

## ***ACTS: The Church in Antioch***

*Acts 11:19-30*

### ***Inclusive Evangelism (v. 19–21)***

- Luke returns to the events of Acts 8 to show what God has been doing to spread the Gospel through others
  - The martyrdom of Stephen led to an outbreak of persecution
    - Which led to Jewish Christians fleeing Jerusalem and settling in Phoenicia, Cyprus, & Cyrene
- At first, these Jewish Christians only preached to other Jews
- But, eventually Jewish Christians from Cyprus & Cyrene began coming to Antioch and shared with Gentiles too
  - Which resulted in a large Gentile Church in Antioch

### ***Barnabus in Antioch (v. 22-26)***

- Like with Peter's account of Cornelius' conversion, the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem wanted to investigate the news of Gentile conversions in Antioch
- So, they sent Barnabus
- He found the Church to be vibrant and growing in their love of Jesus
  - So, he encouraged them to remain purposeful (v. 23)
    - And the Church continued to grow
- He then traveled to Tarsus to find Saul/Paul
  - About 385 miles away
  - Together, they spent a year training up the Church in Antioch
- This is the first place that the name 'Christians' was used to describe followers of Jesus
  - Christian = "Belonging to Christ"
    - Not a self-designation
      - The Church preferred terms like "believers, disciples, brothers"
    - This reflects a separate identity than simply a type of Judaism

### ***Living It Out (v. 27-30)***

- When God revealed through a prophet a coming famine
  - The mostly Gentile Church in Antioch looked for ways to support their Jewish Christian brothers and sisters in Judea
  - They sent an offering to Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabus & Saul

### ***So What?***

- As the Church lived out the mission of Jesus:
  - They lived with purpose
    - Do we do the same?
  - They needed intentional training
    - Are we seeking to grow?
  - They had a genuine concern for the needs of others
    - Do we?

***Meditation Verse:*** Acts 11:17