

THE POSSIBILITIES

One of the things you quickly recognise when you reflect on the life of the Lord Jesus as you see it laid out for you in the Gospel accounts of His life and ministry is that He simply turned impossibilities into opportunities. One of the most profound statements He would make was simply "*I am the way...*" (John 14:6)

The right side up is knowing Jesus as your Saviour
The right side up is trusting in and following the Scriptures
The right side up is being changed by Jesus
The right side up is confronting the culture.
The right side up is being part of His church
The right side up is one man and one woman in a relationship when he says "I do" and she says "I do" and they do!
The right side up is having a vision of a heaven to win and a vision of a hell to avoid

In this "topsy-turvey" world we live in, that has lost its way, that has got things wrong and out of perspective to turn it upside down is to turn it the right side up ... He is the way.

THE PRINCIPLES

The first sermon Jesus preached is a perfect illustration of how He turned the world upside down - we call it the sermon on the mount (Matthew 5-7) so it was about **attitudes** .. Who succeeds ? Not the pushers or the ones looking out for No 1 BUT "*blessed are the poor in spirit .. theirs is the kingdom*". "*Blessed are the meek*" ... and you discover meekness is not weakness. You discover the power of God's love reaches everyone and it reminds you that in order to turn the world the right side up will take the sacrifice of His life at Calvary. Consequently you have to talk about **actions**. How is salvation obtained "*nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling*". The world would not do it like that -it needs ceremony, you have to earn it, have ritual and so on. Striving for peace through self effort, education, accumulation of things and following various dubious philosophies. It is time to turn the world upside down !

THE PEOPLE.

We are the community of God's kingdom. Each day an opportunity to confront society and its values. To be the alternative "right side up" people.

DPS.

ROCHFORD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Welcome to

CHURCH AT HOME

Sunday 13th June 2021

UPSIDE DOWN

Read through this outline and join with everyone else at 11 am

HYMN MP 77

Christ Triumphant, ever reigning, Saviour, Master, King,
Lord of heaven, our lives sustaining, hear us as we sing.

*Yours the glory and the crown,
The high renown, the eternal name.*

Word incarnate, truth revealing, Son of Man on earth.
Power and majesty concealing by Your humble birth.

Yours the glory

Suffering servant, scorned, ill treated, victim crucified !
Death is through the cross defeated, sinners justified.

Yours the glory ...

Priestly King, enthroned for ever high in heaven above !
Sin and death and hell shall never stifle hymns of love.

Yours the glory ...

So, our hearts and voices raising through the ages long,
Ceaselessly upon You gazing, this shall be our song.

Yours the glory ...

(Rev. Michael Seward)

(It would be good if you said this prayer out aloud)

O God our wonderful, loving Heavenly Father
How good it is to know You are always there for us.

So we worship You afresh today.

Ours is such a troubled world it needs to know You and Your
power Help us Lord through the lives we lead to discover
again the joy of knowing You, living for You and serving You.

AMEN *(You may like to say the Lord's prayer also).*

BIBLE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

UPSIDE DOWN

"these are they who have turned the world upside down"

Acts 17:6

Have you ever tried to stand upside down? You can look and marvel at all the clever gymnastics displayed on our TV screen as part of the Olympics but no one ever stays upside down. So what is the significance of this comment about a group of people who supposedly **"turn the (their) world upside down."**

The setting is Greece and in particular Thessalonica (Salonika today) in the news because of its crippling debts. The kind of place today as a traveller where you click your camera over and over again. At some spots you just stand, read the plaques, check the brochures and guide books. You are swept along and absorbed by the history, geography, culture, the philosophy along with a thousand and one other things that tell the story of the nation. A fabulous place to visit but the rest of the story will demand your attention as you discover that Greece now as then in its past is and was a pagan nation.

Catch up with a couple of men - Paul and Silas - making their way into the capital city of Macedonia (as it was called then). Thessalonica was a quite famous place, a rival to Corinth as a business centre. A "free" city so it could elect its own citizen's assembly, mint its own coins. It had no Roman garrison lodged within the city boundary. The two men rented lodgings, Paul got on with his tent making trade and at weekends spent the time preaching. The results were amazing (see 1 Thessalonians 1). A three week mission saw a lot of people, including some very influential folk, were wonderfully converted.. Luke's phrase *"not a few"* (Acts 17:4,22) is one

way of saying *"it was a big crowd"*. Then watch out ... it all went wrong ! It seemed like all hell had been let loose. The town officials learning that Paul and his entourage had come to town spoke out critically and angrily against them. Then there was a mob, a riot, shouting and cursing, screaming for Paul and Silas, banging and kicking on doors as they tried to find them. When the crowd could not find them they dragged Jason and some of the other brothers down the street. When they reached the City Hall they shouted at the magistrates. ***"Here they are - these are the men who have turned the world upside down"***.

They then added another accusation *"they have another king, called Jesus"* (Acts 17:6,7). The Greek word literally *"another, of a different kind"*. Jesus is unlike the rulers of this world. His weapons are different for He uses truth, love and brings peace . He conquers through the cross, where He gave His life for a world of lost sinners. It is strange how a world that is devoid of hope, peace and has no answers for the here and the hereafter thinks everything is OK and subsequently is the right side up so it is OK.

The move is to legalise cannabis and various legal highs all destroying lives as the individual shouts *"I'm all right -there is nothing wrong with me"* but look at the distress, confusion, chaos it all produces. The secular humanism, the atheistic approach, the woke patterns that want us all to conform to their way of thinking and behaving. Society is ravaged, torn apart by the violence, the drug culture, the breakdown of relationships and constant strife and conflict. Ours is an era/age of distractions and discontent. There is so much noise and confusion. Its music is loud and thunderous, its entertainment explosive, sometimes destructive, perverse and evil.

So you have rebellion, the disruption of people's lives with the angry protests now so frequent and disturbing, all with the inference they are always right and the rest of us are so wrong. Then the issue is that we have to accept that this kind of world is the right side up ! Do you know something when you are in the emergency room at the hospital or sitting at the Crematorium or standing by an open graveside they have nothing to say. So you observe how they fill such sad moments with "pop"/secular songs and emotive poems. They go away to their homes, return frequently to the gravesides, embellish them with so much. The peace and comfort that Jesus gives, that the Gospel message proclaims eludes them because they fail to understand Jesus wants to turn their world the right side up.