

Developing A Life of Prayer
EDGEMONT BIBLE CHURCH
5/4/2022
“Prayers of Peter and Cornelius”

- I. God working in the unbeliever – vs 1-8
 - A. God’s Preparation of Cornelius – vs 1-2
 1. *Cornelius’* Secular life, he was
 - a. a captain stationed in *Caesarea*
 - b. over 100 men, (*a centurion*) of what was called the *Italian Regiment* of 300-600 men
 2. *Cornelius’* Religious life, he
 - a. The Fear of the Lord - *feared God with all his household*,
 - i. is clean – Ps 19:9
 - ii. the beginning of wisdom – Ps 111:10; Pr 9:10
 - iii. the beginning of knowledge – Pr 1:7;
 - iv. is to hate evil – Pr 8:13; is to depart from evil – Pr 16:6
 - v. prolongs life – Pr 10:27; tends to life – Pr 19:23
 - vi. is strong confidence – Pr 14:26; Are riches and honor and life – Pr 22:4
 - vii. is a fountain of life – Pr 14:27
 - viii. is the instruction of wisdom – Pr 15:16
 - b. *who gave alms generously to the people*, - Helped the Jewish people
 - c. *and prayed to God always*. – Does God hear the prayers of unbelievers? – see vs 4
 - B. A Visitation to Cornelius – vs 3-7a
 1. *Cornelius’* Vision while about his religious activity - *About the ninth hour* (about 3 PM) of *the day*
 - a. One of the regular times of day for temple prayer
 - b. Acts 3:1 – the time of prayer – one of the more important times
 2. The Vision Details
 - a. *he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!”*
And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?”
 - b. *So he said to him*,
 - i. *“Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.*
 - God knows the heart of the pray-er
 - Cornelius still needed to hear and believe the Gospel – Ac 4:12
 - ii. *“Now send men to Joppa and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. “He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.”*
 3. The Delegation from Cornelius – vs 7b-8
 - a. *Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually.*
 - b. *So, when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.*

II. God working in the Believer – vs 9-23

A. God's Preparation of Peter – vs 9-17a

1. *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. (about 12 noon)*
 - a. God working through what is happening in one's life
 - i. *Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat;*
 - ii. *but while they made ready,*
 - b. *he fell into a trance*
 - i. *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.*
 - *In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.*
 - Levitical restrictions would have prevented Peter from eating
 - But the New Covenant was instituted through the death of Christ
 - *And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."*
 - *But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."*
 - *And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."*
 - *This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.*
 - ii. The abolishment of the OT restrictions
 - Into the Stomach/ Out of the heart - Mt 15:11; Mr 7:15
 - The declaration that all foods are clean - Mr 7:19
2. *Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant,*

B. The Supplication to Peter – vs 17b-23

1. The Arrival of Cornelius' delegation
 - a. *behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house and stood before the gate.*
 - b. *And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.*
2. God's Announcement to Peter
 - a. ***While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him,***
 - i. *"Behold, three men are seeking you.*
 - ii. *"Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."*
 - b. *Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius,*
 - i. *and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?"*
 - ii. *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."*
 - c. *Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.*

III. God Finishing His Work - The Proclamation to Cornelius – vs 24-48

A. The Conversation with Cornelius – vs 24-33

1. Their Arrival

- a. *And the following day they entered Caesarea.*
- b. Not Idle While Waiting
 - i. *Now Cornelius was waiting for them*
 - ii. *and had called together his relatives and close friends.*

2. First interaction

- a. *As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.*
- b. *But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."*

3. Introductory Comments

- a. *And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together.*
- b. *Then he said to them,*
 - i. *"You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. – Jo 4:9; 18:28; Ac 11:2-3; Ga 2:12*
 - ii. *But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. – vs 11-15*
 - iii. *"Therefore, I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?"*

4. Cornelius updating Peter

- a. *So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold,*
- b. *a man stood before me in bright clothing, "and said,*
 - i. *'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.*
 - ii. *'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.'*
 - iii. *"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."*
 - **prostasso** - to arrange towards, enjoin, bid, command.
 - As a military man, he understood that as the Lord spoke, obedience was the only proper response

B. The Concepts for Cornelius' household – vs 34-43

1. What Peter Learned

- a. *Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.*
 - i. *opened his mouth* – Greek colloquial expression marking the following point as important
 - ii. Peter begins by explaining what he learned from the vision shattering what remained of the barrier separating the two groups
 - iii. *I perceive* – admitting that what he is about to say is new for him – the church was to include people from **every nation** – Jo 10:16

iv. *God shows no partiality* – The OT taught this, but the Jews glossed over it – De 10:17; 2 Chr 19:7; Job 34:19

- b. *"But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.*
- why did Peter still have to preach the Gospel – universalism or trans-dispensationalism - Ac 11:14
 - *whoever fears Him and works righteousness* – works follow fear
 - **dektos** - approved; propitious, accepted(-table). As used in 2 Co 6:2

2. Why Peter Came

a. The Person and Work of Christ in His Life

- i. *"The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ--He is Lord of all— 2 Co 5:19; Col 1:20*
- ii. *"that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:*
- iii. *"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. – Mt 3:13-17; Lk 3:21-22*

b. The Work of Christ in His Death – The Gospel

- i. *"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. – 1 Co 15:3*
- ii. *"Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, – 1 Co 15:4*
- iii. *"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. – further proof of a bodily resurrection*
- iv. *"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. – see above - A4biii*
- v. *"To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.**" – Is 53:11; Jer 31:34; Zech 13:1*

2. The Consequences for the Gentiles – vs 44-48

1. God's Work finished

- a. *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. – Ro 8:9; 1 Co 12:13*
- b. *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.*
- c. *For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,*

2. Man's work begun - Discipleship

- a. *"Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" - Note: baptism is after salvation, not for salvation*
- b. *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.*