

Original Christians

May 5, 2024 Acts 11:19-30

Sermon Notes:

Diverse

Doctrinally Sound

Doppelgangers

Doers

Sermon Resources:

Opener Questions:

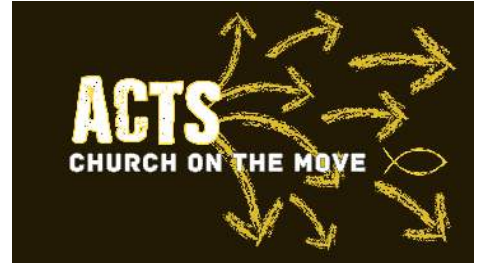
Who is someone you've wanted to be like or emulate?

Share about a time that other Christians have stepped up to help you with a need.

Discussion Questions:

1. What have you been reading in the Bible this past week that is challenging or confirming your understanding of who God is and who you are in Him?

2. The Story so far... review what has happened in the story of Acts thus far by jumping through the major happenings in Acts, starting at the beginning. What are the major themes, characters, and events so far?



3. Read Acts 11:19-30 together. As you consider the story so far and the more recent events told in Acts, you'll find there are shifts and similarities woven into this section, as well as a few surprises. Use your work together in question 2 to tease out the shifts in character, theme, setting as well as the themes/things that have stayed consistent. How do the shifts actually support and further the expansion of the gospel message?

*Vision for the gospel going to all the world remains, characters, location, and understanding continues to shift and align with a more global understanding of Acts 1:8. **Shifts:** in messengers from Saul + Peter to scattered Jerusalem disciples, (Barnabas + Saul come in to support the main theme), location from Jerusalem to Antioch, and understanding spreads from only witnessing to Jews to now include Greeks.*

Theme + vision remains: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8). Others?

4. Look closely at the editorial comments in Acts 11:21, 23-24. How do these comments help illuminate/confirm what is happening/has been happening throughout Acts thus far? What are the markers of the "The Lord's hand" being with them? How does this translate today?

Movements of the Spirit do not contradict the Word and character of God. While we don't get to see the "Holy Spirit come down on them" as clearly as Peter might have, we have signposts - the fruit of the Spirit on display, actions that enact and apply the character of God such as: steadfast love, compassion, mercy, grace, forgiveness, etc. We can test what we see against Scripture, while also remaining humble and teachable, just as these disciples in the early church stayed moldable to the Spirit of God (one ex: only witnessing to Jews to broadening the net to Greeks!).

5. Think critically about what was happening and where it was happening in this passage, with special attention to verse 26. Try to put yourself in the scenario.

- a. What are some of the obstacles you might foresee teaching in this environment? How might you go about teaching the 'majors'?

Remember, Antioch, a large economic and cultural hub of the world in the days of the early church so the diversity within this church would be vast. Some commentators suggest the only thing the church in Antioch would have in common was their belief and faith in Christ.

- b. What are the major tenets you would focus on if you were to try to teach a culturally, ethnically, racially, experientially diverse group to "be a disciple of Jesus"? Make a list of what comes to mind when you hear the words "in the likeness of Christ." What characteristics, attitudes, actions do you think of? How does verse 29 affect this list? Can you identify any growing edges as you seek to walk in step with the Spirit?

Another way to ask this question is, "What does this passage teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?" Use the sermon bullet points as well as your own investigation of this passage + other Scripture to help answer this question. Tease out and trace back the list you make to anchor points in Scripture.

6. There is a beautiful (maybe surprising) reversal towards the end of Acts 11. The 'daughter' church in Antioch hears of an upcoming need and, "each of the disciples, according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brothers and sisters who lived in Judea." (v.29) ... to the the 'mother' church. What has the 'daughter' church learned in her years under Barnabas + Saul's tutelage? How is this shown through what she's doing? What does this short portion of Acts 11 teach you about being a disciple of Jesus and being a 'discipler' of others?

Love for the church at large is on display through the sharing and giving of what the disciples have. The simple fact that they are brother and sisters in Christ catalyzes sacrificial giving. The idea that they are 'owners of nothing and stewards of everything' is an outer working of their love for Christ and each other.

7. Engage with Woodlands in the Word this week by reading Acts 10-14. Next week's sermon passage is Acts 12.

We will be shifting away from weekly sermon based curriculum for the summer (after next week). The summer series in Daniel will begin May 19 and there will be study aids to help you and your group members engage with Scripture this summer! Be on the look out!

Practical Applications:

Dinnertime Discussion: In what ways do you think you are like Jesus? In what ways do you wish you were more like Jesus? Just talk about a couple of specific things!

Practicing Prayer: Be praying for unity (even though we don't have uniformity) at Woodlands. Pray that we would be united around our common mission and beliefs and not divided over culture or politics or other issues.

Developing Disciplines: Are you hungry to learn the Scriptures? How are you interacting with God's word in your day and your week? Will your rhythms shift in the upcoming season change? How so?

Gospel in Everyday Life: Are you accepting of people that are different than you are? Ask God change your heart to welcome the one who is strange to you by respecting diversity while seeking the deeper unity we share in Christ.

Verse for Meditation: Acts 1:8

Service Opportunities: Study Day! May 13th we are also opening up the church to college students to have fun, play games and study for finals. We want to feed them and serve them! If you are interested in providing food or volunteering you can also [sign up here](#) today!

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