

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

Acts Series

These questions are for the **April 19, 2020** sermon, "When Silence Settles In." Please read the sermon passage (Acts 11:1-18) together out loud.

Sermon Outline

WHEN WE SEE GOD AT WORK IN UNSETTLING TIMES, PREPARE FOR . . .

1. Initial resistance to our involvements (1-3)
 - a. Keeping Christ at the center of your crisis is the seedbed for creativity.
 - b. Leaders will be criticized. But there are always new ways to reach people with Jesus.
 - c. The gospel has always been meant to be a blessing to all the nations.
2. Evidential recounting of God's grace (4-17) (What do you do with initial resistance?)
 - a. Note what God has done (4-10) He made everything clean.
 - b. Note what God has commanded (11-12) We make no ethnic distinctions.
 - c. Note what God has arranged (13-14) He has prepared hearts in every nation.
 - d. Note what God has validated (15-17) God gives the Holy Spirit to all.
3. Eventual silence among those opposed (18)
 - a. Ethnic Jews wanted to force Gentile converts to be circumcised, but when they heard Peter's testimony (the Holy Spirit having fallen upon Gentiles), their criticism stopped.
 - b. By his grace and gifts, God will silence every critic.
 - c. We are called to bring Christ with us into the crisis, for God's glory.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: In what way have you been criticized because of ministry efforts/participation? What group of people do you most delight to share the gospel with? How has God gifted you uniquely to reach that group? If you have one, tell us a story about a convert.
2. Based on #1, above: Be honest with yourself and with us! Are you prone to criticizing new gospel initiatives? Maybe those which reach people whom you do not care for? Or initiatives in which you have no leadership or say? Or maybe initiatives which use new methods which you have never considered? How can we resist becoming critical, especially as we age?
3. Based on #1, above: How have you brought Christ with into a crisis? And how did he become a seedbed for creativity in the crisis? How were problems solved? How did ministry increase?
4. Based on #2, above: When God is in something, there are many stories to tell for his glory. Review the four "hammerheads" Peter uses to silence the critics (#2 above). When you see the hand of God at work, you proceed with confidence even in the face of critics. Has this ever happened to you? Tell us about it.
5. Based on #3, above: We don't know how long the critics are silenced, but we do know the issue about Gentile converts in the early church (and their relationship to the OT Law) will soon come up again. Speak about how devastating criticism has been in your life. And how healing times of silence (the absence of criticism) has been. How can you better tune your ears to hear only what God has to say about your gospel involvements?