

embodied in the Roman imperial system was not won by seizing the levers of power: it was won when the victims knelt down in the Colosseum and prayed in the name of Jesus for the Emperor. The soldiers in Christ's victorious army were not armed with the weapons of this age; they were the martyrs whose robes were washed in blood.

- B. Missional churches need shepherds who nurture the sheep in the Gospel and strengthen them with what it will take to continue in the faith.

IV. The Gospel Revolution and Success (14:24-28)

- A. Success in mission looks like the Gospel being preached, God opening a door of faith, and *worshipping communities* being established.
- B. The church is prepared to face affliction and persecution because they have the Gospel, the Spirit through which they will encourage one another, godly leadership, and because they are worshipers of the Living God.

LIVE THE STORY

We must not only love the Gospel Story, we must begin to live the Gospel Story, indeed, to have the Central Character live in us.

- Do you think the Gospel, when embraced, will produce new values in us? Why? What are the things our culture values?
- Why do you think the Gospel, when faithfully proclaimed and believed will provoke resistance?
- What are some of the things said in our own culture intended to poison peoples' minds against the gospel?
- Based on the Drucker quote (see Intro), how does the Gospel accomplish each piece of what he defines as necessary to cause a revolution? In what ways does the Gospel intend to cause a revolution, and in what ways does it intend not to?
- What do you think about the term "*community of worshipers*" to describe the church? Why are *they* a vital part of mission?
- Why might the churches in Acts 14:21-22 need strengthening?

The Gospel Revolution and Its Resistance

Jerry Cisar — October 12, 2014

Text: Acts 14

Introduction

- A. The Gospel produces a revolution and resistance.

Peter Drucker: *The only possible cause of a revolution is a fundamental and radical change in...[one's] order of values, ... [and] conception of his own nature and his place in the universe and in society.*

- B. Iconium

- C. The Gospel provokes a Resistance that...

- i. ...is unavoidable
- ii. ...has a spiritual source.
- iii. ...highlights our need for the church.
- iv. ...is part of a successful mission.

I. The Gospel Revolution and Resistance (14:1-7)

- A. While the Gospel seed is being planted in fertile Iconium, another seed is being planted too. (Matthew 13:24-30)

- B. The gospel message when believed produces a fundamental and radical change.

- C. Opposition to the Gospel begins with false ideas – lies.

- i. Act 13:45; 14:2
- ii. There are spiritual forces behind these lies.

a) Luke 8:11-12

b) 2 Corinthians 4:4

D. Paul and Barnabas resisted the lies by boldly proclaiming Gospel truth. (14:3)

➤ 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

E. Jesus engaged the opposition testifying to the Gospel, giving signs and wonders.

F. The Gospel divided the city! (4)

II. The Gospel Revolution and Worship (14:8-20)

A. The healing of the lame man and the scene of worshipping Paul and Barnabas are two parts of one event.

i. Why do they call them Zeus and Hermes?

ii. Paul and Barnabas tear their clothes. (14)

B. Paul begins his Gospel presentation by distinguishing the true God from idols. (15-17)

i. The good news includes a call to turn from vain and meaningless idols to worship the living God who made heaven and earth and everything.

ii. The Gospel gets to the heart of the problem in man. *we reject the worship of God.* (Romans 1:18-32)

C. Similarities to other scenes in Acts.

a) Acts 3; Acts 9:32-35

b) Luke 5:24

D. Salvation is ultimately designed to raise all of us up from our worship idols and transform us into worshipers of God.

i. Luke 14:34

ii. 1 John 3:13

The revolution that the Gospel produces begins in the heart and it is a revolution of values – of worship – and therefore it “touches the nerve” of unbelievers.

III. The Gospel Revolution and Endurance (14:21-23)

A. The Great Commission is not simply getting decisions but is making disciples.

i. Worship is this the goal of mission, so this *community of worshipers* is never merely a means to an end.

ii. This *community of worshipers* requires strengthening in their souls.

a) Jesus told us we would have afflictions.(John 16:33)

b) Our Savior suffered and so will we.

Leslie Newbigin: We have seen many such successful revolutions [political and economic], and we know that in most cases what has happened is simply that the oppressor and the oppressed have exchanged roles. The structure [the value system] is unchanged. The throne is unshaken, only there is a different person occupying it. How is the throne itself to be shaken?...Only by the power of the gospel itself, announced in word and embodied in deed. ...the victory of the Church over the demonic power...