



The Antioch Church

In Acts 11:20, the Church at Antioch was founded by men of Cyprus and Cyrene. No apostles were involved in starting this church.

“But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.” (Acts 11:20, NASB)

The first man to go to Antioch was Barnabas, a grace man, who was sent from Jerusalem to check out Antioch to see what was going on. Acts 11:22-23.

“The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord;” (Acts 11:22-23, NASB)

After observation of the Lord’s work, he went to Tarsus to find Paul. Barnabas, who had the gift of prophecy, knew that the Antioch Church needed a pastor-teacher, so he sought after the best that could be found - Paul. The principle is that the local church must have someone leading with the gift of pastor-teacher. A church needs Bible doctrine communicated. Acts 11:25-28.

“And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.” (Acts 11:25-28, NASB)

The Antioch church actually sent money to the church of Jerusalem to help the destitute believers. Legalism finally degraded the Jerusalem church because of many believers with mental attitude sins. The grace church sustained the legalistic church in their time of need which shows Antioch’s orientation to grace. Acts 11:29-30.

“And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.” (Acts 11:29-30, NASB)

Antioch was taught grace from the start and was prospered by the Lord by the rapid expansion in numbers of believers as recorded in Acts 11:23-24.

“Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord.” (Acts 11:23-24, NASB)

The Antioch church was interested in Bible doctrine. This interest in doctrine stabilized the situation and made it possible for the great missionary movement in the first century, whereas the Jerusalem area was destroyed in 70 AD. Acts 11:26.

“and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” (Acts 11:26, NASB)