

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Salvation Comes To The Gentiles, Pt 3

Acts 10:24-35

Keywords: Peter, Cornelius, Acts 10, Grace, Salvation, Partiality

PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: In this examination of the story of Cornelius and Peter we see how God uses the salvation of Cornelius and his household to show both the impartiality of God in salvation and the relationship between faith and works.

I. Introduction.

- A. We come again to this critical turning point in the book of Acts (10).
 - 1. So far we have seen how God prepared both Cornelius and the Apostle Peter for their divinely ordained meeting through visions given to both of them.
 - 2. We saw the cultural and religious challenge presented to Peter through his vision of foods forbidden for the faithful Jew to eat.
 - 3. Interestingly, we don't see anything holding back Cornelius. The entire challenge seems to be upon the apostle, not the Gentile.
 - 4. **Read vss 24-35.**
- B. Last time we learned how God is teaching Peter that he should not call any person unholy or unclean (28).
 - 1. We saw that the gospel propels us to engage every type of people and nation and not allow tradition and preference to constrain us.
 - 2. This shows how radical the gospel message is for it is not for a select group of people.
 - 3. It is a gospel that frees us to love and follow God. And this is all accomplished through Jesus Christ who breaks down all ethnic and religious barriers.
 - 4. The gospel is not to become a Jew. It is not to stop being a Gentile. It is to come, by faith, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is to become part of Jesus' Body, called the Church.
 - 5. This brings great freedom. And yet we learned that the freedom is one that is designed to free us to serve. It is not a freedom that is designed to let us sin.

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- C. That point, the purpose of our freedom in Christ, is the focus of this sermon. In our passage we find two foundational truths related to how God saves.
 - 1. The first is that the gospel propels us to engage every type of people and nation and not allow tradition and preference to constrain us.
 - 2. The second is that in God there is no partiality.
 - 3. The third is that God saves all who fear Him.
 - 4. We looked at the first point last time, and this week we will dive into the biblical idea of impartiality of God in His dealings with humanity. And then, next time we meet, Lord willing we will see the third point.
 - 5. However, key for us all is that each of these should drive our vision for evangelism and missions. To whom do we pursue with the gospel? What do we call a person to do? And what does that look like in real life? The next two messages will clearly answer these.

II. The Conversion of Cornelius.

- A. Background.
 - 1. Peter is now at the house of Cornelius. He is greeted by quite a crowd of people—close friends and relatives of the centurion.
 - 2. With this encounter he has understood the meaning of the vision he had regarding unclean food and that God is doing a new work now because of Jesus Christ.
 - 3. From here, in vss 30-32 Cornelius simply recounts what we already know, but Peter didn't—how it came about that Peter was summoned.
 - 4. In vs 33 Cornelius now makes it clear what he is expecting and hoping from Peter. He wants to hear what the Lord has “ordered” or “commanded” him to say. But there are several small observations to be made in this verse:
 - a. First:
 - b. Second:
 - c. Third:
 - d. Fourth:

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e. Fifth:

5. And so now the situation is set for us. We have the preacher, Peter. We have the gathered people, Gentiles. And we have the witnesses to this world-tilting event, fellow Jewish friends of Peter. And Peter immediately begins to teach.
6. And to set the stage for the gospel he reveals two key truths about the nature of God's saving work.
 - a. The impartiality of God.
 - b. The truth that God saves all who fear Him.

B. The impartiality of God.

1. Peter reveals a bit of his own bias in vs 34. This is rather impressive as it is a model of humility.
2. What is meant by this though? The impartiality of God is a wonderful, humbling doctrine that is worthy of our time. But if you properly apprehend it like Peter does, I warn you that your life will be very different.
3. Partiality is something the bible overtly says God does not practice. And it is a sin the is forbidden of Christians.
 - a. Partiality has no place in relationship to different races and people groups (Romans 2:1-12).
 - b. Partiality has no place in relationship to social relationships (Ephesians 6:9).

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c. Partiality has no place in relationship to earthly and eternal rewards.

(1) Colossians 3:22-25.

(2) 1 Peter 1:17.

d. Partiality has no place in relationship to economic status and reputation.

(1) Galatians 2:1-7.

(2) James 2:1-9.

4. This is the issue with Peter and Cornelius.

a. Up to this point Peter saw the Gentiles still as Gentiles.

b. They were people, but they were not God's chosen people. They had value but not to the point to fellowship with them.

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- c. And if the gospel was to go forth into all the world then things had to change within his own soul. And the only way that happens is when we begin to see things as God does.

III. Conclusion.

- A. At the beginning of this message is asked some basic questions that we should seek to answer in light of God's impartiality and the gospel call. Let us answer them now:
 - 1. To whom do we pursue with the gospel?
 - 2. All who do not know Christ. We stop thinking that one person is too far gone and another person is somehow closer to salvation due to something in them.
 - 3. We repent of pursuing relationships that only benefit us. We fight our own foolish hearts when we resist opening our lives and homes to those we do not understand or like.
 - 4. We spend time seriously asking ourselves to whom the Lord came to save? The nice? The clean? The pleasant ones? Who?
- B. And in this whole process what you will find is that you may realize you are more like Peter before meeting Cornelius than you like to think.

Benediction

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing the good news of Jesus Christ, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen