

**Theme:** The message of the gospel turns lives and worlds upside down. The World of sin and death is overturned through the one who rose from the dead to bring forgiveness and life.

**Background:** The messengers of the gospel have had their share of suffering for sake of the good news.

**Introduction:** Ever found yourself in “hostile territory”? Military service – Work environment – dispute with neighbors? Paul finds himself in hostile territory in Thessalonica

## **I. The Heart of the Gospel (Acts 17:3)**

A. Revealed in the Scriptures – Paul’s 3-fold strategy:

1. Reasoning from the scriptures
  - Root for “dialogue”
2. Explaining
  - Literally “opening”
  - As Jesus did on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:31,32; cf. John 5:39)
3. Proving
  - Giving evidence

B. The necessity of Christ’s suffering

1. In His crucifixion
  - a. Fulfilling the Word of God (Isaiah 53:3-10; Psalm 22)
  - b. The wages of sin?
    - Death (Genesis 2:17)
  - c. The payment for sin?
    - Life for life (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22)
    - Reasoning from the scriptures (Exodus 12)
    - Explaining my debt of sin and Christ’s taking my place; God’s provision for my debt
    - Proving God’s promise/desire to save his people
2. His temptations and sufferings
  - Jesus is identified with humanity
  - Tempted as we are!
  - Suffered as we do (Hebrews 2:10, 17-81; 4:15; 5:8-9)

B. The necessity of His resurrection

1. Reasoned (Psalm 16; 2 Samuel 12:23; Jesus and Jonah in Luke 11:29)
2. Explained
  - Death cannot hold the living God
3. Proved
  - Witnesses to his death, witnesses to his resurrection, the empty tomb

C. The Messiah has come

## II. The Fruit of the Gospel (4)

### A. Persuading some

1. Reasoning from the scriptures
  - a. We are sinners in the sight of God
  - b. God is just, he must punish sin
  - c. God is loving and will not abandon his people
2. Explaining God's plan of deliverance
3. Proving – we are lost apart from the grace of God

### B. Provoking others

1. They could not refute Paul's reasoning
  - They could only deny it
2. They resort to violence

## III. The Power of the Gospel (6)

### A. Over-turning lives

1. Threatening to the Jews
  - a. Righteousness not found in the law?
  - b. A Messiah who isn't just for the Jews?
  - c. The sacrifices are finished, fulfilled?
2. Threatening to us?
  - a. A changed life
  - b. A changed heart
    - New desires
    - New hope
    - New life

### B. Over-turning worlds

1. An "upside down" world
  - Living in rebellion against God
  - Thoughtlessly approaching judgment
2. Setting it "right side up"
  - Life is restored, promised, secured in Jesus
  - Fellowship with God is restored

NOTE: This is no utopia here, but lives can be dramatically changed.

3. Silencing the messengers?
  - The Jews thought the messengers were the challenge

NOTE: The power of the resurrection is not in the messengers – it is in the risen Lord!

**Conclusion:** Jesus will turn your world upside down – to deliver you from what is perishing and give you what is everlasting; Life – Peace – Joy in your loving, saving Lord and King.