



**WEST
SIDE
CHURCH**

Fall Kick Off

Series: Equipped

Sermon Title: When God Is at Work

Sermon Text: Acts 11:19-26

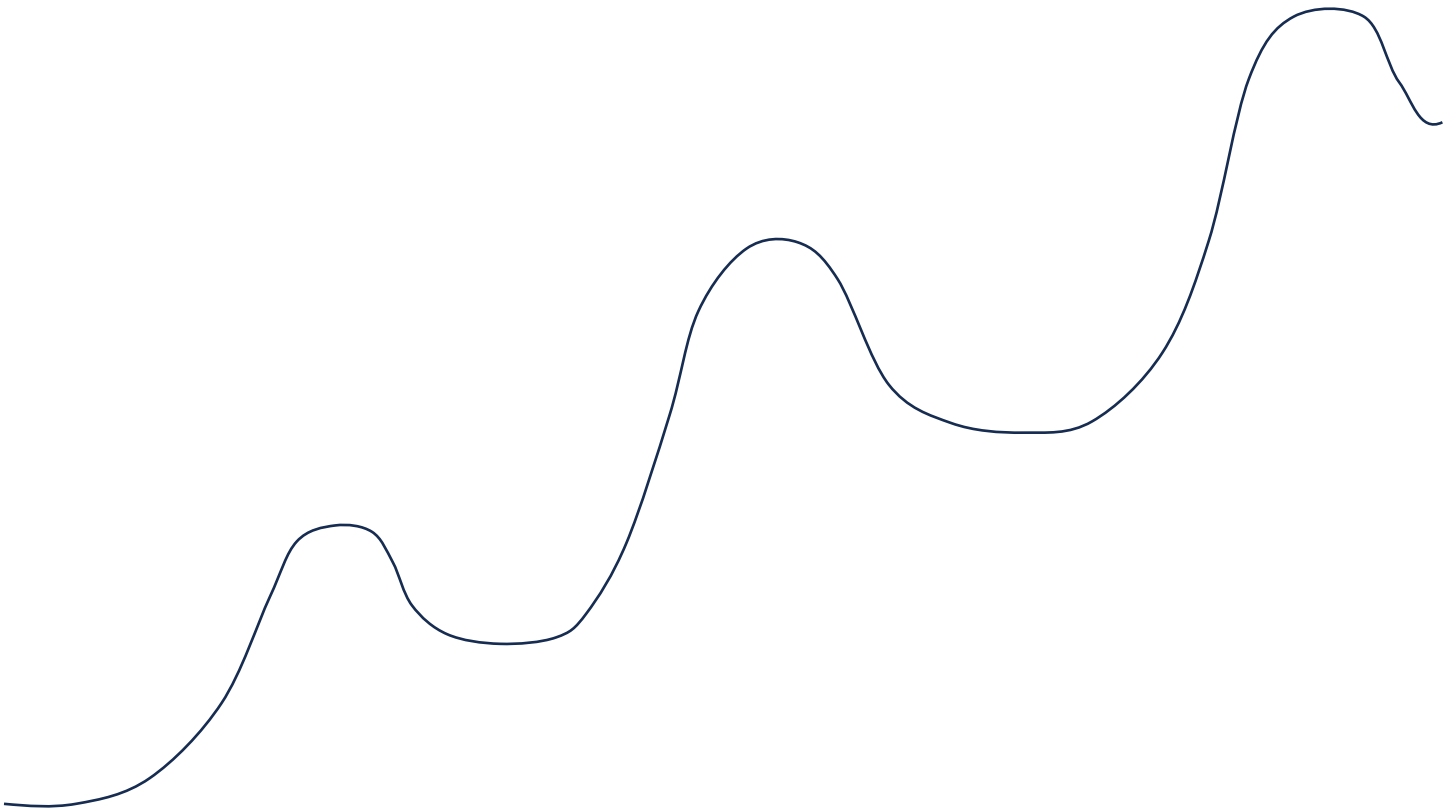
Group Week of: September 01, 2024

Sermon Date: September 08, 2024

Scriptures for Additional Daily Studies	
Day 1	Stephen's Persecution – Acts 7
Day 2	Dispersion & Gentiles – Acts 8
Day 3	Saul's Conversion – Acts 9
Day 4	Peter & Cornelius – Acts 10
Day 5	Gentile Inclusion – Acts 11:1-18

The Text: Acts 11:19-26

- 1) **Read** the text slowly and carefully.
- 2) **Pray** for understanding, insight, and transformation.
- 3) **Fill in the plot arch** by writing down verses in the story as points on the plot line to help show you where the main lessons in the story are.
- 4) **Answer** the interpretive questions at the bottom.



Textual Questions

- 1) What is (are) the main lesson(s) you see Luke giving to Theophilus (and us) through this account?
- 2) How does persecution lead to growth in this passage?
- 3) Who are the people that begin to share the gospel with the Gentiles in Antioch?

Discussion Guide Questions

- 1) If you lived in a place where Christians were under persecution, would you stay or would you go? How would you make this decision? Discuss your answers with your life group.

- 2) The church in America, and even the founding of this country, began with those fleeing religious persecution. The Church of England would not permit any other forms of Protestantism, and many of the Puritans did not fully agree with the doctrines of the Church of England. For example, John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrims Progress*, was often imprisoned for preaching without church authorization. Christians fleeing that persecution settled the Americas. God often does great mission work through Christians who are fleeing for their lives. Should we see the Christians who fled persecution in places like England or Jerusalem as scattered or planted? Why?

- 3) These scattered disciples shared with their Jewish brothers and sisters that Jesus was the Messiah. This resulted in churches popping up all over the Roman world: Cyprus, Antioch, Phoenicia, and even Cyrene. These churches were not planted by the apostles but by lay men and women. Do we believe that being a “lay member” limits the work that God can accomplish through us? Why or why not?

- 4) People from the churches in Cyprus and Cyrene felt compelled to move to Antioch (in a completely different country) and share the gospel with *Greek* people. This mission work does not appear to be by the design of the apostles but a movement of the Spirit. Is there a people group in this world you feel called to share the gospel with? If so, how have you responded to that call? If not, have you prayed for such a burden?

- 5) When news got back to Jerusalem of Gentile believers in Antioch, they sent Barnabus who “encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.” What are the ways God has *encouraged* you to remain true to Him with all your heart? How have you *encouraged* others to do the same?

- 6) The work is beyond what Barnabus can do by himself, so he goes to nearby Tarsus (about a week’s journey) to enlist the help of his old friend, Saul. Saul and Barnabus return to Antioch and spend a year there *teaching* the church in Antioch. How is *teaching* different yet similar to *encouraging*?

- 7) When Christians are filled with the Spirit, encouraged, and taught the Word of God, wonderful things take place. Of these three things, is there anything you need more of? Share it with your life group *and* your pastors. Commit to living for Jesus so boldly that those around you also would call you “Christian.”