

## First at Antioch

Acts 11:25-30

Introduction:

- A. Antioch important city to world: Pop. 500,000, lighted streets, beautiful buildings.
- B. Antioch important city to church: Important to converting Gentiles (Acts 13:1-4; 14:26,27).
- C. Antioch had two important firsts in the history of the Lord's church

Discussion:

### II. The Disciples Were Called Christians First At Antioch. (v. 26)

- A. "Christian" was a new name for God's people.
  - 1. Prophesied by Isaiah 62:2 - Antioch first Gentile church.
  - 2. It was not just used at Antioch - "first at Antioch" implies wider usage.
- B. "Christian" was not merely a name used in derision. (1 Pet. 4:16; cf. Isa. 62:2).
- C. "Christian" means "of Christ" describing a certain kind of person.
  - 1. He is not one who just believes in Christ, he lives for Christ. (Acts 26:27,28).
    - a. Opposite to ungodly and sinner. (1 Pet. 4:18).
    - b. Opposite to murderer, thief, and busybody. (1 Pet. 4:15).
  - 2. He is one who believes and turns. (Acts 11:21); obeys (1 Pet. 4:16,17).
  - 3. He is one who is righteous (1 Pet. 4:18) and in "house of God" (1 Pet. 4:17; cf. 1 Tim. 3:15). "As long as you live in my house, you will..."

### III. The First Case Of "Congregational Cooperation" in Benevolence Was At Antioch. (Acts 11:27-30 our text)

- A. Why was the relief sent? - a famine. (v. 28).
  - 1. N. T. sent funds to churches in need, not a "created" need.
  - 2. Churches today sometimes send to churches not in need - only assumed need.
- B. How was the relief carried to Judean churches? - directly. (v.29).
  - 1. No middle agency received and managed funds.
  - 2. No organization between sending and receiving church.
- C. Where was the relief delivered? "Elders" in Judea. (v. 29).
  - 1. No human organization involved.
  - 2. No board of directors to oversee the work.
- D. What facts in this case are present in all other recorded cases of cooperation.
  - 1. The receiving church was in need - thru no fault of their own.
  - 2. The funds were sent directly by messengers chosen by church and delivered to needy church.
  - 3. The funds were not sent nor received by human institution to supplant local church.
  - 4. The funds were for relieving needy saints.

Conclusion:

- A. Let us not substitute human names for the one authorized by Christ.
- B. Let us not substitute human arrangements for that authorized by Christ.