

Acts: The Gospel Gone Viral
Lesson 21 “New Wineskins”

I. Introduction - We are in a series on *Acts*. We are going through the entire book and looking at how the Church was born in revival and this caused the Gospel to go viral.

A. We've studied multiple revivals in the early church. These include Pentecost in *Acts 2* - 3,000 saved, healing of lame man - *Acts 3-4* - 5,000 saved, signs and wonders and the healings off Peter's shadow - *Acts 5* - all Jerusalem filled with the doctrine of Christ., and the revival in Samaria - *Acts 8* - All of the city filled with joy.

B. Last week we studied how Peter went to the countryside of Judea and healed multiple people. The ministry of healing caused 3 cities to turn to God. We ended with Peter staying in Joppa in the house of Simon the tanner after he raised Dorcas from the dead.

II. Changing Our Wineskins

A. **Matthew 9:9-17**

1. Jesus calls Matthew (a tax collector and turncoat) to follow after him and then goes and eats at Matthew's house with sinners and tax collectors.
2. This made the Pharisees angry because it violated their tradition. Jesus tells them they need to change their wineskins (way of thought) to receive the new wine God was pouring out.
 - a. Many people cannot receive the new wine (represents the Holy Spirit, his blessings, his calling, etc.) because they are stuck in old thought patterns of religion or the world than run contrary to the kingdom of God.
 - b. For example if a person rejects truth about healing because it different than their tradition, they won't be able to receive this gift of the Holy Spirit God is pouring out.
3. **The reality is God is better than we think so we have to learn to change the way we think! This is the key to receiving more of God in our lives.**

B. **Acts 10:1-23 The Gospel is for Everyone** - This may not seem like a big deal to us today, but in that day the Jews didn't associate with Gentiles. They wouldn't invite them into their homes, eat with them, or relate to them. They were seen as pagan. The early church adopted this mindset because they were in Jerusalem. They had no concept of a non Jewish person getting saved. To them salvation was for the Jews.

1. Ironically, as much as the idea of Gentiles getting saved is normative to the church today, the church went through a similar situation in the 1960s and 70s when they rejected the hippies (Jesus people) God was saving.

a. Why? They came from different backgrounds, had long hair, wore jeans, listened to rock music, etc. Today we all wear jeans and listen to guitar driven worship music in church, but 50 years ago that was rejected.

b. As we are reading this story, ask what you might be rejecting today because it is different, but it is of God.

2. **Acts 10:1-8** Cornelius is a Roman Centurion and a God-fearer (respected the God of the Jews, sympathetic to the Jews/Christians, but had not converted).

a. About the ninth hour (3:00 which was a time Jews would go to the temple and pray - he was probably praying)

b. God gave him a vision of an angel and told him to send for Peter at Joppa. God went to an extreme to give Cornelius a vision, which reveals how much God wanted the Gentiles saved. Sent 3 witnesses to Peter.

3. **Acts 10:9-16** God gives Peter a vision during his time of prayer. (We are to covet the gifts of the spirit) - they often come when we pray.

a. God opens up a sheet from heaven with kosher and non-kosher animals on the sheet together (symbolic of Jews and Gentiles coming together.)

b. God tells Peter to arise and eat and it offended Peter and he told God, "No, I can't eat that which is unclean."

c. Based on Peter's understanding of the word, these animals were unclean. God will never violate His word, but he will regularly violate our understanding of it to reveal His heart of love for everyone.

4. **Acts 10:17-23** God prepared Peter's heart for the three men who were seeking him so Peter would receive them when they arrived. **God will often do this for us prior to divine appointments or big transitions so we'll be open.**

a. Chuck Smith Story - wife had supernatural compassion for hippies.

b. The men from Cornelius recount the vision Cornelius had. This confirms what God had been showing Peter. The leading of the Lord (particularly big decisions) comes with confirmations.

c. **Isaiah 60:1-4** This is a prophetic passage about how God always planned to use the Jews to reach the Gentiles. He is the God for everyone.

III. Conclusion

A. Takeaways

1. In order to experience all of God's plan for us, we need to change the way we think. If He is better than we think, we must change the way we think.

2. God's heart has always been to reach the whole world with the gospel. We must be open to new things He wants to do in order to co-labor with Christ.

3. What do you have a supernatural compassion or draw to? This may be an area God is wanting to use you in during this season of your life.

B. Call Up Prayer Team and Pray Closing Prayer