

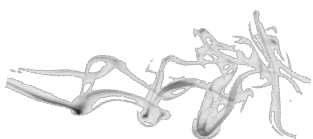
The Irresistible God: How Jesus Builds His Church

Acts 11:1-18

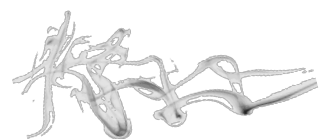
Jesus builds His Church through the work of the _____. 12, 15

Jesus builds His Church through the proclamation of the _____. 13-14

Jesus builds His Church through targeting the _____. 4-12



EMPOWERED
WITNESSES



Acts 11:1-18

¹ Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, ³ “You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

⁴ But Peter began and explained it to them in order: ⁵ “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision, something like a great sheet descending, being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to me. ⁶ Looking at it closely, I observed animals and beasts of prey and reptiles and birds of the air. ⁷ And I heard a voice saying to me, ‘Rise, Peter; kill and eat.’ ⁸ But I said, ‘By no means, Lord; for nothing common or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ ⁹ But the voice answered a second time from heaven, ‘What God has made clean, do not call common.’ ¹⁰ This happened three times, and all was drawn up again into heaven. ¹¹ And behold, at that very moment three men arrived at the house in which we were, sent to me from Caesarea. ¹² And the Spirit told me to go with them, making no distinction. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. ¹³ And he told us how he had seen the angel stand in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa and bring Simon who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’ ¹⁵ As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

¹⁷ If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?” ¹⁸ When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

The Irresistible God: How Jesus Builds His Church

November 20, 2022

Open: How do you determine if God is leading you to do something?

Read & Discuss: Acts 11:1-18

1. Why do you think Peter was criticized for eating with Gentiles? (*See Leviticus 20:24-26.*) How do you tend to handle criticism when you think you have done the right thing? How does Peter's response serve as a positive example to us?
2. God affirms His will to Peter in four different ways: Peter's own vision (vv. 4-10), a command (vv. 11-12), Cornelius' vision (vv. 13-14), and the filling of the Holy Spirit in these new believers (vv. 15, 17). Why do you think Peter would have needed such strong direction from God to do and say what he did? How has God provided you with confirmation that helped you know you were moving in the right direction?
3. Peter said, "the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning" (v. 15). What did Peter mean by "the beginning"? Why would this have been significant to his Jewish critics? How does this event contribute to unity of all peoples in the early church? In what way does Peter's reference to Jesus' words also support this idea?
4. Peter recognized it was ethically and logically wrong for him to "stand in God's way" (v. 17). What can we do to guard ourselves against being an obstruction to what God may want to do?
5. According to verse 18, Peter's critics were satisfied that this event really was of God. Have you ever needed to be convinced God was leading someone other than yourself? What helped persuade you?
6. In Acts, Luke records the conversion of both Paul (Ch. 9) and Cornelius (Ch. 10). How would you contrast those two men? What does their conversion teach us about the grace and power of God? Are there kinds of people you think God is unlikely to save? How do these two conversions help correct that viewpoint?

Apply: Is there anything you have been resisting God's prompting to do? How can your group support you in walking in faith-filled obedience?

Pray: Ask God to make clear to the people of Neighborhood Church how we can cooperate with what He is doing around us. Pray we would be humble and obedient to His promptings.

Acts 11:1-18

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