First At Antioch
Acts 11:25-30

Introduction:
A. Antioch important city to world: Pop. 500,000, lighted streets, beautiful buildings.
B. Antioch important city to church: Important to converting Gentiles (13:1-4; 14:26,27).
C. Antioch had two important *firsts* in the history of the Lord’s church

Discussion:

II. The Disciples Were Called Christians First At Antioch. (v. 26)
A. “Christian” was a new name for God’s people.
   1. Prophesied by Isaiah (62:2) - Antioch first Gentile church.
   2. It was not just used at Antioch - “first at Antioch” implies wider usage.
B. “Christian” was not merely a name used in derision. (1 Pet. 4:16; cf. Isa. 62:2).
C. “Christian” means “of Christ” describing a certain kind of person.
   1. He is not one who just believes in Christ, he lives for Christ. (Acts 26:27,28).
      a. Opposite to ungodly and sinner. (1 Pet. 4:18).
      b. Opposite to murderer, thief, and busybody. (1 Pet. 4:15).
   2. He is one who believes and turns. (Acts 11:21); obeys (1 Pet. 4:16,17).
   3. He is one who is righteous (1 Pet. 4:8) and in “house of God” (4:17; cf. 1 Tim. 3:15).

III. The First Case Of “Congregational Cooperation” in Benevolence Was At Antioch. (vs. 27-30).
A. Why was the relief sent? - a famine. (v. 28).
   1. N. T. sent funds to churches in need, not a “created” need.
   2. Churches today sometimes send to churches not in need - only assumed need.
B. How was the relief carried to Judean churches? - directly. (v.29).
   1. No middle agency received and managed funds.
   2. No organization between sending and receiving church.
C. Where was the relief delivered? “Elders” in Judea. (v. 29).
   1. No human organization involved.
   2. No board of directors to oversee the work.
D. What facts in this case are present in all other recorded cases of cooperation.
   1. The receiving church was in need - thru no fault of their own.
   2. The funds were sent directly by messengers chosen by church and delivered to needy church.
   3. The funds were not sent nor received by human institution to supplant local church.
   4. The funds were for relieving needy saints.

Conclusion:
A. Let us not substitute human names for the one authorized by Christ.
B. Let us not substitute human arrangements for that authorized by Christ.