

## Acts 10:1-11:18 Bible Study

1. What are some examples of favouritism you might encounter? What do you think is behind favouritism?

2. Read Acts 10:1-8. How would you describe Cornelius? What would you think of him if you met him? Would you think he needed to hear the gospel?

*Devout, God-fearing, generous, prayerful, led his family spiritually, humble – feared when saw angel, obedient. For all of his piety, he still needed to hear the gospel and respond to Jesus.*

3. Read Acts 10:9-16. In the Old Testament, “clean” was the normal state for people and meant they could go to the tabernacle / temple and worship the Lord; “unclean” meant they couldn’t. Lots of things could make you unclean, including certain animals. For example, read Lev 11:41-45 (all of Lev 11 if you’re game!). What’s the real issue behind being clean or unclean? See also Mark 7:14-23.

*Holiness – clean and unclean were like pictures to help teach that only the holy can approach God, the unholy is separated from him. The core issue is the heart.*

4. Read Acts 10:17-33. Read also Eph 2:11-12 for some background to the Jew / Gentile divide. What shows you that Peter has understood the meaning of the vision?

*He goes with the men and enters the Gentile’s house. He realises the vision was not just about food but people v28.*

5. When did the Lord command Peter to speak to Cornelius & his household (v33)?

*1:8 – the problem was, Peter probably understood that to mean witnessing to **Jews** in those places!*

6. Read Acts 10:34-48. Summarise Peter’s message. What things could you say the same to someone today? What things would have to be different?

*The good news is that peace with God comes by trusting Jesus; Jesus is Lord of all, Jesus had a real and historical ministry, empowered by the Holy Spirit, apostles were eyewitnesses, Jesus was killed by crucifixion – hanged on a tree meant being under God’s curse, see Deut 21:23 & Gal 3:13 (so we could escape it!); he was raised bodily; he is Judge of the living and the dead; the Old Testament is all about him, forgiveness of sins comes by faith in his name. The main difference is that you could not assume a basic knowledge of the facts as Peter did – vv36-37.*

7. Read Acts 11:1-18. What is the problem Peter faces back in Jerusalem?

*They all thought like Jews too! NB In 10:20 the Spirit told Peter to “not hesitate” to go – literally it’s to go “without distinction” (repeated in 11:12). In 11:2, the word for “criticized” is the same word – they did exactly what Peter would have if the Spirit hadn’t told him not to!*

8. List the key points of Peter’s argument as to why this was from God and should be accepted.

*• v5-10 God’s three-fold vision; • v11-12a The Spirit’s immediate instructions; • v12b-14 Cornelius’ vision; • v15-16 The Spirit was given to them too (cf Acts 2:18).*

9. Why is so much space given to the conversion of one man (and his household)?

*Details and repetition are two ways to emphasise something – this is the final stage of the mission plan of Acts 1:8 – not that the mission is over, but it has now begun in all major people groups.*

10. Consider how Peter starts his address in v34; what is the significance of this for Peter? For us?

*God has no favourites – all need to hear the gospel and respond, no one is more worthy than anyone, no one is unworthy. All are sinners needing peace and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.*