

Sermon Series Title: "Church Beginnings"

Sermon Series Summary: From now until around Easter, we will be in the book of Acts, covering chapters 1-12. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, we see the NT church being born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this series, we see the church being built, the kingdom going forth, and the gospel being proclaimed.

"We are in our "Church Beginnings" sermon series, and through this series, we're going to see that we need to know where we come from to know who we are now and to know who we will become in the future."

Call: 2 Samuel 22:4

Text: Acts 11:1-4, 15-30

Title: "Message and Mission"

Next Week's Call: 2 Samuel 22:5-7

Next Week's Text: Acts 12:1-5

Next Week's Title: "Plight and Prayer"

Future Calls: 2 Samuel 22:5-7, 14-16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21-22, 23-25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 47-49, 50-51

Future Titles: "Rest and Rescue" (Acts 12:6-19); "Futility and Fruit" (Acts 12:20-25); "Obedience Unto Death" (Matthew 26:36-56); "Resurrection Accomplished, Resurrection Applied" (Matthew 28:1-20)

Fallen Condition Focus: We criticize the work of the Lord and we aren't on mission.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ is the One who knew the will of God, accomplished the will of God while being falsely accused, and is the missional and merciful one to save us.

Proposition: "Jesus is our missional and merciful Savior through His obedience unto death."

Summary: The circumcision party criticizes Peter for dwelling among the Gentiles, being unclean. Peter shares the testimony of what transpired in ch. 10, leading the people to worship God for the salvation of the Gentiles. We see the work of Gentile Christians in Antioch as the church is planted there and is on mission through mercy. This chapter helps us to examine ourselves: our salvation, testimony, witness, and mission.

## Reflective Questions:

1. What kinds of people are the hardest to share the gospel with, for you personally?
2. How do you discern the will of God?
3. How do you feel when you see other people growing in their faith and flourishing?
4. What name would you receive based on your life, passions, and goals?

### I. Introduction

- A. Hook
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

### II. The Message (vv. 1-4, 15-18)

- A. The apostles and brothers hear that Gentiles received the word of God, and the circumcision party criticize Peter.
  1. Circumcision party- Jewish Christians who preached that one had to follow the law to be saved
    1. They end up being an opponent to the gospel later in this book (Acts 15) and in the Pauline epistles (Galatians, Philippians).
- B. "You went to the uncircumcised men and ate with them."
  1. Accusation of Peter being unclean.
  2. This didn't break the law, but it broke Jewish cleansing traditions.
  3. They don't like that Gentiles has received the Spirit without the law being placed on them.
    1. Who are the people in our lives we don't want to see in heaven? What kinds of people are the hardest to share the gospel with for you personally?
- C. Peter explains to them the account of Ch. 10, calmly and not defensively
  1. This is the third time this story is being repeated (Cornelius' vision- twice, Peter's vision- twice).
  2. Will of God (divine guidance)- prayer, word, circumstances, witnesses, fertile ground, God's blessing, ending and confirmed by Scripture
- D. The Holy Spirit has fallen on the Gentiles, and Jesus' words confirmed what Peter has witnessed.
- E. "How can we stand in God's way?" And they glorify God.
  1. Do we glorify God with the advancement of the gospel?

### III. The Mission (vv. 19-26)

- A. Because of the persecution after Stephen's death (8:1), the Christians from Cyprus and Cyrene traveled as far as Antioch, preaching to Greeks.
    - 1. Antioch- third most important city behind Rome and Alexandria.  
Known for commercialism and sin
  - B. The hand of the Lord is upon them, and a great number turned to the Lord.
    - 1. Blessing from the Lord- not man
    - 2. Turned to the Lord- not just attendance or nominally Christian...  
repentance unto life
  - C. The Jerusalem church sends Barnabas to confirm.
  - D. Barnabas is glad and exhorts them to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose.
    - 1. Barnabas- good man, full of the Holy Spirit, of faith, intercessor for Paul, generous
    - 2. So many people fall away from the faith. Constantly coming back to Christ.
  - E. Barnabas cannot do it alone, so he looks for Saul.
    - 1. We haven't heard of Saul for years now. Barnabas knows he is in Tarsus somewhere and finds him.
    - 2. Saul may have felt like he was failing God or that there was no possibility of ministry left for him.
  - F. A whole year- they meet with the church and teach a great many people.
  - G. Christians- Christ-ones
    - 1. Not given by Jews- dare not use the title Christ in a name; not given by the church- other names and not about their own glory; given by others
    - 2. What name would you receive based on your life, passions, and goals?
- IV. The Mercy (vv. 27-30)
- A. Prophets in the early church- 1 Cor. 12-14
  - B. Agabus prophesies about the great famine over the world
  - C. Antioch is an affluent city with affluent people. The church decides to send relief to the the brothers in Judea.
  - D. The people of God are marked by the mercy of God... especially for other Christians.
    - 1. They know that their faith started in Jerusalem. Maybe they want to give even though they heard of some objections to Gentiles receiving the faith.
- V. The Messiah
- A. Jesus knows the will of God, and He obeyed to the point of death on the cross.
  - B. He was first falsely accused and crucified for it.

- C. Jesus is the one who asks for the forgiveness of his enemies.
- D. Jesus is the One who has taken on our name, so that we can receive His name.
- E. Jesus is the one who showed mercy to the us who are hungry, thirsty, poor, needy... by becoming hungry, thirsty, poor, and needy for us on the cross.
- F. Jesus is the ultimate Message, Missionary, and Merciful One.