

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for February 23, 2014**

**The Ministry by Peter to the Jerusalem Church**  
**Acts 11:1-18**

The report of the gospel coming to the Gentiles (Acts 10) spread to Judea, and the significance of this event was so great that Luke repeated many of the details.

**1. The rebuke of the Jerusalem believers (11:1-3)**

“Those who were circumcised” were the Jewish believers in Christ who were more serious about the Old Testament Law.

Much like Peter himself (cf. Acts 10:14), the Jewish believers were predisposed to reject any association of Jews with Gentiles on moral grounds.

**2. The report of Peter (11:4-17)**

a. The record of Christ’s ministry to Peter in Joppa (11:4-10)

The report by Peter of the events in Joppa and Caesarea was given in “an orderly sequence” in order to accurately explain what really happened. This report is from an eyewitness, an apostle, verified by six brethren (11:12), and validated by the speaking in tongues (10:46).

Peter provided a specific account of his revelation from Christ. The word-for-word retelling of this event demonstrates its importance.

b. The record of Christ’s ministry through Peter in Caesarea (11:11-14)

Peter provided the general description of his visit to Caesarea.

Events can be accurately reported with either a specific or a general description.

c. The reception of Christ’s Spirit by the Gentiles (11:15)

The phrase “at the beginning” refers to the beginning of the church in Acts 2:1-13. It is the baptism with the Holy Spirit that brings us together into one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-13). The body, with Christ as the head, is the church (Colossians 1:18).

The reason this “beginning” is important is because the giving of the Spirit marked the beginning of the New Covenant (2 Corinthians 3:3-6; Hebrews 8:7-13), which replaced the Law of Moses.

d. The remembrance of Christ’s word by Peter (11:16-17)

The quote of Jesus was from Acts 1:5 and was rooted in the word of John the Baptist in Luke 3:16. The proof of the Holy Spirit coming to the Gentiles was not just their experience but was the Scripture.

The critical word here is “same,” demonstrating the equality of the Jews and Gentiles before God. This work of God joined the two groups (Ephesians 2:11-16).

### **3. The response of the Jerusalem believers (11:18)**

The words of Peter were wholeheartedly accepted with praise to God. We also must be willing to lay aside our preconceived bias and respond to the word of God.

This event would not only unite the Jews and Gentiles in the church, it would forever split the Jewish believers from their people. It would take the church more time to appreciate the full ramifications of this event (cf. Acts 15; Galatians 2:11-14).

God was glorified by the Jerusalem believers because of their realization that He granted salvation to the Gentiles.

May we respond with praise for the fact that God has granted to all types of people the repentance that leads to life.