

Bible Class Notes – Studies in the Book of Acts – Lesson 117

Early Reactions to the Apostles' Message

This week – The Gospel (the good news of salvation) is for people of all nations

God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him. Acts 10 v34-35

Bible Readings for this week:

(Choose a regular time each day to read the Bible and pray whether it be when you first wake up or just before you go to sleep)

Day	Bible Reading	Tick When Read
Sunday	Acts 9 v31-43 (Peter's healing of Aeneas & Dorcas)	
Monday	Acts 10 v1-18 (Cornelius's prayers answered)	
Tuesday	Acts 10 v19-33 (Peter's visit to Cornelius)	
Wednesday	Acts 10 v34-48 (The Holy Spirit comes to the Gentiles)	
Thursday	Acts 11 v1-18 (Peter shows salvation is for all)	
Friday	Ephesians 2 v1-22 (Saved by grace, not by race)	
Saturday	Ephesians 3 v1-21 (Salvation of the Gentiles)	

Important Thought for us Today: What do we trust in for Salvation? Cornelius was described as a devout, God fearing man, praying always. He was loved and respected by all who served under him. He used his power and wealth to benefit local Jews. Surely this was enough to earn him salvation and make him right with God? **Sadly it wasn't.** Maybe we think our being born in a Christian home or country, our church attendance, Bible reading, good behaviour, and good deeds are enough to make us right with God? **Sadly it's not.** We need to see that all our righteousness is as filthy rags to God and can never save us (Isaiah 64v6). Only Christ can save us - it is His gift, trust in Him alone. (Ephesians 2v8-9)

Hymn 391 details what must be our experience to know true salvation.

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| <p>1. Not what these hands have done
Can save this guilty soul;
Not what this toiling flesh has borne
Can make my spirit whole.</p> <p>3. Thy work alone, O Christ
Can ease this weight of sin;
Thy blood alone, O Lamb of God,
Can give me peace within.</p> <p>5. Thy grace alone, O God,
To me can pardon speak;
Thy power alone, O Son of God,
Can sin's sore bondage break.</p> | <p>2. Not what I feel or do
Can give me peace with God;
Not all my prayers, and sighs, and tears
Can bear my awful load.</p> <p>4. Thy love to me, O God,
Not mine, O Lord, to Thee,
Can rid me of sin's dark unrest,
And set my spirit free.</p> <p>6. I bless the Christ of God,
I rest on love divine;
And with unfaltering lip and heart
I call this Saviour mine.</p> |
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EDT Bible Class Take Home Sheet

A Gentile Seeker - Cornelius, a Roman Centurion

• God convinced Peter that the Gospel is for Both Jew and Gentile!

Peter had been brought up a Jew and wrongly taught that God would not bless or save Gentiles(non-Jews). Therefore, contact between Jews and Gentiles was strictly limited. It was seen as a grave sin, an unclean act, for a Jew to eat with such people.

How did God show that this ingrained belief was false?

○ A Banquet from God.

In a vision Peter saw food that was prohibited for a Jew (based on Old Testament laws, and which a Gentile readily ate), descend to him from Heaven and he was told to, **“rise; kill and eat.”** Three times the food was offered to Peter and three times he refused it, saying, **“I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.”** Heaven replied, **“What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.”**

Peter continued to question what the vision meant until he was

○ Invited to a Gentile's house.

Nothing short of a vision from God could have persuaded him that it was the right thing for an apostle of Jesus Christ, a Jew, to share the good news that the Lord Jesus had come to save people from all nations. He knew it was right before God to accept the invitation to eat and pray with Gentiles. **Peter's obedience meant**

○ A Devout and God-fearing Gentile was saved.

Cornelius was a genuine seeker of God. His gifts of money to local, needy Jewish people showed a kindness and concern for the Lord's people; which was not done for bribery or popularity. He had turned from the numerous selfish and power-hungry gods of his own land and was earnestly seeking the one true God of the Bible. But he had yet to hear the true Gospel - that is, until the Apostle Peter visited his home. At last, he understood that no matter how sorry he was for his sin, no matter how many good works he did, salvation could only come by trusting in Christ alone, as the One Who had died in his place, taking punishment for his sins.

○ The Holy Spirit Blessed.

As Peter preached to this Gentile household the Holy Spirit touched their hearts and they were saved. A unique repetition of the amazing occurrences of the Day of Pentecost happened - but this time to the Gentile believers! This special one-off event helped the Jews to see the error of their belief and know that it was always God's plan for Jew and Gentile believers to be part of the New Testament Church.

○ The New Testament Church is now worldwide!

The Gospel is not just in Jerusalem but has now spread throughout the whole world and has been received with joy by people from every continent and nation.

We must ask, Has the Holy Spirit worked in my life? Has He shown me my sin?

Respond by trusting that only Christ can save you and make you right with God.

“Unto me (Paul, a Jew), who am less than the least of all saints (Christians), is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ **Ephesians 3 v8**