

Journey of Obedience: Acts

Peter Opens the Door

Acts 3-4, 8, 10

Who is “IN” your group and who is “OUTSIDE” of your group?

Geographical upbringing. Race. Denomination. Economic status. Education. Moral practices.

1. Peter’s view of God’s Kingdom was influenced by his upbringing.

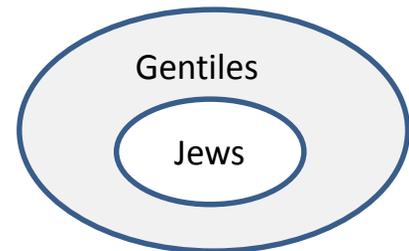
- The Jewish concept taught by the Rabbis—“Jews are IN the Kingdom because they were born into it, and Gentiles are ‘dogs’ OUTSIDE of the Kingdom.”

Jerusalem (Acts 1-7)

Judea/Samaria (Acts 8-12)

“to remotest part of the earth” (Acts 13-28)

View taught by Rabbis:



2. Peter’s message among equals. Acts 1-3

- Eleven of the twelve disciples were from the Galilee region, had little education, and struggled to make a living. They spoke with accents of the region, were not refined, and were easily riled to emotional action.
- “YOU are the MESSIAH of GOD!” (this was the rock that the church would be built upon.) Peter is given the Keys. Matthew 16:13-20
- Message on Pentecost—You delivered the Messiah over to death. **Repent and believe in Him!**
- After healing the lame man—it’s not us who did this; it’s Jesus. **Repent and believe in Him!**

3. Peter’s message to those “above” him. Acts 4

- **SAME MESSAGE:** Acts 4:10-12 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this *name* this man stands here before you in good health... **And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”**
- Acts 4:13 Now as they observed **the confidence** of Peter and John and understood that they were *uneducated and untrained men*, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.
- Acts 4:29-31 **They prayed for confidence!**

And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may **speak Your word with all confidence**... And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit** and began to **speak the word of God with boldness**.

4. Peter's message to those "below" him.

Samaritans Acts 8

- The Jews thought of Samaritans as "second-class citizens." There was a long history of animosity between the two groups.
- The Samaritans didn't like the Jews either. They had their own Temple of worship, their own ideas about Messiah, and only acknowledged the Law of Moses as Scripture.
- James and John had wanted to call down fire from heaven when they had gone through Samaria just before Jesus was crucified and resurrected in Jerusalem.
- **SAME MESSAGE:** Acts 8: 5 *Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them.* (The Samaritans believed the message of Philip and had been baptized in the name of Jesus.)
- **SAME HOLY SPIRIT:** Acts 8:14-15 Peter and John are called to lay hands on them so they can receive the Holy Spirit. WHO GAVE the Holy Spirit? God!

Gentiles Acts 10

- Cornelius is a Roman centurion who fears God. Under the old system of Jewish law, he would be allowed to sit in the back of the synagogue or convert to Judaism.
- God appears to him and tells him to send for Peter, who is in Joppa, along the seaside.
- God appears 3x in a vision to Peter: *"What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."*
- **SAME MESSAGE:** Acts 10:34-36 *"I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)... **through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.**"*
- **SAME HOLY SPIRIT:** Acts 10:44-46 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.

The message of repentance and salvation only through Jesus, God's Messiah, doesn't change.

I need the power of the Holy Spirit to go and speak it confidently to those with whom I naturally wouldn't associate—because God shows no partiality.

Key Verse to memorize:

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

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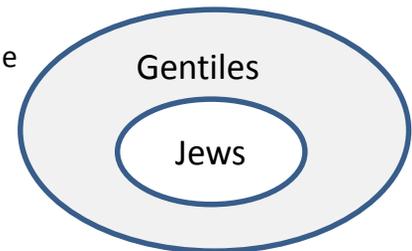
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