

CHAPTER 28  
New Beginnings

*Journal your answers to these questions as you read through the chapter this week. You may wish to read one day and journal the next, or spread the questions over the whole week.*

1. Just fifty days earlier Peter denied Christ and cowered in fear and shame. Now we find Peter preaching in the first megachurch, facing down Jewish religious leaders, and noticeably full of courage. What factors accounted for this change?
2. What was the new church doing to build relationships and to make disciples in Jerusalem (p. 392, 395)? How can our church do the same?
3. How did early Christians regard material possessions (p. 395)? What should be the role of the church in helping the poor today?
4. Why do you suppose the early believers “enjoyed the favor of all the people” (p. 392) and “were highly regarded by the people” (p. 395)? How critical is this to the mission of the church?
5. When ordered by the Sanhedrin to discontinue teaching and preaching in the name of Jesus, Peter answered, “We must obey God rather than human beings!” (p. 396). He was also willing to accept the consequences of his stance. Yet Christians are also called to respect and to submit to governmental authorities (Rom. 13:1-7). When do you think it is okay for Christians to resist authority and when is it not?
6. Cornelius’ conversion along with his household dramatically changed the direction of the church. What began as a Jewish messianic movement would now cross ethnic barriers. Consider the ethnic and racial barriers that exist in the Church today. What are some ways that our church can promote greater racial and ethnic integration and harmony in the church locally? Globally? Personally?
7. What did you learn about the relationship between the Holy Spirit and believers from this chapter of The Story? What does this mean for you?