

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 8/11 thru 8/17
Acts 11:1-30



WHATS THE STORY?

When Peter arrives back in Jerusalem, he is confronted by a group of believers who are wary of his interaction with the Gentiles. Peter is able to assuage their concern with an appeal to the work of the Spirit, and the word of God begins to spread to Gentiles in other regions of the world.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Has there ever been a time when you were resistant to the moving of the Spirit?
- Who, in our world, still needs to hear the good news of Jesus Christ?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: Why did the Jewish Christians go from concerned to excited?

What does it mean to not stand in the way of God?

What does the word Christian mean?

A Deeper Look

After the Kingdom was expanded to the Gentiles, word spread; however, this news was initially met with apprehension by the Jewish Christians. When Peter arrived back in Jerusalem the Jewish circumcised believers approached him with their concerns. Peter retold the experience he had in the home of Cornelius: that he watched the Holy Spirit fall on the Gentiles in Cornelius' household and how God explained to him that he does not show favoritism (10:34-35). He recalled Jesus statement about His baptism being one of the Holy Spirit (v16) and that he could not stand in the way of God's will (10:47 and 11:17). The circumcised believers had no further questions and "...praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life." (11:18)

Far away from Jerusalem, the church begins to organically spread the gospel to the Gentiles. As the gospel spreads into "Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch" (v19) Gentiles begin to hear the good news of Jesus Christ (v20). With the Lord's help (v21), many of those who heard turned to God. The believers in Jerusalem sent a man named Barnabas to investigate and encourage the new believers. Barnabas then went and got Saul from his home town and brought him back to Antioch to help preach, teach, and encourage. It was in this movement in Antioch where the title Christian was first coined, bridging the gap between the Jewish and Gentile believers who committed themselves to Jesus as the Christ.