

Main Idea: If we’re willing to obey God and leave our comfort zone, we’ll make three amazing discoveries, as did Peter in Acts 10:24-48.

- I. God is preparing people (24-33).
 - A. God prepared Cornelius for Peter (24-26).
 - B. God prepared Peter for Cornelius (27-29).
 - C. God prepared Cornelius to listen to Peter (30-33).
- II. God’s Word is powerful (34-43).
 - A. Peter explained the truth about God (34-35).
 1. He doesn’t accept people on the basis of externals.
 2. He accepts people from every nation.
 - B. Peter explained the truth about Jesus (36-41).
 1. He is the Lord of all.
 2. God anointed Him.
 3. He did good.
 4. The people crucified Him.
 5. God raised Him from the dead.
 6. God chose witnesses to see Him.
 - C. Peter explained the truth about our message (42-43).
 1. Jesus is the judge (42).
 2. Jesus is the source of forgiveness (43).
- III. God’s agenda is to reach all peoples (44-48).
 - A. They received the Holy Spirit (44-46).
 1. This account is not a model for us to follow.
 2. This account shows that God saves all people the same way.
 - B. They were baptized (47-48a).
 - C. They wanted to learn (48b).

Make It Personal: In light of Acts 10 we need to ask ourselves two questions...

1. How big is my world?
2. How big is my God?

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 3:2-13

Someone has said, “You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.” Last Lord’s Day we began to explore the subject of moving out of our comfort zones. To move out of your comfort zone you must be willing to take risks. Hudson Taylor, the great man of faith who founded the China Inland Mission, integrated faith and risk. He said, “Unless there is an element of risk in our exploits for God, there is no need for faith.”²

It’s easy to say we believe God and even say we want to live for God, but when push comes to shove so often we’re like the fellow in the following ditty.

*There was a very cautious man
Who never laughed or played;
He never risked, he never tried,
He never sang or prayed.
And when he one day passed away
His insurance was denied;
For since he never really lived,
They claimed he never died!*³

** Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

¹ For an earlier development of this text, see the Acts series preached at WBC in 2001.

² Paul Borthwick, [Leading the Way](#), Navpress, 1989, p. 153.

³ Unknown source

In Acts 10 Peter took a risk, left his comfort zone, and by so doing led the early church to do the same. It was time to go to the Gentiles. But this was easier said than done and took some divine persuasion to get to this point.

As we saw last time in the first 23 verses of the chapter, God did three things to prepare His people to move out of their comfort zones. He prepared a **ministry** in verses 1-8, a **messenger** in verses 9-16, and a **meeting** in verses 17-23. By means of a vision He told a Gentile named Cornelius to send messengers to bring Peter to his house. He also sent a special message to Peter by means of a vision to let him know the messengers were coming and to go with them. That's where we left off last time.

Today we're going to see firsthand what happened because Peter was willing to obey God and come out of his comfort zone. There's much here for us, for if we're willing to obey God and move out of our comfort zones, we'll make three amazing discoveries, as did Peter in Acts 10:24-48.

I. God is preparing people (24-33).

Indeed, the Bible teaches that in eternity past the sovereign God of the universe made a decree to redeem a people for His glory (Eph 1:4ff; Rom 8:28-31). He gave this people as a love gift to His Son (John 17:6). In the course of time, His Son entered the world as a man and gave His life to redeem His Father's gift.

"I am the good shepherd," Jesus said (in John 10:14-16). "I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen [speaking of the Gentiles]. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd."

Jesus did not merely make salvation *possible*, but died to save a *people*. He laid down His life for His sheep. He knows His sheep. And He is at work in the world today, as He promised, bringing His sheep to Himself.

Know this. God is preparing people according to His eternal plan. He is preparing people to receive the good news. He is also preparing people to take the good news to those being prepared to receive it. That's what is happening today in our very midst. And that's what happened nearly twenty centuries ago in the story before us.

In the Acts account, Luke shows us God's "preparing" work in three ways.

A. God prepared Cornelius for Peter (24-26). "The following day [that is, two days after the messengers came to Peter and the day after they left for the house of Cornelius] he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. ²⁶ But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

Verse 23 indicates that Peter did not make the trip alone. Six Jewish brothers from Joppa went along (the number is given in 11:12). That's three times the official number needed to serve as witnesses of an event. Peter would certainly need this triple proof once he made his report back at headquarters of what he was about to see.

The trip from Joppa to Caesarea covered about thirty miles, a hard day's travel. The party left around 3:00 in the afternoon, but didn't arrive at their destination until the following day shortly after noon.

It was obvious to Peter when he arrived that before him was a *prepared* man, in fact, a whole group of *prepared* men and women. Cornelius was serious about this meeting.

We're about to see how to tell if a person is really serious about wanting to know and please God. Look for three traits demonstrated here by Cornelius.

One, they'll want to hear God's Word. Two, they'll want others to hear God's Word. And three, they'll take sacrificial steps to make it happen. Cornelius called together the people who mattered most to him and told them, "A man is coming to tell me about God today. You must come, too!"

When Peter entered the house something startling occurred. I must remind you that Cornelius was a military man, a centurion. He was used to calling the shots and having men respond to him.

But what did he do? When Peter came into his presence he hit the floor. The Greek term *proskuneo* means "to kiss toward" and is used for homage given to deity, angels, and sometimes to men. Gripped by a sense of his unworthiness and in appreciation for this privilege to hear God's Word, Cornelius fell at Peter's feet and "worshipped" him [that's the word the KJV uses]. Now there's a man who's prepared to hear God's Word!

Of course, Peter refused the honor. He knew his role. He knew there is only one who is worthy of such honor. The Lord. He insisted Cornelius stand up saying, "I am only a man myself."

We're in trouble when we forget this. We are but *human beings*, tools in the hands of the Maker, instruments He can use. The brush doesn't take credit for the masterpiece painting, nor do the piano keys for the magnificent music. The artist deserves the honor.

So God prepared Cornelius for Peter. Furthermore...

B. God prepared Peter for Cornelius (27-29). Verse 27 states, "Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people." Now there's a delight for a preacher, a room full of people just waiting to hear what he has to say. But Peter's first words were not exactly what most homiletics professors would consider a model sermon introduction.

Verse 28—"He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him." Whoa, Peter! That's not a very nice way to address this audience. But it was true. For centuries there existed a huge wall between Jews and Gentiles. The animosity was severe. Contact was forbidden by Jewish law.

That of course was due in part to a tragic misunderstanding of the intent of God's law. God never intended His people to practice isolation. Separation—yes ("Be holy for I am holy"), for God's people are to separate themselves from sin. But exclusivism? No. Israel was supposed to be a conduit not a bucket, to receive God's blessings and make Him known to the nations. But Israel began to hoard God and hate the *goyim*.

Peter was not overstating the barrier he had to cross. He literally was violating Jewish law to enter into the home of this Gentile. Why then did he do it? Because God had prepared him for this meeting just like He had prepared Cornelius. He made it clear that both sides had to lay down their prejudices.

Listen to Peter again (28b-29), "But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean." Those were the same words Peter heard the Lord use in the vision (verse 15). Peter got the point. Contrary to the saying, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," Peter is doing something very new and very wonderful as he applies the truth of God to his life.

Is that happening in our lives? No matter our age God has things to teach us from His Word. He's interested in stretching us and opening new doors for us. But we must be ready and willing. We're in trouble when our spiritual diet consists of things we learned

five or ten or twenty years ago, sort of regurgitating old food for sustenance. Peter was an apostle, yet he was still open to learning new truth, even *hard* truth.

Verse 29—“So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?”

God is bringing the barriers down. Peter’s question is intriguing, “May I ask why you sent for me?” On the one hand, it makes sense. He’s curious about Cornelius’ expectation. But on the other hand, surely he knew. Or had he forgotten the Master’s commission to “go to the ends of the earth,” preaching the gospel? That’s why he was there that day.

We tend to be like Peter, don’t we? God is opening doors all around us for the advancement of the gospel, yet we’re prone to miss them.

Several years ago I was on my way to an evangelism seminar when an unexpected visitor stopped by, a man I’d never met before. I could tell quickly by his language that the man didn’t know the Lord. I remember my initial reaction. “Oh no. If I take time to talk to this fellow, I’ll be late for my...*evangelism* seminar.” And then it hit me how foolish I was being. I wanted to learn more about evangelism. God wanted me to *do* it.

God prepared Cornelius for Peter. He also prepared Peter for Cornelius. Thirdly...

C. God prepared Cornelius to listen to Peter (30-33). “Cornelius answered: ‘Four days ago [notice it took four days to bring about this meeting. God is in no hurry] I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me ³¹ and said, ‘Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. ³² Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.’ ³³ So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.’”

Wow! Not only was Cornelius ready to listen but so was everyone in the house. Listen to that final admission, “We are here...to listen to *everything* the Lord has commanded you to tell us.” Everything. Take as long as you like. Don’t leave out a thing. We are all ears. Give us the whole package. When people say that, you know God has been preparing their hearts.

This summer I was challenged by John Piper’s book *Risk Is Right: Better to Lose Your Life Than to Waste It*. I recommend it. “There are a thousand ways to magnify Christ in life and death,” says Piper. “None should be scorned. All are important. But none makes the worth of Christ shine more brightly than sacrificial love for other people in the name of Jesus.”

Sacrificial love for others. When we do that, we show the worth of Christ. And to do that, we must be prepared to move out of our comfort zones.

God is preparing people. They’re next door, across the room at school and work, and around the world.

II. God’s Word is powerful (34-43).

How powerful? It’s so powerful it can break down the most ugly prejudices and bring enemies together. I remember a dozen or so years ago sitting in a stuffy classroom in Chernovsti, Ukraine, teaching God’s Word to about 25 Ukrainian men. A man named Valentin showed me his photo album and I saw five Soviet soldiers in uniform. He was one of them. Another man named Mihai approached our team leader Dave Dernlan, who had shared he served in the US navy during the Vietnam war, and said through a

translator, “I served in the Vietnam war too. We used to be enemies. Now we are brothers serving together.”

Such is the power of God’s Word, and Peter beheld it in vivid fashion on the day he preached in the house of Cornelius. His sermon is highly significant. It’s the first time the good news of Christ was ever preached to Gentiles. Apparently, Peter used no notes as he delivered this extemporaneous message and explained three bottom-line subjects.

A. Peter explained the truth about God (34-35). “Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.”

Peter shares two realities about God that he himself had just learned in recent days.

1. *He doesn’t accept people on the basis of externals.* He doesn’t “show favoritism” as the NIV puts it. The Greek word reflects the Hebrew idiom *nasa panim*, “to lift someone’s face,” hence, “to show favor.” God doesn’t play favorites.⁴ The fact is, not one person is more likely to experience His favor than another for *all are sinners*. Every person falls short of His standard, by virtue of inherited sin nature and willful sin choice. The KJV reads, “God is no respecter of persons.”

That’s quite an admission for Peter, a Jew, to make. So is the next reality about God.

2. *He accepts people from every nation.* All kinds of people too. Jesus made that clear in John 10:16 when He said to the Jewish disciples, “I have *other sheep*, which are not of this fold.” Peter said the Lord accepts people from every *ethnay*—from every ethnic group or nation—who fear him and do what is right.

Some try to use this verse to teach universalism, which says God accepts everybody who is sincere on the basis of good works. “See?” they say, “Peter told Cornelius that God accepts everybody who does what is good. It doesn’t matter what you call God as long as you believe in him. You don’t have to believe in Jesus. One religion is as good as another. You’re okay if you just live a good life.”

But that contradicts the clear teaching of the rest of the Bible (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) that says God saves only those who put their trust in Jesus Christ. It also contradicts what’s happening in Acts 10, for if Cornelius and the other Gentiles were already saved, what was Peter doing in their house? Why was he about to proclaim that salvation is only through the name of Jesus, as he says in verse 43, if that were not true? Furthermore, later in Jerusalem Peter himself testified that Cornelius and his Gentile friends were *not yet saved* prior to his coming (see Acts 11:14), which means that prior to Peter’s coming Cornelius had piety and morality, but he did not have salvation.

John MacArthur shares a helpful insight. “There are some who would deny that there is any pre-salvation work on the part of the sinner, leading to salvation. This, too, is absurd, since the text clearly states that salvation comes to those who fear God and do what is right. Is this salvation by works? Of course not. Peter is simply expressing the reality that there is a Spirit work in the heart of the sinner.”⁵

It’s all accomplished by God’s grace. When a sinner begins to seek God, this is evidence of the grace of God. When that sinner shows an interest in hearing the Word of God, when he calls for the preacher (as Cornelius did), this too is the result of the Spirit’s gracious working. When the sinner decides to change his lifestyle, stop living such a selfish life and start sharing what he has with those in need, this is because of God’s

⁴ F. F. Bruce, p. 224.

⁵ John MacArthur, p. 301.

grace. That sinner is still not yet saved for he still has not yet placed his faith in Jesus, but he is certainly ripe for salvation, all because of the grace of God at work in his life.

So first, Peter told the truth about God. Next...

B. Peter explained the truth about Jesus (36-41). “You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷ You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. ³⁹ “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.”

And with that Peter summarizes the apostolic message the early church preached wherever it went. This is the gospel. It is the message of the person and work of Jesus Christ. Peter communicates six vital truths concerning Jesus.

By the way, notice that twice Peter says to his audience, “You know.” You know the message. You know what has happened throughout Judea. A person could scarcely have lived in Israel at this time and *not* known, especially a God-fearer like Cornelius. But it’s one thing to know the facts. It’s another thing to grasp the significance of those facts which is why Peter has come. You know that Jesus has come. What you may not know is the whole truth about this Jesus.

1. *He is the Lord of all.* The final words of verse 36 are key. Peter presents Jesus not merely as Messiah of the Jews but as *Lord of all*. He’s the Lord of the Jews, yes, but also of the Gentiles. He is *your* Lord, too, Cornelius and company.

2. *God anointed Him.* For the first thirty years of His life Jesus lived in relative obscurity, until His baptism. At that time God *anointed* Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power, and thus inaugurated His public ministry.

3. *He did good.* What kind of good? A good life unlike any other. Jesus “went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil.” Even the demons were no match for Him.

At this point Peter offers a personal testimony in verse 39, “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.” He saw it firsthand. As well as this...

4. *The people crucified Him.* They put Him on a tree. They *killed* Him. But here’s what separates this person from every other religious figure.

5. *God raised Him from the dead.* Lest there be any doubt about it Peter says God raised Him from the dead “on the third day.” What’s more, He “caused Him to be seen.” By everybody? No.

6. *God chose witnesses to see Him.* Who were the witnesses? They weren’t volunteers. They were individuals God chose, the apostles, as Peter affirms in verse 41, “by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.”

That’s the truth about Jesus. To be right with God you must know and believe that Jesus is the Lord, the God anointed one who lived a perfect life in the place of sinners, who died at the hand of sinners, whom God raised from the dead, an event He verified through the testimony of witnesses.

In his message Peter moved quickly to a third bottom-line subject. First the truth about God, then about Jesus, and...

C. Peter explained the truth about our message (42-43). “He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed [KJV ‘ordained’] as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”⁶

What Jesus accomplished Jesus wants made known. Peter says, “He commanded us to preach...and to testify that He is the one whom God appointed.” This is our message. God wants us to tell the world two things about His Son.

1. *Jesus is the judge (42).* He is the judge of the *living* and the *dead*. That’s pretty comprehensive, isn’t it? You can’t fall between the cracks with those two options. You are either living or dead, and in either case Jesus is your *judge*. But here’s the good news...

2. *Jesus is the source of forgiveness (43).* Everyone who believes in Him [the KJV uses the word “whosoever”]—that includes Gentile as well as Jew—receives forgiveness of sins through His name.

Who needs forgiveness? We all do, for we are all sinners under the wrath of God. Who can experience forgiveness? Everyone can, everyone, that is, who believes in His name.

Do you desire the forgiveness of God, my friend? God so loved the world, including you, that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever, and that includes you, believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Repent of your sin, believe in Christ, and be forgiven today.

At that point the sermon ended, not by Peter’s choice but because of divine intervention. Something spectacular happened, something so magnanimous that Peter wouldn’t have believed it had he not seen it with his eyes, which is why God wanted him there!

This brings us to discovery #3. If we’re willing to obey God and leave our comfort zone, we’ll discover that God is preparing people, God’s Word is powerful, and thirdly...

III. God’s agenda is to reach all peoples (44-48).

“While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message (44).” Amazing. Peter wasn’t even able to finish his sermon. In fact, when Peter later retold the story to the Jews back in Jerusalem he says he merely “began to speak” (11:15) when the Holy Spirit came. There was no altar call, no invitation, simply the powerful demonstration of the Holy Spirit. The listeners simply believed (as 11:17 states) and were born again. And Peter and his six Jewish friends got a firsthand taste of just how world-wide God’s loving agenda is.

Luke specifies that three things happened to Cornelius and his Gentile associates.

A. They received the Holy Spirit (44-46). Notice the text again, “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.” There’s no mention that they sought for the Holy Spirit nor asked for Him. They merely heard Peter tell them about forgiveness through Jesus, believed in Jesus (an implied action here but states in 11:17), and then the Holy Spirit came on them.

The event made quite an impression on the Jewish onlookers. Notice verses 45-46, “The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the

⁶ Though Peter refers to “all the prophets,” there’s no direct quotation of the Old Testament in this “sermon.” Why not? Perhaps it’s because Peter is speaking to a Gentile audience.

Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.”

Wait a minute. Haven't we seen something like that before? Yes, we did. We saw it back in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came on Jews who believed in Jesus. We saw similar phenomena in Acts 8 when the Samaritans believed in Jesus. And now it's the Gentiles' turn.

What's going on here? A couple of observations...

1. *This account is not a model for us to follow.* It's not wise to use this episode to develop a pattern for the individual Christian. This passage isn't intended to teach that a person should speak in tongues as proof that he has received the Spirit. For that matter, tongues speaking isn't the only evidence of the Holy Spirit. It just happens to be the evidence God used in Acts, and for a very specific reason, namely...

2. *This account shows that God saves all people the same way.* God knew the Jewish Christians would be hard to convince, so He allowed them to see the same activity they as Jewish believers had experienced on the day of Pentecost. The connection was undeniable. The Gentiles believed in Jesus and received the Holy Spirit just like the Jews did.

There is no other way. God saves all people *the same way*. So today, if you want to receive the Holy Spirit, then believe in Jesus, and the Holy Spirit will enter your life and seal you until Christ your Savior returns (Eph 1:13-14).

B. They were baptized (47-48a). “Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” ⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.”

It was the “sameness” of the event that caught Peter's attention. From his perspective the events paralleled Acts 2, and because it did he called for the same response as he did when the Jews asked him what to do in Acts 2. *Be baptized* (2:38, 41).

There is no such thing as a believer who was unwilling to be baptized in the New Testament. When a person believes in Jesus, he or she is make it public through baptism. Notice that Peter “ordered” [‘commanded’ in the KJV] them to be baptized. If you are a believer in Jesus, the command is for you, too, as Jesus taught in Matthew 28:19.

C. They wanted to learn (48b). “Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.” Receiving Christ isn't the end of the road. It's just the beginning. These new believers exhibited a trait of a genuine Christian. They sought fellowship with other believers. They wanted to learn.

The second verse of *The Church's One Foundation* begins, “Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth.” God has one church, but His elect come from every nation. That's what this third discovery is all about. God's agenda is *worldwide*.

In the final book of the Bible John recorded this declaration of heavenly praise given to Jesus (Rev 5:9), “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from *every* tribe and language and people and nation.”

What a day it was. To use a statement coined by Kent Hughes, “A spiritual continental divide had been breached.”⁷ And it happened, humanly speaking, because Peter was willing to come out of his comfort zone.

Are we willing? We miss out on so much when we cling to our comfort zones.

⁷ Kent Hughes, *Acts*, p. 152.

Make It Personal: In light of Acts 10 we need to ask ourselves two questions...

1. *How big is my world?* Let's be honest with ourselves. Most of us tend to enjoy living in a pretty small world. All around us are people who need the Lord, but they're not in *our* world. We have very little contact with them. We don't think about them very much. We like our comfortable, our familiar little world.

Beloved, we have a *God-given* responsibility in this lost world. And to fulfill it we must leave our comfort zones.

So we're going to help each other again this fall. Next week our community groups will re-launch. They're called community groups because they exist to help us experience the kind of community the Lord intends for His church, with meaningful, Bible-centered one-anothering. But they're also called community groups because they are a means to a greater end than our fellowship, namely our mission of making disciples of Christ in this community and beyond.

They are *community* groups, and they (and every other ministry in this church) exist for the glory of God through making disciples of all peoples. Here's how we're going to help each other. When you arrive in the home where your community group will be meeting, you will see two things. An empty chair, and a \$50 bill on it. In following weeks that empty chair will remain with the \$50 on it until you spend it as a reminder that our group exists for people who are not yet among us, for God's glory. The \$50 is a gift to your group that you can use anyway you choose to show this community that WBC cares for it, with the hope that we can then share the reason we care, which is Christ.

Have fun working together. Come up with a strategy. Add money to it if you want. Do something to bring joy to this community in the name of Christ. Last year a deacon care group fed the Shawnee State women's basketball team. Another gave a \$50 tip to a surprised waitress. Another fed the fire department staff. And there are many other ways to bring joy to our community as a church.

Groceries for someone getting out of jail. Clothes for a child. Give a good book on parenting to five neighbor couples that just had a baby. Perhaps give a gift to support the efforts of a sister church.

In his book *Gaining By Losing*, Pastor J. D. Greear shares, "We once offered ten \$1,000 grants to the small groups that could come up with the best 'community blessing' ideas. As for any other grant, they submitted proposals that we judged, and then we awarded the top ten ideas so the groups could pursue them. It was the best \$10,000 we ever spent on community ministry, launching ministry that goes on to this day! But even greater was the effect this exercise had on the psychology of our church members: It challenged them to see their community through the eyes of the Spirit and empowered them to pursue what the Spirit put into their hearts."⁸

Have fun blessing our community for Jesus' sake.

How big is my world? That's a good question to ask ourselves on a regular basis. And then follow it up with this question.

2. *How big is my God?* When we start seeing the world as God sees it, it's vital that we see God as He is. Only when we see God as He is will we overcome the challenges we'll face in fulfilling our mission in this world. Like Peter did in Acts 10.

⁸ J. D. Greear, *Gaining By Losing*, p. 111.