

Acts 10: 1st Gentile Convert

- **Read Eph. 2.11-19** re: the joining of the Jews and Gentiles into one church.
 - The dividing wall was the Law of commandments that is, the Old Testament law.
 - The old law of Moses contained God's plan to bring the Messiah into the world
 - Gal.3.16, 19, 24, 25.
 - He tasted death for both Jew and Gentile—Heb. 2.9.
 - Acts 10 tells how God started breaking down those barriers in the early church
 - A Gentile, Cornelius, sends for Peter. (10.1-8)
 - **Principle:** when attempting to reconcile individuals, talk to each one privately.
 - Caesarea: Most important Roman city (Governors lived there).
 - Named after Caesar Augustus—structures made of marble
 - Cornelius: Military man; unlikely prospect.
 - Responsible for 100 soldiers (Centurion)
 - Devout; God-fearing; gave alms to the people; Prayed continually.
 - Saw a vision of an angel at the 9th hour (3:00pm).
- "Your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God."
- "Dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon Peter...he is staying with a man named Simon who is a tanner."
 - "He will tell you what you must do."
- Peter's Vision:
 - Praying about the 6th hour (Noon). (Trance: lit. a displacement to a higher place of consciousness).
 - Peter became very hungry—vision of a great sheet with all sorts of animals, wild beasts, birds, etc. ..."Rise Peter, kill and eat..."
 - Peter: "I have never eaten anything common or unclean."
 - "What God has cleansed, you must not call common."

- If barriers between Jews/Gentiles were to be torn down..1st one were the dietary laws. (clean/unclean animals; offered to idols; how was blood drained?)
- This was repeated 3 times. (Cornelius was told one time and obeyed).
- The 3 men from Cornelius arrived from Caesarea and inquired for Peter.
- The Spirit said..."I have sent them...Go and do not doubt."
- The men lodged with them that night and the next day went to Caesarea with some brethren from Joppa.
- Cornelius was waiting for them with his friends and relatives!
- V.22: Centurion/God-fearing/well spoke of by the Jews...Conclusion: He must be a Gentile!
 - Purpose of the vision was not to change his diet but to change his direction!!!
 - A major crack had appeared in the wall of prejudice.
- The Conversion of Cornelius and His Household (V.23-48).
 - The next day, Peter went with the messengers and some of the Jewish brethren from Joppa. (Ch.11 says there were 6 brethren with Peter).
 - The Law required 2 or 3 witnesses to establish a matter (Deut.17.6).
 - 7 witnesses (Peter + 6) complete number for Jews to understand.
 - 10 men started out on the 30 mile trip north to Caesarea.
 - Time to understand each other (association promotes understanding).
 - Cornelius fell at Peter's feet and worshipped him
 - Roman soldier falling at the feet of a Jew—amazing sight.
 - "Get up, I too am just a man."
 - Only God should be worshipped---see Matt.4.10; 1 Cor.8.4,6; Rev.19.10; Rev.22.8,9).
- V.28: "...it is unlawful for a Jewish man to associate with a foreigner or to visit him: and yet God has shown me that I should call no man unholy or unclean."
- V.33: "We are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."
- V.34-43: Peter's Sermon

- “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality.”
 - “to show partiality”: Lit. to receive/reject someone on the basis of face alone;
 - God looks at the heart not on superficialities.
 - Sermon begins with John’s baptism
 - Jesus’s miracles...”we are all witnesses of these things.”
 - “They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.”
 - “God raised Him up on the 3rd day and showed Him openly.”
 - Jesus ate and drank with them after He arose from the dead (Lk.24.41-43)
 - He ordered us to preach to the people (Matt.28.18-20).
 - Salvation is only through Christ (Acts 4.12).
- Gentiles Baptized with the Holy Spirit (10.44-48)
 - Peter’s sermon is interrupted by God
 - An important step to convince Jewish Christians to accept Gentiles.
 - It was important to convince the 6 men who came with Peter...astonished.
 - See chapter 11. 15-17. (speaking in tongues...same as apostles (11.17).
 - V.47: Peter turned to the 6 Jewish Christians and asked, "surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized."
 - The only two recorded instances of Holy Spirit baptism are in Acts 2 and 10.
 - On 3 different occasions (10.47, 48; 11.17; 15.8,9) Peter used the incident to prove that God was willing to accept Gentiles...therefore, the church should also be willing to accept them.
 - Mark 16.16: “He who has believed and is baptized shall be saved.”
 - Gal.3.26-27: “For all of you who were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. "There is neither Jew nor Greek,...for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
- Prejudice:
 - Prejudice is sometimes called “the child of ignorance.”
 - Voltaire: Prejudice is “what fools use for reason.”

- See James 2.1: “My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism.”
- Good Works Cannot Save:
 - Cornelius was a “devout man”, a righteous God fearing man”, gave alms to the people.” (11.14)—words whereby he could be saved...”
 - “Stand up, I too am just a man”:
 - Peter, the apostle, would not allow a man to bow before him.
- Salvation Only Through Christ.
 - 10.43: Salvation is only through the name of Christ.