

EARNING THE NAME CHRISTIAN ORIGINS SERIES PART 3 - IT'S NOT ABOUT US Ben Rudolph

Good morning Life Fellowship. It is good to see you here this morning. My name is Ben Rudolph and I am one of the teaching pastors here at Life. And whether it is your first Sunday here, or this is your church home, we are just so glad you are here to worship with us this morning.

Turn in your Bibles to Acts Chapter 11, and we will be looking at one of my favorite stories in all of the Bible. But before we do that we are going to have a little confession time. How many of you are Yankees that have moved down from the North to the South. Please raise your hands. Wow! See what we have done. So if you are a native we have messed your entire community up.

I am from Pennsylvania and when I moved down here people started calling me a Yankee and I didn't know what was going on. And then I realized that Yankee is a term that Southerners still call Northerners. But let me ask you a question - how many of you know where the term Yankee came from? How many know the origin of that word? We use different terms a lot without knowing the meaning, so my question is this - where did that word 'Yankee' come from?

So I like to do a little history search every once in a while, and I learned there were two different philosophies of where the term Yankee came from. One is a playoff of an Iroquois Indian word for an Englishman, which they called *Yangees*, and Yankees just became a form of that. The other idea was that it came from a derogatory term that the English called Dutch settlers in New York which was *Yongkees* for John Keyes, a generic name for a Dutchman, similar to the way we use the term 'John Doe' today.

So here is what we know. We don't know for sure where the term Yankee came from, but it was a term that the British used for their American colonists to make fun of them, and to let them know that, *'Yeah, you might be Englishmen, but you really are a little messed up.'* And we have adopted that term and now we are proud to be called Yankees. And whether you are a Northerner or a Southerner, if you go to another country today you will probably be called a Yankee. That is the term that we have.

Likewise the term Christian has been around for two thousand years. And the question that we have to wrestle with is this - where did that term come from, and how did that term get labeled on followers of Jesus? I know Dan mentioned it a little bit last week, and we are going to talk about that term 'Christian' this morning. Where that term comes from, and how we earn that name Christian.

Now let me just say this, earning the name Christian has nothing to do with our salvation. We believe that salvation comes by grace through faith alone in Jesus and what He did for us on the cross. But what I think is fascinating about this story we are

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about to read is that this was a term that was used and that was earned. There is a life in this story, the life of this church that reflected what was going on in the history of the church.

And so as dig into today's passage we are going to see how the name of Christian first came about. We are going to start in Chapter 11 and read verses 19 through 26. ***"Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen."*** Not this refers back to Chapter 8. ***"Traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus."***

"And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose, for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians."

So just like people who came up with Yankee as a derogatory term, this was a derogatory term that they gave to the people of Antioch who were followers of Jesus. The disciples were called Christians here for the first time. Now this makes me wonder why they earned the name Christian. What did they do that was so unique that they earned this name?

Like I say earlier, this story of Antioch is one of my favorite stories because the great thing about this church is that it didn't start out the way most churches did then. Most of the time when we hear about a church starting then it was started by Peter or by Paul, or with someone who knew Jesus. Even today people start churches with pastors who are well known, and a lot of people think that is the best way.

But look at what happened here. They started the church with just regular people. There were four different groups of people that God weaved together to form the story of this church. The first group that God weaved together is the people of Cypress and Cyrene. We know that they were in Antioch for a couple of reasons.

Number one, they are there because of the persecution that happened in the city of Jerusalem. When the church began in Acts Chapter 2, the city of Jerusalem was transformed and thousands of people were coming to know Jesus. But there was a

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problem about that - they just stayed in Jerusalem. And Jesus had told them He wanted them to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. They were doing a great job of being witnesses in Jerusalem, but they weren't going anywhere else. And so God allowed persecution to come into the church, and it scattered people. People were scattered all over the place, and one of the cities they scattered to was Antioch.

Now this makes a lot of sense because Antioch was the third most important city in the Roman Empire. It was on a vast trade route, and it was one of the most multicultural cities in the Roman Empire so hundreds of thousands of people were there. And if you got displaced, if you lost your home and your job, guess where you would go? You would go where there was a place to find work. So there were lots of people who had gone there and some of them were followers of Christ because of the persecution. They had moved there and they started reaching people who lived there.

And most of the people went only to the Jews because this would have been comfortable for them. They knew that they would be open to the Bible and they would be understanding of the Messiah coming. But there were a couple of guys who got together and felt they should be reaching more people out of the thousands in the city. They remembered that the last thing Jesus told His disciples was to go make disciples of all nations. And they knew that there were people in Antioch besides the Jews who needed to be told about Jesus.

So the men from Cypress and Cyrene decided to have an entrepreneurial vision and to go and talk to other people and not just the Jews. So the second group of people that God weaved into the church was the Gentiles. Now if we understand anything about Roman culture we know the Gentiles had no context of the Bible, no context of monotheism, they didn't know about the Ten Commandments and they hadn't heard about Abraham or Moses.

But the men of Cypress and Cyrene saw the people and they knew that they were lost, they were pagan, and here is what they realized. They knew that every human being struggles with two great issues of sin and shame and the guilt that brings about. Many of the Antioch Gentiles were wealthy, and their lives seemed to be going great, but they knew that they were longing for something deeper and greater in their lives. And they knew what that was, and its name was Jesus.

So now they start preaching Jesus to these Gentiles. They are not preaching Moses or the Ten Commandments. They are just preaching Jesus. And all of a sudden the Spirit of God moves and hundreds of the Gentiles start coming to know Christ. And they start forming this new church which was a church of both Jews and Gentiles.

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Now the church in Jerusalem starts hearing about this story of the church in Antioch and how people are coming to know Christ. *'Hey, did you hear what is going on in Antioch. There are lots of Gentiles being saved.'* And finally the apostles decide they need to send someone to Antioch to find out what exactly was going on. So they send Barnabas there. God now weaves Barnabas into this church at Antioch.

Barnabas was this man who was just everyone's friend. He was a guy that everyone loved. His nickname was Barnabas which means, 'Son of encouragement.' His real name was Joseph. And he earned his nickname because he was someone who just loved people. That is what I love about Barnabas - he always saw the potential in everyone.

Barnabas did that with Saul. Saul had persecuted the church and then he was radically saved. And then all of a sudden he started trying to meet with the followers of Christ, but no one wanted to have anything to do with him - except Barnabas. Barnabas believed him, and he became his friend. He introduces him to Peter and so forth.

And here is Barnabas at Antioch and he sees what the Spirit of God is doing and he is blown away. He sees the grace of God and that God's hand was on this church. And Barnabas knows someone who would be perfect for this community. He goes to Tarsus and he gets Paul. And that is the next person God is weaving into this story.

The reason that Barnabas got Paul is he knew from spending time with Paul how he had been radically converted. And he remembered that God wanted Paul to be His apostle to the Gentiles. And when Barnabas saw all the Gentiles in Antioch coming to Christ, he knew he needed someone who understood both Jewish customs and Roman culture, and of course that was Paul. He was the perfect guy for that. Paul had been in Tarsus for seven years making disciples and Barnabas goes there and brings Paul back to Antioch because he knows Paul would be the perfect leader to help teach these two cultures since Barnabas knew that Paul had been a part of both cultures himself.

So we see God weaving these four groups or people together to make and to form this church in Antioch. And in this passage there are a couple of things that stand out to me. The first one is this - I read verse 21 where it says, "***And the hand of the Lord was with them.***" Now I don't know about you, but that verse drives me crazy. Do you know why? It is because this is what I wrestle with; I want the Lord's hand on my life. I want to be able to take a step back and say, *'Man, the hand of the Lord is on me. The hand of the Lord is on this church. The hand of the Lord is on my family. God is doing something in my life. God is working and moving things in my live. God is weaving this.'*

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So the Gentiles in Antioch were responding and Barnabas came to help out. Then he got Paul to come to teach the church. But here is what we know - God was the one who was moving and shaping everything to make this church what it was. And I really want to see God do the same thing today. And I don't think these stories are in Scripture for us to read and just think, '*That is a really cool story.*' I don't think that is what God wants us to do. I don't think we are to read that story and say, '*That's nice, but it is not for today.*' No, I believe that God wants to do something just like that today with us. I believe He wants to see a work in Lake Norman like the one in Antioch. I believe He wants not just Life Fellowship to be like that, but also every other church that calls Him Lord in this community. I believe that the Spirit of God wants to do something today.

So the question that we have to ask ourselves is - why is that not happening? If God is working to weave our stories together then that means this - that He is weaving our stories into something greater than ourselves. And that excites me. Does that excite you? It excites me to think that I am not just here to live my life, to accomplish the American dream and hope I don't screw up along the way, but to believe that God has called each and every one of us to something bigger and greater than ourselves. It is not about us. It is about Him.

And God invites us into His story. Here is the main idea, the big idea for this morning. God weaves our story into His when we submit to Jesus as Lord. God weaves our story into His when we submit to Jesus as Lord. And we can see God weaving the story of these four groups together in this passage because there was something unique that was happening. God was in control of it and we can see that.

Whenever we are reading a passage of Scripture, whenever we are reading a story a great way to read and study the Bible is to look for words that are used over and over and over again. And there is one word that is used over and over and over again in this story that should make us realize there is something about this word that we have to take a step back to understand why Luke was using it.

And it is the word 'Lord.' I want you to see this. Verse 20 says, "***But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.***" Verse 21 says, "***And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.***" Now skip down to verse 23 and it says, "***And he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose.***" Verse 24 says, "***And a great many people were added to the Lord.***"

The word Lord is used over and over in this passage. Luke is trying to tell us that there is something unique about this church. And the uniqueness was that this was a church that understood who was in charge. This was a church that understood that if they

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wanted to see God move, if the Spirit of God was going to work in this city and in this group of people that He had to be the king.

And one of the greatest confrontations in our lives is the consumerism that drives so many of us. This is the sea in which we swim. Consumerism is all about us. It is all about our lives, and getting what we want done. So what confronts that message more than anything else in this culture today that we live in is that there is a king and His name is Jesus, and it is not about us. It is not about what we want to do with our life.

There are young people here today. Some of you are in junior high, some of you are in high school, and some of you may be in college. And I think you probably are always getting asked what you are going to do when you get through with school. I am sure that is a question that you get asked a lot. Do you know what a great response to that question would be? *'I want to do whatever the Lord wants me to do.'*

And that is not just a true answer for young people today, that is for us who have jobs, careers and families. We need to let people know that we are submitting to Jesus as Lord. I believe that God wants to weave us into His story in a greater way. And I wonder what it is going to take to get the hand of the Lord to work and move like He did in this early church.

Here is what I don't see today, and that is a lot of submission. It is so hard to submit, and I struggle with it every single day myself. I don't want to submit. On my day off do you know what I want to do? I want to do what Ben Rudolph wants to do. When I first wake up on my day off I want to do what I want to do. Submission is hard for all of us. But submitting to Jesus as Lord in our lives is what is crucial if we are going to see the hand of God on this church, and in our own lives.

So as we think about what they did in Antioch and what we are missing today, I want to share with you three ways in which I believe we wrestle against submitting to the Lord. When we think about God weaving us into something greater, and that He wants to weave our story into His story, we realize that it could be a beautiful thing. And that is what I want in my life. But we have to ask ourselves - why is it not happening? What is it that I am doing that is fighting against the Spirit of God working and moving in me, in my family and in this church?

So I want to share these three ways with you and those are - we either take away, or we run away, or we back away. We take away, we run away or we back away. If we are going to see God weave our story to His we have to submit to Jesus as Lord. And the reason what we don't submit to Jesus as Lord is because we either take away, run away or we back away.

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What do I mean by that? Number one - let's look at take away. If we are going to submit to Jesus He is going to have to be in control. He is going to have to be the one controlling the steering wheel. And that is going to drive some of us crazy. Some of us when we are riding with our spouse driving in the car, we are the ones who always comments. And everyone goes through that. We may be teaching our kids how to drive and we are trying not to say anything because we want them to learn how to do it. But it is so hard for some of us to hand the control over to someone else. Submitting is the hardest thing in the world for us to do.

But God is calling us to submit to Him. We see this in the passage with Barnabas. Barnabas is a man with great authority yet he leaves the church in Jerusalem that has the apostles who have the seat of authority. The apostles send Barnabas up to the church in Antioch to see what is going on. And he sees the Spirit of God working and thousands of people coming to know Jesus.

Now I don't know about you but this is what I would have been tempted to do. *'All right, I am here now, and I am in charge. I will show you how to make this church even better. I will tell you what to do now.'* I would be tempted to try and do something really great under my leadership. We have this tendency whenever the Spirit of God begins working and moving to immediately jump on it and say, *'Now it is my turn, God. Thanks for getting me this far.'* And the reason why we are not seeing the hand of God more in our churches and in our lives is because we are constantly trying to take control from Him.

And Barnabas was someone who was able to step back and see the grace of God was working and he didn't want to mess it up. He wanted to do what he could to help, but he wanted the Spirit of God to lead it. He was not there to take control. He was there to just help guide the reins of it. And that is what we need to do as well. We can invite the Spirit of God to work in us and move in us, we can ask for it all day long. *'God, we want you to come. God, we want you to fix this. God, we want you to move here.'* But if we are asking God to do that when we still have our hands on the steering wheel, it is not going to happen. Do you know why? It is because God is interested in His glory alone. He will not risk moving and working if it means that we are going to rob Him of glory later on.

Growing up in my family we always had video games to play. We always had the latest video game system. My dad was a youth pastor in the 70s, and I remember he bought an Atari in our home for the youth group kids. Then after that we had the ColecoVision system. Does anyone remember ColecoVision? I see a few of you do.

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Well, we had the ColecoVision system and then when 1985 came it was the Nintendo Original NES. And we were into that hook, line and sinker.

I remember that I would always have a group of friends in my neighborhood at my house playing Nintendo after school. One kid would buy one game and another one would buy another, and we would all share those games. I have an older brother, Chris, and he was amazing at video games. Even to this day he is still really good at them. He could just work his thumbs like magic. And whenever a kid had a video game that they got stuck on, and they couldn't conquer, they would always bring the game over to let my brother play it.

Remember the Nintendo video game 'Contra?' Chris only lost one life in that entire game. That is how good my brother was. Now I know that means nothing to some of you, but it was a major accomplishment for my generation. So my friends would bring over these different games that they would get up to a certain level, get stuck, and they would then let Chris play it. And he would work his magic and get past that level for them. And then my friends would say, '*We did it. Okay, now give it back to me. It's time for me to play again.*' And sometimes they would tell other friends, '*Hey, I conquered Metroid.*' But they hadn't conquered Metroid; it was my brother Chris who had conquered Metroid. Right?

And we do that. We forget that God does something and we say, '*Yay God, look what I did. Look at all that I did.*' And God is not interested in sharing His glory. We need to give God the controller when we are in trouble and ask Him what He wants us to do. And then let Him lead us and give Him the glory.

I was talking to a pastor friend of mine who is doing some similar things in his church like we are doing with the Mooresville church plans. He has started outreach groups in his church and he is about three years into the process. He now has as many people meeting in these outreach groups as he does meeting in his church on Sunday mornings. He is seeing the Spirit of God doing some great things. And he told me that this is something he has learned: '*The more I try to control these groups, the less I see the Spirit of God work and move.*' And that is a lesson for us, whether it is raising our kids, or starting any kind of ministry, because many times we try to take control from God.

The second thing we do is - we run away. You know it takes a lot of courage to let God take control and to submit to Him. If we are going to let God lead us and submit to Him it means He is going to ask us to go places and do things that are not comfortable for us. It means we are going to have to reorder our lives and our calendar and our resources.

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We see these men from Cypress and Cyrene who saw these Gentiles and said, ‘*What if we took the gospel to them?*’ See, there was no game plan, there was no guide book, there was no curriculum to know how to do this. They had never even seen this done before. They had never seen the apostles do this. And yet they believed that God was opening a door for them to do something. You have to love that. You have to love the courage it took to step into something that no one knew what to do. And yet they stepped out and they committed themselves to doing what God would lead them to do there. And God showed up in an incredible ways.

Not only did it take courage for these men of Cypress and Cyrene, but courage was needed for the Gentiles to believe. I mean you are talking about an entire culture that was raised upon polytheism and the worship of Caesar. And now they are going to have to believe there is a different king, a different ruler. And they had to worship a God that they could not see, but a God who had risen from the dead. So it took incredible courage for them to even believe the good news of Jesus.

So we see this courage in profound ways. And I think that is a struggle for some of us. When it comes to God saying, ‘*Hey, I am calling you to do this,*’ we are like, ‘*See you later, God.*’ And we will run away. We will stay very busy, maybe even doing good things, but we just don’t want God to ask us to step out and do that, or ask us to give up this.

There are opportunities all around us if we would just walk in faith, just trust Him, and not let fear motivate us. We let fear motivate us in everything we do sometimes, whether it is how we talk to people, what we say or don’t say, and that is because we are afraid of rejection from man. There is a verse that is in I Corinthians Chapter 4 that has just been kicking my butt the last few weeks. It is Paul talking about what people think of him, and this is what he says and it is so profound. ***“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. I entrust my judgment to the Lord.”*** See, for some of us it is not a small thing for us to be judged by people; it is a big thing. But if we are going to see the Spirit of God work and move, then the judgment of what people think about us has to be a small thing in our lives.

I was having coffee last week with a couple in our church. They wanted to get to know me, and it was a great time of just hearing their story and me sharing my story. I love hearing stories like this. They have been in our church about two years after moving to Cornelius. They have always been serving God in various capacities in different churches they have been a part of. And now they have been focusing on their neighborhood so for the last year or so they have been part of a Bible study there.

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They had been meeting with about twelve people, but just recently they felt a burden for the hundreds of other people in their neighborhood who didn't know Jesus. So they decided to start more groups in homes and when people asked what it was about they told them: *'it is just about hope.* That is all they said, it is just a place to learn about hope. As they were sharing with me this story they told me that last week there were 32 people in their home, because there are people who just want to learn about hope. You see that is what happens, when we open up our lives or our homes and instead of running away we run to people who need Jesus. What about you - are you running away, or are you running to?

The last thing is - we back away. Now this is my favorite part of the story. Look at verse 19. ***"Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen."*** Who was the person that led that persecution? It was Saul. Saul was the guy who drove those people away. Barnabas comes to this church in Antioch and he sees what the Spirit of God is doing. And I don't believe that Barnabas is ignorant here. It is not like he is thinking, *'Maybe Saul should come down - oh no, the people were driven here by Saul - I can't do that.'*

But that was not what Barnabas thought. I think he saw an opportunity for Saul to be a picture of the gospel. These people had been scattered here because of what Saul did prior to his conversion. And I believe that Barnabas wanted to create a picture of grace here. So he goes up and gets Saul. And I believe he told Saul that the people who he had driven away, people he used to persecute, were now in Antioch.

And what I love about this is we see these two groups of people - one was the offender and one was the offended - and they come together in this church at Antioch. They are weaved together after all of them submitted to the Lord in profound ways. These men of Cypress and Cyrene and their families had to submit to God's forgiveness, and they had to forgive the guy who drove them from their homes. And likewise, Saul had to lean in and he had to realize that he would be known as the guy who hurt these people, even possibly having killed or imprisoned some of their family members.

Yet these two groups come together and they worship under one Lord and King. There is only one person that can do that and that is Jesus Christ. And I think for some of us not seeing the hand of God in our lives is because we have been offended. And the moment we have been offended or something tragic has happened in our lives, we pull back. It becomes hard for us to lean in anymore.

Maybe your story is like Saul's, maybe your story is not pretty and it is not a nice picture of Christianity. And there is a lot of mess, a lot of background, and baggage that you bring into your story of your life. But you know God is saying, *'That's what I want*

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to use. He uses our weakness, He uses our mistakes, He uses the failures of our lives to shape us and mold us and turn us into something that He can use for His greater glory and purpose. That is what God does and that is how He uses us.

The very things in our lives we want to hide are the very things that God wants to use. So instead of backing away we have to lean in. We have to lean in to what the Spirit of God is calling us to do, and not back away. But sometimes that is what we do over and over and over again.

This passage today is a beautiful picture. It is not just God weaving people together, it is a picture of the people God weaves together being the people that should not even be in the same room together. And this is a picture of the hand of God being on the church in Antioch, and it is a picture of the gospel bearing fruit.

So let's think about applying this message. I have a couple of application questions I want to give you and then we are done. Number one - who do you most identify with in this story? Do you identify with the people from Cypress and Cyrene who are these entrepreneurial spirits that just saw something that could be? They saw potential and what might be. And they believed that even though no one else was doing this it might be possible to accomplish it.

What if no one else in my neighborhood is doing anything, but what if my family opened our home? What if no one else in my workplace is doing anything, but what if I began just praying for my coworkers? God calls us to step out. He will give us a vision, maybe as small as a grain or a pebble in our spiritual shoes, which makes us start thinking about the Spirit of God moving in us. We need to identify with this entrepreneurial spirit that we see in this passage.

Maybe you identify with the Gentiles in this story and your background is not God, not church, not Bible, not Jesus. Maybe you find yourself here and you are hearing something about good news, hope, joy, faith and new life. And you realize what is possible with Him. I want to encourage you to step out in faith and learn more. I want to encourage you to give your life to something that is bigger than yourself.

Maybe you identify with Barnabas. Yes, you are involved, you are a leader, and you are already doing great things. You may already have a great reputation. But maybe what this church needs from you is for you to put your arm around someone else who doesn't believe they can do it. Maybe God has called you to look at other people who are on the sideline and He wants them to be your partner in ministry. Maybe you need to start discipling others. It isn't just what you are doing already, but how you can help equip others alongside of you to do the work that God has called you to do.

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Or maybe you are like Saul, someone who has had a rough past. And you are not sure how God can use you. Maybe in your moments of clarity God has called you to a ministry that is not being done now. Maybe God has called you to a people that are not being reached. Or maybe God has given you a story He wants you to use, and you are not using it yet.

You know we have a Next Step Station in the foyer and it is there every week. And I want to encourage you with whatever God is calling you to do, whether in your neighborhood, or in your workplace, to just go out there and talk to the leaders there that will help you to know what the next steps are you need to take. The Spirit of God is calling some of you saying, *'Hey, this call is for you. And this is what I want you to do.'* The Next Step Station will help you know what the Spirit of God is leading you to do. Our job, as leaders of the church, is to equip you, not to do it all for you. That is the way the church is designed to be. So who do you most identify with?

Number two - what kind of submission is God calling you to? Some of you take away the control from God every chance you get. We need to give that control back to Him. Others of you are running away, and God is asking you to step forward. Others of you are backing away and God is calling you to lean in. What is the submission that God is calling you to do?

And lastly - if someone is watching your life who would they say your Lord is? These people earned the name Christian because they lived under the authority of Christ. Whether they were Jew or Gentile it didn't matter. Whether they were from Antioch or some place else it didn't matter. There was one authority they had. If someone is watching your life who would they say had the authority? Who is the authority in your life that they would recognize? Could people who know you say your authority is Jesus?

Let's bow our heads and close our eyes. God is still putting His hand on churches today. God's hand is still leading people today. What I want to encourage you to do is to ask God what He wants you to do. *'I am not sensing it, I am not seeing it. God, what is it about my life that needs to change?'*

In just a few moments we are going to have the time of response. I don't know what God is calling you to do. Maybe He is calling you to just go up to one of the crosses and spend some time praying, submitting things to the Lordship of Jesus again. Maybe He is calling you to pray with one of the people up here in the front. Maybe you are wrestling with what you heard today and you need to pray with someone. Whether it is coming up here to pray with someone or going to the Prayer Room afterwards, don't leave here today if God is calling you to open your heart.

EARNING THE NAME CHRISTIAN
ORIGINS SERIES PART 3 - IT'S NOT ABOUT US
Ben Rudolph

Maybe you got news this week about a sickness, or you have an issue at work that you are burdened with. Whatever it is God does not want you to carry these burdens alone. We would love to walk with you and pray with you this morning, just come and pray with someone and share your need and burden.

Maybe you want to come to one of the four stations around the room that have the Lord's Supper, and you want to remember the sacrifice that Jesus gave for us. So that we can go out we go in power, with His authority, earned for us through His blood. Maybe you want to take a moment to worship Him this morning in that. The work of submission really begins now and bears fruit Monday morning. I don't know what God is calling you to do, but let us be a church that the hand of God is resting on.

Father, we are praying for you today to do a mighty work in us. God, I believe that you want to do today what you have always done, and that is to allow your Spirit to lead us and guide us. God, I pray that you will awaken the hearts and souls of many men and women and young people here today to see what could be in their neighborhood, to see what could be in their schools, to see what could be in their homes. Oh God, I pray you will draw us near to you and may we bend our knees to you. We love you. Help us, God, to know how to submit to you as our Lord in greater ways. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.