



This Sunday we will begin a series on salvation, looking at figures from the New Testament and their conversions. Today let us consider Cornelius, a Roman soldier who was the first Gentile the apostle Peter led to Christ.

Acts 10:1-6 In Caesarea there lived a Roman army officer named Cornelius, who was a captain of the Italian Regiment. He was a devout, God-fearing man, as was everyone in his household. He gave generously to the poor and prayed regularly to God. One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said. Cornelius stared at him in terror. "What is it, sir?" he asked the angel. And the angel replied, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have been received by God as an offering! Now send some men to Joppa, and summon a man named Simon Peter. He is staying with Simon, a tanner who lives near the seashore. He will tell you what you must do."

Acts 10:34-35

God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him & does what is right

THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS

¹First-century Jews disliked Samaritans, but their hostility was even stronger toward Gentiles. Jewish people would not enter the home of a Gentile (whom they considered “unclean dogs”), let alone share a meal with them. In the mind of most faithful Jews, God’s love was for Jews, not Gentiles.

That makes today’s chapter all the more remarkable, as the lives of Peter the Jew and Cornelius the Gentile became intertwined. The God-fearing centurion Cornelius received a divine message to send for Peter. Meanwhile, Peter received a vision, which was repeated three times, about clean and unclean animals. In that vision, Peter was commanded to eat the unclean food. Despite Peter’s refusal, God insisted: “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean” (v. 15). What did Peter’s vision about food have to do with Cornelius? The rest of the chapter unfolds the meaning.

When Cornelius’s men arrived, Peter received them even though they were “unclean” Gentiles. The next day, he went with them to the Cornelius’s house, already beginning to understand God’s acceptance of Gentiles. Peter not only entered their house, but explained: “God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean” (v. 28). Then, in his sermon Peter noted, “God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right” (vv. 34–35). “Everyone,” said Peter, “who believes in [Jesus] receives forgiveness of sins” (v. 43).

The message of Christ was not just for Jews, but for the whole world, Gentiles included. As Peter proclaimed the truth of God’s unbiased love, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his believing household, giving further evidence of God’s acceptance of all who believe, Jew and Gentile alike.

¹Today in the Word - The Conversion of Cornelius by Bryan A. Stewart August 14, 2014

WHAT CAN WE LEARN?

- **God is looking for people who are looking for Him** God used Peter to bring the Good News to a seeker. *If we allow Him to, He will send us as well!*
- **God loves ALL people** - Peter's understanding of God's gracious love toward all people was limited. He thought God only cared about the Jewish people and was surprised that the Lord would send him to a Gentile. We must not limit who God would have us minister to! *Who knows what God will do if we offer ourselves to Him daily?*
- **God notices when we pray, give and help others.** God's Word says that Cornelius' prayers and gifts came before Him! *The Lord is pleased when we are people of prayer and generous in our giving.*

Let us pray,

Father God, thank you for Your gracious and merciful love!

Use us, our prayers & our giving to share the Gospel with those around us! Amen

Blessings,

Pastor Michael & Mary

Please call to set up a home visit for communion or prayer.

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Chuckles *A merry heart does good, like medicine* (Proverbs 17:22)

One day at the office one of the men told his co-worker, "I'm so tired from working, I wish I could get a day off."



"Don't worry, I have a way of getting a day off... just watch this", one of the women replied. Climbing on a chair she reached up and grabbed a pipe overhead and hung from it.

Suddenly, their boss walks in and seeing the lady, said: "What in the world are you doing hanging up there?"

"I'm a light bulb... a very bright light bulb!" she replied.

The boss shook his head and said: "You must've gone crazy from all that work you have been doing. Why don't you take the day off?"

The woman jumped down, grabbed her purse, gave a sly wink to her coworker and headed out the door.

The man then turned his computer off and followed her out the door.

"Hey, where are you going?", the boss asked.

The man replied, "I'm going home. I can't work in the dark!"

