

## ACTS: Church On Mission

### Part 31 - The First Christians

ACTS 11:19-26- “Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia & Cyprus & Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there **were some of them**, men of Cyprus & Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch **spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was w/ them, & a great number who believed turned to the Lord.** The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, & they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came & **saw the grace of God**, he was glad, & he exhorted them all to **remain faithful to the Lord w/ steadfast purpose**, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit & of faith. **And a great many people were added to the Lord.** So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, & when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. **For a whole year they met w/ the church & taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.”**

- **The Word Is Active**
- VS- 19- “...speaking the word...” (i.e. “Preaching the Lord Jesus”)
- The unbelievable power of preaching the Gospel- the Word- is a major Meta-theme for Luke in Acts...
- Hebrews 4:12- “For **the word of God is living & active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul & of spirit, of joints & of marrow, & discerning the thoughts & intentions of the heart.”
- We’ve mostly thought that this means our “quiet times” can be really lively- but according to the Bible- the “Word” is literally...
- It’s the agent that the Holy Spirit uses for change (Romans 10)
- John 1:1-5- “In **the beginning was the Word**, & the **Word was w/ God, & the Word was God.** (**He**) was in the beginning w/ God. All things were made through (**him**), & w/out (**him**) was not any thing made that was made. In (**him**) was life, & the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, & the darkness has not overcome it.”
- John 1:14-17- “**And the Word became flesh & dwelt among us**, & we have seen **his glory, glory** as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace & truth. (John bore witness about him, & cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.’”) And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; **grace & truth came through Jesus Christ.**”
- This is what Jesus means when He says that “I will build my church & hell won’t stand against it” (Matthew 16:18)
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- **Jesus Is Preached To The Hellenists In Antioch:**
- VS. 20- Spoke to the Hellenists (Greek Speaking Non-Jews)
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- **The Hand Of The Lord Was W/ Them:**
- You would think that people would be catching on by now...
- God told us to go...every time someone goes amazing stuff happens...maybe we

- should all...go (fishing analogy)
- Matthew 4:19- "Follow me & I'll make you fishers of men"
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- **A Great Number Turned To The Lord:**
- Revelation 1:12- John says he "turns" to see the One he is hearing & he's overcome by WHO He sees
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- **"Unnamed, Ordinary Believers"**
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- **The Disciples Made More Disciples**
- VS 26- "Taught a great many people" made disciples from converts
- The disciples had done a killer job preaching the Gospel & now there was this massive amount of people who'd converted...
- But this wasn't what Jesus had don't them & the Spirit had empowered them to do- they were to make disciples
- Matthew 28:18-20- "And Jesus came & said to them, "All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore & make disciples** of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**. And behold, I am w/ you always, to the end of the age."
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- **"Disciples" First Called Christians:**
- VS. 26 – "Disciples first called Christians in Antioch"
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- **The City Called Them Christians...**