

Acts of the Holy Spirit - 14
Continuous Conversion
Acts 11:19 – 12:24, Week of Oct 15, 2017
Bay Park Life Groups – Leader

What do you call people that are committed to joining Jesus' life, community and mission? Christians!

Christianos (Greek – Χριστιανός)
Christ = *the One, Messiah, Promised Deliverer.*
ianos (singular) or ianoi (plural) = *follower of, looks like, belongs to*

The term first appears in Acts 11:26 where Jewish and Gentile believers came together as one. From a law, traditions, rituals, cultural, linguistic, preferences and values point of view these believers were clearly different from each other and not a religious subset Judaism. What they did have in common was a commitment to joining Jesus' life, community and mission, ergo the name Christian. Salvation (by grace through faith in Jesus) leads to sanctification (a life long journey of becoming more like Christ). Sadly, North American Christianity has sometimes turned into a "salvation leads to status quo until you get to heaven" proposition. This is because we have spent more time focusing on the doctrine of security of salvation ("once saved always saved") at the expense of the biblical doctrine of sanctification as the life long ongoing fruit of salvation.

The book of Acts is a timely reminder that the grace of God is more than the gift of forgiveness of our sins, it's the very power of God at work in us to become more like Jesus – Christian!

1. Does the following quote resonate with you? How does it compare with your attitude and/or experience?

The Christian church is a society of sinners. It is the only society in the world in which membership is based upon the single qualification that the candidate shall be unworthy of membership.

~ Charles Clayton Morrison (*American* magazine editor, 1874-1966)

Read Acts 11:19-30

2. A. Finish one of the following sentences:
 - The verse that most stood out to me was . . .
 - My Acts 11 AHA is . . .B. The message they shared was *the good news about the Lord Jesus* (v 20). What is this message, in your own words, and in a few sentences?

3. Antioch of antiquity has been compared to the Las Vegas of today – *what happens in Antioch stays in Antioch!* Antioch, not Jerusalem or Rome:
- Was where Jews and Gentiles first started worshipping together.
 - Was where the name “Christian” was first used.
 - Became the new base of operation for the Gospel going viral (cf Acts 13:1-3, 14:26, 15:1, 36, 18:22-23).

How does the story of Acts 11:19-30 impact your faith and outlook today?

4. In 11:27-8 we read about *prophets* from Jerusalem coming to Antioch. Prophets were *inspired teachers, a class we shall afterwards frequently meet with, who sometimes, but not necessarily, foretold future events. They are classed next to apostles (1 Co 12:28, 29; Eph 4:11).*¹ In what ways does God continue to bring words of prophecy to his church today?

Read Acts 12:1-24

5. What do we learn about prayer in Acts 12?
6. Once again in Acts we see that salvation (by grace through faith in Jesus) leads to sanctification (a life long journey of becoming more like Christ). What are you doing to ensure the Holy Spirit has freedom to do a work of ongoing growth in your life? Where are you strongest? Weakest? How can you help each other?

¹ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible* (Vol. 2, p. 188). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.