



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Missions: Overcoming Barriers

SPEAKER Ps Ng Hua Ken

THEME Critical Concerns of Our Times

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ gave all His disciples a command, what we now know as the Great Commission, to reach individuals, families, communities, people groups, and the nations through the worldwide proclamation of the Gospel.

As a former missionary to unreached people groups, Ps Hua Ken shared about his unique first-hand experience of partnering God in missions. We hear of how God shaped his views through the writings and life of Gladys Aylward, a missionary to China, to the point of his personal willing surrender unto God. The question he asked of all of us is this: “What would qualify us to be missionaries for God?” To answer this question, Ps Hua Ken explores the barriers Apostle Peter faced in his missionary journey in Acts 10 and how God overcame them and gave Peter the qualifications to be His instrument.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO MISSIONS- Acts 10

Ethnic divides were deeply ingrained in first-century Israel. Jewish believers like Peter thought of themselves as God’s favoured people. It was unlawful for them to interact with Gentiles, or non-Jews, in any manner. Gentiles were considered unclean because they were not circumcised and did not follow the law of Moses. However, God was about to set Peter up as His chosen mouthpiece to bring the first Gentiles into His Kingdom. Acts 10:9-10 sets the scene at noon where Peter, while praying, falls into a trance.

In his trance, Peter saw heaven open and something like a large sheet was let down to earth by its four corners. It contained *all kinds* of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds (v11-12). “All kinds” is significant. In Leviticus 11, God gave His people a list of clean and unclean creatures to eat and avoid. The Jews were forbidden to eat unclean creatures, and the collection of creatures Peter saw was clearly made up of many that were unclean.

When God called Peter to “rise, kill and eat”, Peter’s outright refusal is perfectly sound and proper. But he was wrong. God, at that very moment, was in the act of teaching Peter the basics of the Gospel – that it was extended “to them that are far off”, which plainly includes the Gentiles. “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean (v15)”, God told Peter.

Verse 16 states that this whole scene was done thrice. The purpose of this, of course, was to emphasise it.

In the meantime, God sent an angel to Cornelius, a Gentile, to seek Peter out and bring him home (v4-6). Cornelius' men arrived at the house Peter was lodging at, just as Peter was pondering over the vision he had received. God reassured Peter that he could go with these men without hesitation (v17-20). Peter shared with Cornelius and all who were in his home what they needed to do to be saved (v34-43). The Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the message (v44). When Peter saw that the Holy Spirit was poured out over the Gentiles, he was finally able to understand that the Gentiles too could receive the Gospel without being a Jew or circumcised.

Why wasn't this clearly communicated to Peter through an angel? That would have saved Peter some time! But it is because God has committed the task of sharing the Gospel to His disciples, the Church. It is *our* responsibility. It was not an angel, but it was Peter who told Cornelius what he had to do to be saved.

Like Peter, God has given us this responsibility to share the Gospel to those near and far. The Gospel of Jesus Christ has been extended to ALL. There is not a single person, or people group, who is excluded. It is our mission as the Church of Jesus Christ and we can be assured that God will prepare us, as He did for Peter.

Ps Hua Ken shared the unique obstacles he faced in his missionary journey in a cross-cultural environment. From conflict within his team to adjusting to an entirely different culture and language. It was totally different from the romanticised notion of a missionary's life that many people have. At his lowest point, filled with doubt and discouragement, God invited Ps Hua Ken to surrender his life to Him afresh. The key then to overcoming any barriers to God's mission, is a willingness to surrender to God as He prepares you, followed by an obedience to what God has called you to do.

QUESTIONS

1. What do you think qualifies a person to be a missionary for God? How do you think God prepares a person to be a missionary for Him?

2. What barriers or obstacles do you think your cell group faces in carrying out the mission to share the Gospel?

3. Are you willing to surrender these barriers to God today and say yes to Him? Share what God is asking you to do specifically.