

Notes for Acts - Chapter 10

John's title for Chapter 10: "Pentecost II – It is no longer a Jewish thing"

A Summary of Chapter 10:

- Chapter 10 focuses on 2 people: The Apostle Peter and a new character named Cornelius.
- Cornelius is a Roman Centurion (he's in charge of 100 men) based out of Caesarea, Israel.
- God sends an angel to Cornelius and tells him, "Go get Peter & bring him to you."
- Meanwhile, Peter, while praying sees a vision of a great sheet filled with animals.
Some of those animals are "forbidden-food" for Jews.
- God tells Peter in this vision to "kill and eat".
- Peter says no as it is against Jewish custom. God reminds Peter of who's in charge! ☺
- Peter figures out the vision is about the Gentiles receiving the Word of God
- Meanwhile, the Centurion sends men to get Peter and bring him back for a Bible Study.
- Peter goes to Cornelius' house to preach Jesus. In the middle of the sermon, people get saved.
- People started speaking in tongues like they did at Pentecost in Chapter 2.
- The difference between this "tongue" experience and Chapter 2, is that this time Gentiles get saved. These are the first recorded Gentiles (i.e., non-Jews) to get saved.

Introduction – Until this chapter, Peter believed you had to be a Jew first to become a Christian.

- When Jesus told the Apostles to take the Gospel "To Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth", I'm sure Peter thought it only applied to Jews.
- God chose the Israelites to be his chosen people. Not because they were better, but he needed a group to be an example to the world.
- The mistake the Jews made was "it went to their head", and they thought they were more pious than others were. (Sounds familiar? ☺)
- "Understand, then, that it is not because of your righteousness that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stiff-necked people." (Deuteronomy 9:6 NIV)
- God calls us, and the Jews to separate themselves from the world by our conduct. It does not mean we are superior or should avoid contact. How can you be a witness if you avoid contact?

Introduction – God called Peter to be his witness to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles

- Paul said, "For God, who was at work in the ministry of Peter as an apostle to the Jews, was also at work in my ministry as an apostle to the Gentiles". (Galatians 2:8 NIV)
- So why was Peter chosen to open the Gospel to the Gentiles?
- God did it this way "For Pete's Sake!" ☺ It was to help break down Peter's bigotry.

Verse 1 – Cornelius was a "good person". Being a "good-person" will not get you into heaven!

- "Salvation is not a reward for the good we have done, so none of us can take any credit for it." (Ephesians 2:9 The Living Bible)
- The "salvation exception" is for those who never have heard the Gospel. God will judge all people fairly based on what they do know. This is what Romans Chapter 1 is all about.
- People like Cornelius who seek God, are often led to the Gospel message.
- "I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me." (Proverbs 8:17 NIV)

Notes for Acts - Chapter 10 (cont.)

Verse 14 – Peter sees a “great sheet” full of animals. God tells a hungry-Peter “kill & eat”.

- The animals included those that were forbidden to be eaten by Jews (Listed in Leviticus 11)
- Jewish “kosher” laws on eating is not just about these animals. It also includes how food is prepared and what *combinations* are acceptable (i.e. you can’t eat dairy & meat together).

Verse 14 – God tells Peter to “kill & eat”. Peter “rebukes” God by saying, “Not so, Lord”.

- You can say ‘Lord’ and you can say ‘Not so’, but you *can’t* say “Not So Lord”.
(W. Graham Scroggie)

Verse 21 – The 3 men told Peter “An angel told our boss Cornelius” to come find you.

- Application – Be cautious when people say “God spoke to us and we have a message for you!”
- God hasn’t lost your telephone number! In this case God was working “both ends” to bring them together.
- John said, “but test the spirits, whether they are of God;” (1 John 4:1)

Verse 30 – Cornelius arranges for his family & friends to hear Peter’s message.

- Charles Spurgeon was once asked, “What does it take to be a great preacher?”
His answer: “A great audience!” (He meant one that is receptive to God’s message.)

Verse 41 – Peter says, Jesus was not seen by all the people (when he rose again), but by witnesses whom God had already chosen

- For those who argue “pre-destiny” over “free-will”, this is one of those verses!
- Some people use this verse to argue for “limited atonement”. That is the belief that Jesus *only* died for those are pre-destined.
- I simply disagree. Christ died for *all*. Some simply *choose* not to accept that free gift God gives. Here is a supporting Bible Verse:
- “And he (Jesus) died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. ” (2 Corinthians 5:15 NIV)

Verse 45 – The Gentiles at Cornelius’ house believed the Gospel and started speaking in Tongues

- Tongues is the supernatural gift of praising God in another language.
- To study “tongues” read 1st Corinthians 12 & 14, or see my notes on Acts Chapter 2.
- Some Pentecostals use this verse to teach that to “really” be saved, you must speak in Tongues.
- My response: “All these (the different spiritual gifts) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. (1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV)

Personal Application:

- God worked on Peter to throw away his pre-conceived notions of salvation and superiority.
- The lesson to learn is not see people as being immoral, but to look at people as needing Jesus!
- Jesus commands us to “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt. 5:44)
- We, as Christians see our enemies and persecutors as those who should be punished.
- Jesus says to pray for them. Partly to lead them to salvation, but also to change our perspective of how God looks lovingly on all people, and wants them to repent.
- John 3:16 says “For God so loved the world (not just believers!) that he gave his only Son...”