

## **Cornelius - The New Covenant Door to All Nations**

### **Acts 10**

#### **vs. 1-8, Cornelius' Vision**

Roman Centurion

Devout - religious, ritualistic, generous, moral

Sympathetic to Jewish theology and ethics

An angel of God -> messenger who conveyed God's care.

Cornelius, you are known and I care.

What you have been doing has been seen, but there is more to your "habits of devotion".

#### Instructions:

Send men to Joppa

Bring Peter to your home

Cornelius immediately obeys

**Question:** What is your response time concerning obedience? How long does it take for you to act when you know God is asking you to do something? What are the reasons for your hesitation?

#### **vs. 9-16, Peter's Vision**

The heavens opened

Sheet is let down (the church spread out)

Filled with all kinds of animals, reptiles, birds.

Hungry? Kill and eat.

I can't. I would never. These things are unclean. He fails to evaluate his old paradigm in light of Jesus' life and teaching.

**Leviticus 20:25** You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean.

**Deuteronomy 14:4-20** Here is what you can eat and here is what you can't eat.

**vs. 15,** What God has made clean, do not call common.

3X (same as Holy, Holy, Holy)

The Mosaic law outlined distinction.

The question for an Israelite was, Will you remain faithful according to God's criteria (law / rules) not your own?

In this reality of salvation history, Gentiles were considered unclean.

But with Jesus all of this changed!

Cleanliness takes place through Jesus, not through ritual. Salvation is for every nation, tribe, and people.

**vs. 17-20,** Just so happens... In this precise moment...Cornelius' men show up at the door.

Holy Spirit confirmation -> go greet these men

**vs. 21,** I am the one that you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming?

**vs. 22,** The men share why they have been sent but with one additional detail, "who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation".

**vs. 25-26,** A clearer understanding of Cornelius' spirituality.

Religious -> yes

Knowledge of Jesus -> no

Salvation is not possible without Jesus.

**Question:** Who has the Holy Spirit asked you to be in relationship with? How often do you interact with people outside your worldview? What would it mean for you to offer hospitality to someone of a different ethnic background?

**vs. 28,** Another significant shift in detail.  
God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.

What the Mosaic Law required concerning purity and forgiveness has been fulfilled in Jesus (Ephesians 2:11-22).

**vs. 33,** We are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.

Who is there? vs. 24 -> Cornelius, his relatives, and his close friends.

**vs. 34-43,** The gospel story. (Peter's gospel presentation)

1. True faith (fearing God) is always accompanied by righteous living.
2. Jesus is Lord of everything.
3. The resurrection of Jesus is real.
4. God is the judge of the living and the dead.
5. Forgiveness is available only through Jesus.

**vs. 43,** Everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

**vs. 44,** The Holy Spirit opens their eyes and their hearts.  
The Spirit moves them to respond to the gospel.

- genuine belief
- genuine transformation
- big day - follow up and connection

Baptism -> a public act of commitment and embrace of the gospel promises.

**Question:** Will we surrender our biases and prejudice? Will we embrace the all ethn (every people and language) of God's heart? Are you willing to step outside of your cultural "comfort zone"?

Cornelius is significant because,

- Peter is involved.
- Peter has to explain his actions.

**Acts 11:2-3** So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, saying, **3** "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them."

- Peter also speaks to the counsel in Jerusalem.

**Acts 15:7-9** And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. **8** And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, **9** and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

The Jerusalem church endorses the reception of Gentiles into the Messianic community.

**Acts 11:18** When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

Transformation

**Question:** Have I encountered Jesus and has he transformed my life? Have I experienced the joy of baptism? How can I take a step of faith and open my mouth concerning the love and grace of Jesus?