



**SERIES: ACTS - WHEN THE WORLD TURNED UPSIDE DOWN**  
**MESSAGE TITLE: "TO WHAT DO WE BELONG?"**

**SPEAKER: BRAD WILLIAMS**  
**DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 2020**

## MESSAGE SUMMARY

## BIBLICAL TEXT(S): *Acts 11:1-26*

In Acts chapter 11, we are first introduced to the church in the city of Antioch. Antioch was a large metropolitan area in the ancient world. People from all over the world lived there because it was a bustling trade hub. Jewish Christians who were scattered because of the persecution that broke out in Jerusalem came to the city and started preaching the Gospel, even to those who weren't Jews and had no prior knowledge of God or the Bible. The Gospel took root, and Antioch became a major hub of Christianity and the place where the term Christian was first used. What happened in this city gives us hope that our modern cities, with all their plurality and diversity can become places where the Gospel is received with joy.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*These questions are designed to help lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage(s) and the speaker's message. These can help your group understand and apply the teaching more profitably*

## LEAN IN

***These are icebreakers and warm ups, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.***

1. If your group already knows each other pretty well, have each person pick one word that they think describes the person next to them. If the group isn't as familiar with one another, have each person pick a word that describes themselves.
2. When you were a child or in high school, what thing did you think defined who you were?
3. Would you rather live in the country or in the city? Why?
4. What's one thing you're looking forward to this week? What's one thing that you're dreading?

## LOOK DOWN

***These are questions about the Bible passage(s) and observations about what's been read. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.***

1. What happened when those who were scattered because of persecution started preaching to Greeks and not just Jews?
2. What happened when the church in Jerusalem learned about this? What did they do?
3. What does chapter 11 tell us about Barnabas? How is he described?

*cont.*

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- What additional words might you use to describe him based on his actions in this passage?
4. Who did Barnabas seek out and what did he do with this person?
  5. What interesting thing first happened in Antioch?

**LOOK OUT**

***These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.***

1. How did God confirm that this new way of doing things was a good thing in this passage? How does that impact your thinking about how the church should view new ways of doing things today?
2. How do Christians/the church often react to new ideas or ways of doing things today? How are modern reactions similar or different to what's described in this passage
3. Do you know anyone in your life (or in history) who has some of the same character qualities of Barnabas? What qualities do they share with him?
4. In his message, Pastor Brad said that even though the city of Antioch had people from different nations and backgrounds, the groups didn't mix well. They stayed with people who were similar to them. Where do you see this same trend today?
5. According to Pastor Brad, the people in Antioch needed a new name for this group of believers that went beyond their ethnic identities, so they called them Christians. How have you seen believers today move beyond racial/ethnic/generational/socioeconomic/political boundaries today? What do you think that could look like?

**LOOK IN**

***These are questions that help you consider personal application. Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max.***

1. How has God shown you that a new or different way of doing things can be a good thing in your life?
2. How does this passage encourage or challenge you as you react to or participate in new ways of doing things in the church and in the world?
3. Which quality of Barnabas do you most wish to develop in your life in this season?
4. To what do you really belong? What factor is most important in your life? Your race, economic status, political party, relationship status, etc.?

cont.

**CONTINUED:**

5. What might it look like in your own life to move beyond racial/ethnic/generational/socioeconomic/political boundaries? What do you find most exciting about this idea? What do you find most difficult?

**LIVE IT OUT**

***These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.***

1. What's one new thing that you've learned about how to react to new ways of doing things from this passage? How can you put that into practice this week? How can your group encourage and support you?
2. Go around your group and point out a quality of Barnabas that you see in each of your group members. Often we focus on ways that we are lacking. Spend some time encouraging each other for how God has already grown each of you!
3. How can your group pray for you this week as you seek to make your faith, and not any other factor, the most defining part of your life? Is there anything you need to do this week to take a step in that direction?

*Thanks to Ashleigh Rich and the Adult Discipleship Team for this week's notes and questions, as well as Charissa Burns (@charissaburnsstudio on Instagram) for her illustrated notes, which normally appear on the following page.*

