



DELTA
GROUPS
September 13th
"Gut Check"
"Distinct"

Big Idea: "God changes people through Distinctive Churches."

Open it: When I was growing up I heard many sermons with a similar theme; "The Distinctive Marks of the Church." Good topic but the content to me was a little suspect. The sermon would be one that affirmed what we were already practicing. It was an affirmation of who we were and was used to identify those who were not correct in their practice. The question as we look at the first century church is "what made them distinctive?" What was it about them that made people notice distinction? There is no better example of that than the church in Antioch. They were so unique that outsiders had to come up with a completely original name to describe them. Let's look at Acts 11 and see exactly what constitutes a "distinctive" church.

Dig it: Read Acts 11:19-29

Distinction: Consider Antioch, a large city that housed almost every nationality, consider the gospel, up to this time a Jewish Message and messengers; With that context to see that they "saw the evidence of God's grace;

1. What are some of the difficult decisions that people had to make?
2. What are some the tough tasks that had to be done?
3. What is the significance of outsiders coming up with the name "Christian?"

Distinction: The Apostles thought it important that Barnabus and Saul remained there a whole year teaching and equipping:

1. What is significance do you see in this?
2. What does this say about the important role of teach and equipping?

Distinction: The "brothers" sought to meet the needs of this new and thriving church. Knowing this help was coming from the Jews in Jerusalem what does that say about the gospel?

Reflect on it: We are going to mention the three "distinctive" traits of the Antioch Church. Reflect and discuss how more distinctive you and our church can become.

1. "They saw the evidence of God's grace" in them. Where do you see the evidence of God's grace around you? How would you like to grow in this evidence?
2. They were "taught" and equipped. How do see the value of God's teaching lived around us and how can you grow in access to teaching? How can you be an "equipper" of others?
3. They "decided" to share with those in need. Where do you see this in your life? How can you grow in this?

Do it: Pray as a group that we can be so unique that people would have to come up with a complete different name to describe us?

