

**Title:** Antioch 1: “Christians” // **Scripture:** Acts 11 & 13

**ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME** *15-20 minutes*

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the assignments from last week turned out.

**SERMON REVIEW** *5-10 minutes*

In Antioch, a group of people began to live in a way that shattered every known mold. The onlookers had to invent a new word to describe them: “Christians.” 2,000 years later, that word evokes many emotions and layers of meaning. However, in Acts 11 and 13, we can discover what made the men and women of the church in Antioch so unique that they ruptured and renewed many of the common molds and labels of their time!

These unnamed followers of Jesus learned to see God’s grace in the middle of chaos, suffering, doubt, and need. They learned together how to see God at work and, with the sense of a settled soul, became witnesses committed to encouraging others to invite Jesus to be the center of their lives. As a result of their identity with the name of Jesus, they became a unified yet diverse community called “Christians” (ones who live and act like Jesus Christ) who shared the life-changing testimony of the work of the Spirit in the community around them.

**THE MAIN THOUGHT** *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

Our primary call as people who trust in and follow Jesus is to be witnesses of the gift of His grace to everyone!

**SEE IT – Questions** *10-15 minutes*

**Picture** (What is the story saying?): What did the Antioch community of Jesus followers learn to see in spite of the chaos and hardships of life? What did the example of Barnabas demonstrate about sharing encouragement instead of spreading criticism? Why is it so important to get our identity only from our faith in Jesus?

**Mirror** (Where am I in the story?): Where have I been seeing or failing to see God’s grace at work in my life? What areas of my life feel heavy or overwhelming instead of resolved and peaceful? Why? How well am I tuned in to seeing God at work around me? Do the people I encounter every day see me as a “Christian” who looks like Jesus?

**Window** (How does the story change how I see those around me?): What are some specific ways I can begin to witness God’s grace in my neighborhood, with the next generation, and among the nations around me? What are some simple ways I can be more gracious and generous, more Christ-like, with the people I encounter every day?

**BE IT – Practice**

**Change UP // Exercise** *5 minutes*

Think of how you have seen God’s grace at work in your lives. Take a moment to have everyone share a brief story of what that grace looked like and how it changed your outlook on the circumstances. Pray together, thanking God for His grace in those moments. Specifically ask God to give you eyes to see Him at work in new ways this week.

**Change IN // Group Activity** *5 minutes*

Do a start/stop analysis of how you have witnessed God’s grace this past week. On a clean sheet of paper, write down at least one thing you can stop doing to ensure that you don’t miss out on seeing God’s grace. Then, write down at least one way you can pay better attention to seeing Jesus at work around you in the week to come.

**Change OUT // Life Application Assignment** *5 minutes*

When our identity is obediently centered in Jesus we are free to be gracious and generous. Identify at least one specific need that you know of in your neighborhood or workplace. Make a specific plan as a community to be Jesus to that person or family and identify specific ways you can freely and abundantly meet that need this week.

**CLOSING PRAYER** *5 minutes*

Take a few minutes to gather any prayer requests and pray for each other to SEE IT and BE IT this week.