



## MISSIONS

### SESSION 5: CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS



#### IN THIS SESSION

This Session will examine the realities and challenges of differing cultures in missions. In doing so, we will discover some helpful considerations in cross-cultural evangelism that consider our audience but maintain the non-negotiables of the gospel.



#### KEY PASSAGES

- **Acts 11:15-18** <sup>15</sup> “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on [Cornelius and his household] as he had come on us at the beginning. <sup>16</sup> Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ <sup>17</sup> So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”
- **Galatians 3:7-9** <sup>7</sup> Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” <sup>9</sup> So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.



#### DISCUSS

- As we asked at the end of the Session, what is the best way to assess cultural practices in light of spiritual realities? How does the gospel—the “good news” of God’s radical grace that brings us into a missional partnership with him—inform our view on what people must “do” to be considered followers of Jesus? Brainstorm some principles you could have in place that would help you operate in this way.
- What cultural assumptions might you have regarding the essentials of the gospel that are not really core parts of its message at all? In other words, what do you tend to require of people that the gospel does not? Be encouraged to share honestly with the person or group with which you are walking through this Study and invite feedback on opportunities to think differently.
- Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. What was the motivation behind Paul’s concern to avoid cultural practices from leeching onto the gospel? Did Paul abandon cultural concepts completely or did he leverage the reality of culture to further benefit his mission? How might you take a similar approach as you think about the advantages of viewing different cultures as a means to advance the gospel?



#### PRAY

Pray that the Holy Spirit would convict you in the areas where cultural norms have been unnecessarily appended to the gospel. Invite God to transform your perspective of the usefulness of culture in reaching people for Christ and begin to thank him for the opportunity to conform to the image of Jesus in this way!