

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

THE LIFE — VII

Discrimination in the Church – Acts 10
Pastor Miles McPherson – March 3, 2013



MEMORY VERSE

“And the voice came to him again a second time, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’” (Acts 10:15 ESV)

“While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.” (Acts 10:44-45 ESV)

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Review the Sunday Message

(No sermon notes provided – use your own notes for discussion)

COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS — THE LIFE, PART EIGHT

In Leviticus 11, Israel was given strict instructions on the type of animals they were allowed to eat. In fact, there were some animals they couldn't even touch, and if they saw or were near a dead animal's carcass they would be considered temporarily unclean. This was serious stuff to any good Hebrew, and the Apostle Peter would've been no exception.

However, one morning as he went up on his rooftop to pray he was led into a vision by the Lord and in front of him were all of the animals that he was taught his whole life were unclean. And the Lord told him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” (Acts 10:13b) This would've done more than confuse Peter; this would've put him in a tailspin. The God he loved and served with his whole heart was now commanding him to break the very law that God himself told his fathers to strictly obey. But how could this be?

Well the answer lies in the rest of Acts 10. The purpose of God showing Peter this was for the greater purpose of welcoming then Gentiles (whom were viewed as unclean by Jewish standards) into the family of God. This was so revolutionary that it unset the Torah obeying Jewish community and equally brought great joy to all those who were typically not welcomed.



On Sunday, Pastor Miles tied this story to that within our own contemporary culture. How often do we prejudge a book by its cover within the church specifically? As a church committed to bringing Pervasive Hope to every street and every person, this lesson needs to be heeded.

Study Questions:

1. Briefly discuss what some of your core attributes were before you became a Christian. The following are a few things to mention:
 - What did you believe about God?
 - How did you view your own existence? Was life important to you? If so, what were you passionate about?
 - How did you view people that believed differently than you?
2. How did your response to the above questions change once you started following Jesus?
 - Try to show a clear comparison and explain why you believed they changed.
3. Read Acts 10:34-43 together as a group. List and discuss the key components of Peter's sermon that he preached to the household of Cornelius. What lessons from his sermon can you properly apply to your view of other people in the body of Christ?
 - God shows no partiality (v. 34-35).
 - The same gospel message that was preached to Israel was actually received by those who it wasn't preached to initially (Gentile Romans) (v. 36-37).
 - The purpose of Jesus' healings and wonders were to point people to his Kingship (v. 38-41).
 - The apostles were appointed by God to testify to these things they saw. Including preaching these to the Gentiles (v. 42-43).
 - The overall point is that all people can have commonality with each other because of what Jesus accomplished.

Do you view your relationships with others in terms of the complete work of Jesus on the cross or by other means? How does this section of Scripture challenge and change your view of others.

Give examples of relationships that you need to mend because of division. What areas of sin do you need to repent of because of division? What areas of unity can you celebrate and learn from?



Add'l Notes:

