

Series "God At Work" Book Of Acts
"This Is What God Did"
Acts 11:1-18
Study -21

In Jewish thinking, the world was divided into two groups: Jews and Gentiles.

In the OT, Jews were to testify to the Gentiles how to live and in whom to believe. Isaiah 42:6

Acts 11:1-18 We have the reaction of the leadership of the church to the new Gentile converts. The initial response is anything but warm and welcome.

Thought Of Our Passage: "God's Plan Of Salvation From The Beginning Was To Rescue All Lost Humanity Through God's People Israel"

1. Verses 1-3 What Were You Thinking?:

2. Verses 4-17 This Is What Happened:

3. Verse 18 This Is What God Wants:

1. Verses 1-3 What Were You Thinking?:

Acts 11:1 Now Context - refers to the events of **Acts 10**, which gives the detailed account of the conversion of Gentiles. Cornelius, a Gentile Roman Centurion, had a vision from God, was told by God to send for Peter, and Peter had a vision of clean and unclean animals. Peter was told by God to accompany the Gentiles to Caesarea.

We have Peter repeating the account of **Acts 10** in **Acts 11** almost verbatim. Over **3 times**.

the apostles The apostles had stayed behind to minister to the Jews that were in Jerusalem after the persecution broke out at the martyrdom of Stephen in **Acts 7-8**.

heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. News travels fast. This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was like the outpouring upon the Jews in **Acts 2**.

Now Peter was in Caesarea staying for a while. **Acts 10:48**

Acts 11:2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, Peter now returns to the hub of Christianity.

those who were circumcised This *describes a group (Party) within the church of Jerusalem that were zealous of the Law. This group (Party) was*

unable to believe that Gentiles could enter the church except through Judaism.

The Reason Being Ignorance – *The Mystery of the Church (Jew and Gentile as One, Ephesians 2-3)* Israel did not yet understand the relationship between Law and Grace, Jews and Gentiles, and Israel and the Church.

The Reason Being Willful Disobedience – They became great enemies of the church and Paul. **Titus 1:10**

took issue with him, Literally "to make a difference." This group was making a distinction between the Jews and Gentiles, **God said there is no difference, distinction! Acts 11:9**

took issue with him, Wow! Jewish conservatism was so strong that even Koshers Peter is being called on the carpet.

Acts 11:3 saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."

Note the 2 charges against Peter:

#1. Charge - "You went to uncircumcised men – Peter went to the Gentiles.

#2. Charge - and ate with them." Fellowshiped, idea of becoming one with them.

"You went to uncircumcised men - Acts 7:8

This "Covenant of Circumcision" was a contract that...

1. Guaranteeing the everlasting continuation of Abraham's seed.
2. The everlasting possession of the land of Israel.
3. A sign, or symbol, of a contract between God and His people
(Gen. 17:7-8, 23-27)

**It meant a separation from the prevalent sins of the time.
Deuteronomy 10:16**

Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4

The New Testament teaches that we have been circumcised at conversion. Colossians 2:11

and ate with them." God, through Moses, had given them dietary laws.

Mark 2:16

2. Verses 4-17 This Is What Happened:

Acts 11:4 But Peter began speaking
proceeded to explain to them in orderly sequence, saying, Peter goes back through and tells of the events that led up to the reception of the Gentiles.

The Church at this point is about 10 years old. This is a pivotal point in the history of the Church.

Peter Presented 3 Pieces of Evidence:

1. Verses 5-11 The Witness Of The Vision From God: Acts 11:5

"I was in the city of Joppa praying Peter was praying and Cornelius was praying too, **Acts 10:1-2.** They were both seeking the will of God.

and in a trance I saw a vision, wide awake, was seeing events like it is happening.

an object coming down like a great sheet lowered by four corners from the sky; great sheet – is the Church, which has from 4 corners, all of the world is welcome.

Acts 11:6 crawling creatures – *We were the unclean crawling creatures that God has made clean. (Gentiles)*

Acts 11:7-8 'By no means, Lord, If Jesus is Lord or Master, how dare we say "NO!"

Acts 11:9 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.'
1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17

Acts 11:10-11 "This happened three times, Peter is not getting it; Cornelius gets it the first time.

2. Verses 12-15 The Witness Of The Holy Spirit: Acts 11:12 the Spirit told me to go Notice this instruction is divine, it is from God. This is not Peter's idea but the Holy Spirit doing the work in and through him.
Holy Spirit, Spirit 83 times in Acts (Acts of The Holy Spirit).

with them without misgivings. Don't fight what I am doing,

The Witness of Six Other Brothers: six brethren also went with me, and we entered the man's house. There are times we should not be without witnesses.

Acts 11:13

Acts 11:14-15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them,

just as He did upon us at the beginning. This shows that Peter believed that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the same as in **Acts 2**. He did not refer to **Acts 8:17** because the Holy Spirit was bestowed through laying on of hands.

3. Verses 16-17 The Witness Of The Word: Acts 11:16 "And I remembered the word of the Lord, Peter was a disciple of Jesus, so he took what Jesus said and applied it to the situation. Memory and Conviction.

how He used to say, (Said this often) **'John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'** Acts 1:4-5

Acts 11:17 "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us (Acts 2)

also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ Note: The Holy Spirit Came Through Faith Not Circumcision.

who was I that I could stand in God's way?" This was all God's doing, it wasn't Peter.

3. Verse 18 This Is What God Wants:

Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down, or "*were silenced, became quiet, quieted down, had no further objection*".

and glorified God, "*give praise, to honor, to think highly*". What could they say? They were open to the Lord as to His moving.

repentance – means "*a change of heart, a change of mind.*" It is the idea of turning around from one direction to a new direction.

repentance that leads to life." Note that it is repentance that leads to life. Ephesians 2:11-16

Application:

- 1.** The Gospel Is Intended For All People. It's Our Duty to Get It To Them.
- 2.** Christian Fellowship Transcends All Racial, Social, and Cultural Differences. Those That God Receives, We Should Receive. **James 2:1**
- 3.** The Careful Observance of Religious Duties Is Not Enough To Save One. All Must Come By Faith.
- 4.** When People Act Upon The Light That God Has Given Them, They May Expect God To Give Them Further Light.