

# **The Church at Antioch**

# Welcome

- Alright we are gonna try some new things tonight
- As you heard in the announcements, we are still in Acts 11, so I am gonna try not to welcome everyone again for the third time
- As you start clicking or flipping there our big question is “what is the mission of the church? And how is Mission Sent part of that mission?”
- Hopefully you have found your way there, I will pray and we will jump in
- Pray

# Acts 11:19

19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.

# Acts 11:19

- Alright we are going to jump into this with a theological question
- Why do bad things happen to good people?
- Now I know what you are thinking, what does this have to do with what we are reading?
- I want everyone to think about what we just read, these people are leaving their homes, they are scattered, they are traveling why?
- Persecution

# Acts 11:19

- All these people are far away from what they know and believe because they were being persecuted where they were
- Ever since Stephen, these people could not worship the way we can today, so they left
- Now going back to why bad things happen to good people
- First, there is no one righteous, no not one
- Second, to quote Joseph in Genesis 50:20, “ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.”

# Acts 11:19

- Remember we looked at this in depth at the start of Acts
- Jesus is crucified, the disciples run and hide
- Jesus ascends, the disciples hide until the coming of the Spirit
- They get the Spirit, Jesus tells them they will be His witnesses, first in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, then the rest of the world but they never left Jerusalem
- So persecution came and they were scattered, now what we look at as evil Jesus has used to spread His kingdom

# Acts 11:19

- We have to always remember the point of the church is to spread
- Jesus would say in Matthew 28:19-20, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- The church is not meant to stay here, this is not meant to only be our thing
- We aren't the mafia (la cosa nostra), we are meant to be missionaries
- And look, these people are spread out and they are only talking to Jews, again the opposite of what we are called to. But it continues

# Acts 11:20-21

20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.



# Acts 11:20-21

- Alright so how did these radicals grow their church body?
- They preached the Lord Jesus
- What this means, is they weren't out preaching self help
- They weren't out preaching 21 steps to a better you
- They were preaching something like what is found in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

# Acts 11:20-21

- We have talked about this many times before, yes we need to engage in the conversation
- Yes we need to meet people where they are, not preach at them but talk with them
- But at some point, if we are being missional, the conversation has to turn to Jesus
- Again, behavior modification only gets us so far You will only change as long as you are strong enough
- However, Jesus gives new hearts, new desires, it is a new creation, not a new behavior

# Acts 11:22-26

22 The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. 25 So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.”

# Acts 11:22-26

- Alright there is so much to get into here, and if I run out of time we will pick it up next week
- However, I want to discuss the overall of what is happening in this scene from a 50,000 foot view
- Here we have some people who left Jerusalem because of persecution, they were preaching to the Jews and then some started preaching to the greeks
- People start believing in Jesus, because these people are faithful to preach Jesus

# Acts 11:22-26

- This information got back to Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas who is delighted when he gets there, they keep preaching, Barnabas sends for Paul
- They keep preaching and it says a great many people were added to the Lord
- This is what success looks like right here
- If our goal, our mission is to seek and save the lost, then this is what it looks like to be succeeding in this mission
- Now, I do not want us to get hung up on the number, a great many
- Last week we saw if 1 sinner repents all heaven rejoices

# Acts 11:22-26

- So 1 can be a great many
- But look at what is happening here, people are preaching, things are happening and a church grows
- In fact, this church we just saw, Antioch, is going to become the hub for church expansion throughout all the world
- The church in Jerusalem doesn't close, but they never really send out people the way Antioch does.
- In fact, most churches today can trace their lineage back to Antioch in some way

# Acts 11:22-26

- The Ephesians, Corinthians, Philippians, Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Thessalonians, even Mission Sent are direct benefactors of the church at Antioch
- Although Antioch never became this gigantic mega church, this one church had a hand in starting almost all the churches you can think of
- This is why our vision isn't to be the next mega church, our vision is to create opportunities for all disciples to serve those around them, share the gospel of Jesus, and live lives on mission

# Closing

- So as Josh makes his way back up to the stage
- Ask yourself, what is my mission and how am I completing it for the glory of God?
- If you have more in your heart that you are burning to do, we are going to take some time after we sing this last song to discuss it as a group
- To brainstorm, to spur one another on to do good works
- This is going to be new, and exciting for all of us involved
- Pray