

The Antioch Church*

Acts 11:19-30

Based on NLT (1996)

Acts 11:19-21

Meanwhile, the believers* who had fled from Jerusalem during the persecution after Stephen's death *were traveling...far and wide....* They *spoke about Jesus*, but only to the *descendants of Abraham*. However, some of the believers who went to a *place called Antioch... also told those who were not descendants of Abraham there about...Jesus*. *God's power* was upon them, and large numbers of these *people believed* the message about Jesus*.

Acts 11:22-24

When the church* at Jerusalem heard what had happened, they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he arrived and saw this proof of God's favor (*on the believers at Antioch*), he was filled with joy, and he encouraged the believers to stay true to *Jesus*. Barnabas was a good man, full of *God's Spirit** and strong in *belief*. And large numbers of people *became believers in Jesus*.

Acts 11:25-26

Then Barnabas went...to find *Paul*. When he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching great numbers of people. (It was here at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.)

Acts 11:27-30

During this time, some *spokesmen** traveled from Jerusalem to Antioch. *As God's Spirit directed*, one of them...*predicted...*that a great famine was coming upon the entire Roman *Empire....* So the believers in Antioch decided to send relief to the brothers and sisters in *and around Jerusalem*, everyone giving as much as they could.

...Then, Barnabas and Paul took their gifts to...the church in Jerusalem.

Words/Phrases to Consider

'God's power'

This means that God was helping them very much and showing his strength through his help to them.

'proof of God's favor'

This is equivalent to 'God had been good to the people' or 'God had blessed the people.' Please see the Glossary for 'bless.'

'Christian'

In many societies today, this word carries much baggage and actually does not carry the same meaning that it did in Acts. In Acts, this term denoted a true believer and follower of Jesus, not just a cultural follower or someone 'born into' a Christian family.

Story Crafting

There are many place names that are left out of this story for ease of retelling and remembering.

Some people have found the order of Acts 11:22-24 confusing and difficult to retell. It is fine to reorder these sentences in such a way that the story flows more naturally. For example, you could say something like, 'They sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man, full of God's Spirit, and strong in belief. When he arrived and saw...'

'(on the believers at Antioch)'

Phrases like this may be added for clarity. We know from the previous verses to whom God was showing favor.

Intra-Story Cohesion

Use the same words or phrases you have been using throughout the story set for **believers, Jerusalem, persecution, belief/believe, church, God's Spirit** and **spokesman**.

Continue to use the same word that you have been using throughout the story set for **spoke**.

Continue to be consistent in your use of terms to describe **descendants of Abraham** and **not descendants of Abraham**.

In *God's Spirit*, you were introduced to the term 'brother' in reference to close friends. Use the same or similar term here for **brothers and sisters**.

Worldview

'brothers and sisters'

These terms may be understood as blood relatives in some cultures, so as you did in *God's Spirit*, make sure that whatever words you use here refer to close friends.

CHURCH FORMATION ELEMENTS TO DISCUSS

Healthy churches

Giving of offerings

Leadership/mentoring

Gospel for everyone

Abundant gospel sowing