



GENTILES BECAME PART OF THE CHURCH



Acts 11

God had called Peter to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they were or where they came from. So Peter shared the gospel not only with Jews, but with Gentiles. The Gentiles in Caesarea heard Peter's message and believed. God gave His Holy Spirit to these new believers, and they were baptized.

Before long, the apostles and other believers throughout Judea heard that Gentiles had believed the good news about Jesus. They were surprised, so Peter shared about the vision God had given to him of the sheet of clean and unclean animals and his encounter with Cornelius. Peter explained that the gospel is for all people. Then the believers praised God and understood that Jesus had come for the Gentiles, too!

At the same time, believers who scattered after Stephen's murder had traveled to places like Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. In those places, the believers only shared the gospel with the Jews. But some believers from Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and preached the gospel to the Greeks, too. God was with them, and a large number of the Greeks believed the good news.

The church at Jerusalem heard about these new believers, so they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas was a good man. He loved God and was full of faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. When Barnabas arrived, he saw that God was gracious to these believers. He was glad and encouraged them to keep following God. Even more people trusted in Jesus.

Then Barnabas left Antioch and went to Tarsus to look for Paul. He found Paul and brought him back to Antioch. They stayed with the church in Antioch for a year, teaching large crowds of people. Jesus' followers were first called Christians at Antioch.



Big Picture Question:

What is the church? The church is all Christians everywhere, who gather together in their communities to worship and serve God.



Christ Connection:

Even though some people tried to stop it, the gospel spread throughout the earth—not only to Jews but also to Gentiles. The good news about Jesus is for everyone. God calls us to celebrate when others believe and help them know and love Jesus more.