

## GBC Discipleship RESOURCE



# Discerning the Invitation of God Together

## Week 03 | Prepare. Patterns. Partner (Acts 11:1-18)

*For a brief overview of why (and how) to engage in each of these practices, you can read the **Guideline For Growing** on our website.*

<https://www.gymeabaptist.org.au/growing/pages/guideline-for-growing>

## What is a Discipleship Menu?

A discipleship menu is a selection of discipleship activities to engage in to continue the conversation that begins on Sunday throughout the week. The aim is to extend our interaction as a community of faith around activities that help us follow Jesus every single day. The activities vary from week to week (though there are some standard activities) and you are encouraged to do as many as you find helpful (like a menu; you don't need to eat everything on it!). Do them on your own (God and you), with a couple of friends (you and a few), or in a Life Group (you and a crew). The important thing is to do a few!

# GBC Sermon Podcast and The Big 3 Podcast

Don't forget you can review this week's sermon on the GBC Sermon Podcast. The sermon is usually uploaded by Monday afternoon. You can also listen in to the Big 3 podcast; a weekly podcast where Matt, Jess, and Marc sit down and continue the conversation by engaging in three big questions raised by the congregation about the sermon. The Big 3 comes out on Wednesdays.

## Overview

In one of the most critical turning points in all Scripture, Cornelius and his family receive the Holy Spirit, indicating that even the Gentiles (non-Jews) are part of God's plan of salvation in Jesus! This remarkable divine activity, however, was not easily integrated into the believers' understanding of what God was doing. In Acts 11, Luke (the author of Acts) retells the story a second time; highlighting Peter's process of discerning what God was doing.

What we learn from Peter's process is that he had an attitude of preparedness, identified patterns of God's activity, and partnered with others to discern that God had, indeed, saved the Gentiles!

## Passages to Read

We believe that the Word of God is living and active and that reading and reflecting on it is one way we encounter God. As you read, we encourage people to ask a set of simple questions: What stands out to you? What questions do you have? What is the invitation of God to you? Who can you tell?

The readings selected this week have all been chosen because of the insights they provide about having an attitude of preparedness for God's

work. As you read them, consider how the practices these passages imply would prepare our hearts to hear from God.

- Psalms 16 and 26
- Colossians 4:2-6
- John 15:1-4
- Acts 13:1-3
- Philippians 4:4-9

## Questions to Reflect on

These questions can be used as the basis of a small group discussion or as journal questions. As with the rest of this menu, use the questions that are most useful for you or your crew.

1. Roxane encouraged us to consider the ways in which God has spoken to us in the past as one way to discern what God may be doing in the present. What patterns can you discern in your relationship with God?
2. Consider the same question, but with a wider perspective; how would you identify the work of God? (e.g., For Peter it was that the Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles just as it had been on the Jewish believers.)
3. What questions would you ask of someone else to help them identify the work of God?
4. What is the value of having others you can speak to about identifying the work of God?

## A Prayer to Pray

These are the areas of prayer that were listed in The Long Read for our discernment process as a congregation. Commit to pray through these.

You may also want to choose one to focus on each day and practice what is known as "breath prayer" where we pray a short prayer (one breath long) as often as it is brought to mind. Convert one of these prayers into a one sentence prayer and commit to praying it for that day. Repeat as often as you want. E.g., Lord Jesus, align our hearts to your heart. Amen.

- Thanks for the ways our community of faith has responded to God's invitation in the past.
- Thanks for God's faithfulness to our community of faith.
- That God would move our hearts for his purposes and plans.
- That God would fulfill his word to us to build his church and make all things new.
- That we would fulfill our mission, vision, and purpose.
- That we would genuinely be indifferent; open to hear God's "now" invitation.
- For the appointment of the Discernment Group.
- For our Day of Discernment on Saturday September 17; that we would be unified and truly see God at work in this process.