

Lessons From

CORNELIUS

THE CENTURION-

ACTS 10:1-48

I. Personal things about Cornelius

A. A Roman army centurion –v. 1

B. The word “band” (speires) referred to one-tenth of a Roman legion, which normally would have been 600 men.

C. Since his house is mentioned, he probably was married with children-see 10:1 & 11:14.

D. He lived in Caesarea-v. 1

II. Spiritual attributes

A. He was devout-v. 2

B. He feared God-v. 2

C. He gave much alms-v. 2

D. He prayed to God always-v. 2

E. He was a just man of good report even among the Jews-v. 22

F. God heard his prayers-vs. 4 & 31

G. He apparently had a powerful spiritual influence over his house, soldiers, kinsmen, and near friends-vs. 7, 24, 44-48

III. Special experiences

A. An angel of God appeared to him-see v. 3 and other passages.

B. God heard his prayer and was aware of his exceptional almsgivings-see vs. 4 & 31.

C. He and those with him received the gift of tongues prior to their being baptized-vs. 44 & 46.

Six men with Peter witnessed this event-Acts 11:12.

As far as the NT record is concerned, this is the only time a miraculous gift was given prior to conversion!

This was done separate and apart from the laying on

of the apostles hands to confirm the fact that God

wanted the gospel preached to the Gentiles!

IV. Nevertheless, Cornelius and his house were lost!

“And he showed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter.

Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved”-Acts 11:13 & 14.

Verse 14 implies that Cornelius and his household were lost!

V. Lessons from the conversion of Cornelius

1. Man is not saved because he is good!

To put this another way, no one can ever be “good enough” to be saved!

If anyone could have been saved by “being good;” it would have been Cornelius!

The bible teaches that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God-Romans 3:23.

Iniquities cause men to be separated from God-see Isaiah 59:1 & 2.

2. Man is not saved because he is religious!

Goebel Music once said, “Jesus Christ did not come to make men religious-they were already religious! He came to make them religiously right!”

Brother Music was right on target when he made this statement!

The Jews of Paul's time were religious, but they were lost!

“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.

For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”-

Romans 10:1-3.

Paul acknowledged that the Athenians were “very religious”-Acts 17:22.

Who wouldn't acknowledge that Cornelius was "very religious," but he was still lost!

3. Special experiences should never be taken as "proof of one's salvation!"

One of the most common statements people make to me about their salvation is, "I know I'm saved because God hears my prayers!"

The bible tells us that God heard the prayer of Cornelius, but he was lost-see Acts 10:31 & 11:14.

An angel of the Lord appeared to Cornelius, and he and his household received the gift of tongues prior to becoming Christians, but they were still lost!

Again, special experiences should never be taken as a “sign of salvation!”

VI. Cornelius and those with him were baptized in the name of the Lord-Acts 10:47 & 48.

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?”

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.”

Notice in these two verses that baptism in the name of the Lord is baptism in water!

Paul said there is one baptism-Ephesians 4:5.

Paul baptized in Jesus name; therefore the one baptism is baptism in Jesus’ name-Acts 19:5.

Peter and Paul both practiced the same baptism, which is baptism in the name of Jesus, in water.

Peter said that baptism in the name of Jesus Christ was “for the remission of sins”-Acts 2:38.

“Repent, and be baptized, everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Cornelius and those with him had their sins put away when they were baptized in the Lord’s name, in water, for the remission of sins!

VII. Have you done what Cornelius did in order to be saved?

If not, why not do it now?