

The Church at Antioch

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[0:00] The Church at Antioch. Acts 11 from verse 21.

And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church, which was in Jerusalem.

And they sent forth Barabbas, that he should go as far as Antioch, who when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would plead unto the Lord.

For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and faith, and much people was added unto the Lord. The Church at Antioch.

What we see at Antioch. Antioch is a city, it's mentioned some 19 times by name. And after Rome and Alexandria, Antioch was the third largest city of its time.

[1:18] With a population of more than 500,000 people. And whilst Antioch was a cultural center, it had not abandoned itself to pagan religion, pagan education, and pagan philosophy.

As had all the other prominent cities like Rome, Athens, and Alexandria. In Antioch, the disciples of Christ were first called Christians. Or in other words, the people of God.

The people of Christ. They were first called Christians there. Antioch was a key base for Christianity. And the Church at Antioch was called the greatest example of Biblical Christianity in the entire New Testament.

The Church at Antioch was very central. There's something about it. It was a base for much of the Church activity of that time. It was the first Church among the Gentiles.

And Paul began his ministry in earnest there. Paul began his ministry systematically as Antioch, as home base for his outreach. The first missionaries of the Church were sent forth from Antioch and called back and sent forth Barnabas and Paul.

[2:32] The Church at Antioch was a Church that was a preaching Church. We see in Acts 11. It was a witnessing Church. It was a teaching Church. It was a serving Church.

It was a giving Church. It was a generous Church. When Agabus prophesied there would be a famine, the Antioch Church collected money and sent it to brothers and sisters in Judea.

It was a generous Church. We see it was a praying Church in Acts 13. And it was a missionary Church. There's much to commend the Church at Antioch.

And in fact, at Antioch, we find the text that the King James Bible is based on. It stems from Antioch. Antioch was a very central part of Christianity.

A very much a launching pad of Christianity into the world of its day. So there's much that we can learn from Antioch, from this Biblical Church.

[3:30] And I'd like us to focus on verse 23. Verse 23, speaking of Barnabas, it says, What we see in Antioch, number one, we see grace.

We see grace. When he came and had seen the grace of God. One of the key features of God's people is grace.

Salvation is by grace. And the Christian life is by grace. When Barnabas came, what did he see? He saw grace.

He saw the grace of God. It was something that was tangible. It was something that was evident. It was visible. It was obvious to Barnabas. And life was today.

Grace ought to be the visible manifest mark of the people of God. Grace. Grace should mark us. Grace should mark our speech, our character, our homes, our hearts.

[4:43] Our nature should exude grace. And grace is something we should grow in. In 2 Peter 3 verse 18, Peter exhorts, But grow in grace.

Grow in grace. And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. To him be glory, both now and forever.

Amen. Grow in grace. It's not something static. It's something dynamic. Grace is something that impacts us. It shapes us. It transforms us.

In Acts 4.33, we read of the church of God. In Acts 4.33, it says that great grace was upon them all. How is your grace level? Brother, monitor that grace pulse. How is your grace level?

[5:39] Is it lacking? Is it missing? Is grace missing? Or is it evident?

Such that someone can see it with their eyes. Is God's grace evident in our life? Is God's grace evident in our church folk? We are saved by His grace and we serve by His grace.

Grace. Someone's described God's grace as God's enoughness. God is sufficient. Grace. Grace should be evident in our language and in our lifestyle.

How can we get more grace? What do we do if we need more grace? Of course, we get grace at salvation. When we save, when we trust Him, we realise that it's His grace that is our great need.

His grace, His mercy to save us. As we in faith trust Him, His grace extends and holds hands with our faith, in a sense.

[6:48] There's something that you can, there's somewhere you can go and get grace from. You're saved. Maybe your grace level's a little bit, it's running out a little bit.

You know, the tank's a bit empty. Your grace tank is getting a bit empty. Where do I go to get grace? How can I get some more? Hebrews 4.14 tells you where to get the grace from.

Hebrews 4.14 through 16.

There's a place you can find grace.

There's a place that grace is still available today. Grace all-sufficient. Grace amazing. Grace awesome grace. God's grace.

[8:18] It's at the throne. It's at the throne, brother. That's where the grace is. The throne of grace. That's where we can go. You can go to that place where grace can be found and you don't have to move an inch.

You don't have to move an inch. You don't have to go and chase some revival or chase some anointed preacher or some supposed anointing somewhere far distant. You can find grace to help in time of need when you come to the throne of grace.

You don't need to move an inch to go there. It is the place of prayer. It's the place of prayer is where you can find grace. You don't need to leave home to get grace.

You don't need to go on some pilgrimage to get grace. You don't need to say a number of Hail Mary's to get grace. You don't need to go to a priest to get grace. You don't even need to go to a pastor to get grace.

You don't need to go to church to get grace. You don't need to go to a particular ritual to get grace. You don't need to pay anything for grace. You need to go to the throne of grace.

[9:22] Go to the throne of grace. Come to the throne of grace right where you are. and find mercy and grace to help in time of need. Go to the throne.

Go to the throne of grace. If you've lost your grace today, you can get it back. Amen. Isn't that good news? Isn't that good news? If you're feeling like your grace level is petering out and just about conked out, then you can get grace there at the throne of grace.

If you've lost grace, you can get it back. Don't neglect to pray. Go to the place of prayer. Go to the throne. What we see in the church at Antioch is that Barnabas found grace there.

He found the grace of God there. And secondly, he found gladness there. Gladness was at Antioch. When he came and he saw the grace of God, he was glad.

He saw the grace of God and he was glad. When Barnabas saw the grace of God at work in the lives of human beings, human people, human men and women just like you and me, when he saw grace at work in their lives, he was glad.

[10:27] He was glad. There was faith and repentance there. It says that a great number believed and they turned to the Lord at Antioch.

A great number believed and they turned to the Lord at Antioch. And the glory of God was there. In Acts 11.18 it says, God had granted repentance unto life.

It was cause for rejoicing. It was cause for gladness. Friends, repentance leads to rejoicing. Repentance leads to rejoicing.

If you're outside of Christ today, repent and you can start rejoicing. You can repent and find his grace. You can repent in faith and find salvation through trusting him and his work alone for your soul's salvation.

You can repent and find that place called Calvary today and find grace to help in time of need. God granted repentance unto life.

[11:38] Repentance leads to rejoicing. Do we lack joy and gladness? Maybe it's because we're looking in the wrong place. If you're feeling like you lack joy and gladness, maybe you're looking in the wrong place today.

The Church of God knows a gladness because of grace. It's because of grace. It's because of soul's transform, of soul's ransom. Our joy is not in worldly distraction, but in godly occupation. Your joy is not in the AFL or the NRL or whoever knows what. Ball might be kicking around on some field somewhere.

Our joy is not in some worldly distraction, but in godly occupation. Our gladness is sourced in him. He is the source of our joy. As David says, My soul followeth hard after thee. Psalm 63, 8 My soul followeth hard after thee.

[12:45] Thy right hand upholdeth thee me. Psalm 63 Read the whole psalm. It's a blessing. It'll be a blessing to your soul. Our gladness is not found in carnal pursuits, but in chasing hard after the Lord.

You know, I've been ministering a long, long time. Now that's why I've got so many grey hairs. I've seen a lot of glum Christians in my time. A lot of glum Christians.

Where's the gladness gone? Where do we see the people of God find their gladness? Where do we get the gladness from? We look in the Word of God and we see where they got glad.

Look in the Word of God. Get your concordance and look up the word glad, gladly, gladness. Joy, rejoice, rejoicing. Acts 12 What were they doing in Acts 12?

Acts 12, 14 Peter was locked up. All hope was gone. But the church was praying. The church was praying. And in Acts 12, 14 When she, Rhoda, heard this I don't know, it probably got louder and louder Because people kept ignoring it.

[13:56] They were too busy praying. They were praying for Peter to get her to jail. And when Rhoda knew Peter's voice She opened not the gate for gladness But ran in and told how Peter stood before the gate Probably just kept on knocking And she was rejoicing.

She went and told the praying saints He's released. He's set free. He's with us. There was gladness there in the prayer meeting. There was gladness at the prayer meeting.

Gladness at prayers answered. The people who weren't at the prayer meeting missed it. They missed it. Gladness. Gladness. Back in the Old Testament there was gladness.

Back in the Old Testament in 2 Samuel 6 There was gladness because of the ark Which represents for us the presence of the Lord, our God. 2 Samuel 6, 12 It says, David went and brought the ark of God From the house of Obed-Eudon Into the city of David With gladness.

He brought the ark out of that place where it had been Shunned away And he brought it back to where it should have been Into that holy place. And this time he moved it God's way Not man's way And God gave them gladness.

[15:11] God's people got together and there was gladness. David got really glad. He got fanatically glad. Now there's a good thing to get glad In the Lord, to rejoice in the Lord Our God.

In 2 Chronicles 29, 30 The people got glad. When God's people get together There's gladness. It's a recurring theme. 2 Chronicles 29, 30 It says, Hezekiah the king and the princes Commanded the Levites To sing praise unto the Lord With the words of David And of Asaph the singer And they sang praises With gladness.

And they bowed their heads and worshipped. When the people got together And worshipped. When the people got together And sang praises They did it with gladness. There was gladness there.

Now I've bumped into some people lately Who've been a bit down. Over at the shop in fact I saw 2 or 3 of them lately. I've bumped into them lately And they were telling me They're feeling a bit down in the dumps.

And they said to me That they've been missing church Because of it. They've just not felt happy enough To come to church I suppose. And when they feel better They say that they'll get along They'll get to come along to church When they feel a bit more like it.

[16:23] When they feel like it. But maybe the best thing That you can do When you're actually feeling glum And down in the dumps And miserable And sorry for yourself And grumpy and grouchy Is to get to church.

Maybe it's the best place to be. To get together in the assembly Of the saints. To get together where you can Sing his praises with gladness. When you can get together And fellowship around the word of God.

When you can enjoy God With his people. Satan delights In making you stay home.

He delights in it. He chuckles and rubs his hands with bleed And has a little party Wherever he is When you stay home from church. When you go AWOL If you're feeling miserable Go to church.

It's the best place you can be. And you're feeling miserable. When we worship the Lord We worship him with gladness. Friends There's much to command Being glad In him.

[17:27] Glad With his people. You can be encouraged there When you get together With God's people. Psalm 100 Verse 2 It says Serve the Lord With gladness.

Come before his presence With singing. Where can we find fullness of joy? David tells us where. Psalm 16 11 Thou wilt show me the path of life In thy presence Is fullness of joy.

At thy right hand There are pleasures forevermore. In his presence there is fullness of joy. Fullness of joy. So in the early church There was gladness there.

There was gladness. Of course there was much suffering there too. There was much tribulation there too. There was much testing And persecution Amongst the people of God.

But no matter what They went through They had gladness. They had gladness there. We see that in Acts 2 46 What does it say in Acts 2 46?

[18:31] Are they continuing Sunday mornings With one accord? No it doesn't say that. It says And they continuing daily With one accord. These were 24 by 7 Christians.

They continuing daily With one accord in the temple And breaking bread From house to house Did eat their meat With gladness And singleness of heart. They ate their meat With gladness And singleness of heart.

Friends we can get together And we can enjoy One another And the Lord Together. Where did the people of God Find enjoyment?

Was it in the coffee and donuts? Was it in the pastor's corny jokes? Was it in the professional drama And display Of the professional band Or musicians?

Was it in the clowns And the carnival? Why was Barnabas glad? It wasn't some human performance Or method. It wasn't man's invention It was divine intervention.

[19:36] Divine intervention Made Barnabas glad. Why was he glad? He was in fellowship. He was in the assembly. He was in the place Of prayer And of worship.

And he saw The grace of God At work Amongst them. Barnabas was glad Because he saw The transforming power Of God's grace At work In people's lives.

And it was alike to that In Acts 8 verse 8 Where we see gladness And joy When Philip came To the city of Samaria He preached Christ Unto them Acts 8 verse 8 And there was Great joy In that city There was great joy In that city Why was that?

Because the word was preached Because Christ was preached Because people were delivered Because souls were saved It was a glad Glad day There was Great joy In that city Later on We see in Acts 15 Paul and Barnabas Sharing the good news The glad news Of how God Had worked In their travels Declaring the conversion Of the Gentiles And this caused Great joy Unto all the brethren When Paul and Barnabas Told of the ministry Of the conversion Of souls There was great joy Unto all the brethren There was great joy Great gladness At souls saved At the wonder Of conversion Of souls Friends There's still Joy today When people are saved There's no greater joy That we can Really have A part to play in Than seeing People Trust Christ As their Lord And Saviour Not only is it a joy For them In receiving it It's a joy for us

In having some Part to play In seeing that happen Joy And gladness We see it At conversion We see it In Luke 15 Verse 10 Where our Lord Tells of the lost coin Of the lost sheep Etc The lost son Luke 15 10 Likewise I say unto you There is joy Joy In the presence Of the angels Of God Over one Sinner That repented There's joy At one sinner Repenting And the presence Of the angels Of heaven And there's joy Amongst the saints On earth too Isn't it a joyful time Isn't it a joyful Joyous time To see someone Trust Christ As Lord Master Saviour Forever One of the gladdest Things we can witness So If you're not glad Go to worship Go to worship Worship the Lord

[22:19] Serve him with gladness Come before his presence With singing I was glad When they said unto me Let us go Let's go If you're not glad Go And witness Go and witness I know I've said this before A preacher friend of mine He says When he's feeling like The devil's attacking him The hardest What does he do?

He goes and gets tracks And gives them out Amen When he's feeling low When he's feeling attacked When he's feeling like The devil's kicking in In the guts He gets the tracks And he goes and witnesses For Christ He goes and tells A soul Of the saviour Gives the devil a hard time Amen If you're not glad Go and witness So If you're down in the dumps Go witnessing Sow in tears And you'll reap In joy Perhaps God in his grace Will grant repentance And bring conversions What do we see In Antioch?

Barnabas had seen The grace of God He was glad And he exhorted them all That with purpose of heart They would cleave unto The Lord For he was a good man And full Of the Holy Ghost And of faith And much people Were added Unto the Lord There was grace there And there was gladness there And thirdly we see Thirdly A good man There was a good man At Antioch One of the key things We notice about the church At Antioch Was what God did there God used a man For his glory And God is using people Here today God is using people Still today To do his bidding Barnabas was called A good man Why was Barnabas Called a good man?

We first hear of Barnabas In Acts 4 36 He was called The son of consolation In other words He was a Comforter He was an exhorter He was a God Filled man He was an obedient Man He was a witness He was a prophet He was an encourager Verse 24 For he was A good man And full Of the Holy Ghost And of faith And much people Were added Unto the Lord God is looking for men That he can make good He's still looking for men He's still looking for women That he can fill With the Holy Ghost God used other human vessels We see Earlier in Acts 11 Verse 20 Other human vessels Who took the word To Antioch Before Barnabas Got there Some of them Were men From Cyprus And Cyrene Which when they Were come to Antioch Spake unto the Grecians Preaching the Lord Jesus Verse 21 And the hand of the Lord Was with them And a great number Believed And turned unto

The Lord Thank God God still Uses men He still uses Men And women People With real Human bodies And human Frailties And human Weaknesses Weak men Inadequate men Yet men Full of the Holy Ghost And faith That was what Made the difference At Antioch It's what makes The difference In a church Where people Are obedient Unto the Lord Men of the word God still uses Human vessels Just like You And me God still uses People to fill With himself Men who will Exhort men Men with a message Men who have The hand of the Lord with them And Barnabas Did not hold back He did not hold back From exhorting them All That with purpose Of heart They would cleave Unto the Lord It was a Strong message It was a Loving message

[26:06] Still A tender message A caring message A message To souls And we need People Today Who will be Messengers Of his grace This world Needs grace Just as much As Antioch Needed it The grace Of God We need people Who will be Messengers Of his grace This world Needs the message Still The same message They heard In Antioch That with purpose Of heart They would cleave Unto the Lord Question yourself Now What is the Purpose Of my heart What is the purpose Of my heart What is the passion Of my life What is the point Of my life Purpose Yourself With purpose Of heart To cleave Unto The Lord Will you Cleave Unto The Lord What does that mean Means to cling To him

Cling To him Cleave To him Hold fast To him Keep near To him Abide With him Remain faithful And true Cleave Unto The Lord Will that be Your desire Today Will that be Your decision Today Will that be That choice Today That you will Cleave You will With that will That you have With that will Power

That the Holy Spirit quickens You to Employ Will you Cleave Unto The Lord Will you Hold him Dear and Near and Close Today Will that be Your desire Will your desire Be that you Will have Whatever he Wants For your life Will you be One of those Like those At Antioch Who are called Christians What will be The purpose Of your heart You know There's much Talk about Purpose driven And what not But there is A reality That there is A purposing

Of our heart A purposing Of our heart Ecclesiastes 3 Verse 1 It says There's a time To every purpose Under the heaven Could it be The time Now Today To make That decision To purpose In your heart In your heart Someone will Scoth When we Purpose To worship In Matthew 26 Verse 8 There was a Woman Who was Extravagant She was Extravagant In her Worship She poured Out this Expensive Fragrant Ointment Upon the Head Of the Lord Jesus Christ And people Were watching And they said In verse 8 Of Matthew 26 But when his Disciples saw It they had Indignation Saying to What purpose Is this waste Some will Think It's a waste Of time Going to Church It's a waste Of time Being a Christian What's the Point Why don't Just eat Drink and Be merry We could be Out there Doing something

Unhealthy To ourselves She was Extravagant In her Worship And they Said What's the Point What purpose Is this Waste But our Lord commended Her Our Lord Commended What she Has done She says He says That she's Done something That's worthy Something that's To be Commended Will you Be Extravagant With your Life Will you Pour it Out at His feet Will it Be a Purpose That is Worthwhile The purpose Of our Gift Was to Worship And our Lord commended Her for it What about You Do you Purpose That which Matters As your Life being Invested In what Counts The church Itself Or the Assembly The gathering Of God's People together The church Is part Of the Eternal Purpose Of God We see That in Ephesians 3 Verse 11 According to The eternal Purpose Which he Purposed In Christ Jesus Our Lord The church Is something That God Has a Purpose That is Eternal For So friends Just think Now of The purpose Of your Life Will you Choose Those godly Purposes For your Life In Psalm 17 3 David Says I am Purposed That my Mouth Shall not Transgress That's a Good purpose To have It's a Good purpose To say I purpose That my Mouth Will not Sin We all Need to Pray That I need To pray That We need To pray Lord Put a Guard Over the Mouth Of my Over the Lips Of my Mouth Put a Sentry There Put a Station A Watch There Over my Lips Set a Watch Over my Lips I Purpose That my Mouth Shall Not Transgress Psalm 17 Verse 3 That's a Good Purpose Isn't It Choose To Think Before You Speak That's Always Wise Whether You're A Christian Or Not

[31:08] Daniel 1 Verse 8 Daniel Purposed Daniel Purposed In his Heart That he Wouldn't Defile Himself He Wanted To have Those Garments That Were Spotless He Wanted To have That Righteousness That Was Christ Upon Him He Would Not Defile Himself That's A Good Purpose To Have There's Lots To Make You Dirty In This World There's A Lot That Can Defile You Defile Your Mind Defile Your Thinking Defile Your Imagination Choose To Not Defile Yourself Purpose In Your Heart And Acts 19 Paul Had A Purpose Too Acts 19 Verse 21 Paul Purposed In His Spirit He Purposed In His Spirit As He Was Going To Go To Jerusalem And Then He Says After I've Been There I Must Also See Rome Paul Purposed In His Heart That He Was Going To Spend And Be Spent In The Kingdom Business In Taking The Message To Other Places So What Can We Learn From Antioch Today When Barnabas Came There He Saw Evident

Grace At Work He Saw Grace At Antioch He Saw God's Grace At Antioch He Saw The Hand Of The Lord He Saw The Conversions Of Souls He Saw The Turning Of People To The Lord And It Brought Him Gladness It Brought Gladness To His Heart And We See A Good Man There Good Not Of His Own Merit But Because He Was Filled With The Holy Ghost That's What We Need To Seek To Yearned For To Be Filled With The Holy Ghost And With Faith And Then We Can Exhort People That With Purpose Of Heart They Would Pleave Unto The Lord So Friends To Wrap Up Will We See Grace In This Church Will We See The Grace Of God In The Church In Adelaide Will We See Grace Grace So Evident That It Will Stand Out Grace So Manifest That People Will Look At You And Say I've

Seen The Grace Of God There I've Seen The Grace Of God There No I Look In The Mirror I See The Grace Of God That He Would Pick Such A Woeful creature As Me To Be Saved We Can Thank God For His Grace Amen Thank God For His Grace That We Saved That We Trusted Him

That We Are His God People Grace Manifesting People And When We See The Gladness In Our Church The Gladness Not A Some Hullabaloo Or Razzmatazz Or Who Knows What But The Grace That Makes Gladness The Grace That Makes Souls Saved The Grace That Transforms Lives That Creates The Real Lasting Eternal Gladness And Friends If You're Not Saved Today There's Angels Just Waiting To Jump Up And Down Joy When You Repent One

Sinner Repents The Angels Before God Rejoice Wouldn't It Be Great This Morning If You're Not Saved To Say It's Time It's Time It's Time For Me To Bow My Knee It's Time For Me To Say I've Had Enough Of Refusing His Call Of Refusing His Welcome It's Time For Me To Come It's Time For Me To Trust Him It's Time For Me To Say Jesus You've Paid For My Sin I Bow My Knee Now I Trust You Now For Time And For Eternity To Be My Master To Be My Saviour Forever And Ever And Ever To Trust Him Instead Of Trusting Your Own Efforts Which Are Vain No No One Can Be Saved Outside Of Christ He's Your Only Hope His Blood

Shed For You Is Your Only Hope Your Only Plead Wouldn't It Be Great To Have The Angels Rejoicing We Won't Hear Them But They Will Be Rejoicing When You Repent When You Trust Him And The Gladness That We Will Enjoy With You!

[35:28] And You're! Trusting Him By The Power Of His Grace And Will We See Good People Good People Transformed By The Holy Spirit People Who Will Be Messengers Of His Grace People Who Will Exhort And Encourage One Another As We See The Day Approaching As We Exhort And Encourage And Urge One Another On That With Gladness Of Heart That With Purpose Of Heart We Would Cleave Unto The Lord Friends Just to In Acts 20 Paul Closed His Time With Some People By Saying This 20 32 He Says And Now Brethren I Commend You To God And To The Word Of His Grace Which Is Able To Build You Up And To Give You An Inheritance Among All Men Which Are Sanctified He Is Able To Build You Up And To Give You An Inheritance Among All Them Which Are Sanctified I

Commend You To God And To The Word Of His Grace Let Us Pray Heavenly Father Thank You That You Are Here By Your Spirit You Are Here Calling To Us Your Word Is Shouting Out Your Praise We Thank You Lord That Grace Is What Counts Today Not Anything Of Man Gladness Comes As We Trust You And Lord There's Good People Here Who Are Filled With The Holy Spirit And Faith Help Us Lord All To Be Such People That We Would Be A People Obedient A People That Find Our Gladness Not In The Vain And Empty Things Of This World But In The Eternal Things That Really Count If There's Any Down And Discouraged Today I pray That They'll Find Gladness In Your Presence Lord That They'll Find Gladness And Fullness Of Joy In Knowing Sins Forgiven Of A Home In Heaven If

There's Any Not Saved Today They'll Find That By That Moment That Instant! Time That Once I Was Lost But Now I Am Found Once I Was Blind But Now I Can See We Pray That That Might Be So Today By Your Grace In Jesus Name Amen Family Family