

Acts 11:1-30

September 28, 2025



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Encouragement Activity

Supplies and Setup:

- One piece of cardstock per student
- One pen or marker per student

Optional:

- Soft worship music to play in the background

Instructions:

- Begin by sharing with students that today's activity is all about encouragement — speaking life and positivity into one another.
- Pass out one piece of cardstock and one pen or marker for each student.
- Ask students to write their name small at the top or corner of their cardstock. Show a sample so they know how much space to leave for others to write.
- Students will pass their cardstock around the room. Each time they receive a sheet, they write a brief and kind message or encouraging note

to the person whose name is on the paper—then pass it to the next person.

- Continue until every student has written on every sheet.
- Once papers are returned to their owners, give students a few quiet minutes to read their notes. Encourage them to reflect on the uplifting words they received.

Teaching Moment:

It feels good to encourage others and be encouraged, right? God designed Christian community to encourage one another, and we will see that in action in our reading today. The church was encouraged through the spread of the gospel, by Barnabas the encourager, and by the disciples taking care of brothers and sisters in need.

DISCUSSION

 ASK SEVERAL VOLUNTEERS TO READ ACTS 11:1-30.

Think back on the events of Acts 10. What context does that add to Peter's actions in these verses? Why was this such an important moment?

How did those listening respond? Why was this equally important?

What did these things mean for the church moving forward?

How did God work in unexpected ways through difficult circumstances in this passage?

Why do you think Luke noted the differences in audiences in verses 19-26 (Jews v. Greeks)? Why would this be significant?

What do the actions of the disciples at the end of this passage teach us about the way the gospel impacts all areas of life?

How has God called us to care for others today?

GOING DEEPER

You are uniquely positioned in your school, community, and activities to encourage those around you. What are some ways you could do that this week?

What makes it easy to miss these opportunities and focus only on ourselves?

APPLICATION

What do we learn about God's love for people from every background in this passage?

How has God worked a bad situation out for good in your life?

What are some ways we can care for our community using the gifts God has given us?

PRAYER

Thank God for making the gift of the gospel available to everyone. Ask for His help as you seek to share the gospel message and the gifts He has given you in your community.

LOOKING AHEAD

Encourage your group to look ahead as we discuss our role, God's strategy, and the goal of missions.

October 5, 2025 --- Matthew 28:18-20 / Acts 1:8 / Revelation 7:9-10 / Romans 10:13-15

COMMENTARY

Acts 11

Endorsement of the Witness to the Gentiles (11:1–18). The final scene takes place in Jerusalem, where Peter was questioned by some of the more conservative Jewish Christians about his having dined with Gentiles. Peter related the whole incident to them. Both visions are given in detail for the third time. The reader cannot miss the importance of the event. Peter's critics could not deny the Spirit's work, so they had to agree with Peter that God was including the Gentiles in Christ. Not all the details had been settled. The issue would arise again in the Jerusalem Conference of Acts 15. But the general principle of the Gentile mission had been agreed upon. The door was now open for the mission of the Antioch church.

Antioch's Witness (11:19–30). The church of Antioch in Syria was established by some of Stephen's fellow Hellenists who had fled the persecution in Jerusalem. Antioch was a city of Greek culture and language. The Christian Hellenists witnessed to the Jews of the city first but eventually turned to the Gentiles. They were the first Christian congregation to undertake a Gentile mission. That is probably why the name Christian was first used there. "Christian" is a Latinized formation and was undoubtedly used first by the Gentiles whose attention had been drawn by the Christian outreach.

Antioch's Gentile mission came to the attention of the Jerusalem church, which sent Barnabas to check it out. Barnabas quickly determined its authenticity and joined in the outreach himself. He remembered Paul, who was himself a Greek-speaking Jew of the Dispersion, one who would be particularly suited for a ministry to Gentiles. Barnabas went to Tarsus, found Paul, and brought him to Antioch. There the two witnessed for a whole year. The Antioch outreach prepared the two for their own mission to the Gentiles, which they would soon undertake.

Verses 27–30 relate a special project undertaken by the Antioch church. Agabus, a Christian prophet from Jerusalem, predicted that a severe famine would soon occur throughout the Roman Empire. A major famine did indeed occur at that time, during the reign of Claudius. The Antioch Christians saved up and assisted the Judean churches when the famine struck. Paul and Barnabas administered the offering. It served as a pattern for Paul, who would later undertake a major collection from his Gentile congregations for the Judean Christians.