

CP - 1/22/23

Acts 11:19–30 - Gospel Advance: Faithfulness, Encouragement, and Generosity

Sermon Outline:

This passage presents a “series of firsts” in Acts:

- *First wide-scale Gentile evangelism (11:20)
- *First use of the term “Christian” (11:26)
- *First mention of prophets in the church (11:27)
- *First financial gifts from one church to another (11:29)
- *First reference of church elders (11:30)

This passage picks back up from 8:4. 8:5–11:18 is an aside that shows the struggle and God’s work for the early church to share with the Gentiles.

- *Jewish church (Acts 1–7)
- *Samaritan church (Acts 8)
- *Gentile church (Acts 10)
- *Now a church of Jews and Gentiles at Antioch (Acts 11)

1. The anonymous faithfully shared the Gospel. (11:19–21)

- *The church had only gone as far north as Caesarea (70 miles from Jerusalem).
- *Unnamed Jewish believers reached across cultural barriers with the Gospel.
- *God delights to use those who don’t seek recognition but simply serve Him.
- *Who am I engaging with the Gospel? Whose favor am I seeking?

2. The “son of encouragement” exhorted new believers & shared the work with Saul. (11:22–26)

- *This man is Joseph (Barnabas) from Acts 4:36–37, 9:26–27.
- *He celebrated (full of joy) God’s work and exhorted God’s people.
- *All that he did came from who he was. Character precedes action!
- *He was a team player. Like those in 11:20, he was not self-seeking.
- *Who am I encouraging to be faithful to the Lord? What is my reputation?

3. The congregation was sensitive to the Spirit & generous to Christ’s people. (11:27–30)

- *The church at Antioch submitted to the word of Scripture & voice of the Spirit.
- *Their sensitivity produced generosity to help another local church.
- *Am I sensitive to the Holy Spirit? Am I obedient?

***The different ministries of 11:19–30: Spirit-empowered evangelism, Spirit-empowered encouragement, Spirit-empowered teamwork & teaching, Spirit-empowered prophecy, Spirit-empowered generosity

1 Corinthians 12:4–11: “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.” (12:11)

Small Group Questions:

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you from the Bible passage and sermon?
2. What are some reasons why the author Luke branches off in Acts 8:4–11:18 before sharing the story at Antioch? What was the importance of him telling the story this way?
3. What is the significance of the anonymous believers in Acts 11:19–21? What do we learn from their lives? Who am I (we) engaging with the Gospel?
4. What are the different ways Barnabas encouraged others in Acts? How did he specifically encourage the believers at Antioch? What important role does encouragement play in the local church, and what are some dangers of neglecting it? Who am I (we) encouraging?
5. What does it mean to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit? How do we know the Spirit's voice? How did the church at Antioch obey the Holy Spirit? Why is it important to see the different ministries in Acts 11:19–30 as empowered and used by the Holy Spirit? Are we sensitive to the Spirit's voice and obeying Him?