

Transforming Daily
“... stirred up the crowds ...”
Acts 17:13

Isn't it amazing that there are people who just can't leave the people of God alone about their faith? What does that say about the people and what does it say about the faith? It is one thing for another religion or false cult to try to proselytize a believer, but it is totally another thing for a group of people just to antagonize what they don't understand. Nevertheless it happened to the early believers and it is happening to the believers of the 21st century church.

I just finished reading an article about three people who walked into a church in California while the services were going on. The choir was singing. They seemed to be looking for someone in the pews, then suddenly turned around and fired several shots into a row of people sitting in a pew. They hit two teenagers. The three ran out and were not caught. What does that say? Were they friends, gang enemies, or rivals over the same girl or territory? Who knows, but they came into the church! The three assailants had no regard for what was going on in the church. They had no regard for God or that local body of believers. They could have had that showdown anywhere, but why at and in the church? A similar story just a few months ago where a man walked into the church and shot and killed the minister while he was preaching. Why? No one knows. But it stirred up the people.

The context that Luke is sharing here in this text has to do with the faith. Some came from Thessalonica to Berea to confront what Paul was preaching. They didn't believe the gospel, and they didn't want him influencing others at Berea to believe it either. It all boils down to the same thing whether gunmen coming into the church to shoot someone they don't like, or a group of people in the church undermining the ministers message. They are envious and jealous of something, or in some cases, just plain wicked.

The church needs to be aware. The church needs to be discerning. While it is true that we ultimately do not wrestle against flesh and blood, just as God uses people to do His will, Satan and his demonic host uses people to do theirs. This calls for the church to step up their praying. It calls for the church to step up their evangelistic outreach. It calls for the church to step up their desire for further discipleship. It calls for the church to take their presence in the world more seriously, and to be of one mind – the mind of Christ. We are to be of one accord, one purpose, following one Lord.

Does any of this concern you? Are you aware that these kinds of things go on from people outside of the church as well as from people inside the church? What are you doing to thwart the efforts of the enemy before it is reported that his people stirred up the crowds.