

*Recap of 9/26/21 message (Joe Ricchuiti – Acts 11:1-19):*

- 1. Acts chapter ten demonstrated that Gentiles could have a direct relationship with God without going through Judaism and without circumcision. Thus, instead of being pleased at Peter's overture to gentile Cornelius, his family and friends—they criticized him. He is forced to explain himself.*
- 2. "When Peter returns to Jerusalem, he has some explaining to do to the church." (Willimon)*
- 3. As a side note, Greek scholar, A.T. Robertson, points out that: "It is plain that Peter was not regarded as any kind of pope or overlord.*
- 4. The complaint of the Jerusalem church against Peter is that he ate with and had social contact with gentiles, which though not a direct violation of the Mosaic law, it was a violation of the Talmudic law. That law which the rabbis added to the Word of God. The tradition of men, not the law of God.*
- 5. Peter's answer is to point out the intervention of God in all that happened. God did it. It was all of God. Prayer, the Lord's voice heard from heaven, the Spirit's direction, the Angel's appearance to Cornelius, and finally, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the assembled gentiles without the imposition of Jewish hands, thus showing that God was in it, and to oppose gentile inclusion would be to oppose God. The Holy Spirit came upon the gentiles as He had upon the Jews on the Day of Pentecost and incorporated them into the Body of Christ, the Church (called the Baptism of the Spirit, 1 Corinthians 12:13). Peter's conclusion, "...they should be treated as brothers and recognized as member of the body of Christ" (Erdman).*
- 6. "The world sees and judges people on the basis of race, background, occupation, age, and appearance. But we are to see others as fellow believers or as people who need the Lord" (Richards).*
- 7. Thus, the most important distinguishing characteristic of those we meet is that they either know Jesus as their Savior or they need to know Jesus as their Savior.*
- 8. Peter here gives a spirited defense of the place of gentiles in the church and in the plan of God without the need to go through Judaism or circumcision. Yet later (as recorded in Galatians 2:11-14) Peter, under pressure from Judaizers (those Jewish Christians who sought to place gentiles under the Law), separated himself from the gentile Christians in Galatia. Two lessons we can learn from Peter are: 1) we must avoid inconsistency in our walk, but consistently follow God's Word; and 2) we must not live on yesterday's faith and victories but be growing in faith.*