

A New Name and a New Friend

Acts 11:19-26; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 128, 129, 155-165

Sometimes people call us by our nickname. Maybe you have a nickname. Usually, something we do or say can give us a nickname. Sometimes people call us nasty names. The early believers were called names. One of them stuck, and it is still used today.

It was becoming dangerous to be a believer in Jesus and remain in Jerusalem. Saul and other Jewish leaders were putting people in prison. Sometimes they were beaten, and sometimes even put to death. So, many of the new believers began moving away from Jerusalem.

Many new believers moved to villages and towns and cities. They were so happy and full of the joy that comes from knowing Jesus. They just could not stop telling others about their new faith. The news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection began to spread everywhere. This was not what the priests and rabbis had in mind. They didn't want people to tell others about Jesus.

Some of the new believers moved to Antioch. A large number of Jewish people lived there. Antioch was an important city. It was very beautiful and famous. But it was also a very wicked city, dedicated to heathen Greek gods.

Until now most of the believers were Jews. And they shared the good news about Jesus with their Jewish friends and neighbors. But when the believers moved to Antioch, they began to tell their new neighbors about Jesus. They told everybody. They told Jews who lived there. And they told Gentiles, people who were not Jewish. Telling Gentiles was something new, something different. The Lord blessed the believers as they shared the good news. And great numbers of people joined the early church.



The Message

*God's grace
includes everyone.*

Memory Verse

*“ God does not
show favoritism but
accepts men from
every nation’ ”*

(Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

The news about the Gentile converts spread back to the apostles and other believers in Jerusalem. Some of the church leaders there were worried. They were not sure that God wanted everyone to hear the good news. After all, the Jews were God's chosen people. So the Jerusalem believers asked Barnabas for help. Barnabas was a good man, full of faith, and filled with the Holy Spirit. He was asked to travel to Antioch and find out what was happening.

When Barnabas arrived in Antioch, he saw that the believers there had truly been blessed by the Lord. They really did understand the grace of God. They believed that God loved all people and wanted them to love one another. This made Barnabas very happy. He encouraged the believers to cling to the Lord and enjoy Him. He preached to the Gentiles and many more people decided to follow Jesus.

Barnabas soon realized that he needed help. There were so many people to talk to. So many to tell about Jesus! Who could help him? He thought about Saul. He remembered how Saul had changed after meeting Jesus on the road to Damascus.

Even his name had changed—now he was called Paul. So Barnabas began searching for him. He traveled to the city of Tarsus where Paul had been born. There he found Paul teaching others about Jesus. Soon he told Paul about the great work to be done in Antioch.

So Paul and Barnabas traveled back to Antioch. There they began working together to spread the good news. For a whole year they shared the good news about Jesus. And many people, both Jews and Gentiles, believed.

Because the believers talked so much about Christ, they were called Christians. Soon the name spread all around the Roman world.

But it was in the heathen city of Antioch that the name was first used. And it was in that city that Saul, now called Paul, began his work among the Gentiles. God had called him to do a special work. What work has God called you to do?



S A B B A T H

THINK Go for a walk with your family. While walking, think of different names of people groups—good or bad. Where did these names come from? Are all nicknames nice?

ASK Ask each family member to think of a name they would like to be called.

PRAY Thank God that we are called Christians because we believe in Jesus Christ.

S U N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss Acts 11:19-26. Who were the first Christians? Ask three people what the word *Christian* means to them. Find *Christian* in a dictionary. Tell your family what it means.

DRAW Draw a globe or the shape of your country. Write your memory verse on it. Hang it where you will see it during the week. Use this to teach the verse to your family.

PRAY Ask God to help you to be a good Christian.

M O N D A Y

READ Read and discuss Acts 8:1-3 for family worship. What does this tell you about Saul before he met Jesus?

SHARE Create a logo that tells what it means to be a Christian. Share it with someone today. Tell them what the word *Christian* means. Yes, *Christian* means a follower of Christ. What does your name mean?

PRAY Thank God that He sent Jesus to die for your sins. Thank God for men like Paul and Barnabas who shared the good news with others.

T U E S D A Y

READ With your family, read Acts 11:19. Look at a Bible map. Where did the Christians go when they left Jerusalem? Find the places on the map. How did they get there? How do we travel today? Draw pictures of both.

DO On the map, measure the distances from Jerusalem to the places mentioned in Acts 11:19. Ask God to protect people who are spreading the good news in difficult places.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ Read and discuss Acts 11:25, 26 during family worship. Where was Saul when Barnabas found him? Find it on a Bible map. Where did they go when they left that place?

THINK Find out about the Greek gods that were worshiped in Antioch. Was it easy for Paul and Barnabas to spread the Word of God? Why? Encourage your pastor today. Make and send him or her a card of thanks for all they do.

PRAY Ask God to help you share His love with others.

T H U R S D A Y

READ With your family, read 1 John 3:1. What is the good news? Make a "Good News" newspaper. Include pictures from your favorite Bible stories. Share the paper and tell the stories to a friend.

ASK Ask a friend to come to Sabbath School with you this week. Pray for that person today.

F R I D A Y

READ During worship today, read and discuss Acts 11:19-26. How long did Paul and Barnabas stay in Antioch? What did they do there?

DRAW Who do you like to spend time with? Draw a picture of yourself and that person. Tell your family why you like to be with them.

PRAY Say your memory verse together. Then pray for all those who are spreading the good news about Jesus. Ask God to help your family share the good news too.



Christ is the Greek word for Messiah. Christian means someone who follows Christ.

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PUZZLE

Directions: The letters provided below are not complete. Finish them to find two names for one of the men and the name of his friend.



S A L _
P A U _
B A R N A B A S