

## ACTS – CHURCH ON THE MOVE

(Theme Acts 1:8)

Chapter 11:19-30 Church growth

Now we see in this passage the plan of God moving on –but with one big difference. It was not the apostles or any other leaders but un-named disciples who had fled from the persecution. They came to Antioch which was a pleasure seeking city. They were the ones who ‘preached’ (witnessed) and started the church there, and again crossing boundaries to the Gentiles. The passage has been summarised – ‘a Christian - - shows, grows and gives’.

*Gospel Growth - - v19-21* (might be an idea to look the places up on the map)

v19 Remember it was back in Chapter 8 that Luke records the beginning of the persecution.

What is significant about the different groups these fleeing Christians are ‘talking’ to?

Many of them were going to the Jews –perhaps the easiest ones to reach.(??)

Who are the ones we may go to first of all?

v20 Now some were going to all, especially the Gentiles in that needy City. We do not know if they knew of Peter’s experience with Cornelius and family. What were they preaching?

v21 ‘The Lord’s hand’ - used in the Bible to tell of God’s judgement – see Deut 2:15 7 and 1 Sam5:6/7/9&11 Meditate on Hebrews 10:31

It is used also in blessing (as here in this passage) – see also Nehemiah 2:8 &18

Luke slips in a favourite summary to show the great progress of the gospel. What does this verse tell of their efforts?

*Church Growth - - v 22-26*

v22 Good news –travelling fast –even with much less means of communication that we have.

What keeps us from sharing the gospel in our day in this country with similar effectiveness?

Why do you think the Jerusalem church sent someone out to visit Antioch? Why Barnabas?

v23 ‘saw the evidence’ – refer back to v21 What was his reaction?

What does Barnabas do first? How important is that in nurturing new believers?

v24 Spend a few moments looking at his qualifications. Are these what we would pick out?

Notice –he is soon active. What is the result of his ministry there in the church?

v25 Why does Barnabas do this –when he is engaging in fruitful ministry himself?

v26 What a years ministry! How this must have helped in the growth of the church. Is this another way in which larger churches may help the smaller ones?

What does this section teach us about our priorities in church work?

What does it teach us about reaching others (both individually and from church life)?

Called ‘Christian’ – why? See also Acts 26:28 and 1 Peter 4v16

*Church Care - - v27-30*

As we come to this last section – let us ask the question –How can Christ-people (Christians) indulge in the same standards of living as those around them, while our brothers and sisters in Christ are destitute – or in great need? See Galatians 6:10

v27 ‘prophets’ seen as itinerant workers in the early church –both foretelling and forth telling.

Cf. Acts 2:17 - -many of them could have been explaining (like Peter did) how OT prophecies were being fulfilled and worked out in the early church.

v28 Luke shows how the prophecy was true and fulfilled.

v29 How much relief did they send? How much does God require of us?

What is so impressive about the people’s reaction to the news of the famine? Remember, they would have known very little of their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem.

v30 As Barnabas and Saul (Paul) get back to Jerusalem with news of the Church in Antioch, how it much have cheered their hearts when the gift was presented to them.

See also the record of the Macedonian church – 2Corinthians 8:1-7

DJ

PRAYER POINTS:

Pray for boldness to speak the Gospel – and to be an encourager.

Good Friday tea and service. Easter Services. The opportunities to share the gospel.

The Pastors, Tom and Gary in their teaching ministry.