

ACTS 11

Main Point: Accepted into “The Beloved”

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

-Ephesians 1:5-6

Digging Deeper

Acts Chapter 11 kicks off with a retelling of the narrative of how God made the Gospel available to all of humanity. I know we've focused a lot on that over the last few chapters. Probably, because it's a REALLY BIG DEAL! It goes against every tradition the Jewish people would have held to back then. When the other apostles “heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.” ” (Acts 11:18) There was not much to say after that. The promise to Abraham now rings true in their minds that God had brought the blessing to ALL nations.

So then, what does this mean for us? As Christians, that is, Gentile converts adopted in by the blood of the cross, how do we view our lives now? The main point now comes to fully understanding God's love for us. Not simply in the mind, but in the heart. Allowing that heart conversion to truly take place and become our actions.

What actions did the early church take here in Acts 11? - Read and discuss!

Discussion Questions

1. Acceptance is something that we as humans naturally strive for... what does it mean to find true acceptance in God?
2. In our American culture, we see so much “Self-love” emphasis, many times in attempts to validate ourselves and our own desires. How is this seen through the lens of scripture? Is it positive or negative? How so?
3. As the fellowship was dispersed by persecution, and began to grow, they focussed on meeting other's needs. What is the value of fellowship to you? Where else do we see the Christ-centered, others-focused mentality in scripture?
4. The Christians were first called “Christians” At Antioch. Our ‘American cultural Christianity’ doesn't mean the same thing that the term ‘Christian’ meant back then. What does being a Christian mean to you?
5. God Always has a purpose for the things that happen in your life. In many cases, we don't always see what God does with it until after His will is done in our lives. Where have you seen this in your life? As Christians, we each have a “new purpose,” do you know what that purpose is?