

Christians Turn the World Downside Up

Foreword

We are all sort of familiar with what it means to turn something upside down. In Acts 17, an angry and envious group of Jews hauled Christians before city magistrates with several indictments, the first of which was, "These have turned the world upside down..."

Their accusation was backwards. Christians do not turn the upside of the world down; they turn the downside of the world up...to God.

Paul and Silas were on a missionary journey, leading hundreds to follow Christ. After just two weeks in the Greek city of Thessalonica, they led a multitude of men and women to Christ. Satan immediately rallied an opposition mob who accused Christians of four things:

1. They have turned the rest of the world upside down.
2. They intend to do the same in Thessalonica.
3. They contradict the decrees of Caesar.
4. They claim Jesus is a king.

Fortunately, Christians were not harmed by the mob or the city council. But for safety sake, and the furtherance of the Gospel in new cities, Paul and Silas escaped to another town.

The first indictment above implied that the world's status quo was ideal and good. This was the "upside" the mob referred to, that Christians were tearing down. If they only knew how ideal and good the upside of Christianity was, and how a world of sin is actually the downside of life.

The Days of Noah Were Upside Down

Gen. 6:1-5

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

2 That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

3 And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

4 There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.

5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Jesus also added that in Noah's day, men and women were eating and drinking and marrying right up until Noah entered the Ark and the rain came and took them all away.

Matt. 24:38-39

For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away;

This lack of response to the impending doom of Noah's warning was upside down. It made no sense.

If a watchman had screamed to them that an enemy army was on the horizon, all life would have come to a screeching halt and people would have run screaming to hide or prepare for battle. That would have made sense. That would have been downside up. Responding to Noah's warning would have been downside up. It would have lifted them up from death to life.

Our Days Are Upside Down

We are traumatized by the toll Coronavirus has taken on our world in the last 15 weeks. Nearly 3 million have caught it, and over 200,000 have died. The status quo of our lives has flipped.

But when you think about it...the human race has gotten better during this time, not worse. So actually, we did not flip upside down, we flipped downside up.

Prior to this virus, our world was definitely upside down! It was rife with every opposite to God's intended order of life.

Just as in the days of Noah, before the virus we indulged every imagination of evil continually and lived casually in it as if there was no God, and as if there was no day of accountability to Him.

Most concerning was the world watched love grow cold and hate rage like fire, with no solution to stop it. Nations, ethnicities, the self-righteous, the self-justified, and militant religious factions fanned hate-flames unceasingly.

The love of money grew roots of evil in every imaginable expression of greed. For profit we sold drugs, weapons, women, and children, in organized cartels who annihilate any who compete, or interfere with them. As the frightened masses of victims fled for safety, did they mumble, "But it's the Christians who are turning this world upside down; who are ruining everything."?

Since Corona arrived, we have been so busy battling that evil, we've had no interest indulging any other evil. Miami just set a Coronavirus record, going seven consecutive days without a single murder. That is not upside down...that's downside up...that's bad getting better.

In 2018, the world's top ten cities with the highest murder rate killed a total of 13,424 people. The U.S. was not in that list, but we can't brag. Due to the countless number of cities in our nation, we were guilty of murdering 15,498 that year. When Christians preach love, joy, and peace, how is that upside down? Our message is downside up; it raises people from death to life!

The Ultimate Downside Up

When God looked down from His high vantage point at the world before Corona, what did He see, and what does He see now? I believe He is pleased. But I don't believe a moment of good is all He's looking for.

I believe God is looking for sustained reversal. I believe He is looking for penitent hearts and changed lives; not only to make our world a better place, but to usher a wave of humanity into a glorious eternal future of love, peace, and joy.

People are sensing the truth of how we got too close to the precipice. But do they know how to turn it around? Christians must recognize this once-in-a-generation time, to lovingly guide people through

genuine change that is birthed out of repentance, and leads to the safe harbor of God's love.

This is not a time for people to run back to their old ways and bury the suspicion that we were wrong, and need to find what is right. And this is not a time for Christians to leave the world lost in their attempt to find the long-term right.

Now the world, on so many levels, sees the need for change. They have seen that the way things were, was upside down. And I believe they have seen that the way things have been during the isolation of Corona, is actually the downside up; the way things should be.

I also believe Christians carry the truth for a sustained change in people's lives. Only changed people change the world; but shallow change means shallow results. Through Jesus Christ, hearts are changed deeply, permanently; lives are reborn; people are changed into a new and God-like creation.

This is the message that has in the past, and can still yet today, slow the rush of self-destruction, and usher in perhaps one last generation of good on earth. This is not a time for saints to be silent. Let us look for every opportunity to convert a conversation on Corona, to a conversation on Christ.