

Life for the Nations Acts 11:1-18

"34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. " - Acts 10:34-35

Ice Breakers:

- What dream stands out in your memory?
 - What favorite story do you like retelling?
 - What is one family tradition you want to keep at all costs?
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BELIEVE

Read this Week's Scripture

Let me make a couple of general observations before we go into today's text.

- **The first**, has to do with the importance of repetition. The fact that this story is told in four parts, with the fourth part being a summary of Acts 10 [the first three acts of the story] gives us a clue about its importance. If we are not careful, we can quickly read over the events and say "yeah, yeah, yeah" and think that we've already covered the material. But we need to read it slowly and meditate upon it so that it will impact us as God intended it to impact us.
- **The second**, has to do with the importance of perspective; we need to keep the timeline of the church in Jerusalem in mind. When we come to the end of the story today, we could be left with the mistaken impression that all is well. But it's not, and that understanding in itself provides a caution that we need to chew on. The consistent theme that we have seen through these four acts is this: God brought the Gentiles into His Kingdom without first making them Jews. I want to update that theme for today's summary message with this takeaway: The power of salvation is not in ourselves but in the message we proclaim.

BUILD

Engage the Scripture

Have someone in your group read Acts 11:1-3

Question 1: Why do you think Peter was chosen to go to the Gentiles?

Question 2: In **Acts 11:1-3**, when Peter went to Jerusalem, who criticized him? Why did the "circumcised believers" imply that it was wrong for Peter to eat with Gentiles?

- Do you think the church today is more like Peter OR the "circumcised believers"? In what ways do we need to be less like the "circumcised believers" in our approach to others | our community | the world?

*Have someone in your group read **Acts 11:4-14***

Question 3: In **Acts 11:4-10**, what does Peter emphasize as a reason that he shared the gospel with Gentiles?

Question 4: What confirmation does Peter give in **Acts 11:12-14**?

- Is there a “wrong crowd” the Church avoids today?
- What group is hardest for you to imagine sharing a meal with?

*Have someone in your group read **Acts 11:15-18***

Question 5: In **Acts 11:15-17**, How did Peter dismiss the idea that the Gentiles were second-class citizens?

Question 6: On “Who” did Peter’s defense rest? [**Acts 11:17**]

Question 7: How did they respond to his testimony? [**Acts 11:18**]

- What does this show about God’s sovereignty in salvation? [**2 Timothy 2:25-26; Acts 16:14**]

BECOME

Apply the Scripture

What issue(s) is more important to me than the gospel?

What am I willing to do to take the gospel to those who haven’t heard?

Where am I in danger of digging in my heels because of personal preference?

In the church, do we have a tendency to step in God’s way? [Meaning do we put up barriers to the gospel, withhold the gospel, or seek ethnocentricity -belief that one culture is superior to another?]