



Leader Guide

Partnership

April 16, 2023

Main Passage: Acts 9:26-27; 11:19-26

Theological Theme

All people need others who will encourage them in the faith and spur them on to fulfill the life God has for them. Believers should look for these people in their lives and for those they can also encourage in this way.

Introduction

- ? **Who is your biggest encourager?**
- ? **What do they do that makes them this in your life?**

1. An Unlikely Ally (Acts 9:26-27)

It is always incredible to see a person who was once opposed to the gospel see the truth and come to faith in Christ. It can be dramatic and powerful to observe the changes that take place when a person surrenders his or her life to Jesus. In these verses, Saul was struggling to fit in after choosing to believe. The disciples were hesitant to accept the change Saul experienced and were not immediately welcoming to him.

- ? **Have you seen or experienced something like the situation with Saul and the disciples? As is appropriate, share about this experience with this group.**
- ? **When have you had the opportunity to welcome someone new into the faith? **Who are you praying for that you long to see come to faith in Jesus Christ?****

2. New Opportunities (Acts 11:19-23)

The church was initially focused on preaching to the Jews, then they began to share the good news with the Gentiles as well. Antioch is the place where we first see the gospel being shared with Gentiles. This effort produced powerful results, as a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

- ? **How did the persecution of the believers in Jerusalem serve as a catalyst for the spread of the gospel? When was a time you faced difficult circumstances that God used for His glory?**
- ? **How does knowing God's hand is on His people even in ungodly places encourage you?**
- ? **When have you needed encouragement to keep going in your faith or been the one to give encouragement?**

3. Partners with Purpose (Acts 11:24-26)

Barnabas was described as a good man, full of faith and the Holy Spirit. What a testimony of how he lived. Saul was not the only person Barnabas poured into. Because it was his nature and character, there are undoubtedly many others that we do not read about. Saul may be the most dramatic example and the one God used to make the greatest impact on the world for thousands of years to come.

- ❓ What qualities would you like people to notice about you? What are you doing to cultivate those in your life?
- ❓ Why does this require multiple people leading and the church operating collectively as the body of Christ?
- ❓ Where are you serving?
- ❓ Who do you need to be a "Barnabas" to this week?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

Call to Action:

- Consider equipping classes for Gospel Conversations online. BBC's "Discover You" class will help you find your calling - you can sign up for a class today at <https://brentwood.church/calendar/category/discover>