

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

## THE FIRST GENTILE CHURCH

International Sunday School Lesson  
for February 5, 1950

Memory Selection: "In Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians."—Acts 11: 26.

Lesson Text: Acts 11: 19-26; 13: 1-3.

In the Book of Acts, Luke, after telling the story of Saul's conversion and his experiences in Damascus and Jerusalem, reverts back in point of time to recount the early spread of the Christian faith.

The persecution which followed Stephen's death resulted in adherents of the new faith being "scattered abroad", the disciples fleeing to various cities, including Antioch, where they preached the new gospel. However, at this time, they confined their missionary efforts to their own race, "speaking the word to none save only the Jews."

Antioch, in Assyria had been founded three centuries before on the Orontes River. It was the third city in the world, with a population of half a million, and the terminal of rich caravans from Persia and India. It was modern for its day, having a splendid and adequate water system, and its main street, five miles long, was wonderfully lighted by night and travelers by day were sheltered from the sun by its arcades. However, morally the city was disreputable; the Roman Juvenal, criticising the evil in Rome, said: "The Syrian Orontes has flowed into the Tiber."

Regardless of its evil practices and reputation, Antioch is known as the second birthplace of Christianity. Here it was that the word was first intentionally preached to the Gentiles by Jews having a broad cosmopolitan outlook. These were natives of Cyprus and Cyrene, having lived abroad and broken somewhat with the strict racial code of their brothers in Palestine. In their activity these Jews "spoke unto the Greeks also." Eventually news of this development came to the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and caused somewhat of a discussion there.

Up to this time the gospel had not been directed particularly to the Gentiles. True, it was that Peter had previously been to Caesarea and received the centurion Cornelius into the faith, which act had been approved at Jerusalem, but no general effort had been made to reach others than Jews. The Jerusalem Christians, somewhat concerned about the reports from Antioch, decided to investigate and wisely selected Barnabas for this purpose. He was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, and his character is amply attested in the commentary that "he was a good man."

Barnabas went to Antioch and was so impressed with the activity there that he remained and took part in it. Remembering Saul of Tarsus, who some seven or eight years ago he had vouched for in Jerusalem, and realizing that this was the type of man for the particular service needed, Barnabas set out for Tarsus in an effort to seek Saul. During these years Saul had been waiting; perhaps sometimes questioning why, but, nevertheless, undergoing a period of preparation by working in Cilicia for the wider and greater mission which he was to undertake.

It was at Antioch that the term "Christians" was first applied to the followers of Jesus. This name was self-assuming because they usually referred to themselves as "saints", "disciples," "believers" or "those of the way." The title was not given them by the Jews, because they were accustomed to refer to the Christians as "Nazarenes," remembering the question whether any good thing could come from that city. The probability is that the Gentiles, perhaps in derision, first began using the term "Christians" for those believing in the new faith.

BE A BETTER  
CITIZEN!

GO TO SOME  
CHURCH  
NEXT SUNDAY



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## Perquimans Church Services

**HERTFORD BAPTIST CHURCH**  
C. W. Duling, Pastor  
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Evening Worship, 8 o'clock.  
Mid-week Services, Wednesday at 8 P. M.

**BETHLEHEM CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Harold C. Turner, Pastor  
Church services at 3:00 P. M.  
Christian Union, 7:30 P. M.

**BURGESS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
Rev. J. R. Byerly, Pastor  
Church services first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.  
Sunday School at 10:00 A. M.  
Church service 7:45 P. M. second and fourth Sundays.

**PERQUIMANS CHARGE CHURCHES**  
E. B. Edwards, Pastor

First Sunday:  
New Hope Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Oak Grove Church, 7:00 P. M.

Second Sunday  
Winfall Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Cedar Grove Church, 10 A. M.  
Woodland Church, 7:00 P. M.

Third Sunday  
Oak Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.  
New Hope Church, 7:00 P. M.

Fourth Sunday  
Cedar Grove Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Woodland Church, 10 A. M.  
Winfall Church, 7:00 P. M.

Fifth Sunday  
Woodland Church, 11:00 A. M.  
Prayer Meeting each Wednesday at Winfall Church at 7:00 P. M.

**ANDERSON'S METHODIST CHURCH**

E. R. Meekins, Pastor  
Church School, 11:00 O. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 A. M., second and fourth Sundays.

**WHITEVILLE GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

Rev. Carl Bjork, Pastor  
Sunday School, 11 A. M. every Sunday except third Sunday.  
Church services every third Sunday at 3 P. M.

**UP RIVER FRIENDS CHURCH**

Elizabeth White, Pastor  
Sunday School, 9:45 A. M.  
Church Services, 11 A. M.  
Christian Endeavor, 6:30 P. M.

**BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH**

Rev. E. G. Willis, Pastor  
Sunday School, 10 A. M.  
Preaching first and third Sundays at 11 A. M.  
Preaching second and fourth Sunday evening at 7:30.

**PINEY WOODS FRIENDS CHURCH**

Carl J. Yow, Pastor  
Sunday School, 10 A. M.  
Morning worship—11:00 A. M.  
Youth Fellowship, 6:30 P. M.

**WOODVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH**

G. M. Singletary, Pastor  
Sunday School, 10:30 A. M. on first and third Sundays and 2:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.  
Church services, 3:00 P. M. on second and fourth Sundays.

**HERTFORD METHODIST CHURCH**

Ben O. Merritt, Pastor  
Church School, 9:45 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Youth Fellowship, 6:45 P. M.  
Evening Worship, 7:30 P. M.  
Mid-week Fellowship, Wednesday at 7:30 P. M.

**BAGLEY SWAMP PILGRIM**

Coy S. Saunders, Pastor  
Sunday School, 10:00 A. M.  
Morning Worship, 11:00 o'clock.  
Young People's Meeting, 6:30 P. M.  
Evening Worship, 7:30 o'clock.  
Mid-week Services, Thursday at 7:30 P. M.

**HOLY TRINITY CHURCH**

E. T. Jilson, Rector  
Holy Communion, 9:00 A. M.  
Every Sunday except first Sunday at 9:00 A. M.  
Church School, 10:00 A. M.  
Morning Prayer and Sermon, 11:00 o'clock.  
Holy Communion first Sunday at 11 A. M.

**BEREA CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Walker Perry, Pastor  
Bible School 10:30 A. M., except first Sunday, at 10 A. M.  
Morning worship on first Sunday at 11 A. M.  
Evening worship first Sunday at 7 P. M.

**CHAPPELL HILL BAPTIST CHURCH**

A. H. Outlaw, Pastor  
Sunday School, 2 P. M. every first Sunday.  
Church Service 3 P. M. every first Sunday.  
Sunday School at 11 A. M. every second, third and fourth Sunday.

Go To Church Your Church Any Church But Go