

Surrey Chapel Fellowship Group Notes 26th/ 27th

Acts 11:1-18 In Hot Water

In this passage Peter recounts his vision and meeting with the believers in Joppa (Chapter 10) to the believers in Jerusalem, who initially give him a hostile reaction.

Reflect on what you know about Jewish attitudes towards the Gentiles at the time before looking at this passage.

v.3 Sharing a meal was a special sign of fellowship in Jewish culture, thereby making Peter's actions all the more radical. What other examples are there of sharing a meal and breaking social norms in the New Testament?

Review Peter's vision. What does it mean? What are the implications?

"Peter's vision has two points: the food laws are fulfilled and ended in Jesus (Mark 7:19), and the people they kept you separate from (the nations, the Gentiles) are not to be considered unclean or common." - John Piper

Peter was probably expecting confrontation on his return to Jerusalem. - He took six witnesses.

There is some debate over whether or not Cornelius was already saved when Peter first met him. Look back on Acts 10:22. v.14 However seems to imply that he was not yet saved.

v.15 Is key in this passage. What is the implication of this?

v.16 "Then I remembered..." This verse is one of a number in the Old Testament that shows the disciples putting together what Jesus had taught them and interpreting Old Testament passages such as Isaiah 49:6 in the light of the New Covenant.

v.17 You can't run away from Nineveh!

v.18 The Jerusalem believers come to understand the full breadth of God's work of salvation. The only proper response to this is worship.

What does this passage say to us in Norwich in 2014?

How should it shape our attitudes to people from other countries, cultures and religions?

Summary

"The conversion of Cornelius was a landmark moment in the history of the Gospel's advance from its strictly Jewish beginnings to its penetration of the Roman Empire. True, it did not settle any of the issues relating to Jewish-Gentile relations within the church, nor did Jewish believers take it as a precedent for a direct outreach to Gentiles. But it did show that the sovereign God was not confined to the traditional forms of Judaism and that he could bring a Gentile directly into relationship with himself through Jesus Christ and apart from any prior commitment to distinctive Jewish beliefs or lifestyle." - The Expositor's Bible Commentary

Further reading

John Piper on receiving the Holy Spirit:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/what-does-it-mean-to-receive-the-holy-spirit>

Prayer Points

Sizewell House Party

Burning Issues

Where is God when it Hurts - John Blanchard Event March 31st.

ADB