

## **Bible Study Group Notes**

Acts 11.1–18

### **THE BIG PICTURE**

Acts 11 follows directly from Acts 10! God has brought the gospel to Cornelius and his household, and the Holy Spirit has been given to Gentiles as well as Jews. But when Peter returns to Jerusalem, some believers are troubled that he has eaten with Gentiles. Peter explains that this was God's work from beginning to end. The passage teaches us that God welcomes outsiders by granting repentance that leads to life.

### **INVESTIGATE**

*Read Acts 11.1-18.*

1. What news reaches the apostles and believers in Judea in 11.1?
2. Why do some believers criticise Peter in 11.2-3?
3. As Peter retells the story, what signs are there that this was God's initiative rather than Peter's idea?
4. What is the significance of God's words in 11.9?
5. According to 11.14, why did Cornelius still need Peter to come?
6. What happens to Cornelius and his household in 11.15-17?
7. What conclusion does the church reach in 11.18?
8. Why is it significant that repentance is described as something God "grants"?

## **REFLECT & APPLY**

9. Where might churches today be tempted to make God's welcome narrower than God has made it?
  
10. How can we be genuinely welcoming without reducing the need for people to hear the saving message of Christ?
  
11. How does this passage help us see repentance as a gift that leads to life, rather than as a cold or negative word?
  
12. Are there people we might instinctively assume are unlikely to respond to the gospel? What might Acts 11 say to us?
  
13. Where might God be calling us to fresh repentance ourselves – perhaps in apathy, pride, prayerlessness, bitterness, or lovelessness?
  
14. What would it look like for us to rejoice more deeply when outsiders are brought near to Christ?

## **PRAY**

- Thank God that He welcomes outsiders and grants repentance that leads to life.
- Pray for warmth, clarity, humility, and courage as we share Christ with others.
- Ask God to make St Peter's a church that welcomes people generously and points them clearly to Jesus.

*NB The Church Prayer Pointers for this month are available in church or on the WhatsApp group.*