

“Common Holiness”
 5 November 2017
 Little Trinity Anglican Church, Toronto

Discussion Questions
 (take as many as you want, in any order)

Read Acts 10 and Matthew 15.1-20 (esp. vv.1-3, 10-11, 17-20)

1. Why did the sermon suggest that most of us at Little T can trace our being in church on Sunday back to God’s message to Peter in Acts 10.15? How do you feel about this idea? Does the fact that the church is now majority Gentile affect how we (/you) think about the Jewishness of Jesus, his first disciples, and the early church?

2. The ESV translation of the Bible we generally use at Little T translates Acts 10.15 as “what I have made clean, do not call common (Greek: *koinoô*)”. This is a good translation decision – the word is the same as in Acts 4.32 – that draws the connection to the paired binaries of holy/common and clean/unclean in the Jewish law (see Leviticus 10.10, also Ezekiel 22.26, 42.20, 44.23). But other versions translate “common” differently. How does your Bible translate Acts 10.15? What’s at stake in this translation decision?

(Cf. Lev 10.10)

CLEAN
 (PURE, GOOD)
 |
 vs.
 |
UNCLEAN
 (IMPURE, BAD)

HOLY (SET APART FOR GOD)	vs.	COMMON (GENERAL USE, i.e., MOST THINGS)
Temple and ritual instruments, when properly used		Law-abiding Jewish people Everyday objects uncontaminated by something unclean
Rare: e.g., ritual instruments used for purification, which took on the impurity of the thing they were cleaning		Some animals (e.g., pigs) Jews who came in contact with those animals, until purified Gentiles

3. What has God made clean? How has God cleansed it? What does it mean not to call “common” that which God has made clean?
4. Does God’s cleansing everything in Jesus (cf. Col 1.20) automatically make everything holy? Or an occasion for holiness? How do we make something holy? What does it look like to live a life where we are giving everything to God? In your mind’s eye, walk through your typical day. What’s different in how you think/act/feel if nothing is “common”? How do we live “sacramentally”?
5. The sermon suggests that the sacraments (baptism and Eucharist), are material means of God’s grace – through common, created things (water, bread, wine) we receive, by faith, the benefit of Jesus’ cleansing sacrifice. Did this affect how you think about baptism and Eucharist? What do baptism and Eucharist mean to you?