

# The Book of Acts

## GROUP CURRICULUM

SERMON **SUPERNATURAL MULTIPLICATION (ACTS 11:1-30)**

DATE **FEBRUARY 23, 2020**

### **Peter Reports to the Church**

<sup>1</sup> Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, <sup>3</sup>“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.” <sup>4</sup> But Peter began and explained it to them in order: <sup>5</sup> “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. <sup>6</sup> Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. <sup>7</sup> And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ <sup>8</sup> But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ <sup>9</sup> But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ <sup>10</sup> This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. <sup>11</sup> And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. <sup>12</sup> And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. <sup>13</sup> And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; <sup>14</sup> he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ <sup>15</sup> As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

### **The Church in Antioch**

<sup>19</sup> Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. <sup>20</sup> But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. <sup>21</sup> And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. <sup>22</sup> The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. <sup>23</sup> When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, <sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. <sup>25</sup> So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, <sup>26</sup> and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

<sup>27</sup> Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). <sup>29</sup> So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. <sup>30</sup> And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

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1. In Acts 11:5-17 Peter provides a recap of God’s amazing and nation-changing work for Gentiles. Write down some recent evidences of God’s work and power in your life.
2. How often do you take time to reflect in thanksgiving and worship on God’s faithfulness? As a group, praise God for His work, His faithfulness and His generous grace. How could you build a habit of thanksgiving and praise into your God Time and Group Time?
3. Read James 1:17. How do you view the act of repentance – as a gift, or as a burden? Why? Now read 1 John 1:8-9. What does God’s Word have to say about repentance? How does this assurance from scripture encourage you to value regular times of repentance as a gift rather than a burden?
4. Read Luke 10:38-42. Use the table below to describe how Mary and Martha represent the principles in Acts 11:23 of being faithful to the Lord without compromise and having a steadfast purpose. How can you better discern whether or not your busyness or stillness reflects a pursuit of steadfast purpose in the Lord?

	Faithfulness to the Lord	Steadfast purpose
Mary		
Martha		
5. In Acts 11:19-20, Pastor Robbie talked about the start of the gospel going “town-to-town” to the Gentiles. Consider your family background. Read Revelation 7:9-10. Reflect on how God’s grace has been evident when you consider the make-up of your home group.
6. In his commentary on the Book of Acts, Warren Wiersbe wrote that “With its large cosmopolitan population and its great commercial and political power, Antioch presented to the church an exciting opportunity for evangelism.” Could you replace Antioch with “Greater Toronto Area” in that sentence? What are you doing to take advantage of that opportunity? What prevents you from participating in the fruit of ‘growth’?
7. Read Nehemiah 12:43. Describe the role of the individuals contributing to the ‘corporate joy’. How do you think your joy in the Lord contributes to the body of Christ in the following areas? Where do you need to grow? As you examine your heart, remember that in the verse, the joy of Jerusalem results from the joy of the individuals:
  - Godliness of character
  - Growth as gifts are used to serve the Lord through His church
  - Generosity with your time, talents and treasures
8. Take a few minutes now to pause and pray for your community. Call out to the Lord that He would be preparing hearts to accept the Word of Christ into their hearts, and that we as believers would have Spirit-led strength to proclaim Christ.