

Where's Your Chair?

Acts 11 1-18



Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;
young men and women, old and young together; let them praise the name of the
Lord.

Psalm 148:11-12

Praising:

People and realms of every
tongue
dwell on his love with sweetest
song,
and infant voices shall proclaim
their early blessings on his name.

Reading:

Acts 11:1-18

Peter makes his defence to the
Church

The baptism of Gentiles requires an explanation. The Jewish born believers in Jerusalem need to make the same spiritual voyage of discovery as Peter. Peter's recap of what had happened, first with his private vision and then his encounter with Cornelius, is taken at face value by those listening. In the honesty and directness of Peter's version of events, it's as though Peter

himself was shocked at God giving the same gift of the Spirit to non-Jews as well as to Jews. But it also seems as though this was a genuine theological question for the Church in Jerusalem. The fact that Peter doesn't need to go to great lengths to persuade them would suggest that they got the answer they had been hoping for. Their own experience of Christ appears to have opened their hearts rather than closed them.

Listening:

Praying:

By your Spirit Lord, give us more and more love every day

- to receive and embrace those who are in any way different
- to welcome and include those whom other people dismiss
- to persist and bite our tongues with those we find difficult

Father: teach me the lesson that you will only ever enlarge my capacity for love, never diminish it. And when I feel the supply running short, turn me back on your grace, again and again.
Amen

Doing:

Monday, 16 May 2016