

“God Shows No Partiality”
Sermon Notes

11:1-3 The problem: You eat with the enemy!

11:4-14 The rebuttal:
God does not play favorites,
But invites all peoples to be cleansed through Jesus Christ.

11:15-18 **You don't decide who possesses the gift of the Holy Spirit,
just glorify God by welcoming his Believers**

Next Week: Acts 11:19-30 “The Disciples Were First Called Christians”

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of February 11th-17th

Context

1. Read Genesis 17. What truths do you learn about circumcision, the sign of God's covenant with Abraham?
2. Circumcision also had a number of typological functions. If interested, see Nick Batzig's article at Ligonier ministries to learn more about how circumcision pointed ahead to Christ and his sacrifice. <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/how-was-circumcision-a-sign-of-the-covenant>
3. Read Luke 3:15-16. What did John the Baptist prophesy about baptism?

Luke 3:15 As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

4. Read Acts 1:4-5. What did Jesus have to say about a promise gift? Read also in Acts 2:37-41 about how the Jews responded to Peter's sermon. What new things do you learn about God's promised gift? What does Acts 5:31-32 also teach about God's gift?

Acts 1:4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

Acts 2:37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Acts 5:31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. 32 And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

Observation

1. Who is the Circumcision Party? What did the focus on? Look ahead to Acts 15. Consider Paul, Peter, Barnabas and the circumcision party in Galatians 2:6-14. See also Galatians 6:11-16 and Titus 1:10-11.
2. Peter retells the account of what happened in Acts 10. What are the similarities? Are there any differences, and if so, what are they? What does Peter's retelling focus on?
3. Luke uses the Greek word διακρίνω several times in Acts 10-11.
10:20 Rise and go down and accompany them **without hesitation**, for I have sent them.
11:3 *the circumcision party **criticized** him...*
11:12 *And the Spirit told me to go with them, **making no distinction**.*
See also Acts 15:8 *And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, 9 and **he made no distinction** between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.*

This word has two senses of meaning:

(1) to waver or doubt (over against faith).

See Romans 14:23 *But whoever **has doubts** is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith.*

(2) to separate, judge, discern, make distinction

See 1 Cor 11:29 *For anyone who eats and drinks without **discerning** the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.* See also James 2:4 *...have you not then **made distinctions** among yourselves...*

How does Luke use this word with a double nuance throughout this story?

Meaning

1. What do you learn about the triune God (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) in this passage?
2. The events of Acts 10 remind Peter of what major, prior event in church history (hint: see Acts 2)? How so?
3. Consider the following passages. What can you learn about God's gifts, especially the Holy Spirit? Acts 8:20; Rom 3:24; 5:15, 17; Gal 2:21; 2 Cor 9:15; Eph 1:13; 2:8; 3:7; 4:7; Rev 21:6, 17.
4. Baptism and Membership:
 1. What does baptism by the Holy Spirit involve and accomplish? Consider Rom 6:3-4; 1 Cor 6:11; 12:13; Titus 3:4-6; Col 2:11-15.
 2. How does Acts 10:1-11:18 impact the transition from circumcision to baptism as the sign of entrance into the covenant community of God's people?
 3. Consider the order of things in Acts 2:37-41, compared to Acts 10:44-48. What is different? How does this complicate our practical theology of baptism? How does it help?
 4. Peter recalls the words of the divine messenger in 11:14 that "he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household." This is one of those descriptive, not prescriptive, passages that credobaptists and paedobaptists have disagreed about over the years. How do you understand it? What does it look like to welcome someone who has a different view on this than you?

Application

1. When it comes to welcoming people into the church, what gets in your way? What makes it hard to welcome people? What makes it easy to welcome others? Do you expect certain things of people in order to connect with them? What should you be most concerned with, when welcoming some new to our church family?

2. Is there anyone in our church community who you could be more welcoming to this next week? If you tend to connect with people who are like you, who is someone different from you that you could reach out to?