

PETER: GOD'S GOOD NEWS VISION

ORDINARY PEOPLE · ACTS 10:1-11:18

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"I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right." (Acts 10:34)

God's Good News Vision (Acts 10:1-17)

- Cornelius's vision (10:1-8)
- Peter's vision (10:9-17)
- God's New (Old) Good News Vision (Genesis 12:1-3)
- Remembering Jesus' words (1:1-8)

Thresholds of Growth, part 1

- Peter's journey with Jesus and thresholds of growth:
 - Shock leads Peter to follow Jesus (Luke 5:1-11)
 - In uncertainty, Peter declares Jesus is Messiah (9:18-20)
 - Peter is overwhelmed by Jesus' glory (9:28-36)
 - In pressure, Peter disowns Jesus (22:54-62)
 - Jesus gently restores Peter (John 21:15-19)
 - Peter proclaims the good news on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41)

God's Good News Vision Proclaimed (Acts 10:17-26)

- The geographical journey to Caesarea with the messengers from Cornelius (10:17-26)
- Peter's spiritual journey into the vision of God (10:27-48)
 - Peter realizes he has misunderstood God's vision (10:34-35)
 - Peter proclaims to a new audience (10:36-43)
 - The Holy Spirit comes upon the Gentiles and Peter invites them to be baptized (10:44-48)

Thresholds of Growth, part 2 (Acts 11:1-23)

- The Jerusalem church in tension and new realization (11:1-18)
- The good news proclaimed in Antioch (11:19-23)

The Good News is for Everyone

- Experiencing the good news in Jesus for ourselves
- Going on a journey of transformation with God in our lives
- Sharing the good news in Jesus with others

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you felt like you were on the outside of something? When have you seen someone else on the "outside"? What did you do?
2. This week we continue our sermon series, "Ordinary People in God's Extraordinary Work," the second part of our journey through Acts. Today we explore the story of Peter in Acts 10:1-11:18. Whether on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you, and then read that passage aloud.
3. Who is Cornelius and what does God speak to him through his angelic vision in 10:1-8?
4. How would you describe Peter's rooftop vision in 10:9-16? What do you think the significance is of this vision? For background on clean and unclean, consider reading Leviticus 11, which defines 'clean' animals as those good for eating or sacrifice while 'unclean' or not.
5. When Peter returns to Cornelius' home in Caesarea, he retells the gospel but has a strong realization about the inclusion of non-Jews (called 'Gentiles'). Why do you think this is significant and what does it cause Peter to do in response (10:34-48)?
6. What do you think this realization speaks to us today? What might it mean for how we think of others who need to hear the good news?
7. After all the excitement of Acts 10, Peter returns to Jerusalem and experiences a very different response in 11:1-16. What do you think was behind their response to his report? How does Peter's response satisfy their concerns?
8. What is one thing you sense God calling to your attention personally through this week's study? If you are with a small group, discuss that together and then pray about it. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and consider sharing your thoughts with someone this week.

DIG DEEPER:

Exploring Faith

- Some people say that Christianity is too narrow-minded or doesn't care about all people. How does this story challenge that perception?

Growing in Faith

- Take some time to review the entire life story of Peter here: mwerickson.com/2023/10/27/overview-of-the-life-of-peter/. If you divided your life story with God into chapters, what would those chapters and their titles be?

Centered in Faith

- It is easy as we grow in our faith to become insular and no longer think of those beyond the church. How have you seen this happen in your journey with God? How might you intentionally engage with those outside the church in coming weeks?