

## **Simon Says, Jesus Says Small Group Guide**

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Do you have any "unexpected" friendships in your life? Explain.
2. What is one thing that has helped you persevere in 2020?

**Read the following passage:** Acts 10:9-23.

Peter's life is a powerful reminder that overcoming cultural barriers and a long history of separation, mistrust, and oppression is not easy, even for people who genuinely want to follow Jesus. Acts 10 was not the first time that Peter had been challenged on the subjects of food laws (Mark 7:17-23), forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-22), and God's desire for a multiethnic people (Acts 1:6-8). Even so, Peter needed to see the vision three times before he was ready to receive the representatives sent by Cornelius. And after this incredible encounter with Cornelius, it was not long before Peter experienced a confrontation with Paul around the topic of food laws, table fellowship, and a multiethnic church (Galatians 2:11-13). Building a multiethnic church requires perseverance.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. Why do you think eating with Gentiles was a challenge for Peter and many other Jewish believers? Why do you think Paul thought it so important for Jews and Gentiles to engage in table fellowship with one another (instead of just eating separately)?
2. What are some of the reasons why keeping within our own racial, ethnic, or cultural groups often feels easier? What can help us push past the obstacles and persevere in pursuing relationships across racial and ethnic boundaries?
3. Peter's example reminds us that we are almost surely going to make mistakes or offend our brothers and sisters as we pursue multiethnic communities together. How should we respond when this happens? How can the core biblical practices of confession, repentance, and forgiveness help us along the way?
4. How was God involved in bringing about this key moment that ultimately transpired between Cornelius's household and Peter's group? How should that encourage us in our pursuit of a multiethnic community? What can we do to be more attentive to the Holy Spirit as we build multiethnic churches?
5. Read Acts 11:1-4. Have you experienced resistance (whether subtle or overt) from family members or others of your same race, ethnicity, or culture when you have pursued relationships across racial, ethnic, or cultural boundaries? Explain. If so, how have you responded?

6. What did Peter learn through his experience with Cornelius? Have you seen any of your own perspectives grow or change as you have connected with people from other races, ethnicities, or cultures?

**Pray**