



## Living Deeply In a Surface Society

*"Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. <sup>2</sup> So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, <sup>3</sup> "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."<sup>4</sup> But Peter began and explained it to them." Acts: 11:1-4 (ESV)*

A **world-view**: the lens through which you see the world.

A **meal-view**: the measure to which you extend hospitality, generosity and grace to people whom the Lord places in your path. It is the lens through which you see **people**.

If your world view doesn't include a generous **meal-view** you probably have a **deficient** view of the Kingdom. (see 2 Cor. 5:16, Gal. 3:28, Eph. 2:11-22)

*"<sup>17</sup> If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"<sup>18</sup> When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life." Acts: 11: 17-18 (ESV)*

God may be trying to break down an **obstacle**, free us from a **stronghold**, expand our understanding of his grace, or even use us to expand His Kingdom, but we can be standing in the way!

*"<sup>19</sup> Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord." Acts 11:19-21 (ESV)*

We must come together under the Lordship of Jesus, serving His Kingdom, and advancing it as ordinary people living deeply in a surface society.

Better Days series / week 3

Pastor Doug Melder

May 28-29, 2011

*"<sup>22</sup> The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. <sup>23</sup> 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, <sup>24</sup> for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. <sup>25</sup> So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, <sup>26</sup> 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." Acts 11: 22-26 (ESV)*

We need our **Tarsus** seasons or we will rob ourselves of maturity, wisdom, and intimacy for our latter years.

*"<sup>27</sup> Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. <sup>28</sup> And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). <sup>29</sup> So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. <sup>30</sup> and they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." Acts 11:27-30 (ESV)*

When one part of the Body is hurting, the other parts should all say "ouch!" and extend **grace** in whatever form they can. (see 1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

### Small Group Questions

1. Can you share a time where someone extended to you incredible generosity, hospitality and grace?
2. Pastor Doug said that "If your world view doesn't include a generous meal-view you probably have a deficient view of the Kingdom." What do you think this means and to what extent do you agree with it?
  - A. Read 2 Cor. 5:16 and Gal. 3:28. How do these Scriptures support the statement above?
  - B. Read Eph. 2:11-22, which is addressed to Gentiles just like the ones in Antioch. What are some ways that this passage inform the identity of those who had come to know Jesus but were not Jewish?
  - C. How is your "meal-view"? What can you do to become more generous, hospitable and extend grace to people?
3. Doug talked about religion as a germ within Christianity that can be hostile to the church. What does this mean and how have you experienced it in your life? Do you carry this germ inside of yourself? How can it cause confusion and delay?
4. How are you doing at sharing the Gospel and doing your part to advance the Kingdom, as an ordinary person? Is there anything that you think the Lord may be calling you to do in this area?

