

Acts 11:1-30

Cross Brand C3:16

6.17.26

Sources: John MacAuthor / Bob Deffinbaugh

I. “The groundwork”

1-18 The apostles and the brothers and sisters who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. ²When Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, ³saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

⁴Peter began to explain to them step by step, ⁵“I was in the town of Joppa praying, and I saw, in a trance, an object that resembled a large sheet coming down, being lowered by its four corners from heaven, and it came to me. ⁶When I looked closely and considered it, I saw the four-footed animals of the earth, the wild beasts, the reptiles, and the birds of the sky. ⁷I also heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’

⁸“No, Lord!’ I said. ‘For nothing impure or ritually unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹But a voice answered from heaven a second time, ‘What God has made clean, you must not call impure.’

¹⁰“Now this happened three times, and everything was drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹At that very moment, three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea arrived at the house where we were. ¹²The Spirit told me to accompany them with no doubts at all. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we went into the man’s house. ¹³He reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, ‘Send to Joppa, and call for Simon, who is also named Peter. ¹⁴He will speak a message to you by which you and all your household will be saved.’

¹⁵“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came down on them, just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁷If, then, God gave them the same gift that he also gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, how could I possibly hinder God?”

¹⁸When they heard this they became silent. And they glorified God, saying, “So then, God has given repentance resulting in life even to the Gentiles.”

Many of the Jews believed you must become a Jew to become a Christian.

This was the beginning of the first Gentile church.

This all happened 7 years after Pentecost.

Why did the Lord wait so long?

--Apostolic authority had to be established.

--It took a while to develop leaders.

--It took a while to teach and develop mature believers.

--It took a while to overcome prejudice.

II. "The genesis"

19-21 ¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered as a result of the persecution that started because of Stephen made their way as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. ²⁰ But there were some of them, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks^[a] also, proclaiming the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

The fellowship was scattered due to persecution.

The refugees were spreading the gospel to other Jews only.

Antioch was described as

--having an academic population

--full of pagan worship

--full of sexual immorality

III. "The growth"

22-26 ²² News about them reached^[b] the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to travel^[c] as far as Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged all of them to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts, ²⁴ for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And large numbers of people were added to the Lord.

²⁵ Then he went to Tarsus to search for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught large numbers. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.

The Jerusalem church needed proof that Gentiles believed

The church in Jerusalem sent Barnabus

The purpose for sending a rep from Jerusalem

To Validate

To Disciple

Barnabus will solicit help from Paul

IV. “The generosity”

27-30 ²⁷ In those days some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ One of them, named Agabus, stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine throughout the Roman world.^[d] This took place during the reign of Claudius. ²⁹ Each of the disciples, according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brothers and sisters who lived in Judea. ³⁰ They did this, sending it to the elders by means of Barnabas and Saul.

There was a famine in AD 45-46

They responded by giving in proportion to their income.

V. The Take Aways

A. Sometimes salvation does not always change all our flaws immediately

B. God can and will work beyond the scope of our understanding

C. We must never let any kind of bias stand in the way of the gospel

D. We must never devalue discipleship. Salvation is just the first step.

E. We must always exercise the principles of “grace giving” in our local churches

