

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Salvation Comes To The Gentiles, Pt 1

Acts 10:1-23

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PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: We now are privileged to see the expansion of the gospel to the Gentiles. Cornelius serves as a key turning point in how God is working out His redemptive plan. We see the way visions guided the people in the story. We see how doubts play into all of this and yet the triumph of God's grace.

I. Introduction.

- A. We return now to Acts and are in chapter 10.
- B. Interestingly, we will see so much of what I taught in Romans 9-11 played out for us in the book of Acts and in many ways this chapter is the key turning point for how God works.
 1. The Church was born in Acts 2. Prior to Acts the nation of Israel was in the forefront. But now, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the early believers and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus, the Church came into being.
 2. However, it was almost exclusively Jewish in its make up. This is because the gospel about Jesus Christ was "to the Jew first" and then to the Greek, or Gentile. Yet the seeds of the expansion to the Gentiles was seen in several ways:
 - a. First,
 - b. Second,
 - c. Third,
 - d. Fourth,
 - e. Fifth,

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f. Sixth,

3. Then, leaving Paul for a moment, Luke turns back to the work of Peter. In Acts 9:32 we find him traveling throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria strengthening the new believers.

C. Today we begin a short series unfolding Acts 10 and the conversion of Cornelius, a Roman Centurion.

1. With this chapter we have a chance to see how Romans 11 and the grafting in of Gentiles to the promises of God begins in earnest.

2. We will see the way God changes how to approach the world around us by abolishing things that would keep a Jew and a Gentile separate.

3. We will see that the gospel is for both Jew and Gentile and the key elements of what is involved in sharing the gospel. And that God is now turning His focus upon the Gentile world which is to our great benefit.

4. And we will see a how the speaking in other languages, commonly called “tongues,” was used to show evidence that the Gentiles were co-recipients of God’s saving work.

II. The Conversion of Cornelius.

A. Cornelius’s encounter with an angel (1-8).

1. We have a lot of information here about this man. Each of the descriptors help us understand him quite well.

a. He lived in Caesarea.

b. He was a devout man who feared God.

c. He led his household to be believers in God.

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- d. He practiced the life of a follower of God.
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2. In vs 3 we are introduced to the first of two visions. This one was via an angel.
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- B. Peter's encounter with God (9-20)..
1. Even to this day Jews will pray three times a day toward Jerusalem, now with the goal of anticipating the coming of their Messiah.
 2. He is hungry, such a little detail but it helps convey the level of detail Luke paid attention to as he researched for the writing of Acts. And in a trance he encounters a strange vision.
 3. All Jews were taught the very specific rules for clean and unclean foods. *"You are therefore to separate between the clean animal and the unclean, and between the unclean bird and the clean; and you shall not make yourselves detestable by animal or by bird or by anything that creeps on the ground, which I have separated for you as unclean. 26 Thus you shall be holy to Me, for I Yahweh am holy; and I have separated you from the peoples to be Mine"* (Leviticus 20:25-26).
 4. And now we have a change in the ways of God. This sheet is filled with all the animals forbidden for the Jew to eat. Do not think that the foods they were to eat were somehow more holy and healthy. Too much ink is spilled on trying to exalt certain foods over others by ripping verses out of context.
 5. The command is short and clear. "Get up, Peter, kill and eat." Not hard to understand but it was hard to accept.
 - a. So Peter pushes back (14). He had lived a truly kosher, faithful life and to do this is to defile himself.

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b. We have God speaking again and now there is a rebuke in it. If God has said it is clean it is clean and your opinion or convictions don't matter.

(1) How many times was this repeated to him? Three times.

(2) Three time is making this a superlative. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty is a superlative of holiness. He is the essence of holy. In a similar way, by repeating the three times God is driving home that things have changed.

(3) Ephesians 2:11-21:

(4) And this whole issue of what separated the faithful Jew with the Gentile becomes a central battle in the New Testament.

(a) Colossians 2:13-17:

(b) Galatians 2:7-16:

(c) 1 Timothy 4:1-5:

c. Having called for obedience, now the purpose becomes more clear. The men arrive from Cornelius. (17-18).

(1)

C. Peter's encounter with Cornelius's men (21-23).

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1. We see that there is some movement in the confusion of Peter. He obeys and identifies himself. He still doesn't really understand but he is seeking to figure it out.
2. They give him their side of the story and instead of sending them away to stay with Gentiles, he invites them into the home for the night.
3. The next day he is off to Caesarea and some other believers accompany him. Likely they are Jewish believers themselves and they want to see what is going on.

III. Conclusion.

- A. We will pick up with this story in two week, Lord willing.
- B. But this story is helpful as it provides some color and explanation on what I spent 10 weeks preaching about the Church and Israel.
- C. Behind all of this is how God is moving now among people like us. It is not due to our greatest or value, but in the grace of God.
 1. In this story we see how Jews are hardened toward the gospel but that Gentiles are not.
 2. We see how the Apostles and early church had to be led step by step to see that this was now the "times of the Gentiles." And that they need to embrace it.
 3. And we see the kindness of God for He is going to pour His grace on the household of Cornelius as their faith is brought into perfect focus upon Jesus Christ.

Benediction

May our God cause you to rejoice in the Lord, to be made complete in all aspects, and to be comforted by the Spirit. May He move in and among us to be like-minded in the Word and to live in peace with one another. Amen