



LAUREL CANYON
church of Christ

BIBLE CLASS: NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES

Wednesday nights at 7:00PM | July 7 – September 29, 2021

Lesson 2: The Church at Antioch: Jerusalem for the Gentiles
July 21, 2021

Excerpt from the workbook, “New Testament Churches: Their Strengths and Weaknesses” by Carl McMurray:

“Antioch, in Syria, was the third largest metropolitan area in the world. Only Rome and Alexandria were larger. It was located 300 miles north of Jerusalem and under Rome it was considered a “free city.” There was freedom of worship here with two major temples with accompanying prostitute priestesses. Understandably, Antioch was a busy as well as an immoral city.” ...

“When it came to the teachers in this early church it can be truly noted that a good foundation led to an excellent building. Acts 11:19-20 tells us that the early teachers in this area were men without prejudice. Although when the church in Jerusalem was scattered some traveled and spoke only to Jews, here the teacher, “spoke to Greeks also.” ...

“200 years after the apostles the church at Antioch still existed, but not in its simple New Testament form. The church at Antioch had become one of the five Patriarchal churches of the early Orthodox/Catholic church. While it was commendable that a church continued to exist here for centuries it is sad that it was not a church faithful to the original pattern, choosing instead to lean toward the power and influence of the hierarchy of the early Catholic faith.”

Bible References:

- Acts 11:19-30
- Acts 13

Questions:

1. Why might the Lord have waited TWELVE YEARS to establish the first Gentile congregation?
2. How did God's wisdom take opportunity away from the Judaizing teachers?
3. What kind of traits should, "church planters," have that would encourage the building effort?
4. Name some real ways that even a young congregation can be, "opportunistic," in a good way?
5. Based on the Antioch model, how could churches today be more evangelistic?
6. Can you give some specific ways to keep the church from, "evolving," into progressive liberalism or authoritarian traditionalism?