



Big Idea: God moves first. The question is whether we will surrender, stretch, strengthen, and support—or stand in His way.

Introduction

God's work cannot be controlled or contained. Like King Canute facing the tide, we are reminded that we don't command what God commands. Acts 11 shows a church learning not to resist the surprising work of God.

Application Question:

Where in your life might you be resisting what God is clearly doing?

1. Surrender to what God is doing (Acts 11:1–18)

Peter recounts how God moved first—through visions, through the Spirit, and through the salvation of Gentiles. His conclusion is simple: “Who was I that I could stand in God's way?” The Jerusalem church moves from criticism to surrender and glorifies God.

Application Questions:

1. What actions of God does Peter highlight as the driving force behind the events in this passage?
2. How do you distinguish between biblical conviction and personal preference?
3. What would it look like for you to fully surrender to God's work instead of questioning it?

2. Stretch further to where God is moving (Acts 11:19–21)

The scattered believers continue preaching, but initially only to Jews. Then some step beyond their comfort zone and preach to Greeks. The hand of the Lord is with them, and many believe. God's mission expands when His people are willing to go further than before.

Application Questions:

1. To whom do the scattered believers initially preach, and how does that shift as the passage develops?
2. Where have you limited your obedience to what feels comfortable or familiar?
3. Who is outside your normal circle that God may be calling you to reach?

3. Strengthen what God is building (Acts 11:22–26)

The church sends Barnabas to Antioch. He sees the grace of God, encourages the believers, and brings Saul to help teach and strengthen the church. Growth requires intentional discipleship and encouragement.



Application Questions:

1. What does Barnabas do when he arrives in Antioch in response to what God is doing there?
2. Are you in a season where you need strengthening from others, or are you called to strengthen someone else?
3. Who in your life could benefit from encouragement, teaching, or discipleship right now?

4. Support where God is working (Acts 11:27–30)

When a famine is foretold, the believers in Antioch respond with generosity. They give according to their ability and send relief to Judea. The gospel produces unity and sacrificial support across cultural and geographic lines.

Application Questions:

1. How do the believers respond upon hearing the prophecy about the coming famine?
2. How do you typically respond when you see a need—hesitation or generosity?
3. Where might God be calling you to give sacrificially for something beyond your immediate circle?