

## Small Group Guide

### ONE CHURCH WITH A GLOBAL GOSPEL

*The Church at Brook Hills,*

*Dr. David Platt*

*November 22, 2009*

*Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3; 14:26-28; 15:30-35; 18:22-23*

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

### **Connect . . .**

*Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.*

#### **Option 1**

Invite learners to respond to the following question: **What do you consider to be a successful church?** Encourage learners to discuss their thoughts briefly. Then, explain that today we will look at a New Testament example of a church who modeled Christ's command for a church.

#### **Option 2**

Invite learners to answer the following question: **What do you see as your purpose within the local church?** Encourage learners to share their thoughts briefly. Then, explain that today we will look at how our individual purpose can look in the church.

### **Review the Message . . .**

#### **The Church at Antioch...**

- They were born in the \_\_\_\_\_ context \_\_\_\_\_ of mission.
- They were radically identified with the \_\_\_\_\_ person \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
- They cared sacrificially for local churches \_\_\_\_\_ around the world.
- They were \_\_\_\_\_ diversified \_\_\_\_\_ in their leadership.
- They \_\_\_\_\_ blessed \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord through corporate worship.
- They were desperately \_\_\_\_\_ dependent \_\_\_\_\_ on the Holy Spirit for direction and power.
- They nurtured an atmosphere for sending \_\_\_\_\_ people out.
- They advanced the Kingdom through \_\_\_\_\_ multiplication \_\_\_\_\_.
- They grew in Christ at Antioch because of their ministry around the world \_\_\_\_\_.

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- They were ultimately renowned in Scripture for reproduction.

#### Discussion

- Enlist two learners to read Acts 8:1-4 and Acts 11:20-22. Describe the circumstances in which the church in Antioch was formed.
- How did the situation that formed the church impact the way that the members of the church viewed its purpose?
- Enlist a learner to read Acts 11:23-26. Explain that the Roman leaders had initially viewed Christianity as a sect of Judaism. How did the designation of the disciples in Antioch as “Christians” distinguish these followers from the Jewish faith?
- Inform learners that the word “Christian” meant that they were “like Christ” or “of the household of Christ.” What did this term indicate about the disciples at Antioch?
- Read Acts 11:27-30. How did their action toward other churches around the world demonstrate what they believed about their responsibility to care for other believers?
- How did their actions to these churches help spread the gospel?
- Read Acts 13:1-4. Note the various descriptions of the church leaders that depict diversified leadership. How did the diversity of leadership demonstrate their lack of preferential treatment and a picture of the global gospel?
- What role did the Holy Spirit play in the life of the church at Antioch?
- Whose mission was this calling? Who was directing the mission?
- Point out that the two missionaries who were sent out were also two of the noted leaders in the church. How did the church’s support of their leaving foster an atmosphere that encouraged no one’s gifts or calling to be held back for the glory of God?
- If possible, use the maps of Paul’s missionary journeys to note the places where he visited. Point out that many of the churches he helped to start in the first missionary journey are also places where he traveled during the second and third missionary journeys. What does Paul’s dedication to these churches indicate about his strategy for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles? What role did discipleship play in spreading the gospel?
- How did the church at Antioch multiply the gospel throughout the world by the work of the Holy Spirit through the work of Paul’s life?
- Enlist a learner to read Acts 15:30-31. How did the preaching of the gospel in the world help the church at Antioch to grow?

#### Application . . .

- In our culture, how is the purpose of a church affected by the way it was started?
- How does our lifestyles identify us with the person of Christ?
- Does our preferences for particular personalities or spiritual gifts falsely influence our preferences for church leaders? How can we often negate biblical commands in favor of personal ideals when it comes to selecting church leaders?

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- How often do we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit when determining direction for the church? To follow the Holy Spirit and know what He says, how would our relationship with Him look?
- How do we often discourage our families, fellow believers, and leaders from fulfilling God's calling on their lives? What is the root of this kind of discouragement?
- What are we most afraid of concerning the idea of multiplication?

#### The Church at Brook Hills...

- Making disciples through small groups.
  - Every member equipped for ministry.
  - Every member engaged in ministry.
- Multiplying churches by sending teams.
  - A church planter trained at Brook Hills.
  - Church members serving at Brook Hills.

#### Discussion . . .

- Enlist a learner to read Ephesians 4:11-12. What is the purpose of the members in the church?
- How does the church help those members fulfill that purpose?

#### Application . . .

- Why is becoming involved in ministry and disciple-making difficult without being part of a small group, especially within a church as large as Brook Hills?
- How can we intentionally become involved in being equipping for ministry?
- What strengths or gifts do we have that we can use to equip others for ministry?
- What is keeping us from taking action to engage ourselves in ministry?
- How can we creatively overcome obstacles to engage actively in ministry?
- Is God calling any of us to seek out becoming involved in planting churches in other contexts?

#### The Bottom Line...

We will most effectively multiply churches when we most intentionally make disciples.

#### Application . . .

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- What part is God calling us to be a part of in making disciples and multiplying churches?