

“A Church That Changed the World”

(Acts 11:19-26)

Introduction – In 1st Century Antioch, we find a **Pattern** for **Ministry** and **Missions** that literally allowed **One** church to **Reach** the whole **World** with the **Gospel**!

I. The **Context** of their **Ministry**.

- ✓ It was a **Dangerous Season**. (Fierce persecution in the 1st century) – “scattered” and “persecuted” – driven from their homes; *separated* from their families. They knew the high cost of following Christ! (we are about to *learn* those *lessons*)
- ✓ It was a **Difficult Setting**. (Antioch; 300 miles north of Jerusalem; 3rd leading city in Roman empire; truly pagan – “a place of learned men and luxurious immorality” (Cicero) – perfect place for the light of the Gospel to shine bright!
- ✓ Notice the **Delivery System**. God often uses the “unknown” and the “unnamed” – *ordinary* people to do the most extraordinary work! (It doesn’t matter who gets the *credit*, as long as God gets the *glory*!)

Application – The opportunity for missions in Tennessee: *4 million* lost people!) – that is over 50% of the people that live in our beautiful state (*every other person* is lost, with no hope and on their way to hell)! This is **Totally unacceptable**!!

II. The **Clarity** of their **Message**. (*Faithful* to share the Gospel – focus was on the “Good News” of Jesus! (Sharing their story – how Jesus changed my life; the most powerful tool for evangelism!)

- ✓ It was a **Relational** message. (19b-20) – they were speaking and preaching the Lord Jesus. (2 different Greek words) – a conversational word and a proclamation word (*talking* about Jesus; teaching about Jesus)

Note: They began to cross racial, ethnic, and language *barriers*! (FF Bruce – “this was something entirely new for the church; it was the expansion of Christianity!”)

- ✓ It was a **Transformational** message. (v. 21) – people being changed by the power of the Gospel!

Question – Do you remember the *first time* you saw the power of the Gospel to change a person’s life?

Illustration: (story) My Father’s story – (People passing from spiritual **Death** to **Life**!)

- ✚ No wonder Paul would say “If any man is in Christ – a new creation” and “I am not ashamed of the Gospel”
- ✚ No wonder William Cowper would write the old hymn; “There is a fountain, filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel’s veins...and the dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day...”

III. The Characteristics of their Mission. (22-23; 26) Things were *getting out of hand!* – my prayer for the churches in our day! (Church in Jerusalem sent Barnabas (Encourager) up to investigate the situation.

Key: Several “Defining Statements” about the church:

- ✓ He saw “evidence of the grace of God.” (unity and *diversity* – people from every tongue, tribe, and nation) – the Church was alive; there was *energy*; they were growing in their faith!
- ✓ “A great many people were added to the Lord” – salvations were common; people being saved and baptized – *there is nothing else like it!*
- ✓ They were *first* called “Christians” at Antioch – so *beautiful* and attractive was their love; it *reminded* people of Jesus! (Little Christs)

Illustration – See their influence on the whole world (Acts 13:2-3) – “literally changed the world!”

- ✚ They Embraced the Essentials (worship, prayer)
- ✚ They were Sensitive to the Spirit (*Holy Spirit said*)
- ✚ They Practiced Kingdom Principles (Sent them away) – funded the trip; provided the boat, supplies, etc.

Application – They would *reproduce* that kind of faithful spirit in other congregations (II Corinthians 8) – churches of Macedonia...(gave *more than they were able*) – motivation!!

The Bottom Line – God is looking for Sacrificial service and Joyful generosity among His people!

Quote: (Adrian Rogers) – “There is no such thing as a small church; every church is a mission outpost of Almighty God!”

Closing Illustration – Our “Faith Story” – Journey of a church that embraced this spirit:

1. *Sharing* the Gospel (Every member a missionary)
2. *Strengthening* other Churches (not in competition)
3. *Starting* New Churches (2 great fears)
4. *Sending* Workers into the Harvest (giving our best)

Invitation - Great day to “Come to Jesus” or to begin a new level of service!

- ✚ Join the church
- ✚ Sharing your story!
- ✚ Praying for lost family members and friends!

6/11/23

「改變世界的教會」(Acts 使徒行傳 11:19-26)

引言：在第一世紀的安提阿，我們發現一種事工和宣教的模式，讓一所教會把福音傳遍全世界！

I. 他們事工的背景

- ✓ **這是一個危險的時代：**（第一世紀激烈的迫害）—「四散」和「遭患難」—被趕出家園；與家人分離。他們知道跟隨基督的高昂代價！（我們即將學習吸取這些教訓）
- ✓ **這是一個困難的環境：**（安提阿；耶路撒冷以北 300 英里；羅馬帝國第三大城市；真正的異教徒之地 —「一個充滿博學和不道德泛濫的地方」（西塞羅）— 正正需要福音真光照耀之地！
- ✓ **注意傳遞的方式：**神經常使用「名不經傳」和「無名氏」— 平凡的人來做最不平凡的工作！（誰得到功勞並不重要，只要神得到榮耀！）

應用：在田納西州宣教的機會：（四百萬靈魂失喪的人！）— 超過 50% 的人生活在我們美麗的州（兩個人之中就有其中一個人，沒有盼望，正在走向地獄）！這是完全不能接受的！！

II. 他們信息的清晰度（忠心地分享福音 — 重點是耶穌的「好消息」！（分享他們的故事 — 耶穌如何改變我的生命；傳福音最有力的工具！）

- ✓ **這是強調關係的信息** (19 節下至 20 節)：他們在傳講主耶穌和講道。（2 個不同的希臘詞）— 一個是有關談話，另一個有關宣告（談論耶穌；教導耶穌）

注意：他們開始跨越種族、文化和語言的障礙！（布魯師 — 「這對教會來說是全新的；這是基督信仰的擴展！」）

- ✓ **這是帶來更新的信息** (21 節)：人被福音的大能所改變！

問題 — 你還記得你第一次看到福音改變一個人生命的力量嗎？

例證：（故事）我父親的故事 — （人們從屬靈的死裡復活！）

- 難怪保羅會說「若有人在基督裡 — 他就是新造的人」和「我不以福音為恥」
- 難怪 William Cowper 寫了一首古典聖詩；「有一個泉源，充滿了血液，取自以馬內利的血管… 垂死的罪犯在當時看到那個泉源便喜樂…」

III. 他們傳道的特色 (22-23 節；26 節) 事情變得一發不可收拾！— 這是我為這個時代眾教會的禱告！（耶路撒冷教會差派巴拿巴（勸慰者）去調查情況。）

關鍵：關於教會的幾個「定義性的陳述」：

- ✓ 他看到了「神恩典的證據」。（合一並多元化 — 來自不同語言、種族和國家的人）— 教會充滿生氣；能力；他們在信仰上成長！
- ✓ 「有許多人歸服了主」— 得救是常見的；人們得救受浸 — 沒有比這更好的了！
- ✓ 他們最初在安提阿被稱為「基督徒」— 他們的愛如此美好且吸引人；使人想到耶穌！（小基督）

例證 — 看看他們對世界的影響力（使徒行傳 13:2-3）— 「真的改變了世界！」

- ✚ 他們著重基礎 (崇拜和禱告)
- ✚ 他們敏銳聖靈 (聖靈說)
- ✚ 他們實踐天國的原則 (差派他們出去) — 給他們經費；提供船；物資等

應用 — 他們在其他會眾中掀起同樣忠心的精神（哥林多後書 8）— 馬其頓的教會…（奉獻超過他們的能力）— 動力！！

重點：神在祂的子民中尋找帶著犧牲的服事和喜樂的捐獻！

引用：(Adrian Rogers) — 「沒有小教會這回事；每個教會都是全能神的宣教前哨站！」

結語 — 我們的「信心故事」— 擁抱這種精神的教會之旅：

1. 分享福音（每位成員都是宣教士）
2. 堅固其他教會（不是要競爭）
3. 建立新的教會（兩大恐懼）
4. 差遣工人參與收割（盡力而為）

邀請 — 「歸向耶穌」或開始新一層次服事的好日子！

- 加入教會
- 分享你的故事！
- 為迷失的家人和朋友禱告！