

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 10 w/Answers

Acts 11:19-30

This week our study in Acts takes us to the model church, the church at Antioch. My prayer this week is that you will come to learn more about the church at Antioch than you have known before; and from that knowledge, I pray that you will find ways within your own local congregation to apply the principles Christ teaches us through this church's testimony.

What was it like then to be a Christian, what did it mean, what was the "gospel message" that was proclaimed then, and how did the local church react to it. These are all questions that will be answered in the course of this lesson incorporating the study of Acts 11:19-30.

So let's get started, and see what the testimony of the church at Antioch can teach us about responsibilities as followers of Christ, and as members of a local congregation.

For our study, read Acts Chapters 11:19-30 and answer the following:

1. When the Jewish converts fled Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen, who did they take the Gospel message to? (Acts 11:19)
 - a. ANSWER: The Jews only, and not the Gentiles
2. Cyprus, Cyrene, and Antioch are three locations mentioned in the scripture passages. Can you identify what country/countries these locations equate to today?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Cyprus is an island in the Mediterranean off Syria.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Cyrene is in Northern Africa in the country of Libya; it is located on the coast, 2000 feet above the Mediterranean.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Antioch is in Syria, also on the Mediterranean coast.
3. Cyrenians are mentioned in several places in the New Testament. Read the following verses and note what was significant about each Cyrenian.
 - a. Luke 23:26
 - i. ANSWER: Simon from Cyrene carried the cross of Christ.
 - b. Acts 2:10
 - i. ANSWER: Cyrenians were present at Pentecost.
 - c. Acts 13:1-3
 - i. ANSWER: Lucius of Cyrene was a prophet and teacher at Antioch.
4. When these converts from Cyrene and Cyprus came to Antioch, who did they proclaim the Gospel message to?
 - a. ANSWER: They proclaimed it to the "Grecians", i.e., the Gentiles.
5. What was the Gospel that they proclaimed to the early church, and how would it differ from ours today? (see Acts 11:20)
 - a. ANSWER 1: They proclaimed that Jesus was Lord, and that Jesus was the Messiah.
 - b. ANSWER 2: At that time in history, only the Jews were waiting for the Messiah's coming to set up His physical kingdom. It will take Paul's advent to get the second part of the message out. i.e., that Jesus is coming again, for all of us.
6. How did the membership grow at Antioch? What program did they institute that generated such a large growth in membership? How many ministry committees, business meetings, staff members and musicians does it say it took to add all those members ... or was it something else? What does it tell us in Acts 11:21?
 - a. ANSWER: That is was solely their faithfulness in proclaiming Jesus as Lord that resulted in God adding to their numbers.

7. According to verses 20 and 21, what can we determine is the basis for church growth?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Being faithful to God's call and leadership.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Remaining steadfast in proclaiming the Gospel - and only the Gospel - no compromises.
8. What role does Barnabas play in the growth and success of the church at Antioch?
 - a. ANSWER 1: He is a mentor, leader, and encourager.
 - b. ANSWER 2: He is also an equipper, and he recruits Paul to come and help.
9. Barnabas sees the need for encouragement, leadership, and equipping of the new church - a Greek-speaking one with both Jew and Gentile membership. Who does he go and recruit to come and help him train and encourage the members? (Acts 11:25-26)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul, once an enemy of the church, is now sought out for his help and knowledge.
10. What does Isaiah 62:2 and 65:15 have in common with the church at Antioch - especially as described in Acts 11:26?
 - a. ANSWER: In prophecy, God foretold these events; specifically that the Gentiles would believe and would be known by a new name - Christian.
11. What is described in Acts 11:27-28?
 - a. ANSWER: A prophet in the church at Antioch foretells of a famine coming to the land.
12. When the church in Antioch realizes that there is going to be a famine, and they realize the impact that it will have on the church in Jerusalem, what do they do? (Acts 11:29-30)
 - a. ANSWER: They take up an offering for the followers in Jerusalem.
13. While at Antioch, Peter comes to visit and see firsthand all that is happening in the church there. He once again meets with Paul. How did Paul react to Peter's visit to Antioch? Why was he so upset? (Galatians 2:11-14)
 - a. ANSWER 1: Peter was trying to act like a Jew while preaching that Christ was for both the Jew and the Gentile.
 - b. ANSWER 2: He was still hung up on the circumcised/uncircumcised differences between Jew and Gentile.
14. Did Antioch play a role in Paul's missionary journeys? (see verses below and answer)
 - a. Acts 14:27
 - i. ANSWER: It was part of Paul's First Missionary Journey.
 - b. Acts 18:22
 - i. ANSWER: It was also part of Paul's Second Missionary Journey.

From our previous study of Dorcas and her ministry to the poor and needy, we now see in this lesson a model church which steadfastly proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah, cares for their fellow workers in far away Jerusalem (because they know that a famine is coming), and ministers to the needs of peoples from many different countries and cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, everyone is treated equally. No one is treated differently as a result of their education, wealth, family background or testimony.

Antioch also modeled discipleship training, mentoring, missionary outreach and the gift of encouragement – all of which resulted in unity and a common sense of purpose and mission. This resulted in God adding great numbers to their local congregation and using them as a spring board for Paul's many missionary journeys.

What an example this church set for all of us. Oh, that we could follow in their footsteps!

Yours in Christ,

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