



**Bad News Travels Fast  
You Went Too Far For Jesus  
Hint: Not Possible!  
Acts 11:1-30**

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**Acts 11:1–3**

**“Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the Jewish believers took issue with him, saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”” (NASB 2020)**



Isaiah 49:5–6

**“And now the LORD says, he who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him; and that Israel might be gathered to him— for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength— he says: “It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the preserved of Israel; I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”” (ESV)**

I never cease to be shocked and amazed at the reactions I have seen or been subjected to and continue to receive by simply following Jesus.

I found myself as one of the shocked ones in Bible school. One of the guys in our evangelism class decided he wouldn't do beach reach, or park reach or anything conventional like that. He decided to instead go to Adult Entertainment venues, and witness to folks going in and coming out while standing on public property. He researched where he could and could not go and on Friday and Saturday evenings, late, he would show up and begin his conversations with folks.

When he first told me, I was shocked and at the same time encouraged at his faith to go where the Holy Spirit told him to go. Within just a couple of weeks, he had a new issue for us to pray with him about. He was indeed leading folks to Christ, and most of them were employees of the Adult Entertainment venues. Now he was looking for churches that these brand-new followers of Jesus could go to, even with their backgrounds of various sordid activities they had been involved in and be disciplined.

Most local churches said no. His church said no. I remember him saying that everyone wants to reach the lost, but only acceptable lost.

These folks were desperate for Jesus, and yet most of the church in the early 1970's were not interested in them. They were not acceptable lost folks coming to Christ. One church was alleged to have told him that he had gone too far to think anyone who had done what these folks had done, could ever be saved. In other words, it was the old clean versus unclean argument all over again.

They did get plugged in but at Calvary Chapel and other churches that were not monuments to spiritual bigotry, but ones that really realized that all the world means **all the world**. Without any regard to what your livelihood might have been pre-Christ.

That entire idea can be rather daunting for the one who has been a follower of Jesus Christ for many years and has remained inside their comfort zone. Yes, the Lord does indeed work to call us out of that as we follow Him, but if we say no often enough, He quits asking and we are left with a rather dry faith.

The idea of this section of scripture is to call us out of the desert of comfort into the excitement of living day by day in the power of the Holy Spirit as we follow Jesus Christ. Peter is our example.

As we merge back to our story here in Acts, once again recall, Peter, in fact all the Apostles, are accountable to others all the time.

We know what that looks like too thanks to Paul.

Galatians 2:11–14

**“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned.** For before certain men came from James, he was eating with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party. And the rest of the Jews acted hypocritically along with him, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that their conduct was



not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?”” (ESV)

Being discipled means being accountable. I have heard pastors say, I am accountable to God and God alone. But what we see here modeled for us in Acts is simple, that is not good enough at times.

If even Peter can be swayed to move back into a sinful lifestyle of spiritual bigotry, who are we to think we can stay pure and avoid the deceit and lies of the enemy as he will attack us in every single avenue of life.

This is why whenever I see a Pastor who is not accountable, I tend to think, dumpster fire in the making. That tends to be the theme of why Pastor’s fail over the years.

As Greg Ogden relates “So when I talk about accountability here, it’s not about examining each other’s life and being under each other’s scrutiny. Yeah, there may be times when we give each other feedback and we need to have some self-awareness that comes through a mirror image that somebody else can give us. But it’s more identifying the stuff ourselves that we want other people to know about and that they can prayerfully, lovingly, hold us accountable to make the changes that are necessary. I consider this the most counter-cultural element of this transformative process—mutual accountability.” (Ogden 2014)

Paul had already dealt with the issue of accountability in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 1:10

“I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to **live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.**” (NLT)

It is only with unity of that kind, that we can even learn to listen to each other. It is not about lording it over someone but loving them with agape love just as Jesus commanded us.

To hold ourselves accountable to others is to trust their judgment and to believe that they are committed to the same truths and values that we are. It also helps if we can sense that they have our best interests at heart. (Thomas Nelson 1996, 2 Cor 2:5-11)

Paul tells us what it looks like in 1 Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 2:10–12

“You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. For you know how, like a father with his children, **we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.**” (ESV)

In our culture, we rebel at this idea. Rugged individualism and all. But part of our journey with Christ is to begin to think and live Biblically.

James also talks about the idea of allowing others to shoulder the load with you.

James 5:13–16

**“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.** And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one



another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” (ESV)

There is also a negative side to accountability. That is what occurs when you are Spirit filled and are seeing Him do new things.

But those you are accountable to have not seen or been where you just were and they are struggling to understand what you are saying or doing. And in some cases, they may simply refuse to recognize the work of the Holy Spirit because of their holding onto old learned biases held in the past before coming to Christ. That is not all of the reasons but is what we see here in Acts 11.

Thus, the argument that we will see here about unclean versus clean. Not a bad idea, but human nature being fallen, we tend to turn legalistic on things like this. And the church in Jerusalem moved that direction.

Peter is also about to learn the axiom that the volume and number of those who disagree with you as you follow Jesus is directly proportional to the number or size of sacred cows you killed along the way. He knew he was crossing a bridge too far as he went to Caesarea and the word has already made it back to Jerusalem before he has even left the coast. He had slain the sacred cow of all sacred cows and to do so, even went so far as to consort with the enemy. He went to a Roman Centurion’s home in a Roman city.

You can already hear the buzz go around the house churches there in Jerusalem as folks begin picking sides.

This is church split kinda stuff here. Yes, there are times that following Jesus can be daring and scary. He really does know what He is doing as He uses others to shake us out of our comfort zones.

Peter is still in Caesarea along with the team he brought with him, ministering in the home of Cornelius. God is moving and this new house church of Gentiles is growing in their knowledge of the Lord and refreshed with His Spirit using them to reach the community there.

Meanwhile, back in Jerusalem.

Acts 11:1

“Now the apostles and the brothers and sisters who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.” (NASB 2020)

We are told in 11:1 that the apostles (other than Peter) and the believers in Judea got word of the momentous events in Caesarea before Peter ever went up to Jerusalem to report what had happened. (Witherington III 1998, 362)

And thus begins the rumor mill in the church and for some reason, it still exists today. There are those who would think this is fantastic, but then there are those who a couple months ago were pharisees and now they are saved. What do you mean Peter went to stay with Cornelius. How dare he.

By the way, do not add the apostles into the group that is critical.

How long was Peter there? We do not really know but it does make for interesting conjecture by those who translate the text for us from Greek. First, there is a Codex Bezae which gives this detail.



11 But it was heard by the Apostles and brethren in Judea, that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. 2 **Now Peter had a desire for a long time to go to Jerusalem. And when he had spoken to the brethren, and confirmed them, he spake largely, and taught them through the countries: who also came to them, and declared to them the grace of God.** But those brethren who were of the circumcision contended with him, 3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. (Whiston 1745, Ac 11)

In order to prevent the reader of the Alexandrian text from gaining the impression that the conversion of Cornelius compelled Peter to break off his missionary work and go to Jerusalem in order to justify himself, the Western reviser introduces a passage (in the style of 8:25 and 15:3) that describes how Peter continued his missionary work for a considerable length of time, and how, finally, on his own initiative, he went up to Jerusalem, where, so far from being called to give an account of himself, he voluntarily sought out the brethren at Jerusalem “and reported to them the grace of God.” (Metzger and United Bible Societies 1994, 338)

In other words, Peter did not come back to Jerusalem because he is called on the carpet by the Apostles. He intentionally stayed there in Caesarea for a time and then traveled back to Jerusalem with the six witnesses in tow to provide a report since he was well aware of those recently saved Pharisees.

Acts 11:2

“And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the Jewish believers took issue with him,” (NASB 2020) Unfortunately, our English translation here has translated the Greek word περιτομῆς (peritomēs) as Jewish. That is not what the word means. The word winds up meaning “those who insisted on circumcising Gentiles if they were to be regarded as true believers in Jesus Christ—‘those of the circumcision’ or ‘those who insisted on circumcision.’ διεκρίνοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς ‘those who were in favor of circumcising Gentiles criticized him’ Ac 11:2.” (Louw and Nida 1996, 128)

Acts 11:2–3

“So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, **the circumcision party criticized him**, saying, “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”” (ESV)

The ESV translation gives us a more definitive picture. This was not all of the Jewish believers, this was a subset, those who were to wind up being the origin of the Judaizers so vilified by Paul in his letters.

What Peter did, at the direction of the Holy Spirit, was considered by this small but vocal group as a step too far. This was a huge change. We also see that the Holy Spirit is still growing these new believers because the reaction is huge evidence of their needing to grow more.

The change said, to the Gentiles, “You don’t have to become Jews first, and put yourself under the Law of Moses first. Repent and believe, and you can come to Jesus.” But it also said to the Jewish followers of Jesus, “Receive your Gentile brothers and sisters as full members of the family of God. They aren’t inferior to you in any way.”

The objection of those of the circumcision was on the second point, not the first. They complained, You went into uncircumcised men and ate with them! At first, they were more concerned with what Peter did than with what God was doing with the Gentiles. (Guzik 2013, Ac 11:1-3)

And there we have the origins of numerous future church splits all around the globe. It has to do with the speed of sanctification and how not everyone grows at the same speed. Whenever we are more concerned about what someone did rather than the question of how is God working and using others in what we are being told. We should hear warning bells go off in our heads. This is why Paul would warn



Timothy to not allow a new follower of Jesus, no matter their background, to not become a Pastor. (1 Timothy 3:6)

They took issue with Peter.

“The Greek word actually means “to separate.” In other words, they separated themselves apart; they took sides against him; they made a cleavage. On the issue of Gentile circumcision, these Jewish believers of the Circumcision Party were not afraid to challenge Peter, the chief of the apostles.” (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 22) They were also not afraid to challenge the Holy Spirit and God as well.

Was there anything unscriptural about what Peter did? No. Not at all. The nations being included has always been the plan.

Joel 2:28

“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.” (ESV)

Genesis 22:18

“and **in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.**” (ESV)

The biggie though is in Isaiah where we discover that some gentiles at the end of the age will wind up being priests.

Hint, all of us as followers of Jesus are priests and kings (Revelation 1:6, 20:6).

Isaiah 66:18–21

““I can see what they are doing, and I know what they are thinking. So I will gather all nations and peoples together, and they will see my glory. I will perform a sign among them. And I will send those who survive to be messengers to the nations—to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (who are famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to all the lands beyond the sea that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. There they will declare my glory to the nations. **They will bring the remnant of your people back from every nation. They will bring them to my holy mountain in Jerusalem as an offering to the LORD. They will ride on horses, in chariots and wagons, and on mules and camels,**” says the LORD. **“And I will appoint some of them to be my priests and Levites. I, the LORD, have spoken!”** (NLT)

Incredible as it sounds, people from the disinherited nations will return to Yahweh, out from under the dominion of their gods. Where Israel failed in that mission as a kingdom of priests (Exod 19:6) Yahweh himself will succeed. He will be the agent for his own mission. (Heiser 2015, 261)

The uproar in Jerusalem was this...Peter ate with gentiles.

The issue was not doctrine. It was not because of sin in the camp, it was over who Peter ate with. Peter himself would later, remembering the grief he got over this in Jerusalem, will allow himself to be sucked into this again in Galatia only to be corrected by Paul.

We see a change begin to take place in the Jerusalem church because of this small group of legalists not yielding to the Holy Spirit. “This church that was once “with one accord” and filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, once so mightily used of God, was now ready to sit in judgment over God, his servant, and his work! It was filled with strife over nothing! By the time we get to the end of the chapter, God had reduced





them to utter poverty, living on the charity of the Gentile believers they here derided (vv. 27–30). This incident in the church at Jerusalem is recorded to warn us. We must carefully and constantly guard against the evil tendencies of our proud flesh toward harshness, slander, and division (Eph. 4:1–7, 30–32; 5:1–2). Be very careful in your judgment (assessment) of your brother's actions (Matt. 7:1–5). Make allowances for and be lenient with one another. Grace teaches people to be gracious!" (Fortner 2007, 155)

What we see is the beginning of something that has plagued the church ever since. Paul would even try to address it. Confusion over the grace of God, with works. Judaism had turned heavily into works.

Yet all throughout the Old Testament we see the grace of God at work for, in and through His people. The sin nature though is tough to shed and what begins here, continues today. Grace is not enough, you must "do" as well. God, they would say, requires us to do to be saved. This is adding in the law onto God's grace. I call Jesus +.

We are saved by God's grace. There is nothing we can do or participate in that will save us. Nothing. There is no Jesus +.

Galatians 5:1–6

**"For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be subject again to the yoke of slavery.** Listen! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you at all! And I testify again to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be declared righteous by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace! For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait expectantly for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision carries any weight—the only thing that matters is faith working through love." (NET 2nd ed.)

Ephesians 2:4–10

"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (ESV)

Doing stuff does not save us. Once we are saved, then the Holy Spirit guides us and directs us and yes, we then "want" to do things for the Lord "because of" what we have experienced from Him. Salvation is not dependent upon us doing anything at all.

James 2:17–20

"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! **But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?**" (NKJV)

Works do not save, they demonstrate what has already taken place inside.

But for this small group in the church in Jerusalem, believing was not enough. They would add in all the aspects of the law as well to include what you eat and who you ate with.



Hebrews 13:8–9

**“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. Do not let all kinds of strange teachings lead you from the right way. It is good to receive inner strength from God’s grace, and not by obeying rules about foods; those who obey these rules have not been helped by them.” (GNB)**

Acts 11:2–17

“And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, the Jewish believers took issue with him, saying, **“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”** But Peter began and explained at length to them in an orderly sequence, saying, “I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object coming down like a great sheet lowered by four corners from the sky; and it came to where I was, and I stared at it and was thinking about it, and I saw the four-footed animals of the earth, the wild animals, the crawling creatures, and the birds of the sky. I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’ But I said, ‘By no means, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ But a voice from heaven answered a second time, ‘What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.’ **This happened three times, and everything was drawn back up into the sky. And behold, at that moment three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea came up to the house where we were staying. And the Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house.** And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, ‘Send some men to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here; and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ **And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ Therefore, if God gave them the same gift as He also gave to us after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?”** (NASB 2020)

Peter provided a masterful argument to those who were leading the charge. He emphasizes the Jewish features of his testimony of what took place.

He starts with his Mincha prayer time in Yafo and how he had a vision while in a trance. He saw something like a large sheet being lowered by its four corners. This would be reminiscent of the four-cornered tallit, especially as he was in prayer. And in this vision, it was filled with all sorts of treif: four-footed animals, beasts of prey, crawling creatures and wild birds. If that wasn’t strange enough, he heard a voice saying, “Get up, Kefa, slaughter and eat!” Kefa reveals he has stayed Torah-observant and objected, “Absolutely not! Nothing unclean has ever entered my mouth!” Note how different this statement is from many modern interpretations regarding the Torah and Messianic Jews. Even after living for over three years with his Rabbi Yeshua (even post-resurrection), Kefa still keeps kosher. (Kasdan 2022, 83-84)

Peter, even having walked with Jesus for three years and then again after the resurrection being with Him did not feel that it meant he could not be a Torah observant Jew as well as a follower of Christ. His being observant had nothing to do with his salvation or earning favor with God. He was Jewish, he was raised this way. His being kosher is why the Holy Spirit gave him the vision three times.

Peter obeyed the Lord. This is an admission of guilt. He did indeed go into a Gentile home, but it was the right thing to do. But he also points out that Cornelius had a vision of an angel at the same time. He is building up the divine appointment factor of what was to take place.

He even expresses the amazement he and his companions had when they witnessed the Holy Spirit come upon this group of uncircumcised gentiles who had simply believed.

Adding in all of the data as he does here in his story, he then asks questions which are ones we would say are leading, they are. Peter is learning everyday how to speak and the Holy Spirit is adept at his word smithing here.





Notice the contrast of pronouns: the Holy Spirit fell on them [the Gentiles], even as on us [the Jewish believers] at the beginning in Acts 2:1–4. This shows clearly that the ministry of Spirit baptism began in Acts 2:1–4 at Pentecost, not before Acts 2. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 25)

He frames the decision to baptize as if I were to do so I would stand against what God was doing, why would I do that?

With such a controversial idea being presented to a skeptical Jewish audience, it was best to frame all this as a question! It was the right response as guided by the Ruach. Kefa was convinced by the Ruach not to avoid “unkosher” people. (Kasdan 2022, 85)

If the Jewish believers received the Holy Spirit when they believed, and now the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit when they believed, Peter then asked the rhetorical question: who was I, that I could withstand God? or, more literally, “able to withstand” or “to hinder” God. (Fruchtenbaum 1983, 25)

Nowhere did Peter single out those who were opposed. He presented to all wanting to heal the breach that obviously now existed in the church.

He had anticipated this type of objection, thus the six witnesses. The result is favorable.

Acts 11:18.

“When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, “Well then, God has also granted to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”” (NASB 2020)

Controversy resolved, for now. But the roots of an issue that will impact the ministry of Paul have been sown.

Remember all of those believers who had to leave town and go elsewhere? We are now back to what they have been up to.

Acts 11:19–26

**“So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks as well, preaching the good news of the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.** The news about them reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and faith. And considerable numbers were added to the Lord. And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers of people; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” (NASB 2020)

As we follow the refugees fleeing the persecution in Jerusalem, we see two groups. One which was most likely from the Hebrew camp, sharing only with those who are Jewish as well.

Similar culture, it makes sense. But there were also Hellenistic Jews who were refugees from persecution as well. They knew Greek and as a result, began to share with non-Jewish Greeks, gentiles. Yes, Peter provided the official opening to the Gentiles, but unofficially, this was going to become a much larger movement soon anyhow.



There in Antioch, 300 miles north of Jerusalem, not only did many of the Greeks come to Christ, but they had a booming church that drew the attention of the church back in Jerusalem.

Antioch is in Syria, Turkey today, and at this time it was “the seat of government of the united Roman province of Syria and Cilicia and was the third largest city in the world, being surpassed only by Rome and Alexandria. (Bruce, Acts: Bible Study Commentary 2017, AC 11:19-30)

The city’s reputation for moral laxity was enhanced by the cult of Artemis and Apollo at Daphne, five miles distant, where the ancient Syrian worship of Astarte and her consort, with its ritual prostitution, was carried on under Greek nomenclature. (Bruce, The Book of Acts, The New International Commentary on the New Testament 1988, 224)

Once again, send in the confirming teacher, the great encourager, Barnabas.

The new believers there need to be taught and who better than Barnabas to grow them in the Lord. This is the Lord looking out for His flock there in Antioch. But what Barnabas discovered was a task rich environment.

This was like the early growth in Jerusalem, except now it is in a gentile city and is taking place with those coming from a pagan background. They need a but more grounding than the folks in Jerusalem needed. So, Barnabas goes to Tarsus looking for an old friend to help him in the growing ministry back in Antioch, Saul of Tarsus. Barnabas convinced him of the need and returned to Antioch with Paul.

These two men continues to minister there in Antioch for a year and during that time, they saw the church grow as they worked together.

Up to this point, followers of Jesus were considered to be a subset of Judaism. That would not hold in Antioch since the vast majority of those who are now believers are not Jewish at all.

These wee pagans, and they were coming to Christ from backgrounds that would water the eyes of the legalists back in Jerusalem. But there in Antioch, they were just new followers of Jesus being added to the flock in need of discipling.

“There was something about the believers at Antioch which caused their neighbors and relatives to look upon them with scorn, and say with contempt and derision, “They are Christians!” What was it? What made these people so unique, so different? It was not their dress, their speech, their diet, or even their social life that made them peculiar.” (Fortner 2007, 160-161) This was the first place where that term was used, and it was intended to be one of derision.

Acts 11:27–30

“Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and indicated by the Spirit that there would definitely be a severe famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. And to the extent that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brothers and sisters living in Judea. And they did this, sending it with Barnabas and Saul to the elders.” (NASB 2020)

There are prophets in the church. This is nothing like the prophets of the Old Testament.

The prophets, properly so called in the New Testament, are men of less importance, we may call them Christian teachers to whom the Spirit at times made special direct communications of but minor import. (Lenski 1961, 459)



Here, some of them were in town teaching one of them, Agabus, had a word from the Lord regarding a pending famine, one which did indeed take place.

We learn here about the concern that the disciple in Antioch had for the church in Jerusalem and the rest of Judea. As a result, they determined to send a gift to Jerusalem to help take care of those who are in need there and they do this by sending Barnabas and Paul to Jerusalem with the gift.

And this brings us to the end of Acts 11. The story is beginning to shift from Peter to Paul. From the Messianic church to the Gentile church. We still have one more persecution to discuss as well as Peter, again before we move on to the formal missionary work of Paul and Barnabas.

The message of Peter, Barnabas and Paul is the same as our message today.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

### **ABC’s of Salvation**

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.



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