

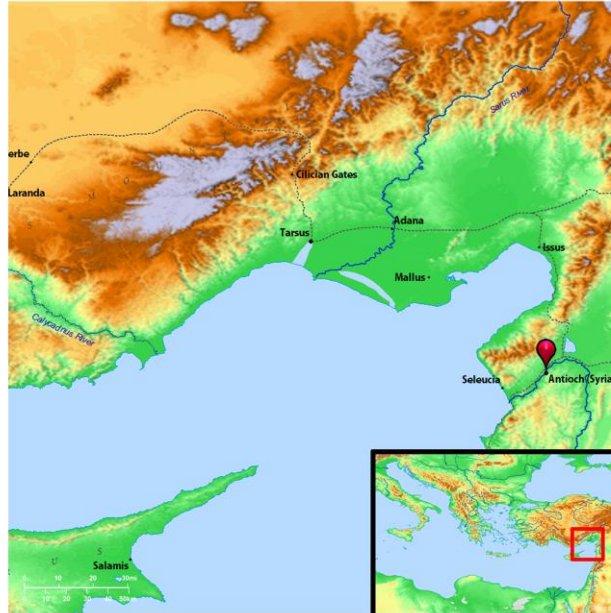
Why are models (especially biblical ones) important?

See Psalm 127:1, Heb. Ex. 25:40, Heb. 8:5

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

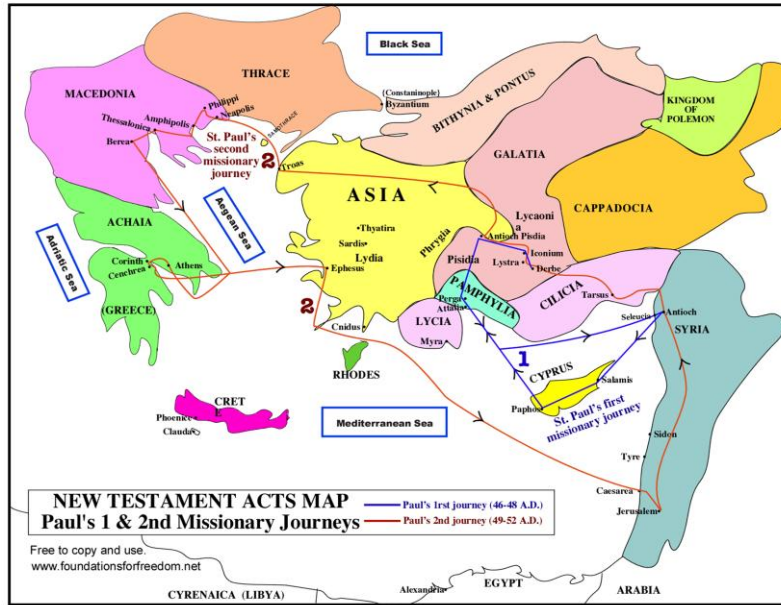
Antioch on the Orontes
 (Greek: Ἀντιόχεια ἡ ἐνὶ Ὀρόντῳ; or Ἀντιόχεια ἡ ἐνὶ Δάφνῃ, "Antioch on Daphne"; or Ἀντιόχεια ἡ Μεγάλη, "Antioch the Great"; **Turkish:** *Antakya*; **Arabic:** *أنطاكية*; **Syriac:** *ܐܢܬܝܘܟܝܐ*; **Hebrew:** *אַנְטִיּוֹכְיָה*; **Georgian:** *ანტიოქია*; **Latin:** *Antiochia ad Orontem*; also **Syrian Antioch**) was an ancient city on the eastern side of the **Orontes River**. Its ruins lie near the modern city of **Antakya, Turkey**.

Antioch was the 3rd largest city in the ancient world, after Rome, and Alexandria. Because of its geographical location, it was known as a "gateway" and "international" city.



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INTRODUCTION TO THE ANTIOCH CHURCH



Paul began his first and second missionary journeys with Antioch as his base of operations. What modern application(s) can we learn from this?

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

THE BOOK OF ACTS (2 DIVISIONS)

DIVISION	CENTRAL FIGURE	BELIEVERS	CITY FOCUS
CHPTS. 1-12	Peter	Jewish	Jerusalem
CHPTS. 13-28	Paul	Gentile	Antioch

The Divisions of the Book of Acts reflect the shift of the church's focus from Jerusalem to Antioch geographically, from Peter to Paul, and from Jews to Gentles. What is the most important aspect of this shift?

THE BEGINNING (ACTS 11:19-26)

- The believers who were scattered from Jerusalem as a result of persecution after the death of Stephen (Acts 7:58-60) fled to other cities, including Antioch, and began to evangelize first Jews, and then Greeks in those cities.
- The sheer number of conversions attracted the attention of the church at Jerusalem, who sent (“apostolos”) Barnabas (“Son of Encouragement”) to build up the believers there.
- Barnabas’ ministry strengthened the church greatly, and realizing that the ministry there was too great for him alone, Barnabas brought Saul of Tarsus (later Paul), to Antioch forming an apostolic team which effectively taught the disciples there for a year.
- The disciples were first called “Christians” at Antioch.

“The Antioch church is a model apostolic church. The church in Jerusalem was the first church governed by the Apostles. (As a result of persecution) The Holy Spirit’s emphasis shifted from Jerusalem to Antioch. From Antioch the ministries of Barnabas and Paul and later Silas and later Silas and Paul were released. The Antioch church became a spiritual hub to release apostolic teams that affected nations.” –John Eckhardt, “Building Antioch Churches”

Initially, the Jewish Christians who left Jerusalem preached the gospel to Jews only. This was partly because of the prejudice towards non- Jews that still existed among the believers (see Acts 10-11:1-18). Gentile believers from Cyprus and Cyrene began to evangelize other Gentiles in Antioch, and a large number of Greeks turned to the Lord.

It is interesting to note that the Jerusalem Jews preached only to Jews, yet the Jews from Cyprus and Cyrene evangelized Greeks. Observations...
(see Galatians 3:28)

Apostle John Eckhardt characterized these Christians as “breakthrough believers,” because they were not afraid to cross cultural barriers to spread the Gospel.

Barnabus’ initial purpose for visiting Antioch was merely to obtain a report and carry it back to Jerusalem, but he ended up saying. What does this say about man’s purposes as opposed to God’s sending one on an apostolic assignment?

Barnabus understood the need to work in partnership with other gifted believers, and that no one person could do it alone. This is a far cry from the one-pastor led church system that is so prevalent today. This also illustrates that fact that Barnabas, although he was a leader himself, also understood his role as a supporter (“encourager”) of other leaders. His ministry was eventually surpassed by that of Paul, although he himself was the vessel that God used to launch Paul into his purpose and destiny.

INTRODUCTION TO THE ANTIOCH CHURCH

- The scattering of the disciples from Jerusalem after the death of Stephen (Acts 7:58-60, 8:1) caused the focus of the church to shift from Jerusalem to Antioch.
- From Antioch God initiated apostolic endeavors that resulted in the planting of strategic churches. The churches of **Corinth, Philippi, Colossi, Ephesus** and **Thessalonica** were all formed as a result of the outreach from the church at Antioch.*
- The church at Antioch represents (a type of) **a governing territorial apostolic church**. It represents a church that has a **burden for nations** and is focused on **fulfilling the Great Commission**.*
- When a local church has these characteristics, it will impact the regions and territories to which it has been given jurisdiction.

*See *"Building Apostolic Churches"* by Apostle John Eckhardt, pg. 1, para. 1

The focus of the church has now shifted from Jerusalem ("past-focused") to Antioch ("future-focused"). What was the importance of this shift, and why was it necessary?

Knowing your assignment- Do church-builders today look for location (building), or do they look for jurisdiction (assignment)?

JERUSALEM VS. ANTIOCH- THE DIFFERENCE

Jerusalem

- Founded by original apostles
- Jewish Christians
- Tradition (Past)-
Oriented

Antioch

- Founded by ordinary believers
- Gentile Christians
- Future Focus

Do we see these same two church-types today? What are the pros and cons of both? Is it possible to have a mix of both mindsets? Why are they both necessary?

THE RESULTS:

To sum up the Antioch Church to this point:

- 1. Not founded by any apostle or recognized “leader.”
- 2. Primarily Greek believers rather than Jewish
- 3. Strongly founded in the Scriptures by Barnabas **and** Saul, who taught there for over a year.
- 4. So Christ-like (mature in their faith) that the Antioch believers were (at first, derisively) called “Christians” by the larger society.

From www.lifestreamteachingministries.com- “The Antioch Model

“Although the church at Antioch was not founded by apostles, these believers came from an apostolic community in Jerusalem. They carried an apostolic spirit and were able to pioneer and breakthrough in Antioch. **“Building Antioch Churches”- Article by Apostle John Eckhardt**

Apostolic churches are willing to accept apostolic input. Are we willing to share ministry with the gifts that are sent into our local houses, or do we treat them as “visitors,” and allow them to sit idly and observe the church service but not participate?

“Apostolic input is accomplished by the visit of apostolic and prophetic gifts as well as the visit of apostolic teams. These anointed gifts will strengthen, mature and release believers into a level of maturity necessary to have impact and influence in regions beyond.” – Eckhardt

It took Saul **and** Barnabus to build up the church. What does this say about the necessity for team ministry (“The church can not be built by the gift of one single person.” – Eckhardt) as opposed to the one-man/woman pastoral system that we use today?

RELIEF MISSION TO THE CHURCH (ACTS :27-30):

- The church at Jerusalem sent a prophetic team to Antioch. One of their number, Agabus, prophesied of an upcoming famine which would affect the then-known world. This spurred disciples in the the Antioch Church to action, and they agreed to send support to the church at Jerusalem.
- This illustrates the power of **apostolic and prophetic teams** and their ability to operate between ministries for the benefit of all. The **prophetic** team sent from Jerusalem ministered a word at Antioch which launched a relief effort carried out by the **apostolic** team (Paul and Barnabas) sent to Jerusalem from Antioch.
- This interplay between local bodies differs from the church paradigm that is so prevalent today, in that it promoted the idea of mutual need between church entities. Although the church at Antioch was not necessarily under the direct authority of the parent church at Jerusalem, and Jerusalem did not overtly claim to have jurisdiction over Antioch, it was evident that one could not exist without the other.

Although the focus of the church was shifting north and east from Jerusalem to Antioch, it was evident that the Jerusalem church was integral to the new Antioch assembly in finding its purpose.

Paul and Barnabas obviously had frequent interaction with Jerusalem, although they were now assigned to Antioch.

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM (ACTS 13:1)

- Barnabas (from Cyprus- a Hellenistic (“Gentile”) Jew)
- Simeon (called “Niger” an African)
- Lucius (from Cyrene in North Africa)
- Manaen (Palestinian Greek/ Herodian)
- Saul of Tarsus (a Hebraic Jew)

“This is an impressive list for at least two reasons. First, God had truly made “two peoples into one” (Eph 2:14, Col. 3:11). He united these people at several levels: (a) Those from different financial strata --assuming that Manaen, having been raised in Herod's household,¹ was a wealthy aristocrat. (b) Those from different religious backgrounds--Hellenistic and Hebraic Jews as well as Greeks (cf. 11:19-20). (c) Those from different nationalities--African, Syrian, Cyprus, Palestinian. And (d) those of differing skin color--assuming that Niger, meaning black, was a description of Simeon.

“Second, this list is impressive because it indicates the mobility of this church. Because their leaders represented such a broad array of people, the church could move evangelistically into any sector of this pluralistic city with a coherent voice for Christ. Simeon could speak to the blacks; Saul could debate in the synagogues; Manaen could deal with the wealthy politicians; Lucius could minister to the immigrants. Furthermore, because of the diversity represented in the leadership, this church would be more likely to avert the kind of racial division that impacted the young church of Jerusalem (Acts 6:1).

In a time of rising racial tensions, the church today would be wise to raise up leaders from a variety of socio-economic strata to evangelize and represent the diversity of people we find in our cities. If we fail in this, we may consign the next generation of Christians to churches that are myopic and schismatic, albeit homogenous and complacent.”

-LEADERS OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH (Acts 13:1-3) By Mark Moore

These “elders” were obviously raised up from among the general assembly of the church. How does this contrast with the traditional model of “hiring” pastors and ministry leaders that most mainline churches follow today?

“(There were) three essential ingredients of the character of these leaders: They were Sociologically Diverse, Spirit Led and Missions Oriented. If we can recapture these three characteristics in today's church leaders, we too can reroute our own culture.” **-LEADERS OF THE ANTIOCH CHURCH (Acts 13:1-3) By Mark Moore**

THE LEADERSHIP TEAM (ACTS 13:1)

- The phrase “...prophets and teachers” can be taken to indicate that every five-fold minister must first be an expounder and teacher of the Word.
- It also points to the fact that there was no one “decision-maker” (i.e. “Pastor”) in the church, but a multiplicity of leadership.
- Worship, consecration and prophetic instruction are integral to apostolic release.

Discussion: Why only “prophets and teachers?” What was it about Antioch that necessitated the emergence of these two gifts primarily?

Priesthood demonstrated by leadership. What does this say about our need to worship more, privately and publically, as we are elevated to positions of responsibility in the Kingdom?

The biblical implication is that the believers in Antioch gathered for the purpose of “ministering to the Lord,” and not to “start a church,” in the sense that we do so today. Their primary motive was WORSHIP, and self-sacrifice. All other activities were the outgrowth of this God-centered lifestyle.

Balancing biblical teaching with prophetic worship is essential to apostolic release. How can this principle be applied today?

A SENDING CHURCH (ACTS 13:1-5)

- In order for there to be “apostolos” (a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders), there must be a dual sending:
- first by the Holy Ghost,
- and then by the church.

³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

⁴ So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

Notice that the ones doing the “sending” are not apostles, but rather “prophets and teachers.”

This is not to say that apostles do not send forth other apostles, but it can be taken to mean that one does not become an “apostle” until one is sent. And that the “sending” can be done by whatever gifts are available in a particular house. The ideal is that ALL five ministry gifts be present in a local body, but under today’s church paradigm, that may not always be the case.

BREAKTHROUGH BELIEVERS (ACTS 13:1-5)

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The aim of every church should be to fulfill the Great Commission, becoming, like the Antioch church, “a work center sending forth workers as the Holy Spirit commands.”

FINALLY....

"... the Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time. God became Man for no other purpose. It is even doubtful, you know, whether the whole universe was created for any other purpose.

"Every Christian is to become a little Christ. The whole purpose of becoming a Christian is simply nothing else."

– C.S. Lewis

"Did apostles found Churches? Sure they did; but, our model was not founded by apostles.

If we would do our part and follow the Holy Spirit, it seems to me that the Antioch Model would work well for us today. Of course, this model does not fit inside of a denominational church structure nor does it fit the independent charismatic structure either. We need to "re-discover" the Antioch Model as our "new wineskin". If we will follow the Lord it will work." Art Nelson, www.lifestreamteachingministries.com

Summing Up

Now, let's sum up what we have learned. The first Ekklesia, or Church, was brought forth in Jerusalem

and was Jewish in its mindset and had to deal with the traditions of the past. This was a transition Church that was moving from its past traditions and mindsets toward the New Covenant understanding. The first real Church Model was Antioch.

1. Antioch was founded by average believers not apostles.
2. Antioch was primarily Greek believers and not Jewish believers.
3. Antioch believers were founded in their faith by Barnabas and Saul who taught them for over a year.
4. Their teaching was effective to mature the Antioch Church to the point that the believers were Christ-like enough that the people called them "Christians".
5. There was little ongoing interaction between the Jerusalem Church and the Antioch Church.
6. The Lord raised up prophets and teachers in the Antioch Church.
7. In a gathering of Antioch prophets and teachers who were ministering to the Lord, the Holy Spirit called and sent forth Barnabas and Saul.
8. The Antioch prophets and teachers confirmed Barnabas and Saul and sent them to do the work prepared by the Holy Spirit.
9. After being sent forth, Barnabas and Saul (Paul), who were prophets and teachers, are then called "apostles", which means "one sent".

SOURCES

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