

Acts 10:24-48

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[0 : 01] Chapter 10, Acts 10, about 24. Let's pray and we'll dive right in.

Lord, we pray that you would fill us with your spirit, Lord, that we would be in your presence, Lord, where in your presence is fullness of joy. Lord, we know we're in your presence, but Lord, we want to draw near to you, knowing you will draw near to us, Lord.

I pray that you would speak to us through your word, that you would prepare us, Lord, each one of us, Lord, from the youngest to the oldest, Lord, that you would use your word to prepare us, Lord, for the things you have coming in our lives, Lord, that we would be equipped, that our sufficiency would be in you, and that the word of God would be our foundation.

We thank you. We love you. We thank you for this time. In Jesus' name, amen. So Peter has come to Cornelius' house. He's gone over for a sleepover, and with a couple of his buddies, they've left from Joppa, and they've come into Caesarea at this time.

So Peter, not wanting to go alone, brings a bunch of Jews with him who are believers, but who can be witness to what God is doing at this time. And he ends up at Cornelius' house.

[1 : 15] Cornelius, remember, had that dream and that vision. And Peter also had a vision, and the two of them, being motivated by God directly intervening in their lives in a very supernatural way, have responded in obedience.

And that's where we pick up then in verse 23. Then called he them in, Peter, and lodged them. This is in Joppa. And on the morrow, Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

That's what we were just talking about. So that's about a two-day journey. And then on the morrow after, so the next day, they spent the night somewhere partway, they entered into Caesarea, and Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

So here we have Cornelius in anticipation waiting for Peter. And you see the response there from Cornelius isn't doubt, isn't to, like, question, well, I mean, just because it was an angel, what's actually going to be happening?

He has the response that Paul gives us in 1 Corinthians 15, where he says, Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand.

[2 : 29] And that's Cornelius' attitude, one of reception. Cornelius doesn't have much knowledge at the moment, does he? He doesn't know a lot of what's going on. Cornelius had limited knowledge, but he's going to have life-changing belief.

Limited knowledge, but life-changing belief. So he wasn't given a lot of information. He doesn't have a lot of knowledge at this moment. But boy, his faith is strong. The size of our faith is not important, but the size of what we have faith in is.

And the example we have of that is when Jesus, he had finished praying, I think it was one of the times in Luke 17, and the apostles said unto the Lord, increase our faith.

They wanted greater faith. They looked at Jesus and were like, man, he has a lot of faith. So even the apostles at this time, when they were walking with Jesus, weren't just thinking, well, he's God.

They knew he was the Messiah, but to them, he was a man. And so they're like, increase our faith. And the Lord said, kind of rebukes them, says, not the size of your faith.

[3 : 32] If you had faith as the grain of a mustard seed, you might say unto this sycamine tree, be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey you. So it's not the size of our faith that's important.

Scripture doesn't actually say our faith grows anywhere. It says our faith is tried, it's tested, but it doesn't talk about it growing. We are to grow in grace and the knowledge of him. But our faith is never, it's not meant to be like, oh, they got a really big faith.

No, they have a really big God, and they have faith in their God. And so God sends us through trials and testings so that our faith doesn't grow, but is tried, and then our image of God grows bigger and bigger and bigger.

And then that little faith we have is in a really big God. And that's where Cornelius we see. He doesn't have a lot of information or a lot of knowledge, but he does have a response to the gospel, which is very, which is in keeping with faith.

And he also did what? He called together his kinsmen and near friends. And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him.

[4 : 46] But Peter took him up, saying, stand up, I myself also am a man. So Cornelius is expecting something amazing.

He's expecting something from God. And like we said before, he thinks that Peter is higher than the angels, because if the angel came to him and wouldn't give him a message, then surely whoever is coming to give him a message must be the greater one.

And so here comes Peter, and he falls down and worships him. So our attitude of belief always bows. Worship always bows. And so here you see this man bowing before Peter.

But Peter corrects him and takes him up, stands him up, and says, I myself also am a man. And as he talked with him, he went in and found many that were come together.

So put yourself in Peter's shoes. He doesn't know what he's doing here. He just knows he's supposed to come here. He brings these men with him, his buddies. They kind of knock on the door, and there's Cornelius, super excited to see them.

[5 : 44] And like falls down and worships him. So you think you're going to go over to someone's house. Like, okay, a ministry call. They want to know about the Lord. And you kind of walk in, and all of a sudden they throw you a party.

Like, hey, what's going on? And so Peter is taking a step of faith as he's stepping into this place, because he's going to say here, and he said unto them, verse 28, You know how it is unlawful.

It's an unlawful thing for a man that's a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation. But God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. And so Peter is saying this is unlawful.

But was it? There actually was no law in the scripture that said, Hey, Peter, Jew, whoever you are, you can't go in with a Gentile. You can't go in their house. This was something that man had started to implement.

But even if there was a law, it's no longer applicable for Peter. And Peter is learning this process right now. Galatians 5, 22 and 23 says, But the fruit of the Spirit's love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

[6 : 50] Against such there is no law. There's no more law that we're under. And Peter's not either, but he's still operating in that mode. So he comes in and he finds them there and he says, Hey, it's unlawful, but God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

So Peter allowed the word of God to shape his views. He didn't allow his own prejudices or his own beliefs. He allowed the word of God that was so recently spoken to him to shape his views.

Isaiah 55, 8 and 9 says, commenting on this idea, For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Well, that means I should expect then my thoughts to need to change quite a bit. If God's thoughts are not my thoughts, and if they're higher than mine, and they're not my ways, then most of the time I can expect my thoughts and ways to need to come into line with his.

Now, having the Holy Spirit, right? We can trust that the Holy Spirit is constantly correcting and giving us the thoughts and ways and desires of the Lord. But at this point, Peter here, he's like, This was what I was operating under, and now God's word has come, and I've allowed it to shape my view, and then to give me a new perspective.

[8 : 10] And he says in verse 29, Therefore came I unto you without gain saying, As soon as I was sent for, I asked therefore for what intent you have sent for me.

And so just as we had Cornelius, who was operating with a limited knowledge, but life-changing belief, Well, look, here now is Peter. Peter was content to act in faith without a full understanding.

He's like, What am I here for? I don't know, but God's called me to be here. I'm going to be here. And so he's operating again with limited knowledge, but maximum belief. And so it would seem like then God's more interested in our faith than our understanding.

And we'll see later. The two are meant to go together, but the one can't operate without the other. We can't have a great understanding of the word, but no trust in it, because faith without works is dead.

And our works are completely dead without faith. But if we have faith and an understanding combined, well, then we see what God can do with that, with Peter.

[9 : 14] And Cornelius said in verse 30, 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.

So he begins to rehearse what's happened. And I was thinking about this with Peter. You know, Peter was on the Mount of Transfiguration. He saw Jesus and Elijah and Moses. He was at the, he saw the resurrected Lord.

And here Cornelius is like, I saw a man in bright clothing. And Peter's like, yeah, I saw a couple men in bright clothing. And as impressive as that may be, I think the thing that impressed Peter the most was not the angel, but the three.

Because he says it was the ninth hour, which would be like, we would think of it, 3 p.m. I think that coincidence for Peter of the timing probably impressed him more than any angel.

And I was thinking of how God knows how best to activate our faith. He knows the thing that is needed most to get our faith going. I don't know how he operates in your life.

[10 : 17] I know how he does in mine. And when certain events and coincidences line up kind of with maybe where I'm at in the word, and he just kind of brings that and overlays it so perfectly on one another, to me, that's like, wow, that's the Lord.

And that's probably more impressive to me than if an angel just popped up in a room and was like, thou shalt go and do whatever. Like this journey, he's just brought us through to find this house and to buy this house.

It's like, the sequences he lines up are so familiar to me with how he operates in my life that it's such an encouragement. Like, this is the Lord. This is him.

Where if an angel showed up in our room, you know, instead of the text message about the house the other night, if it was an angel, I'm like, you shall go by this house. I'd probably just be really scared. And I'm like, I don't know.

That might have been demonic. I don't know. How do we know? Satan can appear as an angel of light. God's never spoken to me that way before. But he's the same yesterday, today, and forever. So I can be assured that the way he's dealt with me in the past is the way he'll continue to deal with me in the future.

[11 : 23] And so for Peter here, God was activating his faith and Cornelius's. Cornelius was in a place where, man, he needed the angel. And that was awesome for him. Peter, he's more in the place where it's like, God speaks into his life and then he kind of layers these events to show like, hey, this is really me, Pete.

You can trust me and go forward with this. And so Peter's like, cool, let's do this. And then you see also these other people. They get no name. They're just like the crowd, the background crowd.

You know, I think of like, when you read like a novel, you're reading a book, that's a good fiction book, you're seeing like, the thread that the author has written through that whole book from, you know, start to climax.

But in the process of that, he's essentially created an entire world and millions of people and processes and things to support his characters. Nobody ever talks about them.

Nobody ever really cares. Could you imagine living in a world like that where your only, your only purpose is to support the main characters? That's like what an author does when they write. We focus on the story, but there's all this other stuff happening around as well.

[12 : 28] Obviously, that's fiction. But in this instance, it's not fiction. You have Peter, you have Cornelius, they're the main characters. They got these background characters. And I find their faith amazing too because it says he had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

You know, can you imagine that? Hey, what are you doing tonight? I don't know. I was just going to hang out with the family. Cool. I had an angel come like three days ago and he said that there's some guy who's going to be coming to my house.

And I sent my two buddies, well, three buddies, you know, two days ago and I told them to be quick. So this would be the day they'd be coming back. Actually, it'd be like three days. But they didn't know for sure.

There was no cell phones. They didn't know when they were coming. But they're all there waiting with anticipation. And they're all seemingly quite excited about this. Which shows Cornelius' credibility that he could, you know, could do that.

Like if one of you guys did that, I'd be there. You know, Alvin, if you called me up and you're like, I had an angel. He was right here in the room and I'm expecting this. I'd be like, I'll be there. I'm not going to miss that.

[13 : 30] He's either going to show up or, well, we should probably talk. But of course, you know, because we have credibility with one another. How do you gain credibility?

Well, you got to spend a lot of time with each other. You know, you have to be honest and truthful. You have to have character and you have to have a reputation. And so you see here with Cornelius' his kinsmen and near friends.

He didn't just go out and randomly grab anybody. It was the people that meant a lot to him that he was willing to share the gospel with. And I think, man, that was more faith than I have sometime.

Here's Cornelius. He doesn't even know for sure what the gospel is and what's coming. He just knows what this angel told him. And he's like, I want you to be part of this. Come and be part of this. And so he's rehearsing this to Peter and telling him all about his fun experience with the angel.

And behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing and he said to me, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. All he ever wanted to hear.

[14 : 33] God hears, God remembers, and God sees. And I think he's telling Peter this like, hey, whoever you are or whatever you are, I want you to know that I was told my prayer's been heard and that God knows me.

Send therefore to Joppa and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter. He is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the seaside, who when he comes shall speak unto you. So here we have, just as rehearsing again, we've looked at that over and over, that sequence of events.

But he says, when he comes, he shall speak unto you. He shall speak a word that's to be obeyed. And Cornelius is already in an attitude to receive this word and to obey it. He's not in doubt.

He's not questioning. He is ready to receive this. Let's turn to, if you look at Acts 10, but turn back to like verse six there.

We see the same thing told to him, where it said that, that he's in the house by Simon, he's in the house of Simon the tanner by the seaside.

[15 : 36] He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do. So God's direction. So it's in verse 32, where he said, when he comes, he shall speak unto you. We see that Cornelius is already expecting that he's going to be directed.

So it's not just like, come and give me a fun word. He's expecting that this word is going to actually give him some form of direction. And then he's brought all his friends and his family. Like, this man's going to tell us what we ought to do.

So there's a recognition that they needed to do something in the state they were in. They were not right with God. Immediately, therefore, I sent to you, and you have well done that thou art come.

Now, therefore, are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. And so he says to Peter, hey, Peter, well done.

You know, you came. Thank you. And so Peter displayed faith. He displayed the faith that he was expecting Cornelius to have. The faith and obedience that he's now going to expect Cornelius to have, Peter first displayed that.

[16 : 37] Peter was being an example of the believer in word and deed and life. And so he shows up with the same faith that he's now expecting Cornelius to have.

And that's 1 Timothy 4, 12 is the scripture. Be thou an example in word and deed and life and conversation and spirit and in purity. And so he says, I'm here and we all are here present to hear all things that God commanded thee.

And that's a constant mindset that we should have, that we are all here present before God at all times, ready to hear God's word. And then Peter opened his mouth. One of the hardest acts of faith.

James tells us the tongue can no man tame. It's not possible. It's not possible for a man to tame his tongue. And here Peter's opening his mouth. We saw the same thing with Philip and Stephen.

They both had to open their mouth. Step one. And we're going to see as we go on here that what God displays openly no man can hide.

[17 : 39] And so God is going to do a work and he's going to clearly manifest it to these people. and no man can hide it, what God does. But there is one thing Peter could do.

There's one thing he could have done to stop this whole thing that could have stopped the revelation of the gospel to the Gentiles. He could have kept quiet.

He could have just been like, nope, not going to say anything. Because faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word. So if Peter wasn't willing to open his mouth, nothing would have happened. So he does one of the hardest acts of faith to just open his mouth and let the Lord speak through him.

And he said, of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. In Hebrews 4.13, it says, neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Manifest means like to show forth, to open, to see. And so, the reason that Peter says, hey, I perceive God's no respecter of persons.

[18 : 45] Well, God's no respecter of persons because everybody's heart's open to him. And so there's nothing for God. It's like, God's not going to respect who you think you are and your status. God sees our hearts, so God doesn't have any respect, hierarchy, respect among people because everybody's hearts are open to him, so he already sees it and he knows.

But in every nation, he that fears him and works righteousness is accepted with him. So God has concluded, Romans 11, 32, that everyone is in unbelief.

He's concluded that all, it's a level playing field, there's no respecter of persons. God has put all in unbelief. We looked at that Sunday morning, right? Because of the fall, because of sin and the curse, we are all under the curse and only those under the curse can be redeemed.

And so since God concludes all of us in unbelief, what's the purpose? That he might judge us? That he might condemn us? That's what the Jews thought. That's why they were against the Gentiles.

That's why God created them. Just so there could be them and us. The reason God created them is because he created us. The reason there's the unbelievers is because God created us, the believers. No, not at all.

[19 : 56] God has concluded that all of them in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all. And it's kind of like with Adam and Eve. When he came, it wasn't to punish them. It was to have mercy upon them.

That God looks at our sin not as something to condemn us for, but to deliver us from. And Peter is recognizing this. He's recognizing through the vision God gave him and then through the circumstances he's in now, that God is not in any way interested in the things that Peter thought God was interested in.

in verse 36. He says, the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all.

That word, I say, you know, which was published throughout all Judea and began from Galilee after the baptism, which John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him.

And so he now presents Jesus. He says a couple things about him. He said, this word, particularly, specifically, this word of truth I'm going to speak to you, you already know it and it was published.

[21 : 13] And so they already know this. And you wonder for Cornelius, as he's praying and putting all these things together, what his mind was pondering about Jesus? Like, who was this guy? Was he just a healer?

What was he? I mean, I'm worshiping the God of the Jews, I'm praying to him. And yet, then there was this man who seemed, it says that it was published about him. He seemed so godly.

But then they, the Jews killed him. How would they do that? And so Peter starts with what they already know. He says, you already know this. You already know who he was. And then he presents this picture of Jesus, which I thought was interesting.

In verse 38, he says, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God is with him.

It's a very different picture than he speaks to the Jews, isn't it? On the day of Pentecost and at other times when he gives them the history of their law and he breaks down who Jesus was according to the prophets.

[22 : 14] He says, and then you've slain him. Well, here he presents this picture of a man, Jesus of Nazareth, from a place in the earth, not from heaven, and the Holy Spirit anointed him with power and he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil for God was with him.

And so for a Roman at this point, Peter is saying, this guy was extremely powerful and yet look what he used his power for. He went about doing good and healing and delivering but God was with him.

And for the Romans, that's what they wanted. They wanted God to be with them. They wanted to know that their God, the gods were on their side and they were blessing them and they were going to give them good crops and good children and good whatever.

And so here, Peter paints this picture where he holds out Jesus and says, this is what you want but look what he did with what he had. We're told in John 14, 12, commenting on this verse, he says, truly, Jesus says, truly, truly, I say unto you, he that believes on me, the works that I do, shall he do also and greater works than these he shall do because I go unto my Father.

Greater works? How greater works? Because Jesus was one person, one man. Now, we're going to have the opportunity through the body to do many greater works than just what he could do in that one body.

[23 : 38] And so he says to us, hey, you believe on me? These are greater works because I go to my Father and I'll send the Holy Spirit that you will have and be anointed with. And so Jesus, what good works did he do?

Jesus' good deeds were not socially focused even if they had a societal effect. I was thinking of like last night, you know, we did good deeds. We came and served and volunteered, but that wasn't the focus.

It was what we did, but it wasn't the focus. The focus was to be a light and a witness and to try and reach people with the gospel. No. Did we have lots of opportunities to talk to people about the gospel?

Not this time, but we made connections and relationships and we are establishing, kind of like Cornelius, that reputation. We are establishing credibility to lay the groundwork and plant the seeds for the purpose of the gospel.

So we don't do social deeds because, well, it's good to feed the poor and it is and it's good to help people and it is. It's good to raise up the lowly and it is. But to what end?

[24 : 42] And so it's always to the end of the gospel. You see that with Jesus. Jesus did a lot of good deeds, delivering a lot of people, healing a lot of people, but it was always with the purpose of to glorify God and to bring people into relationship with Him.

And so here's Peter presenting this Jesus to them. And then he says this in verse 39, and we are witnesses of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree.

Now, you don't tell the Romans that. Your cross that you hang people on, the people who are the lowest of the low, the scum of the earth, that's my Jesus. That's this guy who went about doing good.

They hung Him on a tree. They killed Him. We are witnesses of that. Him, God raised up the third day and showed Him openly. What God does openly, no man can hide.

But what man tries to hide, God reveals openly. Timothy tells us in 1 Timothy 5, 24 and 25, it says, Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment, and some men they follow after.

[26 : 02] Likewise, also the good works of some are manifest beforehand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. And there we see that word manifest again, to make known, to show, to open.

And so what he's saying here is, there are some men's sins that you can see and you can tell. That man is not to be trusted. And there's some, they hide them, and you can't tell. But guess what? They're all going to be revealed at some point.

They will all be made known. In the same way, there's good deeds. Some people's good deeds are very obvious. And some, they will not be hid forever. Luke 8, 16.

No man, when he lights a candle, covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a bed, but sets it on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is secret that shall not be made manifest, neither anything hid that shall not be made known and come abroad.

So these things will be revealed. What God does openly, no man can hide. And what man tries to hide, God reveals openly. Do you want what you're trying to hide for God to reveal openly?

[27 : 05] Well, I don't. I don't have anything to hide, first of all. But you think, well, I don't know if I want God to make these things open. I don't know about that. Yes, we do.

Because we're not hiding our sins. And so we want God to manifest through us the things that He wants to do in this world. Ephesians 1, 4 says, According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

He's chosen us for a purpose. And what is that purpose? For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

His workmanship. That means it's His works that He wants to manifest through us. And He's saying there's nothing hid that's not going to be made manifest. Tying it together, what Jesus said, He told us when we are to pray in Matthew 6, verse 6, When you pray, enter into the closet.

And when you've shut the door, pray to your Father, which is in secret. And your Father, which sees in secret, shall reward you openly. And so we do want God to manifest and make known and open the things that are in our lives that He's doing.

[28 : 17] So when it says that we are created unto good works, they're not our works. They're His. That He wants to do through us and make manifest and make known through us.

The same thing He's doing here to Peter. The same thing He's doing with Cornelius. He's making known and opening these things up. They're not to be hid. And the things that are hidden will be revealed someday, whether here or at the judgment seat.

There's nothing hid that's not going to be revealed. And we have the blessing now, the amazing blessing, of like Peter says here, not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God.

Chosen to make manifest, to make known the truth and the light of God. Even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead. Thank you, Lord.

We get to eat and drink in glory. So, what has God chosen for us? He's chosen those good works for us.

[29 : 15] He's chosen us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy without blame before Him in love. That's what God's chosen for us. Then He's going to make manifest through us those deeds and those things.

What's the only thing we can do to stop it? And keep our mouths shut. Faith comes by hearing always and hearing by the Word of God. God's Word is what produces faith.

Whether it's spoken, whether it's read, whether it's brought to our minds, it's always God's Word. So if we're not willing to share God's Word, faith does not get spread.

So, not to all the people, says Peter, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.

Lucky them. Is Peter saying this to lift up himself and to be like, I'm greater than you? No, because he's already said, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.

[30 : 14] And we've already seen Cornelius lacked a whole lot of knowledge, but he has faith. Peter has more knowledge, but he's acting in the same faith. And so Peter's already confessed, I don't have anything greater than you.

But this Jesus, in verse 42, he commanded us to preach unto the people and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead.

And so he commanded us to preach. The word preach means herald, publish, and proclaim. We don't really think of it that way. We think of preach as something we do on Sunday morning, as a Sunday morning message. But it means to herald, to publish, and proclaim.

Something that you would do out amongst other people. We kind of do it now within the church. But we are. We're heralding, we're publishing and proclaiming the word. We're saying what God has done and what he's currently doing in our midst.

That's why we gather together and hear the word. And then to testify. So they're called to publish this and to testify it. To testify means to solemnly attest, essentially to stake one's life upon.

[31 : 21] You know, I am testifying to this fact. I'm putting everything behind it. I'm staking my life upon this. And the early Christians did. And Peter did as well. They are to publish, proclaim, and solemnly attest to the fact that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead.

And the resurrection was Jesus' ordination. It was the validation that this Jesus is the one who is the judge of the quick and the dead. And again, to a Roman, that means their God, who's the God of the netherworld, is no longer valid.

Jesus is the God of the living and the God of the dead. And to him gave all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remissions of sins.

And so, Peter, knowing that Cornelius is also a disciple of the Old Testament, he says, hey, the prophets have spoken of this. But I really like what he says here about Jesus.

He says in verse 43, to him gave all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins. And this seems like one of those redundant verses again where it could just say that the prophets gave witness that through his name there's remission of sins.

[32 : 40] Or it could say that the prophets gave witness that whosoever believes in him there's remission of sins. But he doubles it. And it's kind of two different perspectives. I like that because it seems like he's saying that the way to Jesus the way is Jesus and then Jesus is the destination also.

So he says the prophets they bear witness that through his name like the process of getting there whoever believes in him shall receive remissions of sins. And we see where Jesus said that in John 14 verse 6 Jesus said unto him I am the way the truth and the life no man comes unto the father but by me.

So Jesus is the process of getting to the father. He's the way but he's also the destination. He's also the entrance in. In John 10 verse 7 Jesus said unto them truly truly I say unto you I am the door of the sheep.

And Peter presents that. He says Jesus is the way he's the process by which you get there and then he's the destination guys. There's no other way you're going to get there. There's no other name that's going to save you.

They're one and the same. Jesus has conquered death he's lord of life and he's lord of death. And while Peter had yet spoke oh sorry while Peter had yet spoke these words the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard the word.

[34 : 04] And so here God being no respecter of persons pours out his spirit. In Ephesians Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit seals us. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

So right now God's just given his stamp of approval upon these Gentiles. He's sealed them with the Holy Spirit. Peter recognizes this and so do all the men with him and they are blown away.

This is also the best way to end a message. Peter's given this message boom the Holy Spirit just pours out on everybody and they all kind of start worshiping God and speaking in tongues.

Like hey service is over guys. This is a great way to end a message. And they in the circumcision which believed were astonished as many as came with Peter because on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

They couldn't believe that God was giving the same seal of approval to these men that he had given to them as well. So was it knowledge?

[35 : 12] Did they need knowledge? They didn't know anything. They were just Peter gave this really short message kind of from this interesting perspective of Jesus is this amazing God-anointed man and yet Jesus as man is also God who conquered death and they're like we believe that.

Why did they receive that so quick? I think because of Cornelius. Because of who Cornelius was. This man he wasn't even a believer at the time but he was a believer in a sense.

He had not yet been given a full information about Jesus. But his faith and his zeal and his desire to know the Lord had so influenced these people that when they heard the truth they just received it.

Cornelius was not the one to present the truth but he was the one to lead them to it. And it's okay if I'm not always the one who gets to be the one to present the truth to help that person fall over the edge into Christ into salvation.

But maybe on the way God will use me to help lead someone to that point where someone else will take it from there. You know Cornelius had brought his friends and his families to this point and he couldn't take them any further.

[36 : 20] But God was faithful to bring the next person who could and it was Peter. So then God pours out his Holy Spirit upon them and he gives this gift of the Holy Spirit to them. And they were all astonished.

The Jews were astonished because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the Holy Spirit for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. So it was identifiable.

The work of God in their lives the Holy Spirit being poured out was very identifiable. And God wants his work in our lives to be identifiable. He wants people to be able to look at us and say I can identify God's work in your life.

I can see the Holy Spirit at work in your life. Now these why did he you know why did he manifest this in such a way? Well because the Jews needed to see the Holy Spirit presented in the lives of the Gentiles in the same way he presented it in their lives so they could know it was legitimate.

And so he pours out his Holy Spirit they speak in tongue and they're shocked because the implications are oneness. If God has just poured out on the Gentiles the same spirit that he poured out on the Jews that seals them and that provides salvation for them well that means they're now identified.

[37 : 34] They are now identified in oneness with the Gentiles and this is absolutely mind-blowing for them. Then answered Peter can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?

And before we look at that real quick let's flip over to Acts 15. We're going to get a little insight because Peter just very quickly just says hey let's just let's just baptize them.

But we're going to find out a little more about what was going on in Peter's heart at that time in Acts 15. And so Paul and Barnabas were disputing with men that had come from Judea and they were saying these men that were of the Judaizers saying you have to keep the law you have to be circumcised Gentiles and Paul and Barnabas were disputing with them saying no that is not true because it doesn't make any sense if God is saving them is pouring out his Holy Spirit on them and they're not keeping the law why would then they revert back to something that was supposedly being used to gain God's favor when God's already given his favor.

I do that. I'm always trying to obtain that which I've already been given freely. Where God gives freely I think well I've got to do something to earn it but he's already given it and I work against my own good.

Anyway they go down to Jerusalem to talk this over and they are in verse 5 of chapter 15 but there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed that's good but they were still holding to this old law and this old system saying that it was needful to circumcise them and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

[39 : 17] Well it's not needful for salvation. Why is it needful? Well it's needful to validate the Pharisees the sect of the Pharisees it's needful to validate their existence in the system that they've been so used to.

And the apostles and elders came together to consider the matter and when there had been much disputing Peter rose up and said unto them men and brethren you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe and God which knows the hearts bear them witness giving them the Holy Spirit even as he did unto us and put no difference between us and them and here's what he says next purifying their hearts by faith and so in this moment when God's pouring out his Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles who are reacting to the news Peter gives them and they're believing Peter's recognizing that God has purified their hearts by faith the Holy Spirit's not given to anybody except they are believing except in faith and it's the same with us we're saved by grace through faith and that not of ourselves it's a gift of God that we don't experience

God's grace without faith God freely gives his grace but we obtain it through faith that is a work because he says we are saved by grace through faith not of works so faith is not a work because you'll hear people say that there's a lot of people that will say well especially in the reformed movement that well faith is a work you know and we can't be saved by faith it's all grace grace grace and faith is works faith's not a work because God clearly points out that grace and faith are not the same as work they're the opposite of that so Peter has a little more information there that he gives us later on when he stands up and says hey this is what happened God poured out his Holy Spirit their hearts responded to the message of the gospel and they believed God purified their hearts by faith they were saved and the Holy Spirit was poured out on them and then he said can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized which he had received so if you look over in chapter 11 he reiterates the whole entire story again and but down in verse 15 he says as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning he's gone back to Jerusalem and telling them what happened he says the Holy Spirit fell on them the same as us

I'm recognizing this is the same manifestation then remembered I the word of the Lord how that he said John indeed baptized with water but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit for as much then as God gave them like gifted as he did unto us who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ what was I that I could withstand God he looked back over to the end of chapter 10 where he says can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized he's saying look the scripture that comes to mind is if God has baptized them in the Holy Spirit already how can we prevent them to be baptized with water because the one is greater than the other the one generally comes before the other as in importance you can baptize anyone with water all day long but it doesn't mean God's going to give us a stamp of approval through the Holy Spirit God gives a stamp of approval and then Peter recognizes well there's no point in withholding this other thing and it's the same in our lives we can't make God work in our lives and move in our lives but when God moves in our lives and works in our lives then we know hey he's validated whatever area he's just moved and worked in

I can step forward and it's the same as we walk by faith God comes in and validates our faith and we then can step and walk in that and Peter he validated this every spiritual experience by the word is what he's doing here and it made me think of where Jesus when the little children come to him and he's going to pray for him and the disciples are like no no no no keep them away Jesus is too important for that and Jesus said suffer the little children and forbid them not to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of heaven and here that's how Jesus would look at these Gentiles they're just sheep without a shepherd just like little children and he said do not forbid them do not keep them away these are of the kingdom of heaven Gentiles are going to make up the majority of the kingdom of heaven and the Jews would forbid them and so Peter he's commands them to be baptized in the name of the Lord and then pray they them to tarry certain days so if you remember back over in verse 34

[44:10] Peter opened his mouth and said of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons so God doesn't respect people God has given to the Gentiles the exact same spirit that he's given to the Jews when they believed with their limited knowledge and their limited ability to grasp the Jewish scriptures and the Jewish mindset they were given the exact same Holy Spirit that's what Peter tells us that these men it fell on them the same as it did on us at the beginning that God is no respecter of persons what does God respect in Matthew when Jesus goes I don't remember where he was but the centurion comes to him and he says hey can you come heal my servant and he's like yeah I'll come with you and he's like no no no no no you don't need to come just say the word and he'll be healed you know I'm a man under authority I say to one go and he goes one to come come and he comes it was the same with you Jesus you just say the word because you are of all authority and Jesus when he heard it he marveled and said to them that followed truly I say unto you

I've not found so great faith no not in Israel God doesn't respect people but he respects faith and that's what we just saw whether it was Peter Cornelius or Cornelius's friends or the guys with Peter God is a respecter of faith and he sees their hearts and why because it's made manifest because there's nothing hid that's not made manifest to God and so he can see the heart and he can see their faith and he responds to that and then they prayed them to tarry certain days and so they wanted them to stay and to continue to teach them now that they understood and Peter when he's writing his epistle he kind of gives allusion to this in 1 Peter verse 5 he gives this whole list and then he says besides this giving all diligence add your faith virtue and to virtue knowledge so yes God saves us through faith God works in our lives through faith but it doesn't mean we're not to continue and there's an expectation that okay we'll add to that knowledge

Peter shows here exemplifies a good leader because a good leader removes hesitancy by the word and that's what Peter does he commanded them to be baptized he didn't suggest he didn't say well guys do you think do you think we should baptize him what do you think he said hey I know how did he know well he told us over there in verse 16 of chapter 11 by the word of God he said wait the word says that John baptizes with water and Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit then if he's given the Holy Spirit we should baptize with water he had biblical authority for that and as a good leader he removes hesitancy using the word of God to chart a path forward he says guys commanding them that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord and so Peter he wraps up his time here with Cornelius he stays certain days however many days that is that must have been very interesting for him and his buddies hanging out there at Cornelius' house you can just see them being like hey what's that that that's pork you want some wow well it was that sheet let down from heaven sure let me try some but as we end

I was thinking of that verse again in Hebrews neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do in other words the eyes of him with whom we are answerable to the one who we have to give account to and that's not something to be scary to us it's not a bad thing but it's a very good thing I want everything to be manifest and open because it's through that that God does his work he he tells us to go into our closets and pray to go and pray alone and in secret and my father who hears in secret will reward me openly well that's good I want that I want to God to manifest forth answers to prayer in my life I want to walk in those good works that were foreordained before the foundation of the world for me well they're not my works they're his works and he wants to manifest them in my life he wants to open them and openly show them and then as we looked at Peter and Cornelius two totally different sides of the coin but the same faith and God rewarded it equally no respecter of persons but God respects faith and he knows my faith because it's completely open completely manifest to him and I want my life to be open to him because I want him to openly work through my life and to pour out his spirit on me as well and so the gospels come to the Gentiles

Paul won't take it and run with it for years before he is brought by Barnabas to Antioch to help out with the work there but God has begun a work here Peter next time is going to go back and he's going to get some confrontation when he goes back to Jerusalem and starts telling them what happened but Peter recognizes that God's authority God's word and then God's spirit completely trumps his views and what he thought was important so Father we thank you for your word and just thank you for manifesting the truth in your word to us thank you for good old Peter Lord a man who so often seems to shoot from the hip the picture we're given in scripture acting and reacting and then we see him now seemingly more circumspect a little more thoughtful and a little more depth to him as he's recognizing the work you're doing in his life and through his life what you're manifesting for through him

[50 : 07] Lord you just used him to bring the gospel to bring salvation to the Gentiles and there's nobody that could deny it they all stood there and saw that God had chosen what they never would have chosen and so Lord I pray that you would use us just like Cornelius Lord to bring people along Lord maybe we're just going to bring them to the next person who will take them further along but Lord let us be of simple faith but of strong faith because we have a big God thank you that you are doing great and mighty things in our lives and Lord I pray that like Peter Lord we would recognize the authority of the word of God and that we would not be afraid Lord to act upon it and lead people according to your word we thank you and we love you in Jesus name Amen Amen