

Digging Deeper by Robert Lee
Sermon Series: True North
Sermon Title: Salvation for All
Sermon Subject: Conversion of Cornelius
Scripture Lesson: Acts 10:23-48

Monday – Read Acts 10:1-22 for a broader understanding of this week’s scripture lesson, then read Acts 10:23-26 and pray for Spiritual Confidence. Apostle Peter responded faithfully to the command of the Holy Spirit to go with men he did not know to Caesarea; a city heavily populated at the time with Gentiles. Moreover, Peter was taken to the home of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, who fell to Peter’s feet in reverence (verse 25). Instead of taking advantage of the situation Apostle Peter made Cornelius get up (verse 26), so not to bring undeserved honor to himself. Peter demonstrated faith and integrity by following strangers to an unspecified location without knowing why he was sent, and by establishing a precedent with Cornelius that they are equal in the eyes of God.

Tuesday – Read Acts 10:27-29 and pray for Spiritual Awareness. When Peter entered Cornelius’ home, it was filled with relatives and close friends of Cornelius. Apostle Peter was fully aware that he was breaking the Jewish law by “associating with or visiting Gentiles” (verse 28). So, what was it that made Peter willing to break the law, especially not knowing why Cornelius sent for him? And what did Peter gain from doing this? The second question above will be answered later. The first question is answered in verse 28b, where Apostle Peter witnessed to the large gathering that Yahweh (God) showed him in a vision that Peter should not call anyone impure or unclean. Peter finally understood the greater message, that his vision was not about *food* being impure or unclean. Rather, it was a sign from heaven that Jews were no longer to call or refer to Gentiles as impure or unclean. I believe this greater message from heaven was intended to be applicable ever since, and we can definitely benefit from it in our culturally divisive world today.

Wednesday – Read Acts 10:30-33 and pray for Spiritual Reminders. Peter and the number *three* are contained in several scriptures throughout the New Testament. Following are six examples of this pattern: (1) Yeshua’s (Jesus) prediction that Peter would deny him *three* times in the Gospels (Matt. 26:34; Mk. 14:30; Lk. 22:34; and Jn. 13:38) and Peter’s *three* denials (Matt. 26:70, 72 & 74; Mk. 14:68, 70 & 71; Lk. 22:57, 58 & 60; and Jn. 18:17, 25 & 27, respectively); (2) Peter was reminded *three* times to kill and eat in his mind and heart what was considered unclean and impure (Acts 10:11-16); (3) Cornelius answered why he sent for Peter (*three* days ago while Cornelius was praying at 3:00pm – Acts 10:30); (4) Peter witnessed the brutal treatment of Yeshua that led to

his death, and *three* days later, Peter was one of the few to witness our risen Savior (Acts 10:40-41); (5) Jesus appeared to his disciples *three* times after he was raised from the dead (John 21:14) and (6) *three* times Yeshua asked Peter if he loved him (John 21:17).

Thursday – Read Acts 10:34-38 and pray for Spiritual Acceptance. Peter revealed truth in the house of Cornelius that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is pleasing in the eyes of the Father. Peter also emphasized the message that Yahweh made to his chosen people about the “good news of peace through Yeshua the Christ, and how Yeshua was anointed by God with the Holy Spirit and power to do good and to heal all who were under the power of the devil.”

Friday – Read Acts 10:39-43 and pray for Spiritual Understanding. Apostle Peter acknowledged to everyone gathered in the home of Cornelius that he was a firsthand witness of everything that Yeshua did during his ministry. Peter testified that Yeshua was crucified but it is Yahweh who raised him from the dead three days later. Yahweh allowed the resurrected Yeshua to be seen by a select few, one of whom was Peter. Peter was also among those who received the command from Yeshua to preach the good news to the people and testify that he is the one who Yahweh appointed as judge of the quick and the dead (verse 42). Verse 43 provides evidence that there is healing power in the name of Yeshua the Christ for everyone who believes in him. Jews and Gentiles alike participated in the killing of Yeshua, and it was necessary for this significant event to occur as it helped fulfill the promise God made to the serpent in Genesis 3:15.

Saturday – Read Acts 10:44-48 and pray for a Spiritual Awakening. Verse 44 states that while Peter was still speaking to Cornelius and others who were gathered in his home, the Holy Spirit came upon all who heard Peter’s message. This amazing event is nearly identical to what Peter and the other Apostles witnessed in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 2:1- 4). This passage confirms that salvation is available for all, Jews and Gentiles alike. Recall from Acts 10:34-35 that God does not show favoritism, and that he accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. Here lies the answer to the second question above from Tuesday’s lesson. Peter helped to create an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to “come on all who heard Peter’s message.” The circumcised believers who traveled with Peter were astonished that the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles (verse 45). This lesson hopefully helps to understand that salvation is for all and believing is not enough in every situation. Apostle Peter’s faith, obedience, integrity and humility helped to create an environment whereby

the power of the Holy Spirit converted to Christianity devout, God-fearing Gentiles like Cornelius and his family who were known for giving generously and praying regularly to God.