

# The Assembly at Antioch

the church of choice

## Lesson 1 – ACTS 11:19-26 (46 AD) – A Multicultural Assembly

19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. 20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. 21 The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. 22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. 24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.



### First Century Antioch

capital of Roman province of Syria

world's third largest city, after Rome and Alexandria

first-century population estimates from 500,000 to 750,000

15 miles from the Mediterranean coast, but accessible via the Orontes River; a major trade center and cultural crossroads

Greek paganism prevailed, but a large Jewish population also thrived

300 miles north of Jerusalem

would become the center of world missions for first-century Christianity

## The Antioch Mission

### 1. Missionaries were moving

Acts 11:19 Those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message

### 2. Racism was recognized

Acts 11:19 telling the message only to Jews.

### 3. Barriers were broken

Acts 11:20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

### 4. Heaven was helping

Acts 11:21 The Lord's hand was with them,

### 5. Multitudes were merging

Acts 11:21 and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

### 6. Testimony was traveling

Acts 11:22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

### 7. Grace was glaring

Acts 11:23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

### 8. Christianity was coined

Acts 11:26 The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

## The Antioch Model

### 1. Intentional intermingling

Acts 10:28 God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.

**racially** Acts 10:15 Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.

**economically** James 2:2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in.

**academically** 1 Corinthians 1:20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

**spiritually** 1 Corinthians 6:11 That is what some of you were. But you were washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

**visibly** 1 Samuel 16:7 Do not consider his appearance or his height... Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.

### 2. Everyday evangelism

Mark 16:15 Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

### 3. Beautiful bonding

Galatians 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

### 4. Corporate Christianity

Ephesians 4:4-5-6 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all,

### 5. Amplified anointing

Psalms 133:1-2 How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head,

### 6. Powerful praises

Romans 15:11 Sing praises to him, all you peoples.

### 7. Eternity envisioned

Revelation 7:9 a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.