

Theme: A thriving, growing church understands that our mission propels us into all the world - from our local area to the farthest corners of the globe.

## I. Remembering 9/11

- A. This is the 10th anniversary of that terrible day
- B. Many things motivated those evil actions
- C. One thing was an inward focus, fear of “others”
- D. We naturally fear, loathe those who are not “us”
- E. We saw this with Jonah this past summer
- F. The same temptation faced the early church
- G. But Jesus gave us a mission to overcome it
- H. Our new series Thrive: The Rise of the Early Church
- I. What caused the early church to thrive and grow?

## II. A Deadly Inward Focus (Acts 1:6)

- A. The disciples are expecting Israel to be exalted (v6)
  - 1. Lord, you are going to put us in charge now - right?
  - 2. They will have to come to us - right?
  - 3. You want them all to be like us - right?
- B. This internally focused tendency is natural to humans
  - 1. Sin divides us and causes us to not trust each other
  - 2. We especially don't like those not like “us”
  - 3. Apostles did with this while Jesus was on earth
  - 4. Now after resurrection - same attitude!

## III. A Thriving Mission For A Thriving Church

- A. Jesus turns their focus outward (vv7-8)
  - 1. A rebuke for wrong focus (v7)
    - a. The same rebuke applies to us today
    - b. Concerned about dates, times - things unrevealed
    - c. Jesus rebukes this - look at the revealed mission
  - 2. An outward focus - Jerusalem to earth's ends (v8)
  - 3. This is the antidote to our natural internal focus
  - 4. This is the antidote to our natural self-exaltation
- B. A brief look at our thriving, ever expanding mission
  - 1. Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, earth's ends (v8)
  - 2. Note the strategy - local, regional, international
  - 3. A church concerned only locally is dying
  - 4. A church concerned only internationally is dying

## IV. The Thriving Mission in Acts

- A. Acts 1:8 is an outline of the progress of Acts
  - 1. Jerusalem - Acts 1-7
  - 2. Judea and Samaria - Acts 8-12
  - 3. Ends of the earth - Acts 13-28
- B. The expansion from Jerusalem to Rome
  - 1. Acts 1:4 - The church in Jerusalem

2. Acts 8:1, 4-5 - Persecution scatters to Judea & Samaria
3. Acts 13:1-5 - the worldwide mission starts
4. Acts 13:46-49 - worldwide Gentile mission going
5. Acts 28:28-31 - Gentile mission; preach in Rome

C. The Church & Word thrives and grows in Acts

1. Acts 6:7 - Word spreads in Jerusalem
2. Acts 9:31 - peace; strengthened, encouraged, grow
3. Acts 12:24 - Word increases and spreads
4. Acts 16:5 - Churches strengthened, grew
5. Acts 19:20 - Word spread and grew in power

D. Acts - God's people thrive and grow

1. It shows how a small church became worldwide
2. It shows how a Jewish church became largely Gentile
3. It shows a thriving growing people!!!

## V. Applying the Word

A. Do we see the thriving mission we have been given?

1. Do we see this is the central message of Acts?
2. Do we how vibrant and thriving with life this made the early church?
3. Do we see that to reject this mission is to begin dying?
4. Do we see that following this mission brings fulfilling life?
5. Our own history at BRCC - thriving through this mission!

B. How are we doing in this mission?

1. The mission - from here to ends of the earth!
2. Am I part of reaching the ends of the earth?
  - a. Do I PRAY for our missionaries?
  - b. Do I GIVE to support our missionaries?
  - c. Am I EXCITED about missions?
3. Am I part of reaching this area?
  - a. Am I praying for the lost all around me?
  - b. Am I personally sharing the Gospel?
  - c. Am I to be part of BRCC or RCC?

C. Prayer for BRCC & RCC to fulfill this mission from Christ

### A Thriving Mission

Acts 1:6-8  
 September 11, 2011  
 Prayer  
 Psalm 67:1-2

Jerusalem	Acts 1-7
Judea and Samaria	Acts 8-12
Ends of the earth	Acts 13-28

In **the church at Antioch** there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, **“Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”** 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and **sent them off.** 4 The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to **Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.** 5 When they arrived at Salamis, they **proclaimed the word of God** in the Jewish synagogues.

Acts 13:1–5

Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. 47 For this is what the Lord has commanded us: “ ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’”” 48 When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. 49 The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

Acts 13:46–49

“Therefore I want you to know that God’s salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!” 30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 28:28–31

So **the word of God spread.** The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Acts 6:7

Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

Acts 9:31

But the word of God continued to increase and spread.

Acts 12:24

So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

Acts 16:5

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

Acts 19:20