

“What it means to ‘B’ a Christian”

Acts 11:1-26

Open:

- Peter returns, to Jerusalem, from a missionary trip only to find that news yealed faster than he did; and the religious crowd was not happy with the actions of Peter.
- Peter tells them the story of the the lesson God taught him, about the importance of obedience to God being greater than man’s tradition.
- A great revival begins because the church decides to obey Hod rather than man. When we don’t see spiritual blessings in our life, we need to double check our focus (*obedience to God or following man’s traditions.*)

Tran: Application

- We find the religious crowd not caring for the needs of carnal men. **vs. 1-3**
 - The so called “religious” people were more concerned with man’s tradition than the true need’s of the lost man. **vs.1-2**
 - We discover that the religious crowd got to the point where they used their status as a spiritual person as an excuse for neglecting the care of the lost man. **III: Ruth**
 - The so called “religious” people were more concerned about their business standing in the community than they were with obeying the commands of God. **vs. 3**
 - Those who were commanded to be a witness to the lost, used their “spirituality” as a status symbol. **Matt. 9:11-13** “*And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? [12] But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. [13] But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*”
- We find the man of God, Peter, teaching the religious crowd what God taught him. **vs. 4-10**
 - God used the Jewish tradition of eating certain meats as an example to show Peter that being a Christian is more than following man’s traditions. **vs. 5-8**
 - 3 times God stressed to Peter the fact that God died for all men and that salvation was for all men. **vs. 9-10**
II Peter 3:9 “*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*”
- We find the spiritually mature dealing with the contention of the carnal man correctly. **vs. 15 & 18**
 - Peter did not respond unkindly or take the attack of the carnal personally. Peter did not use is position to justify his actions, he allowed the Holy Spirit to use his personal obedience as a testimony.
- We find the continued obedience of the church despite persecution. **vs. 19-21**
 - God used Peter Christ like action and his preaching of God’s Word to encourage the church to be obedient despite persecution....”*the greatest accomplishments are borne in adversity.*”

- God uses Barnabas to teach the church the importance of being close to God and not worried about man's vain traditions. **vs. 22 & 23**

- **Cleave** = *To glue together, to solidify with concrete, to use adhesive to make two into one.*
- **Col. 2:8** “ *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* ”

- We find both the church and the carnal man calling those who obeyed Christian. **vs. 26**

- The end result of the obedient child of God is a powerful testimony that will give the Christian a greater audience that will listen to them. **Christian** = One who exhibits the attitude and actions of Christ; one who exemplifies in action the teachings and life of Christ.

I. “**B**” someone who cares about people the way that Jesus did.

- A. Jesus was not selective with who he loved and who he helped.

- i. **John 3:16** “ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* ”
- ii. **Rom. 2:11** “ *For there is no respect of persons with God.* ”

- B. In our story, Peter was used by God to teach the selfish religious crowd that everyone deserves to have someone who will care about them the way Jesus did. **Acts. 11:9**

- C. You and I as children of God, should not let how someone looks, thinks, or act keep us from being kind to them and telling them what Jesus has done for us. **I Peter 2:15-17** “ *For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: [16] As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. [17] Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.* ”

- Just because we go to church, wear nice cloths, and know what the Bible says, does not mean we can stick our nose up at those who have not been taught.

II. “**B**” someone who responds correctly to the contention of others.

- A. Never do we find Jesus lashing out at someone because of how they treated Him. We do find Jesus continually using those moments of contention to teach the Bible.

- We find Jesus focused on obedience to His Father, not focused on defending His actions or His position. **Is. 53:7** “ *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. [6] All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. [7] He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* ”

- B. In our story, Peter did not get mean, nasty, or ugly with those who were wrong. We find Peter doing what Jesus did and giving them a Bible illustration of a truth from God's Word. **Acts 11:4**

- C. You and I as children of God, should learn how to respond properly to those who do not understand why we do what we do. We have no right to lash out or to mistreat someone else because they have mistreated us. **I Thess. 5:15** *“See that none render evil for evil unto any man ; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.”*

III. “B” someone who is obedient, regardless of the circumstances surrounding the situation.

- A. Jesus was always kind to people. He never allowed the circumstances to dictate His actions towards other people. **Lk. 22:48-51** *“But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? [49] When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? [50] And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. [51] And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.”*
- B. In our story, we find the church obeying God even when they were faced with severe persecution and even death. **Acts 11:18-21**
- C. You and I as children of God, should remain obedient to God’s word regardless of how difficult it may seem or how we think the situation will turn out. **I Peter 1:22** *“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:”*

Close: *What does it mean to “B” a Christian? [someone who is an earthly example of Christ]*

- “B” someone who cares about people the way that Jesus did.
- “B” someone who responds correctly to the contentions of others.
- “B” someone who is obedient regardless of the circumstance surrounding the situation.
 - God will always be with and bless the obedient Christian. **Acts. 11:21**

Eph. 4:32

“And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”