

# Membership Covenant



## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Acts 11:19-30

Message for the Week: The Good News Group

Sunday, October 22

### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

Which group that you are a part of are you most excited about? Why?

### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Acts 11:19-30](#) out loud.

(Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## Respond / Reflect:

Who are the people who are spreading the good news in these verses? Are we willing to humbly go do the kingdom work that is hard?

Who is the good news for in this Bible passage? Why is this significant?

Why were so many people in Antioch attracted to the good news?

What do we read in verse 24 makes Barnabus a good man? What makes you/us good?

Have we experienced the good news of God's grace in our lives? How do we know?

Do we see "what the grace of God has done? (verse 23)"? Describe something that you could say is the result of God's grace.

What, if anything, are we looking for when it comes to doing kingdom work? What are we looking for from church?

## Try It:

We are here to live grace, encourage grace, and carry grace, so that we can bring grace to the world. How are you bringing grace to the world?

## Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, lavish your grace on me/us. Please show me/us how much you have transformed my/our life because of grace. Equip me/us to lavish that same grace on my/our family, friends, church, and communities. AMEN

## Missional/Spiritual Practice: Groups

I commit to being an active participant in Covenant's faith community through corporate worship and ministry involvement. Are you an active participant in these?

I commit to being involved in a small group, prayer group, and/or a ministry group to encourage others in their spiritual life and to be held accountable for mine.

Are you involved in a ministry group? If not, which ministry group will you join?

## New International Version

<sup>19</sup> Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. <sup>20</sup> Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. <sup>21</sup> The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

<sup>22</sup> News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. <sup>23</sup> When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. <sup>24</sup> He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

<sup>25</sup> Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, <sup>26</sup> and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

<sup>27</sup> During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. <sup>28</sup> One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) <sup>29</sup> The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. <sup>30</sup> This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

## The Message

<sup>19-21</sup> Those who had been scattered by the persecution triggered by Stephen's death traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, but they were still only speaking and dealing with their fellow Jews. Then some of the men from Cyprus and Cyrene who had come to Antioch started talking to Greeks, giving them the Message of the Master Jesus. God was pleased with what they were doing and put his stamp of approval on it—quite a number of the Greeks believed and turned to the Master.

<sup>22-24</sup> When the church in Jerusalem got wind of this, they sent Barnabas to Antioch to check on things. As soon as he arrived, he saw that God was behind and in it all. He threw himself in with them, got behind them, urging them to stay with it the rest of their lives. He was a good man that way, enthusiastic and confident in the Holy Spirit's ways. The community grew large and strong in the Master.

<sup>25-26</sup> Then Barnabas went on to Tarsus to look for Saul. He found him and brought him back to Antioch. They were there a whole year, meeting with the church and teaching a lot of people. It was in Antioch that the disciples were for the first time called Christians.

<sup>27-30</sup> It was about this same time that some prophets came to Antioch from Jerusalem. One of them named Agabus stood up one day and, prompted by the Spirit, warned that a severe famine was about to devastate the country. (The famine eventually came during the rule of Claudius.) So the disciples decided that each of them would send whatever they could to their fellow Christians in Judea to help out. They sent Barnabas and Saul to deliver the collection to the leaders in Jerusalem.