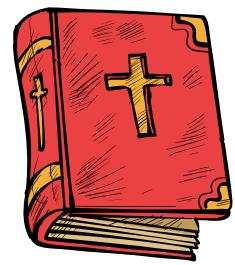




For Further Study



Read and meditate on the passage below:

34 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. 36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.” (Acts 10:34-35)

These verses come from the book of Acts, which gives us an account of the expansion of the followers of Jesus from Jerusalem to the end of the known world. Not only did the gospel extend to other continents; it also reached beyond Judaism to people of various nations and cultures. This was a tremendous breakthrough that didn't happen by accident.

In Acts 10, Peter had a vision of animals in a sheet coming towards him with a message from God to kill and eat these non-kosher foods. Peter rejected this command, but he learned from the vision that he needed to be open to deconstructing his understanding of God's favor. Instead of viewing the message of Jesus to be for Jews (and converts to Judaism) alone, God was calling Peter to embrace a divine love that transcends borders and nationalities.

After having the vision, he was summoned to go to the home of a Roman commander, where he learned of their interest in the way of Jesus. Seeing how God was moving among Cornelius and his household, Peter concluded that God does not show favoritism but accepts and loves everyone equally. Jesus modeled this for Peter throughout his life, but it took this reinforcement for Peter to change his viewpoint.



REFLECTION:

What belief is God challenging inside of you? How will you respond?

PRACTICE:

Spend time with someone that is seen as a social outcast.