

The Book of Acts - Chapter 10
IT FEELS GOOD TO BE BETTER THAN YOU
Dr. Larry Lamb – September 15, 2019

In my years as a follower of Jesus I have never witnessed rigid people enjoy their faith (because they beat themselves up continually) or enjoy other people in the Body of Christ because their pride won't permit it. Somehow, they think: It feels good to be better than you. They are stifling people to be around.

It's never a mark of maturity when a person thinks, "In order for me to feel good about myself, I need to put you down."

ACT 10.9-14 *The next day as Cornelius's messengers were nearing the town, Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon,¹⁰ and he was hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.¹¹ He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners.¹² In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds.¹³ Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat them."¹⁴ "No, Lord," Peter declared. "I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean."*

In the Old Testament, God gave His people the Jews, strict dietary laws on food. The purity laws were given to Israel as a basis for their holiness, to keep them separate from pagan nations around them and centered on God.

***IF GOD CALLS SOMETHING GOOD, LET'S NOT CALL IT BAD.
IF GOD CALLS SOMETHING BAD, LET'S NOT CALL IT GOOD.***

The Jewish food laws presented a real problem for Jewish Christians in the outreach to the Gentiles. No Jewish Christian could dine in a Gentile's home without inevitably transgressing those laws either by the consumption of unclean flesh or of flesh that had not been prepared in a kosher, i.e., ritually proper way. Eating with a Gentile was a violation of conscience.

“God reserves the right to use people who disagree with me.” Dr. Bob Cook

(Have we come to the realization that God will use various people, various ministry styles, and various churches that don't meet our approval?)

ACTS 10.24-27 They arrived in Caesarea the following day. Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵ As Peter entered his home, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶ But Peter pulled him up and said, “Stand up! I’m a human being just like you!” ²⁷ So they talked together and went inside, where many others were assembled.

ACTS 10.28,29 Peter told them, “You know it is against our laws for a Jewish man to enter a Gentile home like this or to associate with you. But God has shown me that I should no longer think of anyone as impure or unclean. ²⁹ So I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. Now tell me why you sent for me.”

As God moves us toward maturity:

1. We will see that the rationalization for being **PREJUDICE** is wrong and prideful.

Acts 10.35 *In every nation He accepts those who fear Him and do what is right.*

2. We learn to **APPRECIATE** the various people God chooses to use for His purposes that might be different than my choice. (SELF-righteousness looks down on people; living like Jesus lifts people up).
Doctrinal truth and discernment? OF COURSE.

3. Let's **REALIZE** that God may put us around people we were once prejudice against to share the gospel.

If we don't mature, it may be possible to continually clutch to the idea that
. . . *it feels good to be better than you.*

Jesus,

I find myself being drawn to You. I want You to be my Savior and Lord. I confess that my sin has separated me from You. Forgive me and cleanse me from sin. I ask You to live through me each day as I humble myself before you. Amen.