



small groups

Discussion Guide



A Place at The Table

Acts 10

Ice Breaker

(5 minutes)

Betsy began by asking a question about meals. She said, "Have you ever had a meal that changed you?" Have you had that experience? If so, when was it and how did it do that?

Lesson Review

(40 minutes)

Betsy began her sermon by discussing the importance and value of sharing a meal with others. She referred back to history, where the ancient Celts believed there were "thin places," places where the distance between heaven and earth was so thin, that it is as though you could feel God. Betsy stated, "I think God does some of his best work around tables. In the Old Testament when God wanted to commemorate His rescuing of his people from slavery and wandering - he gave them a meal. In the New Testament when Jesus wanted his people to remember what he accomplished for them, he didn't give them a list of principals to memorize, He gave them a meal."

Betsy argued that “if we want to be good neighbors, if we want to help people experience the goodness and love of God – we need to make room for God in our lives...and we need to make room at our tables.”

Discuss

- What do you think about the idea of God’s love and grace showing up at dinner tables?
- Can you think of other Bible passages that talk about a dinner table?
- What are ways people can make room for God in their lives and at their tables?

Betsy told us the story of two individuals who met at a table: Peter and Cornelius. Betsy spent time unpacking Acts 10, which is the story of the centurion Cornelius’s conversion and Peter’s vision from God. In this incredible account, a centurion named Cornelius, who believed in God and prayed to him regularly, one day has his life interrupted by an angel of the Lord. The instructions from the angel were for Cornelius to invite a Jewish fisherman named Peter into his home. Peter has a vision from God regarding clean and unclean food, and through incredible circumstances, finds himself standing in Cornelius’s house with the opportunity to share the good news of God with those in the house.

Read Acts 10 and then Discuss

- How do you think Cornelius and Peter both reacted to God’s interruptions into their lives?
- God could have told Cornelius about Jesus through the angel, but he doesn’t. Why do you think that is? And why did God want Cornelius and Peter to meet?
- Why was Peter’s vision hard for him to understand and accept? What was the significance of this vision?
- How did Cornelius and Peter both make space in their lives and at their tables for each other?

Application

(15 minutes)

Betsy challenged us to make space for God in our lives, and to make space for others at our tables – even those who are different than us.

- Who is around your table? Who is missing from your table that you need to invite?
- Betsy listed her group of friends and how each one has challenged her. Could you list a group of people who do that for you? Do you have a group inside the church who can do that and a group outside the church that can do that?
- What is there to gain from truly engaging with people uniquely different from us?

On Tuesday evening, August 4, from 7:30pm-9pm in the Alcove, IBC will be hosting a coffee/dessert night to discuss "Next Steps in Neighboring." This interactive follow up to our recent series on "Good Neighbors" will further give you the chance to discuss the Biblical basis for neighboring, as well as review key points from sermons and also additional insights on application from other publications on this topic. This time will help you think through what it means, both in theory and in practice, to love your neighbors as yourself. Simply RSVP via e-mail to bmckinney@irvingbible.org to sign up and we'll see you on August 4.

