



**A NEW MONTH**  
**A NEW SEASON**  
**A NEW NAME**



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**Date: 09/01/2024**

**We're going to look at the first time  
the Bible refers to believers as  
"Christians"**

**These passages in the book of Acts  
are definitely some of the most  
important in history**

**They refer to the foundation of the first great Gentile (non-Jewish) church**

**HOW DID IT HAPPEN??**

## Four words tell the story:

- Persecution
- Preaching
- Power
- Proof

## **Acts 11:19 King James Version (Persecution)**

**19** Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

## **Acts 7:54-60 King James Version**

**54** When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

**55** But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,

**56** And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

**57** Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord,



**58** And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

**59** And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.

**60** And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**Remember Stephen's speech  
and  
testimony in death**

**WHAT THE ENEMY MEANT FOR EVIL,  
THE LORD WILL TURN AROUND  
AND  
USE FOR GOOD!!!**

**This attack and others like it were meant  
to destroy the church**

**Instead, the opposite happens**

**Believers scattered, but they kept on  
preaching the word of God**

**THEY DIDN'T GIVE UP!!!**

**Acts 11:19 names three cities specifically  
where this was happening:**

**Phoenicia/Cyprus/Antioch**

**The takeaway here is that no area was  
to be left untouched by the Word**

**THE SAME APPLIES TO US TODAY!!!**

**Remember, all this was  
a direct result of the persecution  
the disciples and believers faced**



## **Acts 11:20 King James Version (Preaching)**

**20** And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus.

**Antioch is identified here as the first city  
where non-Jews received the  
Word through preaching/teaching**

**The verse before says only Jews  
were being given the teachings**

**This wasn't what Jesus  
wanted in his commission**

## **Matthew 28:18-20 King James Version**

**18** And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying,  
All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

**19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing  
them in the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Ghost:

**20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I  
have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always,  
even unto the end of the world. Amen.

## **Romans 10:12 King James Version**

**12** For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

## **Revelation 22:17 King James Version**

**17** And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

**Let's focus on Antioch...what was so significant about this city?**

## **Ancient Antioch:**

- Located in modern day Turkey**
- Was a capital of Syria after Roman occupation**
- Dominated by Greek culture/language, but there were a large number of Syrians and Jews that lived there**



## **Ancient Antioch (cont'd):**

- Was a major economic and commercial center of the ancient world**  
(at one point, it was the 3rd largest city of the Roman Empire behind Rome and Alexandria)
- All kinds of travelers through constantly, it was tolerant of all religions**
- Sport and leisure dominated their culture so much, it was became the city's defining characteristic**

**WHY DOES ALL THIS INFORMATION MATTER?**

**This was the city where the first great Christian church among Gentiles was to be established**

**This was the city where the first worldwide missionaries were sent from**

**This was the city where believers would be called a new name**

**PREACHING HERE WAS VITAL TO  
THE GROWTH AND FUTURE OF THE CHURCH!!!**

**PREACHING WHEREVER WE ARE RIGHT  
NOW IS JUST AS IMPORTANT!!!!**

**God overruled the pleasures and sins of Antioch**

**God overruled the fears and doubts of  
believers in that city to witness and preach  
despite all the trials/opposition**

## **Luke 1:79 King James Version**

**79** To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

## Isaiah 42:6 King James Version

**6** I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

## **Acts 11:21-25 King James Version**

**21** And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

**22** Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch.



**23** Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

**24** For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.

**Take a step back and picture this**

**One of the most idolatrous cities in ancient times**

**a great number" were convicted  
and  
converted**

**The effect of all the new converts  
was so powerful, news reached all  
the way back to Jerusalem**

**WHEN THE HAND OF THE LORD ENTERS  
YOUR LIFE AND STARTS WORKING,  
EVERYBODY IS GOING TO HEAR ABOUT IT!!!!**

**The apostles and first leaders of the early church were based in Jerusalem**

**They wanted the new churches to have help (**verse 22**), be exhorted, (**verse 23**) and be taught (**verse 26**)**

**WHO DID THEY CHOOSE FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT?**

**BARNABAS**

**This isn't the first time he appears in the Bible**

**We've been introduced to him previously**



## **Acts 4:32-37 King James Version**

**32** And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

**33** And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

**34** Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

**35** And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

**36** And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

**37** Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

**What made Barnabas a good candidate  
to go to Antioch?**

He was a native of Cyprus (**Acts 4:36**)

**36** And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,

**He was a "good man, full of the  
Holy Ghost and faith",**

## Barnabas' mission was exhortation

“with purpose of heart” → determined, set, focused

“they would cleave unto the Lord” → constant, loyal,  
persistent

## **1 Peter 5:9 King James Version**

**9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.**

## **Galatians 5:1 King James Version**

**5 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.**



## **1 Corinthians 15:58 King James Version**

**58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

## **Another major point of the story:**

- The church and Barnabas recognized their need for help**
- They didn't get full of themselves and think that they could do it all by themselves**

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**Barnabas seeks out Saul for assistance.....but why?**

**→ Because he has seen and knows firsthand Saul's gift for teaching and preaching**

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## **Acts 9:26-30 King James Version**

**26** And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

**27** But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

**28** And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

**29** And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.

**30** Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsu

.

**WE COME TO THE END OF THIS STORY.....**  
**BUT WHERE HAS IT LED US TO??**

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## **Acts 11:26 King James Version**

**26** And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch..

**For a whole year, Barnabas and Saul lay  
the foundation for the framework  
for the church at Antioch**



**Dedication and commitment by everyone  
involved leads to “much people”  
being converted, in addition to the ones  
already were**

**A NEW NAME IS GIVEN TO  
BELIEVERS...CHRISTIANS**

**→ This name appears three times in the NT**

## **Acts 26:28 King James Version**

**28** Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

## **1 Peter 4:16 King James Version**

**16** Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

**God's blessings were so good that believers  
were identified by a new title**

**Had Saul and Barnabas planned on being there for a whole year? We don't know for sure, but they couldn't leave because their work was flourishing so much**

**HAS GOD BEEN SO GOOD TO DEEPER  
LIFE THAT OTHERS NOTICE ???**

**HAS GOD BEEN SO GOOD TO YOU  
THAT OTHERS NOTICE ???**

**PERSECUTION/PREACHING/POWER/PROOF**

**THESE ARE THE STEPS THAT LED TO  
BELIEVERS BEING IDENTIFIED AS CHRISTIANS**



**KNOWING THE HISTORY, LET US WEAR  
THE NAME “CHRISTIAN”  
AS A BADGE OF HONOR!!!**

**FROM THE ANCIENT CITY OF ANTIOCH  
TO THE MODERN DAY 2024**

**LET'S CONTINUE TO LET A NEW MONTH,  
A NEW SEASON SHOW WE ARE DEDICATED  
CHRISTIANS!!!!**



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**A NEW SEASON**

**A NEW NAME**

