

Dgroup Discussion Guide for January 12, 2020

Truth that Matters Most: Share It!

Scripture: Acts 10:38-43

The resurrection is so important to our salvation story; without it, we are all just wasting our time following Christ if he did not rise from the grave. We may consider many different facts about life as important but the standard of the importance of truth is its relevance and its impact in people's lives. What do you think is the most important truth that you and I need to know? THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS is the most important TRUTH! He made sure the world had no excuse if we ignore this truth – after all the resurrection is celebrated worldwide!

Among the 1st century believers, there's one primary message: JESUS DIED and ROSE AGAIN. The first message preached (Acts 2:23, and in succession 3:15, 3:26, 4:10, 4:33, 5:30) is on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the same message that the apostles have carried with them as they began working on the foundations of the church preaching the good news of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

In this chapter in Acts, we will discover the answer to the question: Can a GOOD PERSON enter heaven without Christ? Let's study the life of Cornelius and the great mission God had given to Peter, and discover how the truth that matters changed the lives of those who heard the gospel.

1. THE PREPARATIO OF CEORNELIUS

Cornelius was a centurion, a commander of 100 soldiers of the most elite army during that time. He must have been a level-headed fellow, a peacekeeper. He was also a devout man who sincerely feared God and was generous even to the Jews. He was a good man, and logically many of us will say "a good man deserves to go to heaven". However, we see from Scripture that being good or doing good is not enough. We can't enter heaven without our sins being forgiven by God and only Christ's death on the cross can pay for the sins of the world (1 Peter 3:18)

God notices, hears, and knows (v3-4) the prayers of our hearts. As Cornelius was praying, a vision was given to him to send for Peter (v5-6) who was in Joppa at that time. Here we learn about God's own heart; how He takes the initiative to reach out to people who have yet to know Him fully. Cornelius was a good man, but being good doesn't solve the problem of sin. He needed to learn about what Jesus Christ did on the cross. He needed someone to tell him about the TRUTH THAT MATTERS MOST.

2. THE MESSAGE TO PETER

While all of these were happening, God was simultaneously working in the heart and mind of Peter. His message to Peter through a vision was perplexing, but Peter eventually figured out what it meant. God wanted him to reach out to a gentile, a Roman centurion, his family and friends.

This mission given to Peter will sound familiar to us if we take the central command of the book of Acts to heart (Acts 1:8 be WITNESSES). You have family members or friends who don't know the Lord yet ... like Peter, you are given the responsibility to share the truth that matters most!

3. PETER AND CORNELIUS

The pinnacle of the story was when Peter met Cornelius and was welcomed to his house, where an audience and Cornelius were waiting for Peter's message from God. Cornelius even fell at Peter's feet to worship him, to which Peter responded with all humility, "Stand up; I too am just a man". (Acts 10:25-26)

Peter took the opportunity to speak to Cornelius' household. He first explained the prejudice of Jews against Gentiles, and how God has corrected this attitude by showing him that he is not in a position to call any man unholy or unclean.

Peter then preached the gospel to his Gentile audience (10:34-43). Peter emphasized that through Jesus, everyone who believes in Him receives FORGIVENESS OF SINS – the greatest need of all mankind.

Because of Jesus, you can face the many disappointments of life, and because He is RISEN, you can look forward to an amazing eternal life with HIM!

Do you know the truth that matters most? Do you know that if you have Jesus, you have everything, but if you don't have Jesus, you have nothing?

May we all be reminded of the great future we have made possible because of Him who died and rose again. Because Jesus is alive, we can face our problems and we have a greater story to tell!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who can you relate to most? Are you like the Roman centurion, doing good and devout, yet in great need of a personal encounter with Jesus? Or are you like Peter, who knows the truth, and is given a mission to share the truth that matters most to others?
2. Now that you know that God works behind the scenes, is there anything that stops you from sharing the truth that matters most to others? Surrender these to God and ask Him to empower you as He did Peter?
3. Think of people closest to you who need to hear the most important truth. Pray for fertile hearts and an opportunity to share the truth that matters to these people.