

"MISSION to EVERY-BODY!!!"

8 / 6 / 17

Acts 10:9-16, 44-48 (NIV) (Was SERM_296; 8/4/96; 758, 2003; 1057, 7/29/07; 1456, 2012)

INTRODUCTION— MARK TWAIN once said: "Most people are bothered by those passages of SCRIPTURE they don't understand, but FOR ME I HAVE ALWAYS NOTICED THAT THE PASSAGES THAT BOTHER ME ARE THOSE I DO UNDERSTAND." (Snappy Stories, p. 11)

I'VE BEEN TOLD several times that people don't understand this passage from ACTS CHAPTER 10 that we read a minute ago. In a FEW MINUTES, I HOPE WE CAN UNDERSTAND IT BETTER, and BE GLAD FOR IT.

I. PETER and CORNELIUS

A. PETER'S VISION (vv. 9-16)

1. Peter didn't understand the meaning of the VISION he saw while on the rooftop— it was a great puzzle to him!
2. THAT'S THE WAY IT IS SOMETIMES WITH GOD'S WILL!! WE DON'T UNDERSTAND— IT DOESN'T SEEM TO MAKE SENSE WHY GOD TELLS US TO DO CERTAIN THINGS!
3. IF GOD WANTS US to KNOW "WHY" He wants us to do things, I BELIEVE He will TELL US! BUT— He might want to **SHOW** us!
4. TO: "TURN the OTHER CHEEK" — (Mt. 5:39) (V Mt. 18:22) — OR TO: "FORGIVE...NOT SEVEN TIMES, but SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN"

B. CORNELIUS' REQUEST

1. THIS BEGAN TO BECOME CLEAR TO PETER WHEN CORNELIUS' MEN appeared on his DOORSTEP in JOPPA. He went with them to CAESAREA, the COASTAL TOWN where CORNELIUS was in command of the "ITALIAN REGIMENT." (vv. 20-24)

2. CORNELIUS and all of his FAMILY and FRIENDS wanted to HEAR WHAT GOD HAD TOLD PETER! LET'S REMEMBER that **ALL** of the DISCIPLES and FOLLOWERS of JESUS until this time were: JEWISH PEOPLE!! (Or CONVERTS to JUDAISM.) NOW — some “GOD-FEARING GENTILES” wanted to learn about JESUS, the **JEWISH** MESSIAH and SAVIOR.
 3. PETER and the other APOSTLES, UNTIL THIS MOMENT, did not UNDERSTAND the meaning of Jesus' words to them just before He ascended to Heaven— “Go, and *MAKE DISCIPLES of ALL NATIONS, baptizing them...*” (Matt. 28:19, NIV)
 4. PETER and the other APOSTLES may have thought Jesus wanted them to ONLY go to OTHER NATIONS to try to **WIN** every **JEW** in the world to FAITH in JESUS CHRIST as LORD and SAVIOR and MESSIAH!
 5. **BUT NOW— PETER PUT TWO and TWO TOGETHER,** and realized that these “UNCLEAN, IMPURE GENTILES” were the REAL SUBJECTS of his VISION— HE FINALLY REALIZED THAT “GOD DOES NOT SHOW FAVORITISM but ACCEPTS [PEOPLE] FROM EVERY NATION WHO FEAR HIM AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT.” (vv. 34-35)
 6. PETER PREACHED the GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST to CORNELIUS and his GUESTS *THAT VERY HOUR, as he had that day of the FIRST CHRISTIAN PENTECOST* — and WHEN THEY TRUSTED CHRIST as THEIR SAVIOR, HE BAPTIZED THEM RIGHT THEN and THERE!!
- C. The RESULT— the GOSPEL WAS from then on GIVEN: **TO GENTILES!!**
1. **IF IT WERE NOT FOR THIS MOMENTOUS ACTION, YOU and I** **WOULD NOT BE CHRISTIANS!!!** CHRISTIANITY WOULD HAVE REMAINED a “SECT” or a DIVISION in the JEWISH FAITH— and ONLY JEWS WHO BELIEVED JESUS IS the MESSIAH and SAVIOR WOULD TRULY BE CHRISTIANS! The ONLY GENTILES

WHO COULD HAVE FOLLOWED JESUS— WOULD HAVE BEEN
THOSE WHO HAD FIRST CONVERTED to JUDAISM!

2. BUT— **THROUGH the VISION TO PETER, and PETER'S OBEDIENCE**
To GOD THROUGH THAT VISION— **THE DOOR WAS OPENED**
SO THAT **EVERY PERSON ON EARTH COULD HEAR THE**
GOSPEL and COME TO CHRIST!!

II. THE GOSPEL GOES OUT TODAY!!

A. GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS—

1. That is, GOD favors no ONE PEOPLE or RACE or NATIONALITY over another.

2. GALATIANS 3:26 gives us GOD'S VIEWS on this: *“YOU ARE ALL SONS of
GOD through FAITH in JESUS CHRIST... THERE IS [THEREFORE]
NEITHER JEW nor GREEK, SLAVE nor FREE, MALE nor
FEMALE, for you are all ONE in CHRIST.”* (NIV)

3. THEREFORE, GOD'S WORD and the GOOD NEWS of GOD'S
FORGIVENESS and SALVATION through JESUS CHRIST SHOULD
GO OUT— TO ALL THE WORLD!!

4. And SO IT DOES TODAY!!!

B. BRUCE and EMILIE PRIVATSKY — (26 yrs. ago, were at Bookwalter UMC)

1. They spent 3 years in INDONESIA
2. THEY SPENT NEARLY TEN YEARS in KAZAKHSTAN (former USSR).
3. TEN YEARS AGO, they went to ISTANBUL and TURKEY.

C. BILL and GRACE WARNOCK —

1. BEEN in AFRICA: LIBERIA
2. THEN, they went to MOSCOW— Retired a few years ago.
3. ONE CHURCH a few years ago had a YARD SALE to raise over \$1000
to SUPPORT BILL and GRACE as METHODIST MISSIONARIES
to RUSSIA.

D. BUT — NO CHRISTIAN HAS TO GO to another PART of the GLOBE to BE a WITNESS for JESUS CHRIST!!!!!!

E. WE CAN BE MISSIONARIES — *RIGHT WHERE WE LIVE !!!*

1. AS PETER SAID, “*GOD DOES NOT SHOW FAVORITISM...*”
2. THERE ARE PEOPLE ALL OVER THIS CITY, ALL OVER THIS COUNTY WHO NEED TO HEAR the GOSPEL of JESUS CHRIST– IT'S UP TO **US** TO TELL THEM!
3. **INVITE PEOPLE** TO CHURCH WITH YOU!!
TELL THEM ABOUT CHRIST!!

CONCLUSION — A father and teenage son were walking on the beach AT DAWN, after a severe storm had finally blown over. The BEACH WAS COVERED BY THOUSANDS and THOUSANDS of STARFISH which had been blown up by the storm. The SON SAID, “Dad, we have to DO something!!” AND the SON ran down to the shore and started PICKING UP STARFISH ONE BY ONE and FLINGING THEM INTO THE OCEAN. Catching up to his SON, the FATHER asked him what he was doing. The ANSWER was that STARFISH, like ALL FISH, need to be MOVING IN WATER in order to BREATHE and SURVIVE— if they stayed on the BEACH, they would DIE.

“BUT THE BEACH GOES ON FOR MILES, AND THERE ARE THOUSANDS of STARFISH,” replied the FATHER. **“HOW CAN YOUR EFFORT MAKE A DIFFERENCE??”**

The SON looked at the starfish in his hand, and said: **“IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE TO THIS ONE,”** and he THREW IT TO SAFETY in the waves.

WILL YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE — TO JUST ONE??????