



Sermon Series: Acts
Sermon Title: Kill and Eat
Date: 8/3/2025

Acts 10:9–23

Big Idea: God's freedoms fuel cultural change.

Seventy years ago, our society had cultural norms that were dramatically different from today's. While some shifts in culture can feel threatening, Acts 10 teaches that some cultural changes are not only good, they are God-initiated. This passage shows how God can fuel freedom that redefines how we worship, whom we include, and how we love.

1. Freedom Through Obedience (Acts 10:9–16)

Peter was praying on a rooftop when he received a vision from God. In it, a sheet descended from heaven, full of animals considered unclean according to Jewish dietary laws (Leviticus 11). God commanded Peter to “kill and eat,” but Peter resisted. His response was based on religious tradition, centuries of defining clean and unclean foods. However, God replied, “What God has made clean, do not call common.”

This wasn't just a dietary correction; it was a spiritual shift. Jesus had already taught that what enters a person does not defile them (Mark 7:18-19). The vision wasn't just about food; it was about freedom. Peter was being called to live in the spiritual freedom Christ had already made possible. But old habits, even religious ones, die hard. His struggle reminds us that obedience to God sometimes means abandoning what we've always known, even when it's deeply ingrained.

2. Freedom of a New Community Together (Acts 10:17–20)

While Peter was still puzzling over the vision, messengers from Cornelius arrived. They had traveled overnight to reach him at exactly the time God was speaking. The Holy Spirit told Peter not to hesitate to go with them, because they had been sent by God.

This moment was a radical shift in how community was understood. These men were Gentiles; outsiders, considered unclean by Jewish standards.

Even they knew this, as evidenced by their respectful posture at the gate. But God's command was clear. Peter was to go with them, and in doing so, God was building a new kind of community. From people, tribes, nations, to One people, One God, One salvation in Jesus. One new community - Yahweh's Kingdom.

Peter's obedience here reveals the boundaries of who can belong to the family of God. The Holy Spirit builds bridges across cultures and backgrounds, uniting people who otherwise would never sit at the same table. There are no racial or cultural hurdles; no one is "unclean" - people are either followers of Jesus or what we call Lost - needing you and me to show them the way.

3. Freedom to Share Life With Others (Acts 10:21-23)

Peter didn't just go with the Gentile messengers; he welcomed them in. He hosted them, breaking a major cultural barrier. Jews did not invite Gentiles into their homes. Gentiles were outsiders, and Roman soldiers were part of the oppressive occupying force. But Peter responded with God-inspired hospitality.

This wasn't just politeness; it was a reflection of the kingdom of God. Jesus regularly ate with outcasts, touched the unclean, and forgave the rejected. Peter's actions follow that same Spirit-led model: share life, open your table, break the mold.

Hospitality becomes a vehicle for salvation. When we embrace people who don't look, think, or live like us, we reflect the heart of God. The church is not just a place of belief, it's a culture of belonging. And this radical hospitality is what God uses to bring others into His family.

God redefines what is clean, who belongs, and how we live in community. That freedom is not just theological, it's deeply practical. It affects our meals, our relationships, and our assumptions. Obedience to the Holy Spirit will often take us into places that are unfamiliar and uncomfortable, but it always leads to deeper love and wider community.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. In what areas of your life are you holding onto “clean vs. unclean” thinking that Jesus has already made obsolete?**
- 2. How does Peter’s struggle to embrace spiritual freedom mirror our own struggles today?**
- 3. What does Acts 10:17–20 teach us about divine timing and God’s orchestration of human events?**
- 4. How might God be calling you to expand your definition of Christian community?**
- 5. Who might be at your “gate” right now - someone outside your normal circle waiting for an invitation to belong?**