

## Everything's-a-Changin'

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Acts 10:1-11:18

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## SETTING THE SCENE

- » Have you ever felt like you just weren't part of the "in crowd"? Share the experience and explain how you felt at the time. How do you feel looking back on the experience? What did you learn? How does it make you feel (and/or act) when you see someone else being excluded from something?
- » Share your salvation experience with the group. When did it happen? How did it happen? Who was involved? Once you accepted Christ, who were the most important people who have helped you grow along the way? Where do you think you'd be right now if they hadn't stepped up and shared their spiritual lives with you?

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## THE STUDY

- » Share your overall thoughts and impressions from the sermon this morning. What things stand out to you? What did you learn? Where did God most challenge you? What questions do you still have about the passage or the sermon?
- » Who do you relate to the most: Peter or Cornelius? Explain your answer. Do you typically feel like an "insider" or "outsider"? Does it depend on your environment (work, home, church, etc.)?
- » Read **ACTS 10:1-8** as a group and then answer these questions:
  1. What kind of guy was Cornelius? How was he different and how was he the same as the average Roman citizen?
  2. How did he respond when the angel appeared to him? Was this the right response? How would you have responded?
  3. How did Cornelius respond to the angel's command to send for Peter? What do you think he was thinking at the time?
- » Now read **ACTS 10:9-20** out loud and answer the following questions:
  1. What was Peter doing when God sent Him the three visions? Why is that significant or important?
  2. Why did God give Peter the vision three times? What did that mean culturally? What did it mean to Peter?
  3. Do you think it was OK for Peter to refuse God's command in the vision? Why did he refuse? Explain your answer.
  4. Did Peter fully understand the significance of the vision right away? What lesson is there for us there?
- » Cornelius was ready to hear whatever Peter was ready to share. Peter gives this Gentile audience their first "Gospel Message" in **ACTS 10:34-43**. What were the key elements of the message Peter gave them? Do you think we make sharing our faith more or less complicated than Peter made it? Explain your answer and discuss as a group.
- » How did Cornelius and his household respond to the Gospel Message (**ACTS 10:44-48**)? Compare this event with the one recorded in **ACTS 2:1-4**. How are they the same? How are they different? Why is it significant (then and now)?
- » How does Peter respond to their faith and the evidence of the Holy Spirit falling on Cornelius and his family? Do you think he should have baptized these Gentiles without them having been circumcised (or even going through a baptism class)? Explain your answer and the implications it has for us today.
- » Read **ACTS 11:1-3** as a group. How did the church back home in Jerusalem originally respond to Peter entering a Gentile's house and eating with him? Why was this their initial reaction?
- » Peter tells everyone what happened and concludes his story in **ACTS 11:15-18**. What key lessons should we learn and take away from Peter's conclusions here? How did the Jerusalem believers respond? Was this the end of the criticism and fight over the issue of uncircumcised Gentiles being included in the faith? Why?
- » What one thing from this morning has stuck with you (maybe even something we haven't covered yet)?

# APPLICATION

- » At the end of the sermon, David talked about some of our preconceived notions, prejudices, and world views. Did he say anything that surprised or shocked you? Do you agree or disagree with what he said? Explain and discuss.
- » Share with the group one preconceived notion, prejudice, or world view that you hold to that God is starting to work on you about. Are you aware of any that *Pinecrest* needs to deal with? How about Christians in general?
- » Think of one person in your life (somewhere in your sphere of influence) that you simply do not get along with and/or would rather not be around. Write down that person's name in the space below:

Now spend some time individually (and as a group) praying about and for that person. Ask God to bless them. Ask God to soften your heart towards them. Ask God to open a door to share your faith with them (if you dare!).

- » Discuss as a group how your group and how *Pinecrest* can reach out to some people who typically think (rightly or wrongly) they are not (or would not be) accepted at church. How would Jesus reach out to them?
- » Share any unanswered questions or comments you have as a result of the group discussion or sermon...

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## PREPARING FOR NEXT WEEK

- » In two weeks we continue this journey as we unpack **ACTS 11:19-30**. Read this story and discuss the key lessons in the story. Why do you think Luke included these events in his narrative? The Gospel is being preached to Gentiles without the full consent of the church. How did the church respond to this? What was Barnabas' role?
- » What one thing stands out to you personally in this passage? What do you want to learn more about?
- » Spend some time reading through this story during the week. As you read it through several times, what patterns start to emerge? What surprises you? What is God trying to teach you through this passage?
- » Write down any questions you have about this verse and be prepared to discuss them next week (after the sermon).

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## CARING COMMUNITY

- » **SHARE** with the group how God has been speaking into your life or challenging you this past week (this may be as a result of the sermon or something in your personal journey). Is there anything from this week's LifeGroup discussion you need to work on?
- » Are there any **NEEDS** you have coming up in your life that the group can help you with (this may include spiritual needs, life needs, pretty much anything...)
- » **PRAY** for one another. Share your requests and praises with one another. Write them down here. If you commit to praying, please be sure you do it...