

“Signs of a Spirit-Filled Church”

Acts 11¹⁹⁻³⁰; 13¹⁻³

Introductory Question – Choose one

Q¹ – What is the farthest from home you have ever been? Why were you there?

Q² –

Discussion Questions

- 1) **Read Acts 11:19-30.** Why & how did the gospel make its way to the Jews beyond Jerusalem (v.19)?¹ When and how have you seen God bring good out of adversity?
- 2) Antioch was the third largest city in the Roman empire. Why and how did the gospel make its way to the Greeks there without the apostles?²
- 3) What might the apostles have been thinking and feeling when they found out that the gospel was taking root in Antioch among the Gentiles (v.22)? Why did they send Barnabas there (cf. 8¹⁴)?³
- 4) What did Barnabas discover when he arrived in Antioch, and what did he do as a result (v.23, 25-26)?³
- 5) Who encouraged and affirmed you when you came to faith in Christ (cf. v.23)? Who helped you to grow most when you were a new believer (cf. vv.25-26)?
- 6) Whether adopted by believers in Antioch or invented by their enemies as a term of reproach, Luke tells us that “*the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch*” (v.26)? What other famous first was the church in Antioch responsible for (**read Acts 13¹⁻³**)?⁴
- 7) Acts 11²⁷ is the first mention of the gift of prophecy in Acts. In addition to preaching, teaching, and challenging people with God’s message (Acts 15³²), a prophet like Agabus “through the Spirit” also made a prediction. What did he predict, why did it matter, and how did the believers respond?
- 8) What signs of the Spirit’s work do you see in the church in Antioch? Which of these signs of the Spirit’s work have you seen or experienced in your life/church?
- 9) Which signs of the Spirit’s work would you like to pray you would see/experience in your church?

¹ Acts 6⁸⁻¹⁵ describes the beginnings of the persecution that resulted in Stephen’s death (7⁵⁴⁻⁶⁰) and “a great persecution [that] broke out against the church at Jerusalem” so that “all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria” (8¹).

² Acts 8¹ says that in the “great persecution...all *except the apostles* were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria”.

³ Verse 24 actually begins with the Greek word *hoti* which means “because”, a word that connects Barnabas’s ministry of encouragement (v.23) to his Christian character (v.24) and helps explain his response.

⁴ Antioch was a city with at least four distinct cultural groups (who each lived in their own “quarter”). From the diverse names of the leaders listed in the church at Antioch in Acts 13¹ (Latin^{Lucius}, African^{Niger}, Jewish^{Saul}, Greek), it is evident that the Antioch church was truly multi-cultural not only in its membership but also in its leadership. It was this multi-cultural model in Antioch, rather than the homogeneous model in Jerusalem, that Barnabas and Paul planted in their missionary journeys.