

Sermon Follow-up | April 26, 2020

1 Book of History — The Witness of Peter

Focus Passage: Acts 10:1–43

Additional Context: Acts 10:1–48; 11:18

Corollary Scripture... Genesis 1:28; 12:3; Isaiah 49:6; Matthew 28:19; Luke 2:32

Other Passages Referenced:

Sermon Recap: Peter's gospel witness to Cornelius and his household introduces a new work of God to offer salvation and the Holy Spirit to non-Jewish people, including Gentiles as members of His people. Although it was a new thing in practice, it was something God foretold in Genesis 1:28; 12:3, Isaiah 49:6, and other Scripture passages. In Acts, God is doing new things that He had already told us about. He was forming a new community not based on a common lineage, language, or land, but rather a common Savior and LORD. To bring about this new active and intentional mission to Gentiles, God supernaturally interrupted both the Gentile Cornelius and Peter the Apostle with separate visions and instructions. Peter needed Cornelius and Cornelius needed Peter. All of his life, Peter had viewed Gentiles as unworthy of salvation—unclean people who ate unclean food and lived unclean lives. Peter's vision repeated three times until he understood that God was telling him the Gentiles would no longer be avoided as unclean. Both Peter and Cornelius prayed, listened, and obeyed; otherwise they would have missed the new thing God wanted to do through them. The gospel is not good news for good people. It is good news for all people. That good news may interrupt and lead us to do what we and others would have thought to be unbelievable behaviors.

Introductory Comments

- You may find it helpful to review or to read for the first time the *Essential 100 Bible Stories*, stories 70–75 with the accompanying study helps – http://4253c4441ad892aa960e-24cd47e2db7eb74aea96b064d0d8c38d.r45.cf2.rackcdn.com/uploaded/e/0e9868497_1582137015_e100-stories-5175-final.pdf. These stories cover Jesus' promise/command to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth, the coming of the promised Holy Spirit to indwell believers, and the initial spread of the gospel toward Gentile peoples in the early church.

Group Gathering Interaction

Connect: Making Honest Connections with One Another (Pick one)

1. Please share briefly one of the following:
 - a. A high or low from your week.
 - b. Someone who came alongside you to help you understand what you were reading in the Bible.
 - c. What has God been saying to you through His word, the sermon, or other people?

Grow: Listening to and Learning from God's Word

Read Genesis 1:28; 12:3; Isaiah 49:6; Luke 2:32, Acts 10:1–43

1. What convinced Peter to baptize the folks in Cornelius' house who responded in faith to the gospel message?

2. How would you trace the thread running through the passages you just read to explain how each of them points to Jesus and how each shows God's concern for the salvation of all peoples?

Serve: Serving King Jesus and Others, By Living Out and Letting Others Know God's Word

1. In your experience with prayer, how do you pursue the "listen" and "obey" parts? How do you know you are hearing God's voice as compared to your own inner voice or other voices? Can you share a specific example of a time when you prayed and sensed God speak to you? How did you respond?
2. As you think about God doing a new thing in this moment:
 - a. What new learning are you pondering as a result of this pandemic?
 - b. What new person is God asking you to invite into the new community?
 - c. What new person is God telling you to send for and to ask them to speak into your life?

Further Resources

- Bible Project –
 - Acts – <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Content/Series/181310?episode=48>
- Illustrations and quotes from the sermon can be found on the "Sermon Slides" link at the bottom of www.wcchapel.org