

Small Group Discussion Guide

“No Limits (pt. 6)” - 02.07.16

Scripture: Acts 11:1-18

Bottom Line: We are saved by GRACE through FAITH in JESUS.

ICEBREAKER

Icebreakers are a great way to get your group talking, laughing and learning more about each other. Use some of the following examples or make up your own questions for you group. If you could have an endless supply of food what would it be? If you could be anybody besides yourself who would you be? What's the ideal job for you?

UNPACKING THE GOSPEL

Everyone faces moments where a lot hangs in the balance. Where to go to school, who to marry, how many kids, etc. Acts 11 is a pivotal point that is caused by a potential limit being put on God. And what hangs in the balance is all of Christianity.

Read Acts 11:1-3

1) Who were the “Circumcised Party” and why did they criticize Peter?

Answer: They were people born and raised in the Jewish faith in Israel who came to believe that Jesus was the Old Testament's promised messiah. They continued to observe all the Jewish laws & customs. The reason they criticize Peter is because he sought out a Gentile, associated with a Gentile and he told the Gentile he could be saved through faith alone.

2) Why is this argument such a huge deal? ? What hangs in the balance?

Answer: They are asking, “Is salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus alone or is there something you had to do (religious rule-keeping and behavior) in order to be right with God?” Do you have to work to get to God or does Jesus's work on your behalf get you to God?

3) How does this question impact your life? Do you feel tension?

Example: Do I have to work in order for God to accept me? Is it just faith in Jesus or is it Jesus plus religious activity? Is it faith alone or faith plus being morally good?

Read Acts 11:4-18

Peter tells the story of what happened with Cornelius and recounts his own struggle with this question. Peter says responds by communicating what God said and what God did.

1) What is the Apostle's conclusion?

Answer: They will not put a limit on God's grace because that would be the opposite of what God is offering! JESUS IS ENOUGH!!!

2) Where have you put a limit on God's grace towards others and toward yourself?

LIVING OUT THE GOSPEL IN MY EVERYDAY LIFE

1) How should I respond to God's grace if I'm irreligious or religious?

Answer: a) Irreligious- Repent of bad works. Come by faith alone. b) Religious- Repent of good works. Come by faith alone.

2) Am I free to do whatever I want? Where do good works and religious rules fall into all of this? (Read Romans 7:7-25)

Answer: We work from acceptance, not for acceptance. We respond to God's grace and mercy towards us by extending it others. We do this all for God's glory. “Want to”, not “have to”.

3) Pray that God will help to accept God's offer of radical grace!