

Introduction:

Acts 10 and part of **Acts 11** deals with the conversion of Cornelius. Certain events are note worthy and this conversion created quite a stir as a “Gentile” becomes a Christian. We want to look at this event from the perspective of Peter, Cornelius, and what did and did not save him.

I) Sincerity

A) Cornelius

1. A Gentile seeking to serve God.

Acts 10:1 *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.*

2. He was serving God the way he knew how.
3. Like many today who are sincere and serving God by what they have been taught, the way they grew up, as they believe the scriptures teach.
4. When Peter came to his house, he was going to hear something different. What was he going to do with the Gospel of Christ?
5. The same goes for us when we hear something different and realize we need to change.

B) Peter – walls had to be torn down.

1. There was a division caused by the Law of Moses.

Acts 10:9 *The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. 10 Then he became very hungry and*

wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance **11** and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. **12** In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. **13** And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." **14** But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." **15** And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." **16** This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

2. Dietary Laws were part of the Law of Moses.
3. Part of the Law represented all of the Law.

Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. **2** Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. **3** And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law.

- a. Sabbath Day Observance is in the Old Law.
 - b. Levitical Priesthood
 - c. Dietary Law
 - d. If one part is done away with then the whole law is gone.
4. Bigger application- distinction between Jew and Gentile was gone.

Acts 11:3 "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"

5. Prejudice had to be done away with, cultural divide between Jews and Gentiles had to be breached.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth

I perceive that God shows no partiality. 35 "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

6. This is a testimony to Peter's sincerity.

II) How Was Cornelius Saved?

A) Not by...

1. A good moral life – **Acts 10.2**

Acts 10:22 *And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."*

2. Not by prayer --Paul was not saved by prayer alone

Acts 9:11 *So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying.*

Acts 22:16 *'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'*

3. Faith only, **Acts 10.2.**

a. Paul was not saved by faith alone, see **Acts 22.16**

b. We read of people who believed but were not saved.

John 12:42 *Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

c. Demons believe and trembled but were not saved.

James 2:19 *You believe that there is one God. You do*

well. Even the demons believe--and tremble!

- d. People on the Day of Pentecost believed but were not saved.

Acts 2:37 ***Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"***

- 4. An angelic appearance

Acts 10:3 ***About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"*** ***4*** ***And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"*** ***So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.*** ***5*** ***"Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.*** ***6*** ***"He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."***

- a. Cornelius told Peter about the angel's appearance.

Acts 11:13 ***"And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 'who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.'***

- 5. Holy Spirit baptism

Acts 10:44 ***While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.***

Acts 11:15 ***"And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.***

- a. The us refers to the Apostles, the beginning refers to the Day of Pentecost.
- b. Note the Jerusalem Council which states plainly the

purpose of this H.S. baptism.

Acts 15:7 *And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 "So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, 9 "and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.*

B) Saved by...

1. Words

Acts 10:6 *"He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."*

Acts 11:13 *"And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, 14 'who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.'*

a. What happened when Peter came to the household of Cornelius?

Acts 10:33 *"So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God." 34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.*

b. Man is saved by the Gospel of Christ. **Romans 1.16.**

2. Faith

Acts 10:43 *"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."*

- a. Without faith it is impossible to be saved.
- b. Jerusalem Council

Acts 15:7 *And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: "Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. 8 "So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, 9 "and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.*

- c. No distinction between Gentile and Jew when it came to faith and salvation.

3. Repentance

Acts 11:18 *When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."*

- a. Repentance -turning toward God.
- b. At Mars Hill this is stated.

Acts 17:30 *"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,*

4. Baptism

- a. H.S. came upon Cornelius but not saved yet. Why?
- b. Baptism is a command of God, into Christ.

Acts 10:48 *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.*

5. The grace of God.

Acts 15:11 *"But we believe that through the grace of the*

Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."

Conclusion:

Let us not miss the point of why the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his household. To show God makes no distinction between Jew and Gentile. Why Peter was sent to Cornelius? To tell him what to do to be saved. When was Cornelius saved?