

GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY

YEAR: KNEEL / FOCUS: LIVING ON MISSION / SERIES: ACTS

BIG TRUTH: GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY

Luke 20:21; Romans 2:11; Galatians 2:6; James 2:1; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Proverbs 28:21

BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 10:34-35

“So Peter opened his mouth and said: ‘Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.’”

BIG IDEAS

- God loves the nations.
- God redeems the nations.
- God gives the nations His Spirit.

BIBLE PASSAGE: ACTS 10

KNEEL: LIVING ON MISSION

The Kneel Year is an exploration of what it means to worship God with our all (Luke 10:26-28) and to use our influence to lead others to do the same. We know that as we pursue a life of worship, we will pursue a life of both wisdom and mission. Throughout this year we will study and pursue the wisdom of God through the book of Proverbs and the mission of God through the book of Acts, and we will learn how both of these things must inform and shape our influence as Jesus followers!

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know...

- The gospel has the power to turn the world upside down.
- They are empowered and chosen to be a gospel witness in the world.
- Our salvation has come by grace alone.



Every student should feel...

- Comfort that the Lord is with them wherever they go.
- Hope in the God of salvation.
- Responsible to use their influence to live for Jesus alone.



Every student should strive to...

- Read, study, and meditate on the entire book of Acts.
- Memorize the Bible verse each week.
- Pray consistently for boldness to make Jesus known.



Every student should want...

- To pursue faithfulness in living on mission.
- To share the gospel with people in their lives who do not know Jesus.
- To sacrifice their personal freedoms for the sake of the gospel

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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BIBLE VERSE: ACTS 10:34-35

“So Peter opened his mouth and said: ‘Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.’”

Partiality is showing favor or favoritism.

“So Peter opened his mouth and said: ‘Truly I understand that God shows no partiality...’”

- God is perfect. There is no sin or imperfection in Him. All that He does is perfect. Every action and attitude are perfection. Because of His perfect, He never shows partiality. This means He never acts in an unjust way towards any person.
- God is not like man. Any action He takes is just and right because He is perfect. He is perfectly aware and knowledgeable in all things. Unlike man, He knows all aspects of every situation. This means that He knows our hearts and judges righteously. This makes it impossible for God to show partiality.

God works in the heart of every person who believes.

“...but in every nation anyone who fears Him and does what is right is acceptable to Him.”

- God’s truth is for all who believe. God works in the hearts of every person who believes in His truth. He redeems them and works in them to make them more like Him.
- God’s people are not one ethnicity or people group. He redeems people from every tribe, nation, and tongue. He does not show partiality in redeeming one nation. He works in the hearts of people in every part of the world who fear Him and believe in His name.

God’s family is diverse.

“...but in every nation anyone who fears Him...”

- For many years, God’s chosen people, the Israelites believed that the gospel was for them alone. God showed them that the gospel was and is for all people who believe. This means that it is for whoever believes in Jesus.
- When a person experiences saving faith, he or she becomes part of God’s family. This means that God’s family is diverse. It is made up of people from many different ethnicities and cultures because God’s truth is for anyone who believes it.

BIG IDEA #1: GOD LOVES THE NATIONS.¹**[THIS]**

When God first chose His people, He chose the Israelites and set them apart from everyone else. The Israelites, or members of the Jewish nation were commanded not to intermarry or even associate with Gentiles because they were God's chosen people. Anyone who was not an Israelite was a Gentile. The salvation that God promised to His people seemingly was only for them, but God's promise to save the world has always been present in His revelation of Himself. When Jesus came, He began to change this view and after His ascension into heaven, we see God give clear instructions to His followers to carry the gospel to every person in the world. In Acts 10, Cornelius has a vision that reveals that God's truth is not just for the Israelites; it's for all who believe. In John 3:16, the truth that God sent Jesus for anyone in the world who believes is evident in God's call for repentance and belief. We see in Acts 10 that Peter and Cornelius struggled to understand what seemed to be a huge change in God's plan, but what is true is that God's plan of salvation always involved every tribe and nation.

[THEREFORE]**How does God's plan for salvation reveal that He loves the nations?**

Throughout Scripture, God reveals that His salvation is for everyone who believes, and it is not reserved for one ethnic group. John 3:16, 2 Peter 3:9, and Romans 1:16 show us that salvation is available to anyone who believes in Jesus as his or her Savior.

[THIS]

God is love and His love is perfect. This means that His love for all people is an example of how we should love. God loves the nations because every person is a reflection of His image. All people are created in His image and therefore are endowed with worth. God's love for the nations is apparent in His willingness to give His only Son for anyone who believes in Him for salvation. God didn't send Jesus for the Israelites. He sent Jesus to die for the sin of the world. God is not a partial God. He does not love some more than others. His love is not conditional. He does not love only those who love Him. He loves unconditionally and sacrificially. He shows grace to all people. He loves all people and provides salvation to those who turn from their sin and place their faith in Jesus.

[THEREFORE]**Read Acts 10:27-28. How does God's command to Peter reveal the way we are to love the nations?**

In Acts 10, God revealed to Peter that His salvation wasn't just for the Jewish nation. He used a vision to show Peter that He was not a God who showed partiality and in doing so He taught Peter not to show partiality. This truth is true today for believers. Because God loves the nations, we should love the nations, too.

How do we reject the idea that God loves all the nations? How do we live out a false gospel when we do this?

We reject the idea that God loves all the nations when we refuse to take the gospel to all the nations. When we satisfy ourselves with keeping the gospel close to home or only taking it to "safe" nations, we are rejecting the truth that God loves every nation, even the violent, or dangerous ones. We live out a false gospel by making the gospel something it's not. 2 Peter 2:1-3 and Romans 16:17-18 warn against teaching or enduring false gospels.

1. Acts 10:34: *God's gospel is for everyone. He shows no partiality.*

BIG IDEA #2: GOD REDEEMS THE NATIONS.²**[THIS]**

Prior to Peter's vision in Acts 10, the Israelites lived by strict rules that did not allow them to associate with anyone outside of their own nation. They lived as a nation set apart for God. Though this is how they had lived, and it was according to God's plan, His salvation plan was always for all nations. He began to reveal this plan through His Son, and He revealed it even more through Peter. Peter's vision in Acts 10 was part of God's plan of redemption for the nations. His intention was that the gospel would go into all the world and part of making that happen was through Peter. Peter responded to the vision in obedience and went to Cornelius' house when he was summonsed. When he was with Cornelius and Cornelius' family and friends, Peter preached the gospel to them. Through Peter's obedience to God's command, the gospel spread. Cornelius and his family were not Israelites, yet they heard the good news of Jesus Christ because God loves the nations and redeems the nations.

[THEREFORE]

What is the significance of Peter's vision and how does this impact the spread of the gospel in the world?

Matthew 28:19 reminds us that Jesus commanded His people to carry the gospel into all the world. His followers didn't fully understand His words in that moment, but when Peter had his vision, they began to understand more and more. Psalm 96:3 and Matthew 24:14 help us see that the gospel is for the whole world and Peter's vision impacted the spread of the gospel to every nation by breaking down a barrier between Jew and Gentile.

[THIS]

Barriers to the gospel are a great hindrance to it. When we create barriers, we work against the command that Jesus has given each of us to carry the gospel into the world. God loves the nations, and His redemption is available to every nation. Often, we believe the lie that redemption is for us and our people only, or that it is only for people groups we deem worthy to receive it. God has declared that His gospel is for all who believe it. For Peter it was unheard of to enter a Gentile's house. For Cornelius it was unheard of to entertain a Jew. This mixing of Jew and Gentile was radical and turned things upside down, yet it was God's way and His plan for redeeming the world. He didn't choose another way. He didn't choose to keep nations separate, redeeming them separately in groups. Instead, He sent Peter to Cornelius and later Paul to the Gentiles on missionary journeys. He didn't create separate families of believers according to their nation. Instead, He joins each believer, regardless of their ethnicity, to His one redeemed family. His redemption is the identity that trumps all other identities and transforms lives.

[THEREFORE]

How does Peter's obedience to go to Cornelius reveal his belief in the redeeming power of the gospel? Do you have the same belief in the gospel? Why or why not?

In Acts 10, Peter's vision would have been radical and the call to enter a Gentile's house would have been something out of the ordinary for him, yet he did it. Not only did he do it, he preached the gospel, revealing his utter belief that the gospel redeems and saves to the uttermost those who believe it. When we believe this about the gospel, we believe it to be true for all nations, not just some.

2. Acts 10:35: *The gospel is available to those who hear it, believe it, repent, and live for Jesus.*

GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY

BIG IDEA #3: GOD GIVES THE NATIONS HIS SPIRIT.⁴**[THIS]**

Salvation involves receiving the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2, what is known as the Day of Pentecost is the moment after the ascension of Jesus when the Holy Spirit came to every believer. Prior to this moment, the Holy Spirit did not live inside of believers. Since the Day of Pentecost, at the moment of salvation, believers receive the Holy Spirit. In Acts 10, we see God make a declaration about His love for all nations and His lack of partiality when He notes that the Holy Spirit came upon the people who heard Peter preach the gospel. The Holy Spirit came upon them because they believed the gospel and were redeemed. The Holy Spirit was not reserved just for the Jewish nation. He is for all people who confess with their mouths that Jesus is their Lord and Savior.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it important to note that the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentiles in Acts 10? What hope does this give to us today?

When we read stories like the story of Cornelius in Acts 10, we should see that it is the gospel coming to us today because we are Gentiles. Because God sent His Spirit upon Cornelius, we know that we receive the Spirit, too. Just like salvation isn't reserved just for Jews, His Spirit isn't reserved just for Jews.

[THIS]

In Acts 10, when the people in Cornelius' house hearing the gospel and believing it received the Spirit, they were connected to the Jews who also had received the Spirit. God's Spirit connects His people together and joins them into His body and family. His one Spirit unites His family everywhere, no matter the language or ethnicity. God is not a partial God. He does not judge based upon ethnicity, skin color, or socio-economic status. He offers His salvation to the whole world and gives His Spirit to every tribe, nation, and tongue. His family of believers is made up of people from all over the world who have believed His Word and placed their faith and trust in Jesus. It is His Spirit who unites this family and when we encounter other believers from other parts of the world, it is by the Spirit inside of each of us that we recognize one another.

[THEREFORE]

How does the church today mistakenly separate itself according to nation?

Often, we separate ourselves according to geography or just similarities. Revelation 5:10 and 7:9 show us that God's family is not separated that way and will not be that way in eternity. In eternity and even now, God's family is made up of every tribe, tongue, and nation. God gives His redemption and Spirit to all people.

Since God is not partial, how should this truth impact the way we carry the gospel to the world?

God is not partial and intends for His gospel to go to all the world. Since this is truth, we should carry the gospel to everyone in the world. We should also be impartial. We should not choose some people to share the gospel with and others to keep it from. 1 John 2:2 and 2 Peter 3:9 help us remember that God's purpose is for all to hear and those who believe to be saved.

3. Acts 10:44: God sends His Spirit to anyone who repents and believes. This means that God gives His Spirit to all nations.