

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 8/4 thru 8/10
Acts 10:23-48



WHATS THE STORY?

Peter's understanding of the gospel mission is expanded once again, this time through the Holy Spirit's visible empowering of a group of Gentiles. The question of clean and unclean is done away with, changing the course of the church forever.

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

- How is the Spirit continue to push the church forward today?
- What do we view as “clean and unclean” in our lives?

- Discuss:** What made Peter realize God wanted the Gentiles in His kingdom?
- What happened to the Gentiles while Peter was talking about Jesus?
- What did the Jewish believers and Peter say about their new brothers and sisters?

A Deeper Look

This week's passage starts with Peter inviting some new acquaintances into Simon the tanner's house. They had come from Cornelius after he was instructed in a dream to send these men to look for Peter. We are told that the very next day Peter, these men, and even some of the believers that were in Joppa with Peter went off to see Cornelius. When Peter arrived, Cornelius shows his reverence for this man that God told him about by falling down to worship him. Peter corrects him by saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal," (v26) which hints at Peter's understanding of Christ's divinity (Lk 5:8). After entering the house, Peter tells the excited people about his dream and its interpretation: that "God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean." (v28) Once the Jewish people counted it unlawful and abominable to associate with Gentiles in this way, but God has broadened Peter's understanding of the Kingdom by way of an allegorical dream. No longer are Gentiles viewed as a less important people in God's plan, but they are being adopted into the people of God. No longer are they profane or unclean, but they are brother or sister.

Cornelius' words in verse 33 shed light on why he felt it necessary to bow down and worship Peter. He says, "I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. So now all of us are here in the presence of God to listen to all that the Lord has commanded you to say." Cornelius views Peter's presence in his home as evidence of the presence of God. Cornelius points out that God is dwelling in his disciple Peter, and will inspire the words that Peter has brought with him. Peter immediately starts with, "God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him." (v34-35)

In the middle of Peter's speech, the Holy Spirit falls upon the Gentiles, filling those present to the shock of the Jewish Christians who witness this confirmation from God that they are acceptable in his sight. Peter instructed them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (v48) and stayed with them several days.