

*“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).*

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## WAYS MEN REACTED TO GOSPEL PREACHING

*John Edwards*

On the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2, when Peter preached the crucified Christ, about 3000 “gladly received his word” and were baptized (Acts 2:41).

As Peter and John spake unto the people, the priests, temple captain and the Sadducees “came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand” (Acts 4:1-4).

When the council heard Peter and the other apostles, “they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them” (Acts 5:33).

Certain of the synagogue of the Libertines, and the Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cillicia and of Asia, “suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught

him, and brought him before the council, And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us” (Acts 6:9-14).

When Stephen was preaching, “they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth...they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him...” (Acts 7:54-58).

When Saul preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God, “the Jews took counsel to kill him...And they watched the gates day and night to kill him” (Acts 9:20-24).

When they which were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Lord Jesus, “a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord” (Acts 11:21).

When Paul preached at Antioch, “the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath” (Acts 13:42).

When Paul preached the next sabbath day, the Jews “were filled with envy, and spake

against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming...And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed...But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts” (Acts 13:44-50).

As Paul went into the synagogue of the Jews in Iconium, “a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren” (Acts 14:1-2).

At Lystra, “there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead” (Acts 14:19).

In Acts 16:19-24, “they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off

*their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.”*

As Paul reasoned out of the Scriptures in a synagogue of the Jews in Thessalonica, *“some of them believed and consorted with Paul and Silas; of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people”* (Acts 17:1-5).

The Bereans, *“received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the people”*

(Acts 17:10-13).

At Athens, *“when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter”* (Acts 17:32).

In Ephesus, *“When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”* (Acts 19:5).

Paul went into the synagogue at Ephesus, *“and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus”* (Acts 19:8-10).

When men heard Paul preach against idolatry at Macedonia, *“they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians”* (Acts 19:28).

When the Jews which were of Asia saw Paul in the temple, they *“stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men*

*every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place...And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar”* (Acts 21:27-31).

In Acts 22, *“they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air; The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him”* (vv. 22-24).

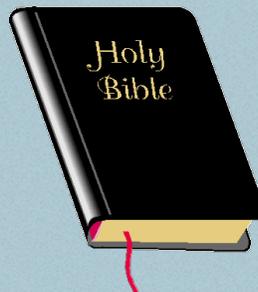
*“And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul”* (Acts 23:12).

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