

### 3. Because of the Scriptures and Christ-likeness:

**v25- 28** *“So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people.” – Acts 11v 26*

*In the physical realm, growth is assumed. Why then do we tolerate stunted growth within the spiritual realm? Only dedication to apostolic doctrine brings noticeable maturity. At Antioch, Scripture, consistently taught, was central to the life of the church.*

- *“built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets”*  
- Eph. 2v 20
- *“like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word”*  
- 1 Pet. 2v 2
- *“Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity” – Heb. 6v 1*

#### Summary:

*The church at Antioch grew with evidence of God’s grace. How did this happen? This community of Christ-followers were dedicated to **living the good news**, whilst at the same time **looking to the example of Spirit-filled encourager-leaders** and keen to keep **learning more from the Scriptures**. The people of Antioch took note: “Christians! They’re just like Jesus!” The question is, **are we?***

#### Taking it further:



*What strikes you most in this week’s study?*



*Re-read the passage carefully and note anything that stands out.*



*How do these Scriptures challenge the way you are living?*



*What is your response to God’s Word going to be this week?*

# At Antioch



*“And the disciples  
were called Christians  
first at Antioch.”*

– Acts 11v 26

## Why?





Aim: To highlight factors that drew the people of Antioch to consider their local church as a truly Christ-like community.



Key Point: Genuine Gospel-impact results from lives that demonstrate *how* the power of the risen Christ is working within them.

### Introduction:

***Did you have a nickname at school?*** Was it nice or nasty?

Usually a nickname picks up on something about you – it rhymes with your name, refers to something embarrassing that happened, maybe a physical reason, etc. Its not always nice, but sometimes undeniable: Like it or not, it's what others see in you! This was true at Antioch...

### Reading: Acts 11v 19-26

### At Antioch: Why Christian at Antioch?

The first Gentile church was in Antioch. This growing church was planted amid persecution, often the way things grow under God and certainly true in the book of Acts. Despite the darkness, God was at work, lives were changing and people took notice. It's the same today:

People are drawn to something authentic: For example, Paul says when an outsider comes to your church and sees God's people functioning as He intends "... he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, "God is really among you!" (1 Cor. 14v 25)

There is something compelling and undeniable when the hand of God is seen working in the lives of His people. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" – Acts 11v 25. Originally it was a nickname given by those who observed the church! Derogatory? Maybe, but the local people saw something that made them think.

### **What does "Christian" mean?**

The Greek word: "Christianos" (derived from "Christos" – Christ)

*Lit. "follower of Christ", "little Christ"*

The believers at Antioch were considered to be "Just like Jesus!"

**Only used 3 times in the Bible...** (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16)  
It should not be taken lightly!

What did the people of Antioch see? Acts 11 gives us some insight.

### **Why "Christian" at Antioch? 3 Key Factors:**

1. **Because of the Gospel and Commitment to its cause:**  
**v9-21 "... Some of them, however... Went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also..." – Acts 11v 20**

*Christians have their seats – a bit like the old pew rents! We don't like change: it is uncomfortable, unfamiliar, requires effort. Yet we believe in a Gospel of radical, fundamental change. God in Scripture is constantly on the move! As Gospel ripples continue to spread, barriers are broken and now Greeks are reached for Christ.*

2. **Because of the Spirit and a focus on Faith:**  
**v22-24 "... They sent Barnabas to Antioch... he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith..." – Acts 11v 22-23**

*Are you a Container Christian or a Colander Christian?  
We're colanders! D.L. Moody famously said "I leak!" So do we!*

*Note the order in Barnabas: We cannot be faith-filled, unless we are Spirit-filled! Carnality in the Church is the death of blessing, yet spirituality nurtures faith, unity and gospel growth. Barnabas leads the way.*

- "Don't get drunk on wine... but instead be filled with the Spirit." – Eph. 5v 18
- "Without faith it is impossible to please God" – Heb. 11v 6