the Jewish and the Greek world. No matter where it went and who it upset, the authorities of the day always responded with anger and jealousy. The usurping King Jesus was taking over their world at a rapid speed and upsetting the peace and prosperity of the Jews and Rome's power structures. King Jesus was turning an upside-down world right side up again.

Despite the opposition, everyday Greeks rejoiced at the good news of Jesus and turned to him in faith. These formerly pagan citizens of Rome left their worship of idols and Greek gods to follow King Jesus. Rejecting their lives of stoicism, hedonism, paganism, and nationalism, they ran to lives of freedom and hope in Christ. The gospel was spreading to the ends of the earth! Let's investigate why this message is so upsetting to our world and what it means for our lives today.

## DISCUSSION

### Read the text: Acts 17:1-9

- What jumped out to you from the text?

The book of Acts has a similar trend:

- Paul Arrives to preach the Gospel
- Many people come to Christ
- Jewish and/or Roman leaders become Angry and Jealous
- They use violence to suppress the message of the Gospel
- Paul leaves town to visit another city, leaving behind a fledgling church.



*This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.*

*Group facilitator: Please feel empowered to use only the questions that are helpful for the context of your group.*



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- What about the ancient world caused this pattern to occur repeatedly?
- The authorities had the most to lose when the Gospel came to town. Why did the Jewish and Greek leaders feel that the message of Jesus threatened their power, peace, and prosperity?
- What was it that kept them from being able to accept the good news with gladness?
- What similarities or differences do you see today in our culture and churches?

The Gospel first turned the Jewish world upside down, then the Greek. But it was the Greeks who saw the most fruit. Every day, Greeks radically upended their lives of hedonism, stoicism, paganism, and nationalism to follow King Jesus. In him, they found rest for their weary souls and freedom from the flesh.

- What can we assume was the outcome in people's lives for each of the following ancient worldviews:
  - Hedonism (Pursuing meaning in the midst of purposelessness by indulging in pleasure)?
  - Stoicism (Pursuing inner peace in the midst of suffering by practicing self-mastery)?
  - Paganism (Pursuing a sense of material confidence in the midst of uncertainty by appeasing the gods with sacrifice)?
  - Nationalism (Pursuing a sense of safety and security in the midst of a violent society by supporting those in power)?
- Where do you see these in our culture today?
- Honestly, which one is most tempting to you?
- What answer does the Gospel give to each of these worldviews?

Pastor Joey challenged us to take stock of our own lives. If we want the Gospel to turn right-side up our lives, communities, and world, are we willing to let go of our control over our personal kingdoms and receive the good news of Jesus' kingdom?

- What is your big takeaway from this text today?
- What is one thing you want to do personally to apply for it?

**Pray**