



“MAKING A DIFFERENCE”

A Study of the Early Christians in the Book of Acts

“GIVING MAKES A DIFFERENCE”

Text: Acts 11:27-30

INTRODUCTION: Making a difference requires cultivating the _____ of giving in us to meet the needs of others and the needs of God’s work. An *undeniable characteristic* demonstrated in the lives of first-generation Christians was *generosity* (Acts 2:45;4:37). In our lesson this evening, we find Christians in Antioch discovering the needs of others and responding to the need with *generosity*, that they had learned from their brothers and sisters in Christ. In the lesson before us, we will learn an instruction on _____ from the first-century Christians – giving, truly makes a difference. Let’s remember, that the Christians in Antioch, were the first major group of Gentiles who turned to Christ and these new believers, when faced with an opportunity to give, responded joyfully. Our lesson is shared in three parts:

I. THE _____ OF A NEED (11:28)

Agabus, a New Testament Prophet, filled with the Spirit, prophesied that a great famine was coming that would cover the entire _____ Empire and beyond – Christians would not be exempt.

A. An Accurate Prophecy

Many Christians in Antioch were those who had been scattered by persecution.

The prophecy made by *Agabus* arrested the people’s attention. (Yours?)

New Testament prophets were “*forth tellers*” rather than *foretellers*.

The prophecy spoken by *Agabus* came true under the reign of Claudius Caesar.

B. An Acute Poverty (Philippians 4:11-12, Hebrews 11:36-38)

_____ has never been a stranger to the people of God (Matt. 8:20).

In seasons of _____, Christians have endured these hardships.

God never owes us an explanation for our _____. We must trust that as our Heavenly Father, He knows what is _____! (Romans 8:28)

II. THE PARTICIPATION IN THE _____ (11:29)

The Antioch believers, relatively new in the faith life, saw the *need* and took the _____.

A. The People Who Gave – “Every man” (I Cor. 16:2a, Deuteronomy 16:17)

We all don’t have the same size wallets, but if we all have the same size _____, we can do great things for the glory of God!

Giving is a team effort, where everyone can play a _____.

**B. The _____ They Gave – “According to his ability”
(Mark 12:41-44, II Corinthians 8:12-15)**

Every believer is *responsible* and *accountable* for doing what God would have them to do with what God has *entrusted* to them.

Jesus commended the giving of the widow, not because her amount was _____, but because her _____ was greater!

Paul taught the Corinthian believers that “giving” is not a one-size-fits-all proposition.

C. The Purpose They _____ - “Relief unto the brethren” (Luke 19:8)

_____ is what Christians do.

The mindset of the believers in Antioch, and the mindset for us today should be – “*Others need it; I have it: I will share it.*”

William Penn once said, “Do good with what thou hast; or it will do thee no good.”

III. THE _____ FOR NEW TESTAMENT GIVING (11:30)

There were three characteristics that became the “*Giving DNA*” of first-century churches -

A. Systematic Giving (I Corinthians 16:2)

A sure sign of Christian growth is faithfulness in _____.

As maturing Christians, we should work to become *predictable* and *dependable* in our giving.

B. Sacrificial Giving (II Cor. 8:2,9)

The Macedonian’s giving did not come from an overflow of abundance, but from depths of _____. When it comes to sacrificial giving, Jesus is our ultimate example!

C. _____ Giving

Motives in giving, _____ matter!

1. A Willing Heart (II Corinthians 8:3,12; Exodus 25:2, 35:21)

2. A Loving Heart (II Corinthians 8:8)

Love does many things for the *object* of its affections – love serves, love pursues, love endures and love.....! _____!

3. A _____ Heart (II Corinthians 9:7)

We are wise to remember, that “*we can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving*”
- Amy Carmichael

CONCLUSION: Let’s remember that money is a tool that God has given to us to get His work done on Earth. Money is also a test of our relationship with Him. Our handling of money – it’s uses and investments, demonstrate how much we really trust Him. We must learn the sure benefit of knowing that God owns it all and we should follow His leadership in managing each dollar and cent that He entrusts to us. If we are willing to follow His lead, we can make a difference – through _____!