

The Church on the Move: The Gospel for Everyone

Acts 11:1-18 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 11 September 2022

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: What song do you think you have played most often in the last year?

Worship: [Psalm 139:1-14](#) (Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?)

Sermon Summary for [Acts 11:1-18](#) (Read aloud before reading the sermon summary.)

The events of Acts 10 and 11 are some of the most significant found in Luke's account. From here on, everything changes – not just for Cornelius, but for the world. The Gospel has been set loose. As the Holy Spirit fills these gentiles, it is clear that the Good News of Christ is for all peoples of all backgrounds. Through Jesus, Israel can now fulfill its purpose to be a light to the whole world. In Him, everything changes for everyone.

The Gospel changes everything when Jesus is essential for all // There is no level of personal goodness achievable to bring lasting life and blessing to ourselves. Cornelius is a picture of this truth: he is a devout and gracious person. He was a person of prayer; he gave alms. If human goodness could be enough to earn the Creator's favor, then there could be many paths to God, and Cornelius wouldn't need Jesus. But he most certainly does. And so do we. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ([Rom 3:23](#)). There is no righteousness apart from Christ. No devoutness apart from His has merit. As Jesus said, "I am the way, the Truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except by Me ([John 14:6](#)).

The Gospel changes everything when Jesus is made available to all // Jesus is essential for all of us. And just as vital: there is no person who is outside His reach; He is available to all. As NT Wright wrote of Acts 10 and 11:

"This is the moment we have been waiting for. Jesus told His followers that they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, and the Holy Spirit had fallen on the believers in Jerusalem (Acts 2) and in Samaria (Acts 8). Now at last, the Spirit comes on Gentiles as well. The message has now reached out to embrace not only Gentiles but Romans. From here, it may be a long step geographically, but it's only a short step culturally to everywhere else in the then-known world."

The eternal freedom and hope that Jesus offers, which will be realized beyond what we could ever ask for or imagine, will never fail. And it is for all ([John 3:16-17](#)). The Holy Spirit has clearly shown that these uncircumcised people have been regarded as fit vessels to be filled with God's presence and voice. The Spirit called both Peter and Cornelius toward this moment, just as It is calling us to our loving Father. Even more: the Spirit is urging us to go forth – to move toward others with this Good News in word and deed.

The Gospel changes everything, as Jesus is central for all // This new reality was terribly difficult for many of the Jewish Christians to accept when Peter spoke with them. Their lives had previously seen the old requirements of their faith as fundamental, essential. But everything has changed. No longer is the path to be Jewish and then Christian. Jesus alone is the center and foundation of our faith. He is our identity. Even today, it's far too easy for us to remove Christ from the center. Or to add to who (or what) we must be to "truly be Christians". We can be tempted down this path by theological, religious, social, personal or even political reasons. And once again, each of these is a reminder of our deep need for the forgiveness and grace we only find in Jesus, as well as our continual need to put our Lord at the very center of who we are.

Discussion Questions *(You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)*

The Gospel changes everything when Jesus is essential for all

- Explain how this passage teaches that human goodness is not enough to earn God's favor, but rather that Jesus and His redemption are essential to life and hope for everyone.
 - Why do you think Cornelius sensed he needed something more than human goodness?
- Discuss [John 14:6](#) and how the bible teaches that there is only one path to God.
 - What would you say to someone who believes there are many paths to God?

The Gospel changes everything when Jesus is made available to all

- What would make many Jews resentful of a man like Cornelius?
- How does God use this man's story to represent the redemption He offers to all?
- Is there anyone in your life whom you struggle to see as redeemable?
 - How might the Spirit be calling you to move toward this person / these people?

The Gospel changes everything, as Jesus is central for all

- What are some of the ways we fail to keep the Gospel as the center of all of our lives, replacing Jesus with other things (social, religious, political, etc.)?
- In verses 17-18, how did Peter defend himself, and how did the Jewish Christians respond?
 - What does this say about them? What life application can you make?
- What impact does this passage have on you and your walk with Jesus?

Prayer

This week's Prayer Guide for personal or group use is [HERE](#).

Engage & Experience: Prayer

CG Discussion Guides will be provided through November 20th, the last day of our sermon series on **Acts: The Church on the Move**. As we continue our 2022 Focus on Prayer, we suggest you and your CG read a book on prayer together for the end of the year. Here are our recommendations:

- [Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God](#)
Timothy Keller
- [Prayer: Does it Make Any Difference?](#)
Philip Yancy
- [If God Already Knows, Why Pray?](#)
Douglas Kelly