

Sermon-based Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of October 11, 2009

Acts 11:19-26

Icebreaker: What do you remember about the game show, What's My Line? Or, describe a time when you really fooled someone about yourself.

1. Persecution is often perceived as a bad thing, but what do you see in this passage that may indicate that persecution can benefit the Church?
2. By first century standards, these early believers moved a significant distance away from home (Jerusalem) due to persecution. In what ways would it have been more difficult for them at that time than for us today? What does that say about these people?
3. How would you feel if you were forced out of your home? Why?
 - a. Happy
 - b. Angry
 - c. Hopeful
 - d. Depressed
 - e. Victimized
 - f. Challenged
 - g. Suicidal
 - h. Adventuresome
 - i. Relieved
 - j. Other
4. What church planting strategy do you see happening in the early church in this passage? What church planting strategy did Pastor Leroy use?
5. Should a local church have a church planting strategy? Why?
6. What do you think a good church planting strategy would look like in St. Louis today? When will St. Paul's plant its next church?
7. What do you think the phrase, "the Lord's hand was with them" (vs. 21), meant? Where do you see evidence of the Lord's hand today?
8. Write a brief character reference for Barnabas based on verses 22-26.
9. What kind of impact did Barnabas have on the early church? (See also 4:36-37)
10. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch (vs. 26). Who do you think called them that name, and what meaning did Pastor Leroy give to this phrase?
11. Is it easy/difficult to identify other Christians at work, school, or neighborhood? Why?
12. What do you think are characteristics that mark a Christian in today's culture?
13. Share evidences you see in your small group members that would reveal that they are a Christian.

Prayer

Pray for the Lord's hand to be upon us at St. Paul's.

Pray for one another.