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The Controversial Church: Living, Moving, and Existing

Acts 11:19-21, 25-26 - *Meanwhile, the believers who had been scattered during the persecution after Stephen's death traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. They preached the word of God, but only to Jews. ²⁰ However, some of the believers who went to Antioch from Cyprus and Cyrene began preaching to the Gentiles about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The power of the Lord was with them, and a large number of these Gentiles believed and turned to the Lord...²⁵ Then Barnabas went on to Tarsus to look for Saul. ²⁶ When he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching large crowds of people. (It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.)*

- 1) **How Is A Christian Supposed To Respond To This?**
- 2) **How Should We Deal With The Culture That Surrounds Us?**

Romans 12:2 - *Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (emphasis mine)*

- **Mature In The Culture Where He's Placed Us**
- **We Need To Pick And Chose Our Battles**

John 14:6 - *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."*

- **Pluralism Wants The Church To Hold Their Beliefs Privately**
- **The Gospel Isn't A Personal Opinion; It's An Objective Truth**

DEBATING WITHOUT BERATING

Acts 17:16-18 - *While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply troubled by all the idols he saw everywhere in the city. ¹⁷ He went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews and the God-fearing Gentiles, and he spoke daily in the public square to all who happened to be there. ¹⁸ He also had a debate with some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers. When he told them about Jesus and his resurrection, they said, "What's this*

babbler trying to say with these strange ideas he's picked up?" Others said, "He seems to be preaching about some foreign gods."

- **A Composed And Adaptive Approach Of The Gospel**

- 1) **Discussed.**
- 2) **Listened.**
- 3) **Shared His Convictions.**