

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 3RD, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

DOUBLE VISION (ACTS 10:1-8) "A MAN IN CAESAREA"

Caesarea was the Roman capital in Judea, located 65 miles northwest of Jerusalem on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. It was home to the Roman Army's headquarters.

- Caesarea was also home to a centurion named Cornelius. He was a Roman Army officer who led a regiment of Italian soldiers.

"HE WAS A DEVOUT MAN"

In v. 2, Luke tells us that Cornelius "was a devout man and feared God along with his whole household." A typical Roman would have been exposed to many gods (polytheism), yet Cornelius and his family only recognized the God of Israel (monotheism).

- Cornelius had a genuine relationship with God, devoting himself to prayer and charitable deeds.

DOUBLE VISION

Just like with Ananias and Saul, we see a double vision with the Roman centurion and Peter used in God's sovereign plan to bring them together.

- Cornelius received a vision, where an angel told him to send men to Joppa to call for Peter. Meanwhile, the Spirit confirmed with Peter that the men were sent by God, as he was thinking about the vision he had received (vs. 19-20).

"WHEN THE ANGEL...HAD GONE"

We do not know if Cornelius knew who Peter was, but regardless, **he knew he should do as God told him.**

- Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier. After explaining everything to them, he sent them to where Peter was staying with Simon, the leather tanner, in Joppa.

"A MEMORIAL OFFERING BEFORE GOD"

In Cornelius's vision, the angel told him, "Your prayers and your acts of charity have ascended as a memorial offering before God."

- His worship of God through prayer and acts of charity did not go unnoticed (Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:15-16). **God recognizes, accepts, and remembers the sincere acts of worship from his people** (James 1:27).

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Notice that God chose Peter, a Jew, to reach a Roman centurion—and not Paul, a Roman citizen. Peter had to face his prejudice towards another group of people.

- Most Christians today are not of Jewish descent. With the spreading of the gospel to Cornelius, a Gentile, we see **the beginning of salvation through Jesus being offered to us.**

MADE CLEAN (ACTS 10:9-23)

"HE FELL INTO A TRANCE"

This was not a daydream or imagination but a heightened consciousness brought about by God to prepare Peter for a vision.

- Though he was hungry, this picnic spread of live animals, birds, and reptiles—all things that were considered unclean under the OT law—would have turned his stomach, especially being told to "get up...kill and eat."

WHY RÉPÉTITION OF THREES?

We don't know why this command to kill and eat came three times, but we can't help but remember some important threes in the life of Peter.

- **Three times he denied the Lord, and three times he was asked by Jesus if he loved him** before being commanded to feed His sheep (Jn. 21). It is possible this was **to show Peter that Cornelius was part of His flock.**

"NO, LORD!"

Peter was saved and filled with the Spirit at this point, yet he repeated the same mistake of telling God *no* as he had previously (Matthew 16:22; John 13:8).

- God chose Peter, not because he was perfect but because he was available and willing. **It is a fallacy to believe we must be perfect for God to use us when we only need to be available and willing.**

"WHAT GOD HAS MADE CLEAN, DO NOT CALL IMPURE"

Peter's vision wasn't particularly about food. God was using Peter's understanding of clean and unclean foods to reveal to him that Jesus' sacrifice would be available to all.

- The message that Peter did not grasp at this point was that **whoever has been declared clean by God is no longer considered unholy and unaccepted.**

"GO WITH THEM WITH NO DOUBTS AT ALL"

As Peter was thinking about the vision, he was told by the Spirit that there were three men at his gate, waiting for him.

- Peter knew these men were sent by God, but he did not know they were Gentiles. Worse yet, one was a soldier of the Roman Army, and he was to follow them back to the Roman centurion's house.

AN OBVIOUS HEART CHANGE

Historically, Peter did not always react correctly or obey immediately, but this time he did. He **invited them in, gave them a place to stay, and went out with them the next day.**

- He didn't apprehensively invite them in and give them a place to sleep. **He welcomed and entertained them as honored guests,** going against every Jewish custom of that day.

NO FAVORITISM (ACTS 10:24-48)

WE ARE TO WORSHIP AND SERVE GOD ONLY

Cornelius fell at Peter's feet and worshiped him. Peter was a man of God, sent by God, but it was wrong of Cornelius to worship Peter, and it would have been wrong for Peter to receive it.

- **Any time worship is offered to men or angels, it is refused** (Revelation 19:10). Jesus is the only one to receive such worship, showing **He is greater than any man or angel** (Luke 4:8).

GOD HAS NEVER SHOWN PARTIALITY

It was commonly thought that God showed partiality towards Jews and against Gentiles, but as Peter began to speak, he showed he now understood that **"God doesn't show favoritism."**

- With Peter spreading the gospel to a Roman officer, **the Church was starting to align with God's heart as it had been revealed in the OT** (Deuteronomy 10:17; 2 Chronicles 19:7).

"THEY HEARD THEM SPEAKING IN TONGUES"

These first Gentile converts received the Holy Spirit and displayed the spiritual gift of tongues.

- While all Believers have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the special empowering of spiritual gifts, it is not always the specific gift of tongues. The tongues they spoke weren't the same as on the day of Pentecost, as **these were spoken for God and not man** (1 Corinthians 14:2).

"HE COMMANDED THEM TO BE BAPTIZED"

What was taking place was as much for the Gentile converts as it was for the Jewish Christians witnessing God's Spirit and gifts being poured out.

- They witnessed the same Spirit being poured out on Gentiles, empowering them with spiritual gifts in the same manner they had received them, so in an act of solidarity, **they baptized everyone in Cornelius's house.**

THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS AND PETER

Cornelius and his house were prepared to hear from God through prayer and fasting, and Peter was prepared by the Holy Spirit to deliver a message from God.

- Do we **prepare ourselves to hear from God through prayer and fasting?** Do we **allow the Holy Spirit to work on us** and prepare us to proclaim His message?

THE FAITH OF CORNELIUS

- The faith of Cornelius was contagious to those of his household and command.
- Though it is up to the individual to respond to the love of God, we are to consider what we are displaying to those around us.
- Is our faith obvious to those around us?
- Is our faith contagious to those in our homes, schools, or workplaces?

MADE CLEAN

- Cornelius was a "good" man who respected God, but even "good" people need to place their faith in Jesus and what He did for us.
- We are washed and made clean by the blood of Jesus, meaning that all impurities of past mistakes and sin are removed from us.
- Do we claim to have been washed clean by the blood of Jesus yet still walk around in shame?
- "If you continue in my word, you really are my disciples. You will know truth and truth will set you free...Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin...So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free"(John 8:31-36).