

Acts: Church in Antioch

 *April 12*

**INTRODUCTION:**  Acts: *Jesus’ work, through the Apostles and disciples, by the Holy Spirit, to fulfil Acts 1:8.* A lot has happened.

With the Gospel going to the Gentiles (Cornelius, ch. 10) we now see more effects of the persecution in 8:1 (ch. 11) followed by yet further opposition to the expansion of the Church (ch. 12). This section (chs. 10–12) is an interlude between “Jerusalem, Judea, & Samaria” & “the ends of the earth.”

**KEY POINT:** witness, expansion, Gentile missions, Christians

**A.M. SERMON RECAP** (Famous Last/First Words)

* How does Isa 53:7 help understand Jesus’ last words?
* Why were His last words significant?
* What surprise attends His first words?
* What hope do His first and last words offer/assure us of?

**P.M. BIBLE STUDY RECAP** (Acts 1:3)

* What four things does Acts 1:3 tell us marked Jesus’ resurrected ministry?
* What surprised you, encouraged you, challenged you, etc?

**READ:** Acts 11:19–30

**QUESTIONS:**

1. *“It isn’t that the evangelization of the Jews ceased but that the evangelization of the Gentile began.”* **Discuss c.f. Ro 1:16**

*From here the main theme in Acts is the latter.*

*Gentile missions by anonymous evangelists (vv.*

1. *Now we see the effect of 8:1, or the Christian dispersion. Culturally, this was limited to Jews only (11:19; 15:7). After the conversion of Cornelius this expanded to Gentiles.*
2. *Antioch had a Jewish population but was a cosmopolitan city. Third in size in the Empire, it was an up-river harbour city with many notable buildings. It had a population of 500K with many non-Greeks, including Persians, Indians and Chinese.*
3. How was Antioch a providential choice geographically? *If Jerusalem was the capital of Jewish Christians, Antioch became the early capital of Gentile-Christians.*
4. **How has the Lord providentially placed us in Markdale?**
5. How did the Lord richly bless this innovation?
6. What people group might we not be reaching locally?

*Gentile mission is recognised by Barnabas (vv. 22–24)*

1. *It is not an apostle but Barnabas who is sent.* Why?
2. How did he encourage the grace of God?
3. **What relationship did his character have to his ministry?**
4. What was the result?

*Gentile mission is reinforced by Saul (vv. 25–26a)*

1. *With the church growing and in need of greater teaching, Barnabas (the encourager) sent for Saul (the teacher). Saul had spent some 7+ years in Tarsus and Cilicia (training for further ministry). Barnabas gives way to Saul in significance.*
2. **How are all Christians equipped to contribute different skills to our witness and mission?**
3. **Why did the young church need discipleship?**

*Gentile mission produces a new name (v. 26b)*

1. *Believers have so far been called brethren, disciples, saints, saved, Way; and now Christians.*
2. *Evidently followers of Jesus were being seen as different than adherents to Judaism, the NC was making a difference!*
3. *The “ian” of Christian can mean someone who follows someone (e.g. Herodians) or who are of/like them, or who represent them.*
4. **Why did this label “stick”?**

*Gentile mission is confirmed by good works (vv. 27–30)*

1. *Prophets spoke the God’s word before the Canon (Eph 2:20).*
2. *Josephus spoke about a famine during Claudius that afflicted Judea.* **How is this aid a powerful confirmation that the Gentiles had joined the NC community? (c.f. Acts 2:45)**
3. **How is “to each according to his ability” a good principle?**

**NEXT:** April 12- Peter is Rescued, Acts 12:6–19