



Church Polity in the Book of Acts

Acts 10, 11, 15

6/16/19 PM

THE CHURCH AND ITS DEMOGRAPHICS

Introduction:

I. PETER'S PREPARATION FOR GENTILE MINISTRY (Acts 10:1-23a)

A. The Heavenly Visitor Prepares Cornelius (vs. 1-8)

“centurion, God-fearer”

“ninth hour”

“dispatch some men”

“on the next day”

B. The Heavenly Vision Prepares Peter (vs. 9-23a)

“fell into a trance, and he saw”

“like a great sheet”

“unholy or unclean” (see Leviticus 11 & Deuteronomy 14)

“By no means, Lord!”

“without misgivings”

“Peter invited them in”

II. THE CHURCH'S PREPARATION FOR GENTILE MINISTRY (Acts 11:18-24)

A. Hearing the Testimony of Peter (vs. 18; c.f. 1-17)

“when they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God”

“God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”

B. Observing the Results of Other Preachers (vs. 19-21)

“those who were scattered...made their way...speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone.”

“but there were some of them [who]...began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus.”

“And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.”

C. Investigating the Fruits of Growth (vs. 22-24)

“the news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem”

“they sent Barnabas off” (“he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith”)

“witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced”

“and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord”

“considerable numbers were brought to the Lord” (next week’s message)

III. THE LORD’S PURPOSE FOR GENTILE MINISTRY (15:1-21)

A. The Dispute (vs. 1-2a) - “you must keep the Law”

B. The Delegation (vs. 2b-4) - Paul and Barnabas

C. The Debate (vs. 5-6) = “the church, the apostles, and the elders”

D. The Discourse (vs. 7-10) - “Peter stood up and said to them...”

E. The Discussion (vs. 11-12) - “we are saved the same way”

F. The Debriefing (vs. 13-18) - “Brethren, listen to me...”

G. The Decision (vs.19-21) - “do not trouble those who are turning to

Conclusion:

- 1) God expects us to share His racially inclusive gospel with others.
- 2) God is good at breaking down our prejudices, if we’ll allow Him.
- 3) Sometimes we are asked to do the hard thing for the Lord.
- 4) The church can reach and nurture more people if it is not insensitive to social change.
- 5) When we do yield to the Lord, He will use us mightily in His service.