Sermon Highlights

God's Reach Has No Boundaries: The Universal Gospel of Salvation

Sermon Summary:

Drawing from Acts 10 and connecting it to the broader narrative of Genesis, this sermon explores how God's plan of salvation has never been restricted to one people group. Using the account of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, Pastor Bruce Gordon demonstrates that God's sovereignty and human free will work together in drawing all people toward salvation. Just as God promised Abraham that he would be a blessing to all nations, the gospel in Acts continues to spread outward in ever-widening circles, from devout Jews to Samaritans, to Ethiopian proselytes, and now to a Gentile Roman soldier. The sermon challenges believers to examine their own attitudes toward others, to recognize that no person is beyond God's reach, and to maintain spiritual sensitivity to those who are being drawn by the Holy Spirit.

Key Points:

- The narrative of salvation in Acts directly connects to and continues what God began in Genesis, with the number 12 serving as a consistent symbol of divine order across both Testaments

- God's plan of salvation has always been universal, never intended to be restricted to any single ethnic or social group

- The sovereignty of God and the free will of man operate together, as seen in how God sovereignly prepared Cornelius while still allowing him to respond willingly

- No person is beyond God's saving reach, regardless of their social standing, ethnicity, or moral condition, because all humanity stands equally at the foot of the cross

- Believers should develop spiritual discernment to recognize seekers, those whom the Holy Spirit is already drawing, and engage them with the gospel

- Corporate worship is a biblical mandate, and the attitude and intentionality with which believers approach worship reflects the condition of their hearts toward God

- God is personally attentive to the prayers and generosity of those who sincerely seek him, even before they come to full saving faith

- Peter himself needed an attitude adjustment, demonstrating that even mature believers can harbor unbiblical prejudices about who deserves to hear the gospel

Scripture Reference:

- Acts 10:1-8, the account of Cornelius receiving a vision and sending for the Apostle Peter

- Genesis 12 and 15, where God promises Abraham that he will be a blessing to all nations

- Romans 3:23, which teaches that all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory

- Hebrews 10:25, which warns against forsaking the assembling of believers together

- Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10-11, which speak of every knee bowing and every tongue confessing Christ as Lord

Stories:

- The account of Cornelius, a devout Roman centurion in Caesarea, who prayed faithfully, gave generously, and received a vision from an angel directing him to send for Peter in Joppa

- The healing of the lame man at the temple gate, illustrating the gospel reaching outcast members of Jewish society

- Philip's preaching in Samaria, showing the gospel crossing into territory considered unclean by Jewish standards

- Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, demonstrating the gospel reaching a Gentile who had joined himself to the Jewish faith

- The conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus, marking another major expansion of the gospel's reach

- The replacement of Judas among the twelve apostles, used to illustrate the theological significance of the number 12 and its connection to the 144,000 in Revelation

- Pastor Bruce Gordon's illustrative contrast between a skid row alcoholic and a corrupt banker, used to drive home the point that no one stands higher than another before God