



CHAPTER SIX

Taking the Story to New Places

ACTS 10:1-11:18

Chapter 6: Taking the Story to New Places

Acts 10:25-28, 34-41, 44-48 (NRSVue)

²⁵On Peter's arrival, Cornelius met him and, falling at his feet, worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter made him get up, saying, "Stand up; I am only a mortal." ²⁷And as he talked with him, he went in and found that many had assembled, ²⁸and he said to them, "You yourselves know that it is improper for a Jew to associate with or to visit an outsider, but God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.

³⁴Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. ³⁶You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. ³⁷That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: ³⁸how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, ⁴¹not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

⁴⁴While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. ⁴⁵The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the gentiles, ⁴⁶for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷"Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" ⁴⁸So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Discussion Questions from the Biblical Text:

1. A Roman centurion stood by as Jesus was crucified. How do you think Peter felt as he entered the house of Cornelius who also was a centurion?
2. Peter acknowledges the difficulty of the situation. How might this be a model for engaging in awkward conversations about faith?
3. What do you notice in this story? What wonderings are stirred for you?

Discussion Questions from *Bearing Witness in Acts and Today* by Troy M. Troftgruben:

1. This chapter suggests the story of acts is not simply about the conversion of the nations but also about the conversion (or change in thinking) of the church. What do you think about that idea? (page 112)
2. What concrete examples come to your mind of situations where church communities have faithfully (or not so faithfully) navigated traditional barriers to welcoming people? (page 113)

Discussion Questions from *Opening Space: A vision for Fresh Expressions of Church and Creative Mission* by Shannon Kiser:

1. Fresh Expressions emerge around people, places, and passions (pages 45-46). Is there a people, place, or passion that has come to mind for you as you think about the possibility of fresh expressions in your setting? (page 59)