**Unstoppable - wk 17 – Just the Facts**

**Acts is Jesus: The Sequel. Luke Vol 2 – The “what now?”**

**Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

**What follows is supernatural growth and intense persecution. Yet they are unstoppable.**

**It’s been about 10 yrs since Jesus’ resurrection and ascension.**

**Last week a shocking an unexpected event takes place**

**A gentile uncircumcised, Roman centurion soldier, his family and friends receive the gospel of Jesus and filled w/the HS.**

**In their view the worst of the worst – the unsavable.**

**It was a shock to Peter who preached to them, and now he has to explain it to other Apostles and believers. What will they think?**

**Acts 11:1 The apostles and the believers (Jewish / circumcised) throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles (not Jewish / uncircumcised) also had received the word of God.**

**The news traveled to Jerusalem where some of the other apostles and believers were. This did not sit well.**

**(Happened in Caesarea, but staying in Joppa ) 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, (2 day walk from Joppa) the circumcised believers criticized him 3 and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.” (Holding tight to Jewish traditions - offended - you were w/ pigs.)**

**They were upset about what Peter did – instead of what God did.**

**They were saved / redeemed, and their issue was you sat in their house and ate with them? (Explain sitting in home in their culture)**

**Christians sometimes still do the same thing, explain. You went where? You ate with who? Deep Elem…**

**BTW – it is good to remember what were you like before Jesus? How were you treated? Who reached out to you.**

**\*Side note – if you were the same as you are today… you might still need Jesus.**

**Last wk we unpacked the whole event and its significance. But this week are going to talk about how Peter dealt with the initial criticism.**

**(Verse 18 tells us how it turned out…) Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God… (How did they get there? How was it turned around?)**

**(Let’s go back to how…) Acts 10:4 Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story: (He gives a clear account of the events)**

**Peter’s Approach to Criticism (Peter’s approach to confrontation)**

**1. He was not argumentative**

**Didn’t argue – just told them what happened. The whole story.**

**He was not defensive or aggressive in his response.**

**Often our immediate response is defensive - Proverbs 29:11 - A fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back.**

**Peter tells them what the LORD did – every detail. Luke repeats it 3X. He really wants the readers to know exactly what happened. This was extremely importance.**

**Acts 11:5 “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was. 6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds. 7 Then I heard a voice telling me, ‘Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.’ 8 “I replied, ‘Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ (Explain unclean – bottom feeders / trash eaters)**

**2. He was humble enough to know he doesn’t know everything**

**I said, “Surely not, Lord!” Peter was transparent about his own challenges to believe this too – I am learning too.**

**He did not come across as a know it all on the issue. Humble enough to say I don’t know I am learning too.**

**Colossians 3:12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience.**

**Ephesians 4:1** **As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. 2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. 3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.**

**In confrontation - Learning to be humble, gentle, and teachable – is intentional that become habit.**

**Acts 11:9 “The voice spoke from heaven a second time, ‘Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.’ 10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again. (Took 3X for Peter to realize it was not about food)**

**The sheet in a way represents the church of Jesus - body of Christ. When the LORD redeems someone they are in the fold.**

**11:11 “Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying. (God’s timing is always right on time) 12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, (all came to Jerusalem to testify of the event) and we entered the man’s house. 13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. 14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’**

**15 “As I began to speak, (Ch10 - Peter gave the full gospel message of Jesus) the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. (Acts 2)**

**They were not saved because they heard the gospel, they were saved because they believed the gospel. We spent a lot of time on this last week. The meaning of this event was unpacked.**

**16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ 17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”**

**3. He based his perspective on the Word of God**

**He went back to the words of Jesus. He did not say - I thought it was reasonable that they would get it too.**

**He remembered what Jesus said. Jesus determines the answers - not feelings, emotions, or reason.**

**We like to base decisions on pros and cons lists, feelings and opinion - but what does Jesus? What does the Bible say?**

**Acts 11:17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”**

**4. He understood the ultimate sovereign authority of God**

**At the end of the day – it didn’t really matter what he thought or felt anyways – God gets to decide how His creation will live.**

**“Who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”**

**Isaiah 14:27 The LORD of Heaven’s Armies has spoken— who can change his plans? When his hand is raised, who can stop him?”**

**Who can stop the LORD almighty? No one.**

* **We can’t stop or release what he intends to do.**

**We can’t limit or hold God hostage. He does as he wills.**

**Psalm 135:6 The LORD does all that pleases Him in the heavens and on the earth, in the seas and in all their depths.**

* **We don’t get to decide what is right and wrong if God has clearly spoken on the issue.**

**Do you think you can change God or stand in his way?**

**Whether we want to believe this or not – it really doesn’t matter – God get’s what he wants. Peter knew this.**

**Acts 11:18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.” (KJV – Well then, even gentiles…)**

**Notice “God has granted repentance” Is it a command and a gift? YES - God enables / grants their repentance. They were called by God, enabled by God, and turned to God.**

**The response to lives touched and made new - Praise God!**

**They embraced this. They knew Jesus was doing just what He said… to the ends of the earth is happening right now.**

**Psalm 86:8** **Among the gods (false / fake so called gods) there is none like you, LORD; no deeds can compare with yours. 9 All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, LORD; they will bring glory to your name. 10 For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God. (There is no other!)**

**But we will find out later, the objections were not over.**

**The Rest of the Story – Some Highlights**

**\*\* Faith in the good news of Jesus is the only way to salvation**

**The manifestation of the HS was to testify that Jesus is available to every nationality.**

**Acts 10:34 Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35 but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.**

**What is right? It’s what he says next in Acts 10:43 (John 6:28) – you must believe (faith) in the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

**Acts 16:30 He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” 31 They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved - you and your household.**

**The point was this - Uncircumcised gentiles – can be saved. What that means is OT laws are not required to be right w/ God! Faith in Jesus is!**

**Paul wrote about this later – Galatians 3:26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

**God says it. This changes everything!! Call out to Jesus!! Believe in the work and person of Jesus by faith.**

**\*\* When God says you’re clean – You’re clean**

**Acts 10:15, 11:9 “Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean.” Peter’s vision – If God says they are clean – they are clean.**

**This was in relation to gentiles who believe – but this is true for anyone God has made clean. If you are born-again, you’re clean. The old is passed away – it’s a new day! The old life is gone!**

**If God says you are clean – you are clean!**

**\*\* We must be teachable from leaders and peers**

**They listened and received what Peter said. Not only the other believers (Peter was their authority) but also the other apostles.**

**Peter’s friend’s (the other Apostles) were open and ready to accept this. God was working on them too. Showed maturity.**

**Can you receive from peers and those under you?**

**Are you so prideful you can only learn from those “better” / “smarter” than you.**

**\*\* Traditions, methods, and rituals change – truth does not change.**

**Hold loosely to traditions – hold tightly to truth.**

**Hold loosely to - order of praise, service style, music, methods, songs, dress, how it looks, our preference and things that have worked for us. Tradition can be wonderful, and it can be bondage.**

**These things are not the truth they are tools - don’t make them rules. Keep your eyes on the unmovable gospel of Jesus – and be flexible in the rest.**

**Here is one of the ways you can know it is tradition over truth:**

**Does it translate into every culture? Prosperity, healing, music, etc.**

**I want to end with the words of Jesus on this.**

**John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 40 For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.”**