

**"Peter's Ministry"**

**Part 6**

**Acts 10**

**Introduction:** The last time we were together in our study of Acts we were looking at how God was working in the life of Peter to prepare him for the entrance of the Gentiles into the body of Jesus Christ. God had led Peter to the house of Simon the tanner and then He gave Peter the vision of the sheet with all the unclean animals on it.

**Notice Acts 10:10-16**

Based upon Leviticus 11 the Jews were restricted upon that which they could eat. One of the reasons for the dietary restrictions was to separate the Jews from the Gentile nations. Israel was to be different; they were to be holy as God was holy. They were His representatives to a world lost in darkness. Now when this vision of the sheet was given to Peter this was a removal of the dietary restrictions. This was an allowance to associate with the Gentiles. There would no longer be a need to stay separated from them. This is the very point God was communicating to Peter. In the body of Jesus Christ, there would be no difference. The walls that separated the Jews from the Gentiles were being torn down.

**Galatians 3:28**

*<sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

**Ephesians 2:13-15**

*<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

*<sup>14</sup> For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

*<sup>15</sup> Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*

As God was working in the life of Peter, He was also working in the life of a Gentile named Cornelius. When we stopped two weeks ago Cornelius had sent men to Joppa to bring Peter to his house.

**Notice Acts 10:17, 19-20**

Peter did not fully understand what was happening and God did not tell him. Peter's responsibility at this time was to walk in obedience to the will of the Lord and to trust Him. He would understand soon but for now Peter was called to walk by faith.

**Application:**

This is what we also are called to do. There are many times that walking in the will of God is like driving in a dense fog, and you cannot see beyond the moment you are in. It is then that we are called to exercise faith by trusting our Lord with each step we take.

**Hebrews 10:36-39**

*<sup>36</sup> For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

*<sup>37</sup> For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

*<sup>38</sup> Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

*<sup>39</sup> But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

God was working in Peter's life to open a door to the Gentiles and in doing this God prepared him one step at a time. This is how God often works with us. He will bring about change when He wants to redirect us, not all at once, but often it is one step at a time. We are simply called to trust Him because there are many times when we do not have the full picture. For those who want to wait until they get the full picture they miss so much because in most cases God does not give the full picture. When believers draw back and refuse to trust God with each step, they miss many blessings in the preparation process.

This now brings us to where we are tonight.

➤ **The Gentiles and the Body of Christ**  
**Part 4**

**Notice Acts 10:21-22**

I want to pause here and consider the testimony these men had of Cornelius. As a military commander, Cornelius conducted his life in a way that honored God. As we considered before, Cornelius was a believer and we know this by what is said about him in Acts 10:1-2 but he was an Old Testament believer. He was like the Apostles were before the Day of Pentecost. He was a believer but not a New Testament Christian. The point we need to see

here was that the men who knew Cornelius and who worked for him had a powerful testimony of him.

**Application:**

What would the people say about you who know you the best? I suppose the question to ask is, "How do you live your life outside of the church?" Many believers present themselves one way at church but then they live a completely different life when they are around their friends or their fellow workers. As believers our lives are to be consistently honoring to the Lord.

**1 Peter 2:11-15**

*<sup>11</sup> Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

*<sup>12</sup> Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

*<sup>13</sup> Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;*

*<sup>14</sup> Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.*

*<sup>15</sup> For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:*

With this said let me just add that if we live for the Lord not everyone will approve of our lifestyle and this is to be expected.

**Luke 6:26**

*<sup>26</sup> Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*

**Notice Acts 10:23-26**

Cornelius had great respect for Peter but he went too far and bowed down to him. Peter was quick to correct him because Peter knew that only God is worthy of worship. The same thing happened to Paul and Barnabas.

**Acts 14:11-15**

*11 And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.*

*12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.*

*13 Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.*

*14 Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,*

*15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:*

It is a dangerous thing when man accepts the worship that is to be given to God. Herod learned this the hard way.

**Acts 12:20-23**

*20 And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace: because their country was nourished by the king's country.*

*21 And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.*

*22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.*

*23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.*

Notice what one writer says concerning Peter:

*"Peter had come to see that it was entirely inappropriate either to worship somebody as if divine (which Cornelius had tried to do to him) or to reject somebody as if unclean (which he would previously have done to Cornelius). Peter refused both to be treated by Cornelius as if he were a god, and to treat Cornelius as if he were a dog."*

In the Great Tribulation the worship of man will not be refused but it will be demanded.

**Revelation 13:14-16**

*14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.*

*15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.*

*16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:*

The worship of man is forbidden in the Scriptures but we see the worship of Jesus Christ and we see Him accepting worship. This certainly proves that Jesus Christ being fully man, was also fully God.

### **Philippians 1:8-11**

*8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*

*9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

*10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

*11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

### **Notice Acts 10:27**

I want to borrow from the thoughts of Whitcomb here because he mentions something that we need to see. The word "MANY" here has led some people to believe in "household salvation" which is the teaching that says when the parents get saved the children are automatically saved. They will take this text and teach that the "many" here would include the children. I have heard from the Reformed Camp something similar from Acts 16.

### **Acts 16:29-33**

*29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,*

*30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*

<sup>31</sup> *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

<sup>32</sup> *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.*

<sup>33</sup> *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; **and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.***

Many of the Reformed will use this text to preach infant baptism. They teach that when the jailor was baptized and the Bible says "all his" were baptized, that this then included all his children. The Bible NEVER says that his children were baptized. We do not even know if there were children in the house. He may have had no children. Only believers were baptized. The Bible does by no means teach infant baptism. If someone sees infant baptism in this text, they are using their imagination to put something in the text that is not here. Now let us get back to Acts 10:27. Those who use this to teach "household salvation" here also combine this with a verse earlier in Acts.

#### **Acts 2:38-39**

<sup>38</sup> *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

<sup>39</sup> ***For the promise is unto you, and to your children,** and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.*

They use verse 39 to teach "household salvation". They say that when we as the parents believe then our children are automatically saved. But the verse goes on to say, "all that are far off" also. We know that when we are saved not everyone far off gets saved. Neither do our children automatically get saved. Everyone far off can get saved if they too believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and so can our children. But every person must make their own personal decision unless they are under the age of accountability.

#### **Conclusion:**

#### **John 1:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

<sup>13</sup> *Which were born, **not of blood,** nor of **the will of the flesh,** nor of **the will of man,** but of God.*

God brings about the New birth when we exercise faith in Jesus Christ.