

Sermon Series Title: "Church Beginnings"

Sermon Series Summary: From now until around Easter, we will be in the book of Acts, covering chapters 1-12. After the Ascension of Jesus Christ, we see the NT church being born by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through this series, we see the church being built, the kingdom going forth, and the gospel being proclaimed.

"We are in our "Church Beginnings" sermon series, and through this series, we're going to see that we need to know where we come from to know who we are now and to know who we will become in the future."

Call: 1 Samuel 2:9

Text: Acts 10:1-8, 30-33

Title: "Cornelius' Prayer"

Next Week's Call: 1 Samuel 2:10

Next Week's Text: Acts 10:9-29

Next Week's Title: "Peter's Vision"

Future Calls: 2 Samuel 22:2-3, 4, 5-7, 14-16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21-22, 23-25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 47-49, 50-51

Future Titles: "Cornelius' Salvation" (Acts 10:34-48); "Peter's Report" (Acts 11:1-18); "The First Gentile Church" (Acts 11:19-30); "The First Apostolic Martyr" (Acts 12:1-5); "Peter's Rescue" (Acts 12:6-19); "Herod's Death" (Acts 12:20-25)

Fallen Condition Focus: We don't live a life of faith like Cornelius, and we are blind in our sin.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ lived the perfect devoted life and became the supreme revelation for us.

Proposition: "Christ is the revelation and the redeemer of God.

Summary: Our passage today is the setting of a very important event in redemptive history, Gentiles officially receiving the gospel and being part of the people of God. We see Cornelius, a Gentile God-fearer who has been seeking God. God answers his prayer and reveals to him the truth of Christ.

## Reflective Questions:

1. As a Gentile, what does this passage mean to you?
2. Did Cornelius' prayer and generosity earn him his salvation? Why or why not?
3. How does this passage speak into your life of faith and prayer?
4. What does this passage show us about the compassion of God?

### I. Introduction

- A. Hook- Gentile salvation- redemptive history
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

### II. The Man (vv. 1-3, 30)

- A. Caesarea- north of Joppa where Peter was in with Simon, the tanner
- B. Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian Cohort
  1. Centurions were in charge of a 100 soldiers, cohort- ~1000 men
- C. He was a devout man who feared God, gave alms generously, and prayed continually.
  1. God-fearer- Gentile who believed in Judaism but wasn't circumcised
    1. Renounced Roman religion
    2. Rare for a soldier to be upright, usually immoral and debaucherous
    3. Dissatisfied with wealth, power, relationships, etc. Even his own faith
  2. Generosity- calling of God's people; last week's sermon
  3. Continual prayer- v. 30- ninth hour- 3pm
    1. We all pray... especially in moments of desperation
  4. Household- He led his family to live a life of faith as well

### III. The Message (4-8, 31-33)

- A. Angel calls him by name.
- B. Terror- appropriate response to God's glory
- C. "What is it, Lord?"- confession of Lordship, like Paul's conversion
- D. Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God.
  1. God sees us in our prayer and faith
  2. Does this mean that our prayers and generosity save us? No. He was under the old covenant like the OT prophets, not knowing and believing in Jesus Christ yet. Acts is a transitional book, leading to kingdom under Christ, a new redemptive epoch.

- E. Bring Peter to him, followed by immediate obedience
  - 1. Angel could have taught him right then and there, but it is the will of God to use imperfect people to teach His perfect word.
- F. V. 33- We are all here to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.
  - 1. Hearts prepared to hear the word of God with anticipation

#### IV. The Messiah

- A. What does this show us about the heart of God? Compassionate and merciful
- B. Jesus is the ultimate Man, One who feared God the most.
  - 1. He prayed continuously.
  - 2. He gave alms to the poor- salvation to us.
  - 3. He is the One who brings us into the household of God and into faith
- C. Jesus is the Message
  - 1. His life, death, and resurrection is the message of God's will for us.
  - 2. Peter will preach the message of Christ after v. 33 to Cornelius and his family
  - 3. Peter brought the good news to Gentile cities and staying with Simon, the tanner. And now he brings the gospel officially to Gentiles.
  - 4. Jesus crossed every barrier to be with us.