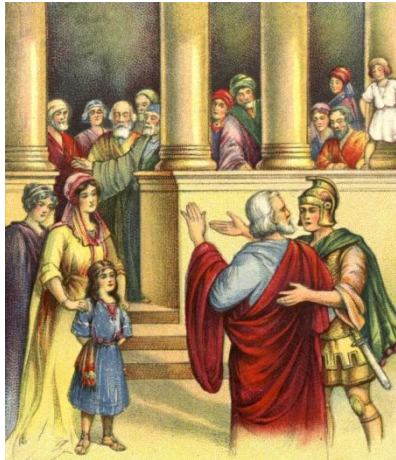


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 7



SALVATION TO THE GENTILES

Scripture Text: Acts 10:24-48

We studied the visions by which God brought Cornelius and Peter together. Today we read of their meeting and its results.

Cornelius invited friends and associates to hear the message from God. Neither Peter nor any human is to be worshiped. All classes of people are to be accepted on equal terms. Peter exalted Jesus Christ. We should learn from this lesson that the sectarian walls built between saints are wrong. What God accepts, we should accept.

How deep is the experience of one who is not concerned for the salvation of those near him? When God has control of a heart, He reaches out from that heart to others. God is love. Concern for others is necessary if we are to win them to Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: *But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.*

—Acts 10:35

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**John 14:25-31** The Spirit will teach.

Tue.—**John 16:5-15** The Spirit must be sent.

Wed.—**1 Corinthians 2:6-16** Natural man cannot receive it.

Thu.—**Romans 8:8-17** The Spirit is life.

Fri.—**Jude 1:10-23** These have not the Spirit.

Devotional Reading: **John 15:18-27** World hates the Spirit.

Cornelius and Peter Meet

Acts 10:24-27 On the morrow . . . they entered into Caesarea—about thirty miles from Joppa. **Cornelius waited for them.** What anticipation he must have felt, wondering what was in store for them. He **called together his kinsmen and near friends.** His faith looked for reward. He knew God was sending rich spiritual help. In concern that others share it, he filled his house. **Cornelius met him.** He could not wait, but went to meet Peter. He associated Peter with the angel and God's message, and he felt Peter was superhuman. He **fell down . . . and worshipped him.** He did not understand; he was ignorant of the wrong he did. See **Matthew 4:10.** Peter corrected him immediately—**took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man**—the same as you. No man is to be worshipped. They went in, talking as they went, and found many waiting to hear.

The Bible shows Peter as a very fallible man. To set him or any other man or woman in a position of exalted power and honor is wrong. It is usurping Christ's place. Christ is the Head of the church. He said, **Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren (Matthew 23:8).** Peter never assumed a position other than a brother in the church, exercising the spiritual gifts God gave him.

Peter Begins

Acts 10:28-33 Ye know . . . it is . . . unlawful . . . for a . . . Jew to . . . come unto one of another nation. (See **Deuteronomy 7:1-6.**) Then why did Peter come? **God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.** He changed his position at God's Word. He accepted these people. Peter asked why they had sent for him. He was ready to serve. A question is often a good starting point. Cornelius recounted his vision. Here we see the power of prayer and fasting. We are **all here present before God**—they came before

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God, not Peter only—to **hear all things that are commanded thee of God**. It was God's message they wanted, not the message bearer. They were expecting to receive from God.

God Is No Respector of Persons

Acts 10:34-35 Peter . . . said . . . God is no respecter of persons. Here it is, the Truth about human relationship in this new Gospel dispensation, brought forth by Christ making salvation possible to all mankind. What a revolutionary doctrine! Peter may have spoken with considerable calmness, but it must have caused some soul-searching in his own heart to say that God has no favorites, does not look to see who is asking before bestowing a blessing. **In every nation**—no race is shut out—**he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.** Here we see both faith and works united as conditions of acceptance with God. Neither alone is enough. Our trust must all be in Jesus. Nothing we can do will save us. Our deeds must be righteous. We must live holy lives (**1 Peter 1:15-16**).

Peter's Sermon

Acts 10:36-43 Peter exalted Jesus Christ. He told them that Christ was the Word of God, the Lord of all, bringing peace to man. He told of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Peter said he knew all this because they saw it with their own eyes. **Us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.** As he talked, the people opened their hearts to all that God had for them.

God Blesses the Gentiles

Acts 10:44-48 While Peter yet spake—uttered the words *remission of sins*—very quickly **the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.** All that heard believed. The Joppa brethren **were astonished** to see Gentiles receive salvation. It was a sight so marvelous to behold that Peter and his companions could scarcely believe their eyes. They magnified God, as those in Jerusalem when first the Spirit came (**Acts 2:4-11**). **Can any man forbid water** to baptize these? They had the spiritual reality inside, now were ready to testify to it by the outward symbol.

We learn from this that baptism does not save from sin. They asked Peter **to tarry certain days.** They desired his fellowship and teaching. They had found a new love, the love of Christ.

We should learn from this vision that sectarian walls built between saints are wrong. If a man is saved and Christ dwells within his heart, it means God has accepted him. He may hold some false teachings which prohibit his being placed as a leader, but he should be treated as a brother. Whom God accepts, we should accept.

JUST A THOUGHT

Faith keeps the man who keeps the faith.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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