

Acts: God on Mission through Paul - Pt. 8
The Gospel always confronts our “idols”
Acts 19:23-41
May 27th, 2018

I. The RECEIVED Gospel TRANSFORMS. (v.23-27)

- A. The WAY of Jesus DISTURBS. (v.23)**
- B. The MESSAGE undermines the SYSTEM. (v.24-27)**

This is an interesting “Paul” text in that Paul is not very visible in it. It’s mostly what is going on because of Paul and the work that he has been doing. It’s making an impact in people’s lives, which in turn is making an impact in the business community of Ephesus. The gospel challenges the way things are...and that can be difficult for people to deal with.

1. In what ways has the gospel changed your life?
2. Is the gospel challenging the status quo of society today? Why or why not?

II. CHALLENGING the IDOLS. (v.26)

- A. QUESTIONING what is NORMAL. (v.25-26)**
- B. The difference between GOOD and ULTIMATE. (v.27)**
- C. There are PERSONAL, CULTURAL, and RELIGIOUS idols. (v.27)**

The gospel upsets the status quo because it challenges the idols...and often we don’t even realize what the idols that we are holding to are. Tim Keller writes that an idol is “Anything in your life that is so central to your life that you cannot have a meaningful life if you lose it.” We don’t like to let those things we hold on to for meaning go.

3. When have you struggled with taking something meant to be good and let it become the place you go for ultimate meaning?
4. What personal, cultural, and religious idols do you see in yourself and the world around you?

III. Our REACTIONS help to REVEAL. (v.27-41; Ps 139:23-24)

- A. FEAR of LOSS. (v.27)**
- B. AROUSING strong EMOTION. (v.28-31)**
- C. CHAOS and CONFUSION. (v.32-34)**

Socrates once said, "An unexamined life is not worth living" Our lives speak volumes. The issue is that far too often we let the voices that are in our actions go by without listening to them. We have the ability to hear what our actions are saying, if we will only that the time to slow down and listen.

5. When have you had a reaction (or an over-reaction) to a loss or a perceived loss? What were you holding on to at that moment that caused this reaction?
6. When has hindsight helped you see the reality underlying some strong emotion that you felt? Was there something there being held as an idol?

IV. DETHRONING the idols in the SELF. (I Jn. 5:21)

- A. DECODE our EMOTIONAL responses. (Prov. 20:5)**
- B. Let GOOD be good and God be ULTIMATE. (Jas. 1:17; Ex 20:2-3)**
- C. Religious PEOPLE develop religious IDOLS. (Is. 1:10-17)**
- D. Seek to love GOD and OTHERS. (Mt. 22:36-40)**

I stole a quote a few weeks ago from someone who said that, "Far too often today our idols are in the self instead of on the shelf." I think we can see that is true, the question becomes how do we identify these idols and then remove them? It's primarily a work of the Holy Spirit in us, but there are some things we can do to keep ourselves open to the Spirit's work.

7. Think of the last time you were really angry. Try to decode that emotional response? What lies beneath it?
8. What are some "religious" idols that plague the church today and how can we begin to let them go?