

BIBLE STUDY
May 3, 2021

THE SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 10: 25-26, 34-35, 44-48

John 15: 9-17

1 John 4: 7-10

1. Acts 10: 25-26, 34-35, 44-48

- **The Story of Cornelius and Peter:** This story is one of a series of stories in Acts that shows how the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles was part of the plan of God and directed by the Holy Spirit. Cornelius is a Roman soldier and a “God-fearer,” i.e., a Gentile who believes in the God of Israel and the Ten Commandments and attends the synagogue but does not become a Jew. Cornelius is a righteous man who uses his riches wisely by giving to the poor. An angel appears to him and tells him to send for Peter. Meanwhile, Peter has a vision of animals, reptiles and birds that were considered unclean by Jewish dietary laws, when told to eat, Peter protests that he has never eaten anything unclean. God tells him not to call profane what God has made clean. The Spirit tells Peter to receive the messengers of Cornelius and go with them without any qualms. Peter goes to the house of Cornelius---a Gentile house that Peter would have been forbidden to enter by Jewish laws—and instructs the people in the message of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit is poured out upon them, and they speak in tongues and glorify God. Peter says that they should be baptized if God has not withheld the Holy Spirit from them.

2. John 15: 9-17

- The continuation of the Farewell Discourse from the Last Supper. This passage follows immediately after the verses about the Vine and the Branches. This section speaks about the relationship between Jesus and us, his disciples.
- **V. 9:** Jesus loves us with the same love that the Father loves him. Jesus tells us to remain in his love. Remain/abide is one of Johns’ favorite words to express the relationship between Jesus and us. It is one of indwelling. Jesus and the Father are within us and their presence is long lasting and constant.
- **V. 10:** The way we remain or abide in Jesus is to obey his commandment which is to love one another as he loved us.
- **V. 11:** The knowledge of the depth of Jesus’ love for us brings us the joy of Jesus and makes our joy complete. Complete means whole and entire.
- **V. 12:** Jesus makes explicit what his commandment is: love one another as he has loved us.
- **V. 13:** Jesus will lay down his life for us on the cross. There is no greater love than this. A true friend would give his life for a friend. Jesus’ relationship with us is that of a true friend.

- **V. 14:** Friendship with Jesus is shown by obeying the commandment of love.
- **V. 15:** Our relationship with Jesus is one of a friend or family, not a slave or servant. We are friends of Jesus because he has taken us into his confidence and shared with us the secrets of the Kingdom of God.
- **V. 16:** This is all God's initiative. We could not know him unless he first revealed himself to us. Our relationship with God and Jesus is in response to his invitation. Every time we pray or are aware of the presence of God, it is because he first reached out to us. There is a purpose to this relationship. We have a mission to love as we have been loved. Love will bear fruit. If we are in tune with Jesus, then we will necessarily only ask for what is his will and desire for us. Therefore, everything we request will be granted.
- **V. 17:** The section ends with a repetition to love one another.

3. 1 John 4: 7-10

- **V. 7:** Love is the very nature of God. If we want to know God, then we must love. If we want to be a child of God, then it is necessary that we love one another.
- **V. 8:** If we do not love others, then we cannot say we love God. Love is the essence of God. God is love.
- **V. 9:** The sending of God's only Son, Jesus, is the proof of God's love for us. God gave of himself for us. God could have destroyed the world for its sin and failure to follow his commands, but he freely chose to save the world through love. Through the Son we receive life.
- **V. 10:** Love consists of this: that God loved us first. It is God's initiative that requires our response. It may feel as if we are reaching out to God but we could only call on him if he first reached out to us.
- **V. 11:** If God loves us so, then we must love one another. Love for each other is the only appropriate response to God's love.
- **V. 12:** We do not see God, but if we love one another he is truly present among us.