

WHEN CHURCH BECOMES A CRUTCH



Acts 11:1–5

11 Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying,³ **“You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”**⁴ But Peter began and explained it to them in order:⁵ **“I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me.**

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Acts 11:19–22

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.

Acts 11:23–26

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.

Acts 11:27–30

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.

These are very challenging times. I wish all things could go back to normal, to the way things used to be. They can't right now, and no one knows when that is going to happen. We want our normal Sunday's back! But what was "normal" for Christ & the Early Church?

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