

## Session 4

Keeping Up With The Kingdom  
week starting June 13, 2021

# UNIFORMITY

How the Holy Spirit Breaks Through

Pentecost #2 (Acts 10) is the day the doors of church flew open to include Gentiles like you and me. But, as with any movement of God, it took his Church some time to catch up to what he was doing. Peter comes under immediate criticism for eating with Gentiles. Later groups within the church added the burden of following the Hebrew law to believing in Jesus (Acts 15), and the Church faced its first major test of disagreement and discernment. Is the Gospel big enough for all people? Can people become followers of Jesus without adding the Hebrew law as well? This week we will see how God uses story to help us discern His will. He also uses tension that can rise up between us as a kinetic energy to move the Gospel message outward.

## GETTING STARTED

- What qualities, appearances or behaviors affect your first impression of someone?

## DISCUSSION

1. Read Acts 11:1–4. What do you notice about the difference between what the Jewish believers heard about the Gentiles and their criticism of Peter? What are some ways we respond to things in a similar way today?
2. The Holy Spirit uses the story of Peter's experience to change the believers' minds. Describe a time when learning a story has changed your mind about something.
3. Read Acts 15:1–21. What do you notice about the discernment process of the church leaders? How is the church catching up to what God is already doing?
4. Leaders like Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and James help rally the Church around God's Grace for all people and bring clarity to the situation. Do you know a leader like this and how do they help you hear God's voice?

## LIVE IT OUT

Is there a situation in your life where it would be wise to investigate, pray and consider the "whole story" before making a judgement or taking action? What is it and how will you proceed?

## MEMORIZATION CHALLENGE

"We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are." Acts 15:11

## PRAY

Holy Spirit, Thank you for leading your church by stories of your work through ordinary people. Help us to see you at work in and around our church and to follow your call to bring the Gospel to all people.