

Acts of the Apostles

27 – Disciples who became Christians

Acts 11.19-12.5

Antioch: 3rd largest city in Roman Empire (300k people, significant Jewish population 10-20k, East/West crossroad)

Risk Takers (v.20)

- Now is the 3rd time we have seen the Gospel go the Gentiles (1.8)
 - Gentiles – “lesser breeds without the Law”
 - Individual – Acts 8 Ethiopian Eunuch
 - Household – Acts 10 Cornelius
 - Antioch – everyday disciples making an eternal difference
 - Indiscriminately sharing the Gospel – “Oh the Scandal!”

Outcome (v.21)

- Many came to know Christ
 - It’s not always the case when we step out, take risks, share the Gospel – but it’s NEVER the case when we don’t
- Pluralism is no threat to the Gospel
 - The myth of the Golden Age of the Church (1950’s? First-Century Acts?)
 - The best days of the church are ahead of her, not behind her
 - The “good old days” weren’t really all that good – clouded by nostalgia
 - The Gospel flourishes in pluralistic environments because it stands in contrast
 - Who God is – who we are – how He has worked – what He offers
 - There is no better story being told

Product (v.22-26)

- People who faithfully converted were encouraged to faithfully continue
 - More people were converted as a result
 - So many that he took two weeks (or more) away to go get Saul help
- Disciples were called Christians
 - “Christians” only used by unbelievers in NT
 - Discipleship is not Christian graduate school / advanced Christianity – it IS Christianity
 - Jesus’ call: follow Me (first disciples, crowds – Mark 8.34, Peter after denial, Antioch, Heritage Park)
 - Transformation of allegiance, affections, and actions – what it means to be a disciple

- Barnabas saw grace – calls for allegiance, stokes affections, seasons actions
- Barnabas encouraged “them all” – encourages allegiance (not alone), encourages affections (singing), encourages action (Hebrews 10.24-25)
 - Crucial because of what was coming
 - Events that God gives us warning about
 - Events that result from injustice

Wake Forest Kicker – be ready, don’t be caught practicing when it’s time to perform

If we don’t continue to follow:

1. Our faith may not be valid (those who endure to the end...)
2. Our witness is distorted or ruined
 - a. If Jesus is only worth following when it’s good times, what makes Him different?
 - b. No fair-weather fans

Questions for Discussion:

1. Who was / is spiritually influential in your life that you would call a hero? Why? What gives them that status in your mind? What kinds of actions did they do or attitudes did they have?
2. In the sermon, Trent noted that it wasn’t the heroes (Peter, Paul, Philip, etc.) whose witness exploded in Antioch. It was the everyday disciples who made the eternal difference. What are some reasons God used everyday disciples in Antioch? What conversations can you envision that you would get into that a “church staff member” would never get into?
3. In the sermon, Trent stated that Pluralism is no threat to the Gospel. Pluralism can be defined as “a condition or system in which two or more states, groups, principles, or sources of authority coexist.” What “sources of authority” are trying to coexist in our culture? How does the Gospel speak to them? How is the story of the Gospel better than the story other worldviews are telling?
4. In the sermon, Trent argued that a disciple is one whose allegiance, affections, and actions have been transformed by Jesus. Read Luke 14.25-33. Where do you see Jesus’ words addressing those three areas?
5. Read Hebrews 10.24-25. How can you help someone be stirred up toward love and good deeds this week? Where do you need to be stirred most - in your allegiance, affection, or action?