

A Good Man Who Needed To Be Saved

Acts 10

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Scripture Reader and Reading. Kadin Lopez – Acts 10.44-48

Persuasion:

I. Acts 10.1, 2 – A Devout Man

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 (Acts 10.1, 2).

A. Cornelius was a Roman centurion.

1. He was a man with responsibility.
2. He knew how to lead men, and
 - a) it takes a skilled leader to lead men in battle, and
 - b) in police action.

B. He was a good man (v. 2).

1. He was devout.
2. He feared God.
3. He taught his family.
4. He gave alms generously to the people.
5. He prayed to God always.

C. Cornelius was a high quality man.

1. He is the kind of man you would want living next door.
2. If your daughter came home and said she wanted to marry a man like this,
 - a) how many parents would be disappointed?
 - b) Can you imagine parents telling their daughter, find a man.
 - (1) Who is lazy and irresponsible;

- (2) Who does not fear God and does not regard man;
- (3) Who will not take an interest in his family;
- (4) Who is stingy and only spends his money on himself;
- (5) Who never prays to God because he is not a spiritual man?

D. Why then is his story in the Bible?

1. There was something missing in the life of Cornelius.
 - a) Even as there was something missing in the life of Solomon, as shown by the Old Testament Book of Ecclesiastes.
 - b) Do you know what was missing from the lives of these two men?
2. We all have something missing.
 - a) Some things that we are missing do not matter, and
 - b) other things do matter.
3. Cornelius, and Solomon, was missing what mattered.
4. To miss what matters could mean the difference between
 - a) life and death,
 - b) heaven and hell.

E. Mark 10.17-22 is the story of another wonderful man.

1. This man approached Jesus about inheriting eternal life.
 - a) Right away we learn that he is a spiritual man.
 - b) We would have a hard time saying that anything is wrong with him,

17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

- (1) Can you find anything wrong with his question?
- (2) Were not his motives of the highest sort?

2. May the Lord give more men as this one.

18 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. 19 You know the commandments. ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” {Exodus 20.12-16; Deuteronomy 5.16-20} 20 And he answered and said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.” 21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack. Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” 22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions (Mark 10.17-22).

3. To say that you lack only one thing is complimentary, but
 - a) this time it is a serious problem.
 - b) How would you like for the Lord to say that you only lack one thing?

II. Acts 10.3-8 – An Angel Pays a Visit

3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in {to him} 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.” 7 And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. 8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa (Acts 10.3-8).

- A. Proof that this man prayed to God always,
 1. as Luke had said in verse 2,
 2. is that he was praying at the regular time of the Jews in the afternoon,
 3. that is, the ninth hour, or 3.00 PM (v. 3).
- B. What Cornelius saw was clear (v. 3).

1. He did not have to interpret an experience and infer that it was an angel.
- C. His submissive attitude (v. 4).
- D. What his prayers and alms had done (v. 4).
- E. Cornelius had to send for Peter, who would tell Cornelius what to do (vv. 5, 6).
1. The angelic visit did not save Cornelius.
 2. The angelic visit was not a sign that Cornelius was saved already.
 3. Cornelius needed to hear something and to do something.
- F. Again, we see the kind of man that Cornelius was (vv. 7, 8).
1. He had servants and a devout soldier who waited on him continually.
 2. Cornelius was a powerful military man who had people at his disposal.
 - a) These servants and the soldier waited upon Cornelius
 - b) with gladness and devotion to him.
 3. What kind of a man has people serve him so?

III. Acts 10.9-23 – A Reluctant Preacher

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. 17 Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. 18 And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there. 19 While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. 20 Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." 21 Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him

from Cornelius, and said, “Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?” 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.” 23 Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him (Acts 10.9–23).

- A. The vision revealed to Peter not to call unclean what God has cleansed (vv. 9–16).
- B. The Holy Spirit approves of the men sent by Cornelius (vv. 17–20).
- C. The three men explain their mission (vv. 21, 22).
- D. So, Peter goes with them, along with six Jewish disciples (v. 23).
- E. Here is what is happening.

- 1. Acts 11.19 explains what had been happening up to this time,

19 Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only (Acts 11.19).

- a) The church only preached to Jews, because
 - b) they thought that only the Jews should hear the gospel.
 - 2. However, God intended the message for all people.
 - a) Thus, God took a stubborn Jew and
 - b) persuaded him that the Gentiles should hear the gospel.
 - (1) If the rest of the church saw Peter change, then,
 - (2) hopefully, the rest would follow suit.

IV. Acts 10.24–33 – Present to Hear the Word of God

24 And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25 As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26

But Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I myself am also a man.” 27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. 28 Then he said to them, “You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29 Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?” 30 So Cornelius said, “Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.’ 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” (Acts 10.24-33).

A. Peter was only a man! (vv. 24-26).

B. Another sign that Peter should start preaching to the Gentiles (vv. 27-33).

V. **Acts 10.34-43 – Through Jesus Christ Is the Forgiveness of Sins**

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. 36 The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all— 37 that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached. 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. 40 Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, 41 not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. 42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. 43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins” (Acts 10.34-43).

A. God does not show favoritism (vv. 34, 35).

1. Christians are His special people, but
 2. anyone can become a Christian.
- B. The word and work of Jesus Christ (vv. 36–38).
1. Jesus came preaching peace,
 - a) peace with God, and
 - b) peace between former enemies.
 2. Jesus demonstrated that He was from God by doing good,
 - a) primarily miraculous works, and
 - b) destroying the works of the devil.
- C. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (vv. 39–41).
1. Peter and several others witnessed of all these things.
 2. Not one contemporary of Peter refuted his testimony.
 - a) They certainly would have, if they could have.
- D. Jesus is the Judge of the living and the dead (v. 42).
1. This reveals why preaching the peace of Jesus must be done.
 2. God ordained Jesus to be the Judge of the living and the dead.
 - a) There will come a time when God will end all things.
 - b) Every human will be present before Jesus for Judgment.
 - (1) If we found the peace of Christ while living on the earth,
 - (2) He will invite us into heaven.
- E. Believing in Jesus you will receive the forgiveness of your sins (v. 43).
1. So, how do I have peace with God?
 - a) Jesus Christ brings the forgiveness of sins, because
 - b) it is our sin which separates us from God.
 - (1) Thus, believing in Jesus leads to the forgiveness of my sins.

- (2) Is this what you have been wanting?
 - (a) God's offer of peace through the forgiveness of your sins is for
 - (b) seemingly good men like Cornelius, and
 - (c) extremely wicked men like the ones who crucified Christ.

VI. Acts 10.44-46a – One Last Sign

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. 45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God... (Acts 10.44-46a).

- A. This sign demonstrated that the gospel is for everyone.
- B. You may think the gospel is not for you, because
 - 1. you are not a terrible sinner,
 - a) thinking that you do not need forgiveness, but
 - b) remember Cornelius, or
 - 2. you are a terrible sinner,
 - a) thinking that God cannot forgive you, but
 - b) remember He forgave the people who crucified His Son.

VII. Acts 10.46b-48 – Commanded to Be Baptized

46 ...Then Peter answered, 47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days (Acts 10.46b-48).

- A. God wants you, no one who can forbid the water for your baptism.
 - 1. You can be baptized, if
 - a) you are like Cornelius, a believer in Jesus Christ, and

- b) you are ready to turn from sin and live for Jesus Christ.
- 2. No one can forbid the water, because
 - a) your sins are too great,
 - b) you are of a different race.
 - (1) You are commanded
 - (2) in the name of the Lord to be baptized.

B. Cornelius then showed hospitality.

- 1. Once you become a Christian, become active in doing good,
- 2. remembering that Jesus went about doing good.

Exhortation.

I. Are You Ready?

- A. Do you believe in Jesus Christ?
- B. Are you turning from your sins?
- C. Are you ready to make the decision to start living for Christ today and forever?
- D. Then be baptized today.