

# **SENT Sermon Study Guide**

## **Even to the Gentiles – Acts 10-11**

**Scripture Reading:** Acts 11:1-18, 2 Peter 3:9



### **Sermon Notes:**

We live in a world of constant change where God is continually revealing Himself  
In Acts 10 God breaks down barriers between Jews and Gentiles

- Gentiles were always a part of the plan – Abraham – “light to the Gentiles”

Acts 10:15 – Do not call anything impure that God has made clean

Sometimes it is hard to accept or understand the new thing that God is showing us

1. God loves the nations and knows the needs of the people
2. God prepares and equips us to be His witnesses
3. God’s Spirit goes before us – we need to keep up!

### **Acts 10 – A New Thing**

Peter at Joppa – at Simon the Tanner’s – goes on the roof to pray – he is HUNGRY

Peter knows what he knows – he grew up Jewish – knows purity laws

- he was there with Jesus, saw and heard him teach... - still observant Jew

- he also knows the voice of God – new interpretation – Spirit presence

Peter’s reaction to what God shows him - Surely NOT!!!! - had to be shown 3 times

Acts 10:17 - Peter is still wondering about the meaning of the vision

Acts 10:28 – going to check it out... but not convinced...

Acts 10:34 – dawning understanding... God want the Gentiles to know him too!

Acts 10:44 – Spirit moves before he’s even done... (11:15 – as I began to speak)

Acts 11:2 – When he went to the church... they criticized him! So he explains...

Acts 11:17 – “If God gave them the same gift as he gave us...”

“who was I to think I could oppose God?”

### **How Do We Discern?**

When God shows us something new... how do we discern?

- Question it??? questions are good – check it out
- Reconcile this with what we know of God’s character
- Watch for Spirit’s movement/confirmation/power

Then GO!!! Embrace the movement of the Spirit into new ways...

**What does it look like?** What is the evidence we need to see that God is in it?

- prompted by God’s love for people – lost people
- rooted in the spiritual need of the people in our lives
- God opens doors that used to be closed – changes the context
- God’s Spirit shows up! – salvation understanding; transformed hearts, lives
- fruit – lives aligned with the will of God - them and US!!!

Becoming aware of and moving into what God is up to requires one thing though...

Like Peter - WE HAVE TO BE HUNGRY!

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. In Acts 10:9 we read that Peter saw this vision when he had gone onto the rooftop of the house for a time of prayer. Being devoted to prayer is something we see repeatedly in the book of Acts. Take some time as a group to pray together about what new things God wants to show us as a church.
2. Accepting change can be difficult, especially when we are sure that the way we are doing things is the RIGHT way! As you think about your own experience of church, what are some of the changes that you have seen take place? What were the reasons for those changes? In Acts 11:2 some people in the church criticized Peter for what he had done. How can we make changes in the church in ways that help unify us rather than divide us?
3. Whenever we change to a new way of doing things, we end up losing something that was meaningful about the old way. What are some of the things that you really miss about the way we “used to” do things in church? What made those things meaningful to you? What are some of the new meanings that have become important in the new ways we do those things?
4. Unless one of you have had a vision and divine message like Peter did, it can be challenging to understand when our ideas come from God or from our own desires and way of thinking. What are some of the questions we need to ask ourselves when we are thinking about changing the way we practice our faith?
5. As you think about how much God loves the people around you, especially those who don’t know Him yet, what are some of your dreams and “visions” about how we as a church can share the Good News of Jesus with them? What would we lose and what would we gain if we made those changes?
6. Who are some of the people in your life that need to know that God loves them and wants to be in a relationship with them? Just like He prepared Peter to go witness to Cornelius, God will prepare and equip you to be a light of hope in their lives. What are the things that are holding you back from sharing Jesus with them? What are the closed doors that need to be opened for them to be able to hear and understand? Take some time to pray together for God to prepare the way for you and for them.
7. In this text of Acts 10-11, the Spirit of God shows up in power confirming that this is a “God thing”. Have you had an experience when God’s Spirit showed up in power? Share these experiences with one another as an encouragement in our faith.

## **Taking Action:**

In the coming week, take time each day to ask God to open the door to a spiritual conversation with someone in your life that needs to hear about His love for them!