

Breaking Barriers

TRANSFORMED BY THE SPIRIT

DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP + EVANGELICAL CHINESE CHURCH + UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
大馬士革國際教會 + 西雅圖證道堂 + 華大長老教會

KINDRED 2024 STUDY GUIDE - WEEK 3

Breaking Barriers | Transformed by the Spirit: Acts 10:34-38

INTRODUCTION:

Of the people you know, who would surprise you the most if you found out that they are an active Christian? Whether we will admit it to ourselves or not, all of us have biases. As a God-fearing Jew, Peter had lived his life thinking of people as divided into two classes - the people of God (the Jews) and the people not of God (the Gentiles). As we studied last week, problems rooted in ethnic differences had already brought the church close to division. But God was about to smash an even larger barrier, that between Jew and Gentile. Peter went into his meeting with the Gentile Cornelius with the wisdom, clarity and direction he receives from the Holy Spirit. It gives him the confidence and assurance that, despite his previous biases, God is doing a new thing. For Peter to succeed in the mission God has called him to, Peter must let go of his biases.

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READ: Acts 10:34-38

PRAYER: *Heavenly Father, open our eyes to your power to transcend barriers and remove obstacles to your word being shared. Guide us as we share from our experiences the challenges we face that our study brings to the surface. Amen.*

DISCUSSION:

1. Skim Acts 10:1-33. Notice that in this passage God has called Cornelius and Peter by name (10:3, 10:13). How had God prepared each of them for their meeting? What does this reveal about the importance God placed in their impending encounter? Why is this an important milestone of the Gospel spreading to the ends of the earth?
2. How do you see God and the Holy Spirit change the mind of Peter and other Christians? How has God used extraordinary means to change your personal direction? How has the Holy Spirit given you knowledge and clarity? How has it enabled you to confidently witness and minister to others?
3. Notice that in this passage, Peter overcomes several barriers. In addition to Cornelius being a Gentile, tanners were considered an unclean profession so Jews ordinarily shunned tanners (Leviticus 11:26-28). Can you remember times in your Christian walk when God was preparing you for something big – something that challenged your beliefs or something that you resisted? Describe biases (conscious or unconscious) that you have discovered in yourself over the years. Which ones have you overcome? Which ones do you still work on? How has God helped you overcome these biases?
4. The strength of Kindred is each church having a different perspective. How has your experience through Kindred helped you to become more open to embrace spiritually diverse cultures? If you are new to Kindred, please share what preconceived notions or challenges you experienced before deciding to join?
5. Peter had to confront the teaching in Jewish law about ceremonial cleanliness with God's direct command to witness to a group of Gentiles. How do you respond when you are called to act in a way that conflicts with the way you previously believed? How do you determine what to do and gain more clarity?

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus thank you that your gospel is for all people – even those we might overlook. Open our eyes this week to those who are desperate to hear your good news. Amen.*



NOTES

