



Sermon Series: Acts
Sermon Title: Courage
Date: 7/27/2025

Acts 10:1–8

Big Idea: What is living really all about?

Life is truly lived when we seek God with a humble heart, a listening ear, and courageous obedience.

1. A Humble Heart (Acts 10:1–2)

Cornelius is introduced as a Roman centurion - someone with status, power, and influence. Yet he's described as devout, God-fearing, generous, and prayerful. Though a Gentile, he reveres the God of Israel and sincerely seeks after Him. Cornelius shows that approaching God starts with humility. His heart is open and reverent. Even without knowing the full truth about Jesus yet, he honors God with what he does know.

God responds to this kind of heart. Throughout Scripture, He promises to be found by those who seek Him with sincerity (**Jeremiah 29:13; Deuteronomy 4:29; Proverbs 8:17**). Cornelius is a living example that God honors the pursuit of truth, even when someone's knowledge is incomplete. Cornelius being a Gentile, uncircumcised, and God making a divine appointment for him to hear the good news of Jesus's forgiveness of sins and the eternal life offered in Him was always a part of God's plan.

2. A Listening Ear (Acts 10:3–6)

While Cornelius is praying at a customary hour of Jewish prayer, he receives a vision from God. An angel appears and calls him by name. Though afraid, Cornelius responds with reverence and openness, asking, "What is it, Lord?"

He's told that his prayers and gifts have been noticed by God, and he's instructed to send men to Joppa to bring back Peter. Cornelius receives specific direction because he has already cultivated a posture of attentiveness. He has a listening ear.

He didn't wait for a supernatural moment to begin listening, he had already built spiritual rhythms into his life. Prayer wasn't a last resort for him; it was his regular habit. And because of that, when God spoke, Cornelius was ready to hear.

In contrast, many people today fill their lives with noise, activity, and distraction. We want answers, but rarely slow down enough to listen. Cornelius reminds us that those who seek God should also expect Him to speak - and make time to hear Him.

3. A Courageous Action Plan (Acts 10:7-8)

As soon as the angel departs, Cornelius obeys without delay. He gathers two servants and a trusted soldier and sends them to Joppa, just as he was instructed.

This act of obedience isn't just practical - it's bold. It crosses cultural and religious boundaries. A Gentile sending for a Jewish man, inviting him into his home, could have sparked controversy or rejection. But Cornelius doesn't let fear stop him. He acts with courage and trust.

True living doesn't stop with good intentions or spiritual experiences, it continues through courageous action. Cornelius doesn't wait to understand the full picture; he moves forward with the light he's been given. Faith that pleases God is always active. It steps out when called, even when there are unknowns.

His obedience sets into motion one of the most significant turning points in church history: the gospel coming fully to the Gentiles. God's global mission advances because one man chose to act when called.

Cornelius shows us that life isn't about status, control, or comfort. It's about knowing God and doing what He says. He approached God with a **humble heart, a listening ear, and a courageous willingness to act.** This is what real living looks like. It's the kind of life God honors, and the kind of life He uses to shape history.

Discussion Questions:

- Cornelius was devout and generous even before he knew the full message of Jesus. What does this tell us about how God responds to spiritual hunger, even in those who don't yet know Him fully?
- Cornelius made space in his life to listen to God. What are some practical ways we can develop a "listening ear" in our daily routines?
- When the angel gave instructions, Cornelius obeyed immediately, even though it was uncomfortable. What are some areas in your life where obedience might require courage?
- This story shows God working outside the expected boundaries by using a Gentile to advance His mission. Are there people or groups today we might overlook as being outside God's plan? How does this passage challenge that?
- The Big Idea asked, "What is living really all about?" Based on this passage, how would you answer that question for your own life right now?