

STRETCH

Acts Session 7 A World-Changing Church

Outline of Acts (from Fee & Stuart)

- The Good news begins in Jerusalem (1:1-6:7)
- The Good news spreads to Judea and Samaria (6:8-9:31)
- **The Good news spreads to the Gentiles (9:32- 12:24)**
- The Good news spreads to Asia (12:25-16:5)
- The Good news spreads to Europe (16:6 – 19:20)
- The Good news reaches Rome (19:21-28:31)

Discussion

Read Acts 11:19-30

- What evidence of the “grace of God” do you see in the Antioch church?

1) Ordinary (11:19-21)

- Grass roots evangelism
- Crossing cultures
- No permission needed
- Change is not brought about by ‘position’ but by Jesus
- There are many ways to let loose God’s word – not just the pulpit

2) Encouraged (11:22-25)

- Encouraging the good – eye for God’s grace
- Call to be faithful and steadfast
- Fullness of the Holy Spirit
- Looking beyond ourselves... “Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul

Discussion

*What things do you find most encouraging in your faith?
How could we be encouragers?*

3) Rooted (Acts 11:26)

“For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.”

- They too devoted themselves to the teaching
- Their identity had become rooted in Christ

4) Responsive (11:27-30)

“Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine”

- To the Spirit – prophetic confidence
- To Needs – sacrificial response (Antioch was place known for its over-crowding and poverty.)

Discussion

Read chapter 12

- How does Luke contrast Herod and the church?
- What point do you think he is making?

World vs Church

Herod

- Confidence in human power, numbers, security of a place
- Desire for outward glory “his royal robes” – made of silver
- The plans of men will eventually fail (v23)

Church

- Confidence in the power of prayer – *ektenos* (Luke 22:44).
- Inner peace (v7)
- The plans of God prevail in the end “but the word of God increased and multiplied (v24)

5) Diverse (13:1)

- Barnabas – A Levite (Acts 4:36)
- Simeon called Niger – “black” / African
- Lucius of Cyrene – North Africa/ Libya
- Manaen, a high official
- Saul

Sacrificial in Style

6) Worshipping (13:2)

- Worshipping / Ministering before the Lord
- And Fasting... Hungry for God
- The Holy Spirit said...

Sacrificial in Service

Discussion

- *What did the Holy Spirit reveal exactly?*
- *How did the church respond?*
- *Who sent them out?*

7) Sending (13:3)

- Listening to the Spirit
- Leaving gaps for God to fill

Sacrificial in Sending

A World-Changing Church

Ordinary	Encouraged
Rooted	Responsive
Diverse	Worshipping
Sending	

Even so...it is God who does it!

- “And the hand **of the Lord** was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21)
- “When he came and saw **the grace of God**” (Acts 11:23)
- ““Now I am sure that the **Lord has sent his angel and rescued me.**” (Acts 12:11)
- But the **word of God** increased and multiplied. (Acts 12:24)