

- Greetings to all followers of “The Way” of Jesus Christ,

**SCRIPTURE:**

Acts 17:6 (MSG) – Larger reading: Acts 17:1-9

*"These people are out to destroy the world, and now they've shown up on our doorstep, attacking everything we hold dear!"*

**STORY:**

On June 4, 1783 at the market square of a French village of Annonay, not far from Paris, a smoky bonfire on a raised platform was fed by wet straw and old wool rages. Tethered above, straining its lines, was a huge taffeta bag 33 feet in diameter. In the presence of "a respectable assembly and a great many other people," and accompanied by great cheering, the balloon was cut from its moorings and set free to rise majestically into the noon sky. Six thousand feet into the air it went -- the first public ascent of a balloon, the first step in the history of human flight. It came to earth several miles away in a field, where it was promptly attacked by pitchfork-waving peasants and torn to pieces as an instrument of evil!

**OBSERVATION:**

They say it took the church over 150 years to accept the organ. Since the 1970s the church has been struggling ... sometimes successfully, sometimes not so much ... about the use of drums during worship. And the church is being turned upside down ... and many do not like it.

Altars are moved. Preachers don't stand in the pulpit to preach nor do they wear vestments ... not even during communion. And the church is being turned upside down ... and many do not like it.

We've gotten away from the "traditional" hymns, which is disguised language for hymns written in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century. We have gone to what my brother-in-law calls 7/11 hymns – 7 words sung 11 times. And the church is being turned upside down ... and many do not like it.

"I don't believe in change" so the declarations go. And yet the parking lot is filled with modern cars. The attire worn is anything but ancient. The hairstyles are modern. Homes are air-conditioned. Televisions (usually more than one) occupy a place of importance in every home. Microwaves have become something we couldn't live without. And yet, we don't believe in change ... and the church is being turned upside down ... and many do not like it.

Jesus brought change. His disciples brought change. He and they attacked everything that the Jewish leaders held dear. They were turning the world upside down ... and the leaders did not like it.

I'm wondering what we need to turn upside down so that the church of Jesus Christ can move forward? Anything come to mind? Maybe you or me are being called to be a change agent and make it happen? Hmmm, what do you think?

**QUOTE:**

*“Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They're not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can't do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.” – Rob Siltanen*

**PRAYER:**

We know Lord that if we really did what you are calling us to do we wouldn't be popular. We might be asked to leave our church. The preacher might go along, but we honestly doubt it. It will cut against the status quo ... and it will turn everything upside down. But, hey God, Jesus did it and lived ... and we know that we will too. Just help us understand that it is you calling us to do this and not some ego trip that we might be on. Amen

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim

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