



Discussion Notes

In Every Nation • Acts 10:21–48
October 11, 2026 • Kirsten Anonby

Main Theme:

In Acts, we discover that the primary strategist and power behind the growth of the church is the Holy Spirit. Nowhere is this more evident than in Acts 10, where we see the Spirit speaking through visions and moving in power to show Peter that both Jew and Gentile are welcome in the family of God. This story marks a seismic shift in the early church, as they discover Jesus' expansive welcome to the nations.

Sermon Outline:

Peter at Cornelius' House

- Large crowd gathered
- Peter's inner conflict: upholding the Jewish purity laws vs the direction of the Spirit
- The Gentile audience: ready to receive what Peter has for them.

Peter's Revelation

- The Jews' history as God's chosen people
- Jesus' ministry to Gentiles and his consistent love for the outsider
- Jesus commission to his followers: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you: and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and **to the ends of the earth.**" (Acts 1:8)
- Peter steps into his role as a witness

The Holy Spirit comes

- A dramatic and vocal movement of the Spirit
- In the same way that the Spirit came on the believers at Pentecost
- A validation that these Gentiles BELONG
- Peter as the Gentile believers baptized

The Holy Spirit is making everything happen

- The acts intentionally and strategically, drawing the believers' attention to the Gentiles
- The Spirit brings the Gospel to Caesarea, the administrative, political, and economic capital of Judea
- Peter is playing catch-up to the work of the Spirit
- The Spirit as the primary mover, already doing good in the world. We follow His lead.

A new way to be clean for everyone

- Peter faces going against Jewish laws about purity and cleanliness
- Jesus fulfills the heart of the law, but challenges the legalism of the law
- Jesus' kingdom is not about being made clean through following the law, but through following Jesus and allowing Him to make us clean
- All are invited.



Study Questions

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Engage:

- Read Acts 10:21–48. At your initial reading, what key themes, words, phrases or people stand out to you?
- What are you most curious about in this story?

Observe:

- Think about the words “clean” and “unclean.” What did those words mean to the Jewish people, and what role did they play in Jewish life?
- How do you think the meaning of the words “clean” and “unclean” changed during Jesus’ ministry?
- Think about the three primary characters in the story: Cornelius, Peter, and the Holy Spirit. What role does each of them play?
- What does it mean to both the Jews and the Gentiles in the story when the Holy Spirit comes on the Gentile believers?
- Take a minute to look at what happens before and after this moment in the book of Acts. How is this moment a departure from what has happened before, and how does this set the stage for what happens in the chapters to come?

Apply:

- What does this story tell you about the church’s identity and mission?
- How does this story challenge or encourage you?
- Pray for each other.