

## NOTES

# TRANSFORMERS

## Gospel Metamorphosis in the Book of Acts

WEEK 3 | Antioch - the First Church

## PRAYER

*Gracious Father in heaven, please be at work in our hearts and in lives. We invite you to have the Holy Spirit work on us and in us to fashion us into better encouragers of your people and into your servants with a generous and open heart. Use me to bring other people to Jesus, in whose name I pray. Amen.*

Unstoppable! 'The Encourager Sent to Encourage' — Acts 11:22-24 Phil Ware

## OPENING QUESTION

(OPTIONAL)

What is the furthest place geographically you've been from where you are now? Would you ever live there? Why/Why Not?



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## WORD

*19 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. 20 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. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. 22 The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 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, 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. 25 So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 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. 27 Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 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). 29 So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. 30 And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.*

### [Acts 11](#)

The church at Antioch was located in Antioch of Syria and was about 7,000 miles travel distance from Jerusalem. It became a haven for Christians fleeing persecution (Acts 11:19). Acts 11:26 tells us that it is the first city where believers were called Christians, making it an important place on the map of the early Church.

As a large city in the first-century Roman era, Syrian Antioch had a sizeable population of well-to-do Jews. It became a strong, early location for the church and is chronicled for us in Acts 11:20–21: "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. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord."

This report made its way back to the persecuted church at Jerusalem. So, they sent Barnabas to learn more. A trusted, godly man, Barnabas loved what he was seeing and so went to get Paul (still referred to as Saul at this point) to come back with him. They stayed a year, teaching and ministering (Acts 11:22–26). From the record of the Book of Acts, the Holy Spirit was mightily present and many prophets went there.

Besides the exciting move of the Holy Spirit, Antioch is important because several large issues were decided as the church grew and encompassed both Jew and Gentile, as God had always intended.

[What is the history and significance of the church at Antioch? - CompellingTruth.com](#)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

((NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE))

1. On a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being never and 10 being always), how would you rate how relationally connected to others you are right now? Why would you rate yourself this way?
2. How open are you to building deep relationships with people that are not like you? (i.e. Culturally, generationally, passions are different).
3. What was the last big issue you faced and how did you/are you walking towards resolution of the issue? Did you face the issue with others or on your own? Why?
4. Barnabas was described as being "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith" vs 24. What does you think it might have looked like in Barnabas' life?
5. Do you choose today to trust Jesus as the Ruler and sole source of fulfilment of your life by accepting His call for you to enter into relationship with Him? Please take this moment to pray with your group. Will you enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your lifegroup leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

**Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite You to be the master of my life. I want to trust and follow You as my Lord and Saviour. I declare that I am Yours, and You are mine, In Jesus name, AMEN.**