

Acts 11 - Antioch

June 23, 2026

UNSTOPPABLE

THE BOOK OF ACTS

Craig Smith • June 28, 2026 • Acts 11 - Antioch

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear Him and do what is right." (Acts 10:34-35)

Human Ethnocentrism: the tendency to see one ethnic group as the standard of "best" for all other groups – *"The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him and said, 'You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.'"* (**Acts 11:1-3**)

The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: "God, I thank you that I am not like other men – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get." (**Luke 18:11-12**)

Three common attitudes that express the struggle with ethnocentrism...

- **Indifference** (Luke 10:31-32)
- **Avoidance** (John 4:9)
- **Disparagement** (1 Cor. 11:18)

Biblical multiculturalism: the integration of all ethnic groups under Jesus – *"I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a*

*trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air. Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.' I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.' This happened three times, and then it was pulled up to heaven again." (**Acts 11:5-10**)*

• **It is God's grace that unites opposing groups, not man's gifts** – *"Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts." (**Acts 11:20-23**)*

In Jesus, we have been given a new and superior "ethnicity" – *"So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." (**Acts 11:26b**)*

*For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility...and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility. (**Eph. 2:14, 16**)*

A multi-cultural church is a powerful witness to the world...

*"This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus." (**Eph. 3:6**)*