

DAILY READINGS

Sunday	Acts 11:19-30
Monday	Acts 12:1-25; Psalm 107:14-21; Proverbs 22:26-29
Tuesday	Acts 13:1-12; Psalm 107:22-32; Proverbs 23:1-3
Wednesday	Acts 13:13-52; Psalm 107:33-36; Proverbs 23:4-6
Thursday	Acts 14:1-28; Psalm 107:37-43; Proverbs 23:7-10
Friday	Acts 15:1-35; Psalm 108; Proverbs 23:11-13
Saturday	Acts 15:36-16:10; Psalm 109:1-7; Proverbs 23:14-16

DEVOTIONAL: READ ACTS 11:19-30

When the early church was being persecuted and undergoing great pressure, they reacted in many ways. Some chose to preach only to the Jews and not much is said about them. However, some of the believers chose to preach the Lord Jesus in the toughest places. The result? “The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21).

The church at Antioch began to grow in astounding numbers. Barnabas and Saul taught “a great many people” for a whole year, and the name of Jesus was made great. What started this movement? It wasn’t a charismatic teacher, a gifted worship leader, or even a community group full of healthy marriages and families. It was a few

faithful followers who stepped out of comfort for a greater purpose.

They were dangerous for the Lord. They were passionate for the Lord. These believers were willing to suffer at any cost for the sake of Jesus. It’s only appropriate that this is the place that followers of Jesus were first called Christians. This wasn’t a self-ascribed title. It was given to them.

A simple, yet often unstated fact about following Jesus is that we will constantly be pushed beyond our limits. We will all face moments when we must ask ourselves, “Am I willing to face the consequences of following Jesus?” When we choose to say “yes,” some of the greatest movements for the gospel happen.

REFLECTION

Why do Christians not have to live in fear?

Would others describe you as someone intentionally living out your faith in Jesus?
What does that say about your walk with Jesus?

What do you feel God may be asking you to do that you find difficult? Why would it be worth the cost of what it might take? What steps can you take to be a part of God's plans this week? Who can you invite to come alongside you?

DISCUSSION

When was a time you have had to step out of your comfort zone and take part in something challenging to you?

PRAYER

God, You have promised to be with me in times of trouble, times of hardship, and even times of persecution. I know that I can trust You. You are faithful to keep Your promises. You understand what it feels like to be persecuted, mocked, and to suffer for the sake of the gospel. Don't let me idolize my comfort. Never let me put my comfort above You and Your mission.

Give me grace to cling only to You. Give me a clear mind and heart, so that when brothers and sisters around me endure trying times, I may provide encouragement, support, and love, through the grace and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Lord, use me and my church to reach the unreached near and far, that people from every nation would know You.

Don't let me live in fear and shame, Lord. You see me, love me, and have invited me into Your mission. You have given me all that I need to live for You, so please lead me by Your Spirit. Amen.