



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

## Study 17: **THE SPIRIT'S GUIDANCE IN NON-TRADITIONAL MISSION OUTREACH** **Acts 10:1-48**

This significant chapter reveals the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles. The Church was already established, multiplying and growing in Jerusalem, Judea, Galilee and Samaria (Acts 9:31) but the Gentile world had not been reached. The Apostles and the evangelizing believers were preaching the gospel everywhere but only to the Jews. **"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only"** (Acts 11:19). Bound by religious nationalism and tradition, they thought that the Gentiles could not be saved except they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses (Acts 15:1,5). Though they had received the Holy Spirit who should **"guide you into all truth"** (John 16:13), the voice of tradition drowned the voice of the Spirit. They appeared to have been ignorant of the many prophecies concerning the salvation of Gentiles. **"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."** **"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles."** **"The Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."** **"And in His name shall the Gentiles trust."** **"For mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."** **"And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."** **"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it"** (Isaiah 11:10; 42:6; Matthew 4:15,16; 12:21; Luke 2:30-32; Acts 15:15-18; 28:28).

### **THE MODE AND MEANS OF THE SPIRIT'S OPERATION**

Acts 10:1-16; 1 Corinthians 12:6-11; Acts 22:12-15; 11:13,14; 8:26-35; 9:10-17; Numbers 24:4,16; Acts 10:26-28; 11:4-12; Romans 15:9-12.

The opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles was supernaturally directed by God, Himself. Neither Peter nor Cornelius would have taken the initial steps without divine revelation, instruction and intervention. Even Paul, **"the Apostle of the Gentiles"** (Romans 11:13; 2 Timothy 1:11), would never have received Christ's gospel and would never have preached salvation by faith in Christ to the Gentiles without divine encounter and revelation (Galatians 1:11,12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 3:1-8). God revealed the need of salvation by faith and full salvation in Christ to Cornelius, a Gentile centurion. Though Cornelius was **"a devout man"**, one that feared God, giving much alms to people and praying to God always, these **"works"** in themselves do not save without faith in Christ (Romans 3:20; 4:1-6; 9:30-32; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8,9; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:4-7). An angel of God was sent to him to instruct him to send for Peter **"who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved"** (Acts 11:14). God, at the same time, revealed to Peter, by a trance, a vision from heaven, to abandon past Jewish scruples and traditions and go to proclaim the saving gospel to Cornelius, a Gentile. Peter counted it **"an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean"** (Acts 10:28). There was double revelation bringing about divine connection and the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles. It was the beginning of bringing **"other sheep which are not of this fold"**, the beginning of converting and discipling **"a great multitude, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues"** in **"the uttermost part of the earth"**. Divine revelation superseded religion and tradition to enable God's servants **"preach the gospel to every creature"**.

### **THE MEN AND MANNER OF SELFLESS OBEDIENCE**

Acts 10:17-33; 11:7-12; John 16:12,13; Acts 9:15-17; Psalm 119:59,60; Galatians 1:15,16; Genesis 18:19; Luke 8:38-40; John 4:25-30,39-42; Zechariah 8:21-23; Luke 5:27-32; Acts 17:11,12.

Both Cornelius and Peter were instructed by the Lord on what to do and they both obeyed. Their obedience was prompt, exact and wholehearted. Neither of them consulted with flesh and blood. None of their Jewish or Gentile brethren would have encouraged implicit, unswerving obedience. Their obedience brought salvation to many souls. Obedience to the heavenly vision will always demand self-sacrifice, self-denial and self-forgetfulness. Being full of self, pride and self-consciousness hinders obedience. Peter had to forsake tradition, overcome Jewish prejudice, resist the fear of fellow Apostles, become dead to public opinion and count earthly gain as loss in order to obey, go

to a Gentile household and preach to bring Gentiles into Christ's Kingdom through the divinely opened door of faith. Cornelius had to be submissive and self-effacing to be obedient to the heavenly vision. The pride of his position in society, the prejudice of Gentiles against Jews, the perverted perception of the public concerning centurions were not allowed to hinder or delay his obedience to God. Obedience may cause us to lose fame, favour or finance but it is the only right response to divine revelation.

**“And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.” “Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear ALL things that are COMMANDED thee OF GOD”** (Acts 10:24,33). Cornelius brought all his relatives and contacts to hear the gospel. As Peter went in, he **“found MANY that were come together”** (Acts 10:27). Through personal contacts, telephone, texts, e-mail, Facebook, twitter, networking social media, we can connect friends, neighbours and even strangers to the soul-saving, life-transforming gospel of Christ. Be a Cornelius to hundreds of people and connect them with their salvation, healing and eternal blessing.

## **THE MESSAGE AND MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT'S OUTPOURING**

Acts 10:34-48; Romans 2:6-11; Acts 2:22-36; 4:10-12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 2:13-18; Acts 11:15-18; 15:7-9,14,18; 2:16-18; 19:1-7.

Peter, Cornelius and all who were gathered together were submissive to God and His word. Peter was willing to speak **“all the word”** and the people were willing to hear **“all the word”**. God's purpose was to save them, purify their hearts and baptize them with the Holy Ghost (Acts 11:14,15; 15:7-9; 10:44-46). Peter preached the Word faithfully and proclaimed Christ as the Saviour through whom we have forgiveness, remission of sin, full redemption and free and full salvation. His message was free of Jewish tradition and religious dogma. Cultural elements, personal preferences and opinions had no place in the straight-forward preaching of the gospel. The message emphasized that **“whosoever believeth”** would receive the salvation provided by Christ. **“Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”** **“Whosoever believeth”** will receive all things provided by Christ through His redemptive sacrifice at Calvary. And they all believed. So, they were saved, sanctified, baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit, baptized in water and **“added to the Church”**.

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