

## Cases of Conversion

Cornelius – A Good Man Who Was Lost

## Two Classes of Good People Who Believe They Are Saved

1. Those with no formal religious belief and practice toward God who do good things providing for their families and others
2. Those who believe in and seek to follow God according to either unwritten or written traditions including some that may be based on the Scriptures

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## Character of Cornelius Before He Became A Christian

- Cornelius was in this second group having a belief in God, being devout, fearing God, teaching his household to fear God, giving to the poor Jews and praying to God
- His character is remarkable because he was a Gentile, an Italian soldier from an idolatrous, immoral culture

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## Character of Cornelius Before He Became A Christian

Act 10:1 Now *there was* a man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort,

Act 10:2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the *Jewish* people and prayed to God continually.

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## How Could A Man Like Cornelius Still Be Lost?

- Cornelius had not obeyed Jesus, His savior and Lord
- Cornelius, like all accountable people, was guilty of sins and in need of the cleansing blood of Jesus

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## How Could A Man Like Cornelius Still Be Lost?

- He did not know that God had appointed Jesus as Judge of all including him
- He did not know how to obey the gospel, God's one plan of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles
- But He wanted to hear and do all the Lord commanded him to be saved

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## Cornelius Commanded To Send For Peter To Preach The Gospel

Act 10:3 About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had *just* come in and said to him, "Cornelius!"

Act 10:4 And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God.

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## Cornelius Commanded To Send For Peter To Preach The Gospel

Act 10:5 "Now dispatch *some* men to Joppa and send for a man *named* Simon, who is also called Peter;

Act 10:6 he is staying with a tanner *named* Simon, whose house is by the sea."

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## Cornelius Commanded To Send For Peter To Preach The Gospel

Act 11:13 "And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here;

Act 11:14 and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.'

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## Why Did Cornelius and His Household Need To Hear The Gospel?

Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

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## Peter Commanded To Go To Cornelius' House

Act 11:5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object coming down like a great sheet lowered by four corners from the sky; and it came right down to me,

Act 11:6 and when I had fixed my gaze on it and was observing it I saw the four-footed animals of the earth and the wild beasts and the crawling creatures and the birds of the air.

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## Peter Commanded To Go To Cornelius' House

Act 11:7 "I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.'

Act 11:8 "But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'

Act 11:9 "But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.'

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## Peter Commanded To Go To Cornelius' House

Act 11:10 "This happened three times, and everything was drawn back up into the sky.

Act 11:11 "And behold, at that moment three men appeared at the house in which we were *staying*, having been sent to me from Caesarea.

Act 11:12 "The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brethren also went with me and we entered the man's house.

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## Why Did God Have To Command Peter To Go To Cornelius' House

- Until Cornelius, the gospel had been spoken only to the Jews
- It was not clear to them that the Gentiles should be taught the gospel and received as Christians equal to the Jews
- It was not clear to them that all could be saved without being circumcised and keeping the Law of Moses

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## Cornelius and Household Are Ready To Hear The Gospel

Act 10:24 On the following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

Act 10:33 "So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

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## Peter Is Ready To Preach The Gospel To The Gentiles

Act 10:34 Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand *now* that God is not one to show partiality,

Act 10:35 but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.

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## Peter Preaches The Gospel To Cornelius and Household

Act 10:36 "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)--

Act 10:37 you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed.

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## Peter Preaches The Gospel To Cornelius and Household

Act 10:38 "*You know of* Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Act 10:39 "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

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## Peter Preaches The Gospel To Cornelius and Household

Act 10:40 "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible,

Act 10:41 not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, *that is*, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

Act 10:42 "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. 19

## Peter Preaches The Gospel To Cornelius and Household

Act 10:43 "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

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## Miraculous Gift of The Holy Spirit Poured Out On The Gentiles

Act 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.

Act 10:45 All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

Act 10:46 For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 21

## What Was Not The Purpose of This Miraculous Gift of The Holy Spirit?

- Receiving the miraculous gift of the Spirit had nothing to do with Cornelius being saved which occurred when he repented and was baptized for forgiveness of sins
- Although similar to Acts 2, this gift did not produce the same results as the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the apostles in Acts 2
- Only the apostles had all the miraculous gifts of the Spirit and could transfer various gifts by the laying on of their hands 22

## What Was The Purpose of This Miraculous Gift of The Holy Spirit?

- Acts 2 – the Holy Spirit given to the apostles to prove to Jews Jesus is Lord and must be obeyed to be saved
- Acts 10 – the Holy Spirit given to Cornelius and household to prove to Jews all people must obey the same gospel to receive forgiveness of sins

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## God Confirms That Both Jews and Gentiles Are Saved In The Same Way Into One Body

Act 11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as *He did* upon us at the beginning.

Act 11:16 "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

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## God Confirms That Both Jews and Gentiles Are Saved In The Same Way Into One Body

Act 11:17 "Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as *He gave* to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?"

Act 11:18 When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance *that leads* to life."

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## God Confirms That Both Jews and Gentiles Are Saved In The Same Way Into One Body

1Co 12:12 For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

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## Cornelius and Household Become Christians

Act 10:47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we *did*, can he?"

Act 10:48 And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.

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## Why Were Cornelius and His Household Baptized?

Act 2:38 Peter *said* to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Mat 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

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## Are We Good Enough To Be Saved Without Obeying The Gospel?

- Although Cornelius was devout, feared God, taught his household to fear God, benevolent and prayerful, he was not saved until he obeyed the gospel
- He was not saved by receiving the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit
- He was not saved by the sinner's prayer
- Like Cornelius, why not obey the gospel by believing in Jesus, repenting of your sins and being baptized today?

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