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Missions/ Cross-cultural Ministry

Acts 10

Missions is a major theme of the Bible, running from Genesis to Revelation. The desire to see the gospel penetrate every culture and nation is at the very heart of God. Yet there is a tendency in our churches and personal lives to place it at the bottom of our agenda, especially when other concerns press upon our already overcrowded schedule. There is an urgent need to regain the biblical vision to see "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11).

1. What keeps missions from being more important to most of us?
2. Read Acts 10:1-23. What do we learn about Cornelius in Acts 10:1-7?
3. Imagine yourself in Peter's situation, having been taught from childhood that certain animals were unclean and not to be eaten. How might you respond to his vision (Acts 10:9-16)?
4. Why do you suppose the vision occurred three times?
5. In what additional ways did God's will become clearer to Peter (Acts 10:17-23)?
6. Read Acts 10:23-48. How did Peter's vision break down his cultural resistance and prepare him for the meeting with Cornelius (Acts 10:23-29)?

7. The Jews viewed the Gentiles as unclean. What racial, cultural or economic groups have we tended to view with contempt?

What factors have led to this prejudice?

8. Acts 10:29 indicates that Peter still did not grasp why God sent him to Cornelius. What did Peter learn about the nature of the gospel through his encounter with this Gentile (Acts 10:30-35)?

9. How is Acts 10:36-43 a fulfillment of Christ's statement, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8)?

10. In spite of all that had happened, Peter and the Jews evidently assumed that the Gentiles would be second-class citizens. How did God convince them otherwise (Acts 10:44-48)?

11. Describe some of the cultural barriers around you.

12. How can you begin to penetrate these barriers with the gospel?

13. There are an estimated 4.5 billion people in the world today. At least 2.7 billion have never heard the gospel. Of this 2.7 billion an estimated 98% live outside of North America. Considering God's concern for the world and the present situation, what are the implications of these facts for: (a) the church worldwide and (b) your local church or fellowship group?

14. What are some ways you can become involved in the advancement of the gospel worldwide?

15. Spend time praying for missionaries you know.