

10/12

HOME GROUP GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

LISTEN

Listen to the sermon and read through the main passages(s)



REFLECT

Prayerfully answer the questions below



DISCUSS

Meet with your group to discuss



RESPOND

Apply the truth of God's word to your life

BACKGROUND:

Peter and Cornelius represent a seemingly insurmountable divide. One was a Jew, the other a Gentile. One was a fisherman, the other a soldier. One was small town, the other, cosmopolitan. Along with this came centuries of resentment, purity laws, and cultural differences. Yet in Caesarea, God reveals that the Holy Spirit he gave to Jews at Pentecost is given to Gentiles. Peter preaches the gospel, and while he is still speaking, the Spirit descends on these Gentiles, confirming their inclusion.

Psalmists and prophets had predicted a future where God's Messiah would unite the nations under his rule, the Lord's servant would serve as their light, all nations would gather at the Lord's house, and God's Spirit would be poured out on all humanity. The tragedy was that Israel distorted the doctrine of election into favoritism, fostering racial pride and hatred, and creating traditions that kept them separated. But Jesus broke down the dividing wall of hostility (Ephesians 2:14). Unity through the Spirit is God's work; our role is to recognize, rejoice in, and uphold what He has done with purity, humility, and mission.

OPEN:

1. Describe a situation when you first felt out of place but later found yourself welcomed into the group. What caused your change in perspective?

REFLECT:

2. Read Acts 10:1-8. How did God get Cornelius ready to receive Peter's message? What evidence in Cornelius's character indicated that the Holy Spirit was working in him?

3. Read Acts 10:33-43. What message did God have for Cornelius? If God could communicate the gospel to him directly, why would he choose to send Peter to meet Cornelius face-to-face?

4. Read Acts 10:44-48. Why was the observable work of the Spirit among Gentiles so significant? In what ways does it demonstrate increasing unity within the church?

APPLY:

5. Share a time when someone went out of their way to help you connect with God. What effect did their effort have?

6. There will always be opportunities to justify actions that create division (Gal. 2:11-14). What are some ways we as Christians contribute to disunity? What are some practical steps we can take to make unity a priority? As a home group? As a church body?

7. We cannot use unity to justify sin or avoid truth. Why is it vital that we pursue both purity and unity? What does it look like to combine clarity and charity to tackle real issues while being both gentle and direct?

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