

CHURCH PLANT IN ANTIOCH

Acts 11:19-26

STRUCTURE

Key-persons: Scattered believers, Barnabas and Saul

Key-location: Antioch

Key-repetitions:

- Message about Jesus was proclaimed: those scattered by the persecution proclaimed Jesus only to the Jews (Ac 11:19); some in Antioch proclaimed Jesus to the Greeks (Ac 11:20); in Antioch, Barnabas helped bring many to the Lord (Ac 11:24); Barnabas and Saul taught great numbers of people (Ac 11:26).
- Facts about Barnabas: he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and faith (Ac 11:24); he arrived in Antioch (Ac 11:23); he encouraged believers (Ac 11:23); he brought Saul to Antioch (Ac 11:25-26); he taught many people (Ac 11:26).

Key-attitudes:

- Jerusalem church's concern when it learned about non-Jewish believers in Antioch.
- Barnabas' goodness.
- Barnabas' joy at seeing God at work.
- Barnabas' desire to have Saul's help.

Initial-situation:

After Pentecost, the number of Jewish believers increased. Saul tried to destroy the church by arresting all the believers in Jesus. Believers scattered from Jerusalem because of the persecution. Saul was converted on the road to Damascus. Saul spent a short time in Jerusalem before returning to his home city of Tarsus.

Initial-problem:

The scattered believers traveled and spoke about Jesus only to Jews. However, some went to Antioch and began telling non-Jewish Greeks about the Lord Jesus.

Final-situation:

For a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church in Antioch and taught many people. The disciples were called "Christians" for the first time at the city of Antioch.

BIBLE STORY

Some of the scattered believers traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking about Jesus only to Jews. However, some of the scattered believers went to Antioch and began telling non-Jewish Greeks the Good News about the Lord Jesus. The Lord was with them and many people believed and turned to the Lord (Ac 10:19-21).

The news about Antioch reached the church in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Barnabas arrived in Antioch and saw evidence that God blessed the people. Barnabas was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord. Many people believed in the Lord (Ac 11:22-24).

Barnabas traveled from Antioch to the city of Tarsus to look for Saul. Barnabas found Saul and brought him back to Antioch. For a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught many people.

The disciples were called "Christians" for the first time in the city of Antioch (Ac 11:25-26).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What happened when the non-Jews heard the gospel in Antioch?
2. How can your church share the gospel with people who normally don't hear the gospel.
3. What kind of man was Barnabas?
4. What happened when Barnabas arrived in Antioch?
5. Why did Barnabas travel to Tarsus?
6. What was the main activity of Barnabas and Saul?
7. What nickname was given to the followers of Jesus at Antioch?
8. What nickname would describe your church?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **A problem that appears to be a serious crisis can become an opportunity for God to act.** The persecuted believers' scattering resulted in the successful evangelism of non-Jews (Ac 11:19-21).
2. **Different approaches should be used to present the gospel to different cultural groups.** Jesus was presented to the non-Jews as the Lord (Ac 11:20), while he was presented to the Jews as the Messiah whom the Jews were waiting for (Ac 2:36; 5:42; 8:5; 9:22). Non-Jewish Christians called Jesus by the title "Lord," while Jewish Christians called him by the title "Christ."

3. **The church should look for someone with spiritual qualifications when it needs someone for a special task.** Barnabas was a good man, and full of the holy Spirit and of faith. He was chosen to visit the Antioch church (Ac 11:24).
4. **People without leadership positions in the church are essential for evangelizing and planting new churches.** Those who began the church in Antioch were laymen (Ac 11:20).
5. **Unnamed and unrecognized people may do great work in advancing God's kingdom.** Those who began the church in Antioch were unnamed people without leadership positions (Ac 11:20).
6. **Mockers may unintentionally proclaim the truth.** In Antioch, non-believers gave believers the nickname "Christians" (Ac 11:26). The nickname was given in ridicule and meant "Christ followers" or "people of Christ's party."

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Pantomime Retelling of the Story:

The storyteller tells the story one time. Then the storyteller:

- Asks for a volunteer to pantomime the story as the storyteller tells it a second time.
- Retells the story while the volunteer pantomimes it.
- Invites a listener to retell the story.
- Asks listeners if the one who retold the story left out or added to the story.