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WARM UP

Do you have a friend or acquaintance that is completely different to you? In what way are they different? Does it affect your friendship with them?

WORD

Read **Acts 11:19-30**

What began as a message preached by Jews to Jews had eventually made its way in an intercultural manner. Before they knew it, the church in Antioch was born with leadership from various nations and a thriving culture of evangelism.

NOTES

1 I Get Knocked Down, But I Get Up Again

¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. ²¹And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:19-21 (ESV)

Like Stephen, the disciples of Jesus are being persecuted and martyred for their faith. Two significant things happen: firstly, the Church in that time are forced to spread the Gospel in other areas of the world, and secondly, people from other nations are seeing the bravery in the disciples, thus become Christians, as well.

- What is a situation that you've looked at as being hopeless, but you see the situation as an opportunity for growth?
- Evangelism is only effective when the hand of the Lord is with us. Would you be willing to take time now to ask for God's hand on all you do?

2 Little Christs

²³When 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, ²⁴for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. ²⁵So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶and 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.

Acts 11:23-26 (ESV)

It's here that followers of Christ were being persecuted and were first mockingly called "Christians", which in that time, meant these followers of Jesus would be like "Little Christs". Although this was done in complete ridicule, in the purity of its definition, it is true - that Jesus followers desire to be more like him by the grace of God.

- In what ways would you like to be more like Jesus? What would it take to see that happen in your life?
- Do you think you are open to letting the Holy Spirit lead you to whomever he might lead you to? Why or why not?

PRAYER

- Pray for strength and encouragement for those who are ministers in restricted nations.
- Pray that by God's grace, you'll be able to carry the Gospel, despite fear, persecution or circumstances.
- Pray for anyone within your group that may be struggling with their faith, that God would show up, and that they would grow into the destiny and purpose God has for them.
- Pray for healing of any members within your group, whether it's relational rifts or physical ailments.