

Living out your faith Pt 13

Acts 10:1-48

- Chapter 10 is a pivotal chapter in the book of Acts, it is where the salvation of the Gentiles is recorded. Why is this so important? Because, up to this point the door of faith was primarily opened to the Jews. But we began to see the winds of change starting in chapter 8 when Philip went to Samaria and preached the gospel and a great revival broke out that caused the church to send Peter and John. There were isolated times when a Gentile would have their spiritual eyes opened and begin to follow the true and living God, but as a whole Gentiles weren't vital members of the church. All of this is about to change starting here in chapter 10.

V1-16

- Just as God spoke to Saul and Ananias through separate visions about how they were to play vital parts in each other lives; God will speak to Cornelius and Peter in preparation for this momentous event. Cornelius' vision is described – first we're told he was a centurion – a Roman officer in charge of one hundred soldiers in the Italian regiment that consisted of six-hundred soldiers. We're also told that he was both devout and God fearing. Evidently he attended the synagogue but he wasn't a full fledged proselyte of Judaism for he hadn't yet been circumcised (verse 11:3). At three o'clock in the afternoon, while he was in prayer, the Lord approaches Cornelius by means of an Angel who in Verse 30 Cornelius referred to as "a man in shining clothes". Cornelius responds to the Angel by asking "what is it lord" verses 4-6 are very interesting indeed.
- Instead of the Angel telling Cornelius what he needed to do he instructs him about who it was – Peter, and where he was – by the sea, that will lead him into a right relationship with God. Angels can deliver God's messages to lost men but they cannot preach the gospel to them (**Luke 2:8-15**). Preaching the gospel is our privilege and responsibility (**1 Peter 1:12**). Angels are amazed how salvation, being a divine work of grace, which God has chosen to work through human channels. Cornelius calls two servants and a faithful soldier and sends them to Joppa to get Peter. Question: who else was in Joppa that God called to preach to the Gentiles? Answer: Jonah. Lastly, although Cornelius was a religious man, a God fearing man, and a good man, he was still a lost man who needed to hear the gospel from Peter.
- You can be sincere about what you believe, and committed to its applications, and yet you will still end up in a lake of fire suffering for all eternity. It's not sincerity, good character, or good works that get you into heaven it's Jesus Christ, and your complete and total faith in Him. The difference between Cornelius and most lost religious folks is that Cornelius knew that his religious devotion could not save him and that's why he sent for Peter so quickly instead of running down his resume to the Angel. And we see in verse 9 – while they're on their journey, God begins to prepare Peter. Before he could save the gentiles God had to prepare Peter to bring the message just as He prepared Cornelius to receive the message. Verse s 11-16 – Peter is shown a vision three times and his initial response is I've been a good Jewish boy who's never eaten anything unclean. However God tells him nothing is impure that He has made clean.

V17-27

- Never put God in a box. He spoke to Peter in a vision, and to Cornelius through an Angel. After God speaks expect confirmation that you heard correctly – for Peter it was in the form of these three men. Verse 23 – according to Jewish law a Jew was to never allow a Gentile into his house. We see that God was breaking down all of Peter’s prejudices. All of us come into Christianity with prejudices and folks there’s no room for it in the body. Prejudices affect judgments and hinder growth. I love how Peter takes some of the brethren with him; he realizes this lesson was not just for him but the body. Folks if God is showing you something it will not just benefit you but also the body, if it doesn’t it wasn’t God who showed it to you. Verse 26 – Peter says “I’m a servant not a celebrity” this is the attitude all Christians should have no matter how popular they are. Verse 27 – Peter sees Cornelius has gathered relatives and friends together for this occasion to hear the gospel.

V28-36

- Verse 28 – This is the first home bible study and it’s in a Gentiles house, which Peter acknowledges, but he wants to hear their hearts. Verse 29 – Peter asks Cornelius “why am I here?”. Verse 33 – what a great congregation. Charles Spurgeon was asked what makes a great preacher? His answer, a great congregation, where people want to hear the word there will always be some good teaching. Verse 34 – Peter begins to preach the Word (**Romans 10:17**) because there can be no faith apart from the Word. Peter summarizes the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cornelius knew about Jesus life and he knew that he was Israel’s Messiah, what he didn’t know was that Jesus was also Savior of all -Verse 36. He didn’t know that God would use Israel as an instrument to spread His life-giving message to the whole of society.

V37-48

- Peter tells them that although the public knew about Jesus life, and ministry only they were eyewitnesses of His resurrection, and despite all the proofs the Jewish leaders received they still condemned Jesus to death. Verses 42-43 – Peter also truly understands that they were to preach the gospel everywhere and to all people’s not just the Jews (**Matthew 28:19-20**). Verse 44 – while he is still speaking the Holy Spirit falls upon the gentiles and they have the same experience as the Jews did on the day of Pentecost ten years earlier. Verse 47-48 – so Peter asks can anyone give a good reason why these people should not be baptized? Only sinful prejudices would motivate someone to oppose this wonderful move of the Spirit.
- What’s interesting, is that Philip the evangelist was also in the city where Cornelius was, yet God sent for Peter not Philip. Why not use Philip who was already there instead of sending for Peter thirty miles away? Simple. God not only works at the right time but He also works through the right servant. It was Peter and not Philip who God gave the keys to the kingdom; it was Peter who God chose to lay hands upon the Samaritans to authenticate their conversion to Christianity; and it would be through Peter that God would usher in the salvation of the Gentiles. But it would be through Paul that God would establish their churches and provide their discipleship; and like Peter, its not until the Lord has

sufficiently prepared Paul that we will see him come back upon the scene some years later.