

Read: Acts 11:1-18

See What God Sees

Acts 11:1 (GW)

The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that people who were not Jewish had accepted God's word.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

What do you see when you look in the mirror? Do you see a nose and eyes and teeth to be brushed? What do you see when you walk down the street? Do you see the sun shining, a towering tree trunk, and sky that is blue? What do you think God sees when he looks at us and looks around at everyone else in the world? Let's find out! But first, he hands us a pair of glasses so we can see what God sees.

In today's Word of God, Peter needed new glasses. He grew up around people who looked, talked, ate, and lived like him. "God wants people to be like me," he thought. "And if they aren't like me, why would I want to be friends with them or even go over to their house?" Peter needed new glasses to see clearly that God was changing things. God gave Peter new glasses to see an amazing sight—a big sheet from heaven with a mix of cows, sheep, and pigs in it. As he was looking at them, suddenly, his doorbell rang! There stood three guys. "Go with them," God said. So Peter did.

You know where they went? To the home of a total stranger who was the total opposite of Peter. His name was Cornelius. Cornelius gathered all his family and friends and invited Peter to tell them about Jesus. Finally, Peter saw things differently. It was okay to visit the home of someone different because God's love isn't based on your skin color, what your face looks like, or anything else your eye might see. What matters are people who respect and worship God, who want to do what is right, but know something's not right. They know they've done wrong, and it scares them. Cornelius and his family wanted to know how to get peace. So Peter told them, "You get peace through Jesus Christ."

We might look differently at people who don't look like us. Today, God is telling us that he doesn't care if you have the funniest personality or the most boring one. He doesn't care if all your neighbors are in awe of you or if your neighbors make fun of you behind your back. He doesn't care whether you are—in the eyes of the world—beautiful or ugly, whether you are African or Spanish, whether you are rich or poor.

The only thing that matters is to put on your new glasses and see what God sees—a person for whom Jesus died. The only thing that matters is to love them. Talk to them. Treat them like you want to be treated. Tell them the good news of peace through Jesus!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Peter saw a big white sheet from heaven with what mix of animals?
- There's a mix of people living in your home. What makes each of them different? Why is that okay?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Glasses help correct your vision. What did Peter need help seeing in today's devotion?
- When God looks at different people, what about them matters the most to him?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- How is judging ourselves on what other people see different from what God sees?
- Discuss with your family why demeaning another race or culture is not seeing things as God sees.

Closing Prayer:

Dear God, your word today was like putting on a new pair of glasses so I could see! Help me see others the way you see them—no different from me. Loved by you, make me a little bolder to love them too. Amen.