

The Gospel in Deed and Word (Peter and Cornelius)
Acts 10

Bible Passage Focus from Acts 10

Peter's Vision in Vs 11-16 – (Peter) saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." ¹⁵ And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." ¹⁶ This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

Vs 28-29 - ²⁸ And he (Peter) said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. ²⁹ So when I was sent for, I came without objection.

Vs 34-35 - ³⁴ So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

Vs 39-43 ³⁹ And we (the disciples of Jesus) are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, ⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, ⁴¹ not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Main Point

- The Gospel is to be shared to all through our actions of love and our words of the good news of the saving work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross.
- The Gospel in Deed and Word

VS 1-16 (Acts 8-10 Context & Cornelius and Peter's visions)

The past couple of chapters in Acts God has been in the process of opening the eyes of the Christian Jews specifically the Apostles or the disciples of Jesus to the fact that the Gospel is no exclusive to just Jews but it is for everyone the gentiles.

- But to the early church to the leaders of the church they assumed Jesus came to save the Jews and only the Jews. And so it was shocking if not life altering to have God tell them that Jesus' salvation through his death and resurrection was much bigger than just the chosen people of God, the Jews, but to everyone.
- Now during this time not a single Jew or their ancestors were not impacted negatively by more powerful gentile heathenness nations. And the current reigning power over the Jews was Rome. And for the Jews they created a law, not given by God, but created to protect the sanctity of the people of God. And the law stated that it was against the law for any Jew to associate or even be in the presence of a gentile. And if they were, they were considered ceremonially unclean for an extended period of

time and would be isolated from their family, community, and most importantly the place of worship the temple.

- But God was on the move to correct this tradition that all of the Christian Jews followed.
 - We see in Acts 8 where Philip is in Samaria and is sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Samaritans who were half Jews, half Gentile.
 - You remember the shocking interaction between Jesus and the Samaritan woman?
 - Jews did not hang out with Samaritans for they were Gentiles. And yet Philip was called by God to evangelize to them and they accepted this message.
 - Then we see Philip miraculously in the presence of the Ethiopian Eunuch and explains the gospel message to him and baptizes him.
 - In Acts 9 we see the conversion of Saul who became known as Paul. The greatest murderer of Christian Jews up until that point and God chose to save him and actually use Paul to be one of the greatest tools of the spread of the good news of Jesus Christ to the rest of the world.
 - And this morning we will see the full picture of God's salvation, that it is for all people and is not exclusive to one race.

- Vs 1-8 – Cornelius Vision
 - In the beginning of Acts 10 we are introduced to a man named Cornelius. He was a Roman soldier, a centurion, an officer in charge of many soldiers known as the Italian Cohort.
 - But Cornelius happened to have been a convert to Judaism. He and his family and all those who served in his household were faithful to God.
 - And he receives a vision and an angel appeared to him and told him to look for the Apostle Peter.
 - And so Cornelius sends a couple servants to go and find Peter and bring him to meet him.

- Vs 9-16 Peter's Vision
 - The next day the Apostle Peter also has a vision from God in vs 11-16 it says
 - Peter "saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." ¹⁵ And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." ¹⁶ This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.
 - And Peter still didn't understand what God was trying to tell him he maybe thought this vision was test of his faithfulness because he failed three times before when it came to his denial of knowing Jesus
 - And much like Jesus had to constantly repeat himself to his disciples and explain things to his disciples, God had to do this with Peter.
 - The Holy Spirit spoke to Peter to meet with these Gentile servants of Cornelius to hear what they had to say.

VS 17-33 – Gospel shown in Deed / Action

- In vs 24 we see the Gospel made alive and relevant through Peter's actions even when Peter didn't fully understand why God was calling him to meet with Gentiles.
- We see the Gospel being shown in Peter's Actions.

- Peter decides to follow the servants and meet Cornelius knowing full well he would be breaking Jewish Tradition Laws of being with Gentiles.

- And when Peter met Cornelius not only was he greeted by Cornelius but also his family, and upon entering Cornelius' home he was met with more people beyond just his family. I mean it was probably very shocking for Peter.
- Vs 25 to 29 says this²⁵ When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶ But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am a man." ²⁷ And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered. ²⁸ And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. ²⁹ So when I was sent for, I came without objection. I ask then why you sent for me."
- How did Peter feel in that moment?
 - A whole bunch of roman citizens one of which was an officer in the roman army bowing down to him as if he was God.
 - And not only was he not supposed to meet with any gentiles but now he is in a home filled with gentiles' family and friends of Cornelius.
 - He probably was in shock by the reverence given him.
 - Uncomfortable that he was in the home of a Roman officer surrounded by a whole lota romans
 - He was weighing the consequences of his actions because Peter one of the key leaders of the church was risking isolation from his Jewish community being ceremonially unclean
 - He maybe felt like he was sinning
 - And probably felt unsafe.
 - And yet we see that Peter obeyed God and the Spirits leading regardless of the traditions and laws of his culture, the uncomfortable nature of this command by God, and perhaps even coming face to face with some of his prejudice toward not just any gentiles but romans and more specifically a roman officer in the army. The same Rome that crucified Jesus.
- So what compelled Peter to obey God's leading?
 - It was a command from God. Now as obvious as this may seem, you have to realize that Peter obeyed the command even when he did not fully understand why God was asking him to share the gospel with these roman gentiles and felt extremely uncomfortable with doing what was being asked of him.
 - Now Peter probably did this because he had three years of not having his expectations met when it came to follow Jesus and time after time he was asked to do something or Jesus did something and Peter didn't fully understand why? This was no different but he knew God was a good God and had a plan and he trusted God regardless if he didn't have the full picture.
 - This is important for us to know. Often times God asks us to do things, commands us to obey him in life and through his Word and we may not have the full picture. We may not know why we may even feel uncomfortable with what God is asking of us. And yet much like Peter God is asking us to obey.
 - The second reason Peter obeyed was because I think he fully understood that as common and unclean as the Gentile Romans were, he too was just as common and unclean as they were

without Jesus Christ saving work on the cross. That as undeserving of grace as he may have felt toward these gentiles, he too was undeserving and yet Christ died for him.

- He may have had some prejudice toward these people and traditions or laws that made it seem wrong to be in the presence of these gentiles and yet the Gospel of Jesus Christ was more powerful than his own prejudice and traditions and laws.

- Peter showed love toward these gentiles in his act to step into their home knowing full well that it was against the Jewish traditions and laws.
- God wants us to share the Gospel through our God loving and sometimes surprising and uncomfortable actions.
- Actions especially in this day and age speaks louder than words.
- God wanted and wants us to Show the Gospel through our actions of love because of the Gospel's transforming work in our lives.

Vs 34-35 (vs 15) – Gospel is for Everyone

- And these Gospel actions of love are to be shared and shown to anyone and everyone.
- In vs 34-35 when Peter finally understands what God was showing him in the vision and his interaction with Cornelius. He says
 - ³⁴ "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, ³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.
- To Peter it was revolutionary it was shocking it was borderline sinful to have the gospel be offered to anyone else except the Jews.
- At the same time, we need to do some self-evaluation many of us have been Christian for a long time some of us, like myself, have been born and raised in a Christian home and have attend church and been a Christian all of our lives. And so, it is perhaps easy for us to be entitled to the Gospel. And somewhat protective of who deserves to be shown the love of Jesus Christ.
 - It makes sense that the Gospel is for everyone but do you really live that out.
 - Are you evaluating your own prejudices when it comes to showing and sharing the love of Jesus Christ?
 - Did you know that God is commanding us in the great commission to go and make disciples and share the good news of Jesus Christ to
 - Drug Addicts, Drunkards, Sex Offenders, Politicians, Gay and Trans, Black and White, Anyone non Asian, immigrant, criminal, woke , liberal. Pro Choice, etc.
- The Gospel needs to be shown to everyone and anyone regardless of our prejudices and how uncomfortable we may feel.
- We should have these clear biblical passages in mind that should motivate us to obey this command to share the gospel to all.

John 3:16 - ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world,^[a] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

- God Loves all people he loves the word and if you believe in him you will have everlasting life.

Matt 24:14 - ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come

- We share the good news, yes for the benefit of the lost.
- but more importantly we share the gospel because once all people all nations have heard the good news of Jesus Christ... CHRIST COMES BACK. The day we all should long for. If you want Christ to come back then get off your butts and start sharing the Gospel to all people.

Rev 7:9-10 - ⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

- No matter what fear or uncomfortable feelings or prejudices you may have toward another person or group of people, know this Heaven will be filled not just with people that look like us and talk like us, but from every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages will be worshipping God in their God designed ways. With their God designed languages, expressions, and musical flavor.

The Gospel is to be shared to everyone through our actions ...but also our words.

VS 36-43 - Gospel needs Words

- Peter after obeying God and now fully understanding what God was trying to show him proceeds to use his words to share the Gospel.
- Yes the Gospel needs to be shown but it needs to be followed with your words of the greatest love that the world has ever known the Good News of Jesus Christ.
- Vs 42-43 ⁴² And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.
- As important as showing the Gospel to everyone through our acts of love, the gospel does not stop at actions only... it needs words.
 - o Think about this God could have revealed the saving work of Jesus Christ the Gospel to Cornelius anyway he wanted. God could have shown him a vision about Jesus Christ death and resurrection.
 - o But instead chose to show him a vision to look for a man named Peter not knowing who Peter was or what Peter was going to do or say.
 - o And Peter comes slightly apprehensive and shows the Gospel through his loving and obedient actions of entering and being in the presence of gentiles but then proceeds to defend his actions through his words. He shares with his words the good news of Jesus Christ to them.
 - Just love is not enough
 - Doing good is not enough
 - The greatest good for humanity is not physical/ mental/ or emotional but it is spiritual.
 - People's greatest needs are found in the soul their spirit. And the Gospel message of Jesus Christ through your words the physical sharing of the Gospel is what meets those needs.
 - Your Acts of love in showing the Gospel meeting people's physical, mental, and emotional needs is a means for us to share the Gospel to meet their spiritual need.

Body 5 – Vs 44-47 – God of Confirmation

- Finally in vs 44-47 after Peter share the gospel with these gentiles the Holy Spirit falls on the gentiles like it did upon the Jews who believed in Jesus Christ in Acts 2 during the first Pentecost. This is called the second Pentecost the Pentecost of the gentiles.
- And Peter baptizes them as an official sign that they are indeed a part of the family of God both Jew and Gentile.
- What I like about the conclusion of this story is that it shows that God is a God of Confirmation. He loves confirming things for us.
 - o When God asks us to do something it is always repeated multiple times and confirmed by God. God is a patient God and is willing to tell us over and over again and confirm it for us so we know for a fact that it is from God.
- God has already communicated through Peter to us that the Gospel is to be shown through our actions our deeds of loving Gospel transformation to everyone and anyone and we need to share the good news of Jesus Christ with our words. And this calling is confirmed in scripture for all followers of Jesus found in Matthew 28: 18-19
 - o All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Application: So then what are some practical steps we should take of living out the Gospel by sharing it to all through our deeds and words.

- 1) Identify who in your life need to see and hear the Gospel? Ask God to soften and open up your heart and eyes to see who needs it. (a relative, a coworker, a grocery store clerk, a struggling dirty looking person down on their luck camping on the side of the road, a struggling mother at target not sure if they have enough money to get both formula and diapers, a little boy at day camp on a field trip to the beach who decided to go into the ocean forgetting to bring a change of clothes and is now crying because he is cold and doesn't know what to do)
 - a. Identify who needs to see and hear the Gospel
- 2) Evaluate what obstacles if any are hindering you from showing and sharing the Gospel?
 - a. Remind yourself of this message today that the Gospel is for all it is a command even when you don't know why or feel uncomfortable. They need see and hear the Gospel.
- 3) Once you identify the person, evaluate your own heart, then go and 'DO IT'
 - a. Show the Gospel with your love and care for their physical, mental, and emotional needs
 - b. But don't stop at showing it find an opportunity to Share the Good News of Jesus Christ with your words.
 - c. Let me tell you something... it might save their life for all eternity.
- 4) And finally, don't assume that Christians , attenders and members at FBC don't need this Gospel Show and Tell either. We all need to see and hear the Gospel daily as well.
 - a. Let me tell you Tamai and I needed all the love and care during the past three weeks and man FBC I was blown away by your Gospel loving care through Food, those encourage messages and reminding us that God is good.
 - b. Keep on doing it.

Identity, Evaluate, Do it, And do it to all: Christian and Non-Christian all for the Glory of God

The Gospel is to be shared to all through our deeds and words.