

Acts # 51

“The Gentile Pentecost”

Acts 10:1-22

Cornelius was afraid but he didn't run away; he stood there and talked.

When a man is afraid and can carry on a conversation, he is a remarkable person.

To be able to think clearly under heavy pressure is one of the primary assets of a trained military soldier.

Why do Cornelius' prayers and gifts to the poor get God's attention?

Because they represent his positive response at God-consciousness; therefore God is now responding to the positive attitude of Cornelius as He must do so because of His essence: His righteousness and justice.

Now we have a neighborhood class problem because down in Joppa is a Jew named Simon Peter, a fisherman, a lower-class citizen and up in Caesarea, we have a wealthy Gentile Roman aristocrat.

Peter is saved but the aristocrat is not saved, yet both have positive attitudes toward God and the point Holy Spirit's making is we must bring these two together; so that the Roman aristocrat and his friends would be saved, demonstrating once and for all, that Gentiles are just as much welcome in the body of Christ as Jews because at this point in Caesarea, we're going to have the Gentile Pentecost.

Two people couldn't be more different than Peter and Cornelius; yet, they both are in Heaven today!

There's no doubt that God's command to Peter to kill and eat is a challenge to him as to whether or not he'll recognize that a command from God trumps the Mosaic law.

Peter says surely not, Lord, no way, but that's typical of the Jewish people and not only in Peter's day.

God's telling Peter to chew with his mouth open and while he's at it, to run with scissors and just like many legalistic Christians, he unravels at the thought of grace.

It's difficult for someone with a religious background to become a grace believer because of this same problem Peter faced.

Peter will break away from it and after a few years, he finally makes it but only biblical truth in the soul can do it.

God is making a point that there's now a major shift in what He requires of His children; under the Mosaic Law there were specific dietary limitations that no longer apply.

The principle is that legalism defiles what God has cleansed.

Peter didn't get it the first time because he was shocked; he didn't get it the second time because he was holding on to his traditional background and the third time was the charm because it was the first time he really caught on as to what was being communicated to him through the vision.

This is generally true of any type of truth which is grace truth; we have to hear it about three times before we really hear it the first time!

Peter's been commanded to eat unclean animals that God has cleansed in violation of the Mosaic law and God has cleansed Gentile believers without those Gentile believers first becoming Jews.