

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon January 22, 2023

Acts 10: 1 – 48 “Epiphany: Pentecost for the Gentiles” – Part 1: Cornelius’ Vision (v1-8)

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. 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.” 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.

I. Introduction

- a. Acts 10: “Epiphany: Pentecost for the Gentiles”
  - i. Part 1: The Vision of Cornelius v1-8 – today
  - ii. Part 2: Peter’s Vision v9-23
  - iii. Part 3: Peter and Cornelius meet v24-33
  - iv. Part 4: Peter’s Sermon v34-43
  - v. Part 5: The Conversion of the First Gentiles v44-48
- b. “This section is one of the most important units in Acts. Here the gospel goes out directly to a Gentile and his household for the first time. Everything is coordinated by God, as was the case with Saul’s conversion. The Spirit’s coming upon the group independently of any action by Peter also confirms God’s direction in what takes place, a point Peter makes very clearly when the controversial inclusion of the Gentiles is discussed in 11:15–18. In a sense this scene is the book’s turning point, as from here the gospel will fan out in all directions to people across a vast array of geographical regions, something Paul’s three missionary journeys will underscore.”<sup>1</sup>
- c. **“EPIPHANY:** The term “epiphany” comes from a Greek word which means “appearance” or “manifestation.” In Western Christianity the festival of Epiphany, observed on the sixth of January, celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, the coming of the Magi to see the child Jesus (Matt. 2:1–12). The 12 days between Christmas and Epiphany have often been called the “Twelve Days of Christmas.” In much of Eastern Christianity, Epiphany is a celebration of the baptism of Jesus, a recognition of His manifestation to humanity as the Son of God (Mark 1:9–11). In the early centuries before the observance of Christmas, Epiphany celebrated both the birth of Jesus and His baptism.”<sup>2</sup>
- d. Today: “Epiphany: Pentecost for the Gentiles” Part 1 – Vision of Cornelius v1-8

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<sup>1</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 380.

<sup>2</sup> Fred A. Grissom, “*Epiphany*,” ed. Chad Brand et al., *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 501–502.

- i. Cornelius: A God-fearing Roman Centurion v1,2
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- II. Cornelius: A God-fearing Roman Centurion v1,2
  - a. 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.
  - b. Cornelius is highly commended by Luke. As a respected Roman military leader in a very important town, but also as a God-fearer who led his household in reverence, diligence, generosity and prayer, Cornelius arrives as a memorable figure in the history of Gospel expansion. He has the significant distinction of being the first Gentile convert described in the book of Acts. We see in Cornelius an unregenerate man outside the covenant who nonetheless is sincerely seeking the One True God.
    - i. "An account given us of this Cornelius, who and what he was, who was the first-born of the Gentiles to Christ. We are here told that he was a great man and a good man—two characters that seldom meet, but here they did; and where they do meet they put a lustre upon each other: goodness makes greatness truly valuable, and greatness makes goodness much more serviceable."<sup>3</sup>
  - c. Caesarea – an important coastal Roman town
    - i. "The city of Caesarea, about 60 kilometers (37 miles) north of Joppa, had been built by Herod I between 22–10 BC at the site of the old Phoenician harbor ... and named after Augustus. The desire to express his loyalty to Rome can be seen not only in the name of the city but also in the construction of a large temple erected on a massive platform (100 by 90 meters) which was dedicated to the worship of Augustus and Roma, the personification of Rome. Josephus praises the beauty and the size of the temple, particularly the statue of Julius Caesar which in his opinion compared favorably with the statue of Zeus in Olympia. Herod built a palace on a small peninsula south of the harbor, which was used after AD 6 by the Roman as *praetorium* (see on 23:35). Caesarea had the typical infrastructure of a Roman provincial capital, which included a marketplace (*agora*), a theater which could seat 3,500 spectators, and a large amphitheater which was larger than the Colosseum in Rome. The seat of the Roman governor of the province of Judea, the *praetorium*, was located in Herod's palace. The large harbor complex played an important role in international shipping. Numerous large warehouses had been built to store wheat, wine and other goods before being loaded on the ships. Caesarea had about 30,000 inhabitants, mostly Syrian Greeks,

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

some Samaritans, Roman soldiers, and a large Jewish minority. Most Greek and Roman deities were worshiped in Caesarea. An inscription confirms that Pontius Pilate erected a temple dedicated to Tiberius. Peter's visit to Caesarea took place in [around] AD 37"<sup>4</sup>

d. Roman Centurion

- i. "The cohort legion was the Roman army's primary fighting force in the late Republican and imperial periods with roughly 5,000 to 6,000 men. The basic fighting unit was comprised of 10 cohorts of 480 men. Each cohort contained six centuries of 80 men each (not 100, as the name "century" implies). The smallest unit was called the *contubernium*, made up of eight men who shared living quarters and food. Ten *contubernia* made up one century, commanded by a centurion. Legions also contained 120 mounted scouts, according to Josephus. Each legion was given a name that reflected some distinct trait, whether of the emperor who formed it (e.g., *III Augusta*), for its extraordinary valor (e.g., *XX Valeria Victrix*), or for its region of service (e.g., *IX Hispana*)."<sup>5</sup>
  1. 1 Legion 5000-6000 men = 10 cohorts
  2. 1 Cohort = 480 men = 6 centuries
  3. 1 Century = 80 men
  4. Each Centurion was commanded by a centurion
    - a. "A soldier had to serve between twelve and twenty years in the legions and auxiliary troops in order to advance to the rank of centurion. As a noncommissioned officer, the centurion was the link between the officers and the troops, and on account both of his position and his experience he embodied the professional military spirit."<sup>6</sup>
  5. So, Cornelius had made his way up the Roman military ranks to a position somewhat similar to a modern US Army First Sergeant, (E-8), "the principal NCO and life-blood of a company. He is the disciplinarian and counselor. He instructs other sergeants, advises the commander and helps train all enlisted Soldiers. He assists officers at the company level (62 to 190 Soldiers)." (goarmy.com)

e. Italian Regiment

- i. Again, note Luke's attention to detail as a historian. The Book of Acts is not only Divinely Inspired Scripture. It is also Divinely Inspired history.
  1. "Several "Italian cohorts" are attested for the Roman army. The Italian Cohort in which Cornelius served was probably the *Cohors*

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<sup>4</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

<sup>5</sup> David A. Kaden, "[Roman Army](#)," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

// ..., a regiment that is attested by a funerary inscription from ... near Vienna, Austria”<sup>7</sup>

- f. Devout man who feared God with all his household
  - i. Devout = εὐσεβής = pious, dutiful, godly
  - ii. Cornelius and his family were faithful in their ongoing investigation into the true God and true religion. Being devout, he likely would have attended all available avenues for Gentiles to inquire into the Word of God and true religion. And, he would have done this “with all his household”.
    - 1. “this Cornelius was a proselyte of the gate, or such as observed the seven precepts of Noah, and lived without giving any offence to the Jews.”<sup>8</sup>
      - a. Noahide Laws = “Beginning with Genesis 2:16, the Babylonian Talmud listed the first six commandments as prohibitions against idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, and robbery and the positive command to establish courts of justice (with all that this implies). After the Flood a seventh commandment, given to Noah, forbade the eating of flesh cut from a living animal.”  
(<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Noahide-Laws>)
  - iii. All his household
    - 1. “Cornelius practiced his piety with his entire household (οἶκος), which suggests that his wife and children also worshipped Yahweh.”<sup>9</sup>
    - 2. “We must not lightly pass over this commendation that Cornelius had a church in his house. And, surely, a true worshipper of God will not suffer so much as in him lieth God to be banished from his house.”<sup>10</sup>
- g. Motive: “feared God” = Cornelius, by God’s grace, has been brought to believe in the Most High God as his Creator and Judge. Cornelius has been granted the rational sense and urge to be at peace with God. He has left the Roman gods behind and has turned to the One True God of the Jews, but still a Gentile.
  - i. “He was a God-fearer (φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν), i.e., he worshiped Israel’s God. Since Cornelius is later described as having an excellent reputation among the Jewish people (v. 22), and since Luke’s use of the expression

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<sup>7</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew Poole, [Annotations upon the Holy Bible](#), vol. 3 (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1853), 416.

<sup>9</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

<sup>10</sup> John Calvin and Henry Beveridge, [Commentary upon the Acts of the Apostles](#), vol. 1 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 407.

“God-fearer” often describes Gentiles who sympathized with the Jewish faith (see on v. 22), Luke describes Cornelius as a Roman officer who worshipped the God of the Jews.”<sup>11</sup>

1. This is worth noting because the life of a Roman centurion was an active life of paganism. Cornelius’ departure from Roman forms of worship would have been very noticeable.
  - a. “A Roman military camp was a religious microcosm. The soldiers worshiped the deified concept (*genius*) of the centuria and of the legion, the spirit (*numen*) of the legionary standards, the eagle as symbol of Jupiter and the power of Rome, the gods of Rome (Jupiter, Juno, Minerva), the war gods Mars and Victoria, Janus and Dea Roma, personifications of relevant virtues such as Fides and Disciplina, the emperor or the *genius* of the emperor, and, depending on personal preferences, the deities of the region or the city in which the cohort was stationed.”<sup>12</sup>
- ii. Does our understanding of humanity leave room for “God-fearers”? What was the understanding of “one who feared God” at that time?
  1. “He attended synagogue regularly (vv. 2,22 – technical meaning for the phrase "God fearer") He certainly was a regular synagogue attendee. That's the meaning of the technical phrase "God fearer" in verses 2 and 22. It referred to a Gentile who was not yet converted, but who regularly attended the synagogue. They weren't called Jews because they hadn't converted yet, but they were called God-fearers.” (P. Kayser)
  2. In today’s world, this would be a person/family regularly attending Christian worship, believing in the Most High God, sincerely seeking God and seeking to love God and neighbor, yet still not born again from above by faith in Christ, not baptized, not partaking of the Lord’s Supper.
- iii. Do you see how the Lord works in different ways over time to convert His elect? Are we able to patiently love and enfold God-fearers in our midst?
- h. Gave alms generously
  - i. Cornelius did not just talk of loving his neighbor. He diligently sought to do it. Giving away his own money, Cornelius showed his trust toward God and his care for his fellow man.
    1. “He generously gave alms (ποιῶν ἐλεημοσύνας) to people, which is often taken in terms of the Jewish people. It is possible,

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<sup>11</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

<sup>12</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

however, that his generosity extended to the soldiers in his unit and to the Greeks living in the city.”<sup>13</sup>

- i. Always prayed to God
    - i. This is likely a reference to Cornelius and his family regularly attending the public times of prayers at synagogue, but would also likely extend to Cornelius’ daily life.
      - 1. “He was much in prayer: He *prayed to God always*. He kept up stated times for prayer, and was constant to them. Note, Wherever the fear of God rules in the heart, it will appear both in works of charity and of piety, and neither will excuse us from the other.”<sup>14</sup>
    - j. So, in summary, with Cornelius, we see a man in whom the Lord has already worked mightily by His Spirit, convicting him of the falsehood of Roman paganism and drawing him and his family into the old covenant dispensation of acceptable Biblical worship of God. This is evidenced by his regular presence at the synagogue for prayers and worship, with his family, and by his regular giving of alms to the poor. Cornelius has been made ready to learn of his Savior, and Cornelius will bypass becoming a Jewish proselyte as he enters God’s Kingdom.
- III. Cornelius’ Angelic Vision v3-6
- a. 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.”
  - b. So, now that we are familiar with Cornelius, we are ready to hear of his angelic vision.
  - c. The vision comes to Cornelius during the daylight hours, around 3pm. Apparently, Cornelius would take time during his day to seek the Lord. We know from verse 30 Cornelius was praying inside his home when the angel appeared.
    - i. “It was about the *ninth hour of the day*, at three of the clock in the afternoon, which is with us an hour of business and conversation; but then, because it was in the temple the time of offering the evening sacrifice, it was made by devout people an *hour of prayer*, to intimate that all our prayers are to be offered up in the virtue of the great sacrifice. Cornelius was now at prayer: so he tells us himself, v. 30.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:1–2.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

- d. Clearly = Cornelius got a very clear look at this angel God sent to him. This is not some self-induced false trance. It is a real angel from heaven. And, it wasn't a dream of a sleeper, but rather a vision of one wide awake.
  - i. "That he *saw him evidently* with his bodily eyes, not in a dream presented to his imagination, but in a vision presented to his sight; for his greater satisfaction, it carried its own evidence along with it."<sup>16</sup>
- e. The angel calls Cornelius by name, and given the glorious and majestic appearance of the angel (v30), and the sudden appearance from nowhere, Cornelius is afraid, yet surely comforted to be called by his own name, knowing that heaven knows of him.
  - i. "he called him by his name, *Cornelius*, to intimate the particular notice God took of him."<sup>17</sup>
- f. Yet, in his fear, he is not struck speechless. And, he notes the superiority of this being, both in his submissive question and his submissive titling of the angel as "lord".
  - i. "Cornelius responds to the supernatural appearance of the heavenly being with taut attention (ἀτενίσσας), "fear" (ἔμφοβος), and incomprehension, expressed in the question "What is it, Lord?" Cornelius does not know whom he sees and what the appearance of the heavenly being means. The address "Lord" (κύριε) is more than a polite address: it reflects the willingness to obey any instructions that he might be given."<sup>18</sup>
- g. Next, we learn that the prayers and generosity of an unregenerate, yet sincere seeker, have come up before the Lord as a memorial, that is as a pleasing aroma before God, referencing the OT sacrificial worship system. Cornelius is experiencing the fruits of seeking after God wholeheartedly!
  - i. "the angel assures Cornelius that God has heard his "prayers" (προσευχάι) and taken notice of his piety, evidenced by his almsgiving (ἐλεημοσύνη). The Greek term translated as "memorial offering" (μνημόσυνον) is used in the LXX to translate a Hebrew term (הַזְבֵּחַ, cf. Lev 2:2, 9, 16) which is best understood in the sense of "invocation (by name)" in connection with the portion of the grain offering which consisted of a handful of flour mixed with oil to which incense was added (Lev 2:2) which was then burned on the altar—as the sacrificial portion was set aside for Yahweh, it was consecrated by the invocation of Yahweh's name, an invocation which represented an appeal that as the Israelite who remembered Yahweh during the sacrifice, Yahweh may

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<sup>16</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

<sup>17</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

<sup>18</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [\*Acts\*](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:4.



graciously remember the one bringing the sacrifice and accept the offering. The verb “ascended” (ἀνέβησαν) supports this interpretation: Cornelius’s acts of charity and prayers constituted a remembrance of the reality of Israel’s God and thus an appeal to his beneficial attention, expecting God’s blessing. The angel assures Cornelius that God has noticed his devotion to him and is about to bless him.”<sup>19</sup>

- h. Next, we see the result of these prayers and actions. God has a man, Simon Peter, nearby in Joppa who will tell Cornelius what he must do. Cornelius need only send men to Joppa and ask Simon Peter to come. The angel even gives Cornelius the detailed whereabouts. How many tanners named Simon living by the sea could there be in Joppa?
  - i. What he must do: Even though Cornelius has been accepted thus far, he must go on to believe in Christ, the fulfillment of the OT system of atonement and obedience Cornelius has piously studied and observed.
    - 1. “Cornelius prays and gives alms in the fear of God, is religious himself and keeps up religion in his family, and all this so as to be accepted of God in it, and yet there is something further that he ought to do—he ought to embrace the Christian religion, now that God has established it among men. Not, He may do it if he pleases; it will be an improvement and entertainment to him. But, He must do it; it is indispensably necessary to his acceptance with God for the future, though he has been accepted in his services hitherto. He that believed the promise of the Messiah must now believe the performance of that promise. Now that God has given a further record concerning his Son than what had been given in the Old-Testament prophecies he requires that we receive this when it is brought to us; and now neither our prayers nor our alms can come up for a memorial before God unless we believe in Jesus Christ.”<sup>20</sup>
  - ii. Note, the angel does not preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Angels help us do God’s will, but angels are NOT the ones tasked with the Great commission, we are.
    - 1. “Cornelius has now an angel from heaven talking to him, and yet he must not receive the gospel of Christ from this angel, nor be told by him what he ought to do, but all that the angel has to say is, “Send for Peter, and he shall tell thee.” As the former observation puts a mighty honour upon the gospel, so does this upon the gospel ministry: it was not to the highest of angels, but to those who were less than the least of all saints, that this grace

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<sup>19</sup> Eckhard J. Schnabel, [Acts](#), Expanded Digital Edition., Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), Ac 10:4.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.



was given, *to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ* (Eph. 3:8), that the excellency of the power might be of God.”<sup>21</sup>

IV. Cornelius Obeys the Vision v7,8

- a. 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.
- b. As soon as the angel departs, Cornelius straightway obeys the heavenly vision, sending men to Joppa.
  - i. “When he sent: As soon as ever the *angel which spoke unto him had departed*, without dispute or delay, he was obedient to the heavenly vision. He perceived, by what the angel said, he was to have some further work prescribed him, and he longed to have it told him. He made haste, and delayed not, to do this commandment. In any affair wherein our souls are concerned it is good for us not to lose time.”<sup>22</sup>
- c. At least one of the three men whom he sends appears to also be a God-fearer. “a devout soldier”.
  - i. “Whom he sent: *Two of his household servants, who all feared God, and a devout soldier*, one of those *that waited on him continually*. Observe, a devout centurion had devout soldiers. A little devotion commonly goes a great way with soldiers, but there would be more of it in the soldiers if there were but more of it in the commanders. Officers in an army, that have such a great power over the soldiers, as we find the centurion had (Mt. 8:9), have a great opportunity of promoting religion, at least of restraining vice and profaneness, in those under their command, if they would but improve it. Observe, When this centurion had to choose some of his soldiers to attend his person, and to be always about him, he pitched upon such of them as were devout; they shall be preferred and countenanced, to encourage others to be so.”<sup>23</sup>

V. Questions to know, love and obey God

- a. Note God’s beautiful Providence in Cornelius’ life.
  - i. Are we resting in God’s Providence?
- b. Note Cornelius, outside the covenant, living faithfully according to the light that had been given to him. Are we living faithfully according to God’s work in us?
  - i. Hearts of reverential fear toward God?
  - ii. Diligent to participate in the life of God’s Church? Word, prayer, worship?

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<sup>21</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

<sup>22</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

<sup>23</sup> Matthew Henry, [\*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume\*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2106.

- iii. Household faithfulness? Word, prayer, worship?
- iv. Lives of prayer?
- v. Should it be that one outside the covenant like Cornelius, should live a life of love and service more faithful than those within the covenant?
- c. Are we welcoming toward those sincere seekers yet to come to faith in Christ?
  - i. Do we have a “court of the Gentiles” prepared in our hearts and lives? But, even more welcoming than the Jewish temple with it’s wall of separation?
  - ii. And do we live as if Christ has “broken down the middle wall of separation” (Eph 2:14), not just between Jew and Gentile, but between all mankind?
- d. What if we all laid out our spending records and looked at them together? Would we be known, like Cornelius, as those who give generously to care for the poor and suffering? Do we give cheerfully (tithes and offerings?), motivated by love, remembering that “God loves a cheerful giver”? (2 Cor 9:7)
- e. Do we trust God’s promise? “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” (James 4:8) Cornelius’ drew near to God with his life, remembering God in his affairs, and God responds to his sincere seeking of God. Let us be encouraged by Cornelius to seek the Lord. Let us be like David: “When You said, “Seek My face,” My heart said to You, “Your face, LORD, I will seek.” (Ps 27:8) Let us remember the Lord also knows us by name, each one.
- f. Have you ever taken time to study and ponder the angelic beings the Lord has created and sent to help us, His children? This should be of great encouragement to us. “Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?” (Heb 1:14)
- g. Do we understand that a Cornelius life of faithfulness is NOT enough to establish peace with God? Cornelius will go on to see what he MUST do. Have all here crossed this threshold, believing in Jesus Christ as their only hope, and crying out to Him in prayer to God for forgiveness of sin? Are we careful to distinguish the root from the fruit?
- h. Are we eager to be evangelists, remembering the GREAT honor we have been given to speak of Christ and His Kingdom? Not for angels. For us.
- i. Like Cornelius, are we quick to obey the Lord’s commands with promptness and with wisdom?