

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 7/21 thru 7/27
Acts 9:20-10:22



WHATS THE STORY?

Paul and Peter continue to lead the story of God's people forward as they preach and minister, sometimes at their own expense. Peter and Cornelius bear witness to parallel visions, as the Spirit once again pushes the boundaries of who belongs in the Kingdom of God.

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

- What would you be willing to sacrifice for the mission that God has called you to?
- Why might God have chosen Cornelius as the representative of the Gentiles?



FAMILY STUDY

- Discuss:** What do you think it was like when Paul began to meet with the disciples?
- How did Peter follow in Jesus' footsteps?
- How did God show Peter that the Kingdom is going to be different going forward?

A Deeper Look

After his baptism into the church, Paul went on to spend time with the disciples who resided in Damascus. One would assume that they compared notes on what they had seen and heard over the last few years. After this meeting of the minds, Paul kept his zeal for God and immediately went to the synagogues to preach that “Jesus is the Son of God.” (v20) Those in these centers of worship were confused at Paul’s sudden change of heart, and some of his former allies became his opponents sought to kill him. With the help of others he snuck away and headed to Jerusalem. Those in Jerusalem were rightfully skeptical of this turn and it took Barnabas going alongside of Paul to gain these disciples’ trust. Then Paul, because word hadn’t gotten out about his conversion was able to be out and about preaching “...in the name of the Lord.” (v28) After word eventually spread, he was threatened again and fled to Caesarea and then to his hometown of Tarsus. Luke adds a note that the “...church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.”

The focus turns back to Peter as he was also traveling around the region teaching and healing. He healed a paralyzed man named Aeneas in a way that emulates his teacher in Matthew 9:8, Mark 2:9, Luke 5:24, and John 5:8. Then in an amazing display of the power given to Christ’s followers, Peter resurrected a disciple named Tabitha, again adding to the number of the believers.

Luke then tells us of a dream that a man named Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, had in which he was told that God has taken note of his prayers and alms to the poor and that he needs to send for Peter. Peter was then shown in a dream things that were once unclean have been made newly clean by God, as the Spirit continues to broaden the kingdom and make things new.