

SERMON NOTES Sunday 15th May

sunnysidechurch

Bible passage: Acts 11.1-18

Sermon outline

Summary of Talk

Part of the ongoing retelling of the Holy Spirit coming up on the Gentiles and the leaders in Jerusalem accepting non – Jews as a part of the church.

A story of Sharing Experience

Peter is accused of eating with Gentiles and rather than defend himself with scripture and theology he shares his experience of the activity of God.

A story of Acceptance

In Chapter 10 God accepts all who fear him and does what is right. At the start of chapter 11 the Gentiles 'accept' the word of God and finally the leaders accept (for the time being) all that had happened as God's work with the Gentiles. How open are we to acceptance and how open to being accepted?

The gift that is given

Peter talks about the same gift, a Pentecost moment, A shared gift received by all, the Holy Spirit, salvation, fully accepted part of the body of Christ.

This gift when it is accepted allows us to sit at the same table, accept new perspectives, glorify God and share our experiences.

Some questions for discussion

1. Read the passage together, what especially strikes you or do you question?
2. Peter sat at the table with Cornelius and his household. Is that just a useful metaphor for unity or is there actual significance in eating together?
3. Who do you think the Church struggles to invite to the table nowadays? Try to include the obvious and less high profile.
4. What do we learn from this passage about listening well?
5. This passage ends with miraculous acceptance. What if the Church can't agree, what principles enable us to move forward?

Revd Jane Markby