

Circle Group Questions

CHANGE IS IN THE AIR -ACTS 10

Ice Breaker Question: As a child, what foods did you refuse to eat? What foods do you still dislike?

Read Acts 9:31-43

1. Why do you think Peter was travelling throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria? To whom was Peter ministering? (Acts 9:32,38,41) What do you think God's purpose was for Peter to travel throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria?
2. How did the events in this section help accomplish these objectives in Lydda, Sharon and Joppa? (Acts 9:31,35,41,42) How can our ministering to the Lord's people help to build up the church and bring others to Christ?
3. At the end of this section, we learn that Peter is staying with a tanner named Simon. A tanner was a leather worker who preserved the skins of dead animals. Why would it be unusual for a Jewish leader like Peter to be staying at the home of a tanner? What might this say about Peter changing perspective?
4. Are there perspectives you once held that have changed over the course of time and because of your relationship with Jesus? Please explain.

Read Acts 10:1-8

5. What do we learn about Cornelius and his character in this passage? (Extra Credit: Use your study notes or commentary to learn more, like what was a centurion)

ESV Study Bible Note: 10:2 Devout man who feared God identifies Cornelius as a "God-fearer" (cf. v.22; 13:16, 26), a Gentile who worshiped Israel's God and was in some way attached to a synagogue but who had not submitted to Jewish conversion rites (esp. circumcision). He followed two of the primary expressions of Jewish piety—prayer and almsgiving. Alms are gifts to the poor. (Crossway Bibles. The ESV Study Bible. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008. Print.)

6. What was the instruction of the Angel to Cornelius? What did Cornelius do?

7. How does Peter's and Cornelius' angelic appearance seem to fit with God's always seeming to have "one more move"? (Pastor Dave's comment from the previous week's sermon)

Read Acts 10:9-23

8. In Peter's vision, what was Peter's response to "kill and eat"? Why would he answer this way? (Leviticus 20:25) (For your own study you will find a complete list on the distinction between clean and unclean animals in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.)

Leviticus 20:25 (NIV) You must therefore make a distinction between clean and unclean animals and between unclean and clean birds. Do not defile yourselves by any animal or bird or anything that moves along the ground—those that I have set apart as unclean for you.

9. How did the voice respond to his answer? (Mark 7:14-19) How did Peter later interpret this answer? (Acts 10:28,34) How do you think he came to this view? (Genesis 12:1-3; John 3:16; Ephesians 3:6)

Mark 7:14-19 (NIV) 14 Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. 15 Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them." 17 After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. 18 "Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? 19 For it doesn't go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

Acts 10:28 (NIV) 28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean.

Acts 10:34-35 (NIV) 34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.

Genesis 12:1-3 (NIV) 1 The LORD had said to Abram, "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. 2 "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name

great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

John 3:16 (NIV) 16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Ephesians 3:6 (NIV) 6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

A question from Pastor Dave's Sermon: "Interestingly God deals with Peter in 3's. Three times Peter denied Christ, 3 times Jesus asks Peter if he loves him in John 21 as Jesus reinstates Peter, and now 3 times He repeats the same vision."

10. When God is trying to get your attention, what do you think is your number? Is it 3? 30? 300? How many times does God have to get your attention on a particular issue (matter) before you become open to what he wants to change in your heart?"

11. How did Peter respond to the emissaries from Cornelius? Why? (Acts 10:20-23)

Read Acts 10:24-35 - GOD'S WILL IS TO CHANGE YOUR HEART TOWARDS THOSE YOU REJECT

12. What criteria do people use today to keep themselves from engaging others? (Examples: a different political party, people in authority, unchristian behaviors and lifestyles, perfect people, the poor and homeless) What is the Biblical view? (Acts 10:28, Colossians 3:11, James 2:8-9)

Colossians 3:11 (NIV) 11 Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

James 2:8-9 (NIV) 8 If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. 9 But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

13. In light of this truth, how is the Christian to regard others from other nations

and races, social position or other reasons? (Acts 10:34,35) How can loving others unconditionally lead to our sharing our faith with them?

Read Acts 10:36-48 -THE SIGN OF GOD'S ACCEPTANCE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT

14. What was the response/reaction to Peter's presentation of the Gospel? (Acts 10:44,46) What was the significance that this revealed? How has this event change the direction of the early church? (Acts 11:19-21)

15. What was the reaction of the believers with Peter? (Acts 10:45) What preconception was revealed by the believer's response?

16. How did Peter respond? (Acts 10:47-48) Why did Peter respond differently? Why do you think Peter had them baptized after receiving the Holy Spirit? (Acts 11:15-17)

Acts 11:15-17 (NIV) 15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?"

17. How has God changed your thinking to match His love? What changes in behavior have resulted in your changed thinking?

GOD CHANGES YOUR THINKING TO MATCH HIS LOVE