

ACTS CHAPTER 10

To the Uttermost Parts: Gentiles

The Book of Acts shifts from the Jews (Jerusalem and Judea),
to the half-Jews (the Samaritans),
then to the uttermost parts of the earth (the Gentiles).

It is now about 8 years after Pentecost.

Peter, not Paul, is to be the “door opener” to the Gentiles.

If Paul had made the initial move toward uncircumcised Gentiles, to bring them into the Church, the Jewish contingent, who were never friendly toward Paul could have created a disastrous schism in the Church claiming that Paul was still out to destroy the Church – but this time from within by bringing in the ‘pagan’ gentiles.

A DEVOUT SOLDIER

Acts 10:1-8

"There was a man in Caesarea called Cornelius. He was a centurion in the battalion called the Italian battalion. He was a devout man and a God-fearer with all his household. He did many an act of charity to the people and he was constant in prayer to God. About three o'clock in the afternoon in a vision he clearly saw the angel of God coming to him and saying, 'Cornelius.' He gazed at him and he was awe-stricken. He said, 'What is it, sir?' He said to him, 'Your prayers and your works of mercy have gone up to God for a memorial; so now, send men to Joppa, and send for a man called Simon who is also called Peter. He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is on the sea-shore.' When the angel who was speaking to him went away, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his orderlies. He told them everything and despatched them to Joppa."

1) At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.

“Caesarea” - not Caesarea Phillipi, which is in the north. This Caesarea is on the coast, sort of the headquarters for the Roman establishment.

a predominately Roman city on the shores of the Mediterranean in Judea.

The headquarters of the Roman governor of Judea;

archaeologists have discovered a stone from a building in Caesarea inscribed with the name Pontus Pilate.

“Cornelius”! - a centurion of an Italian cohort, serving under Herod Agrippa, the representative Roman power in the district.

Cornelius being an officer in the Roman Army would have made him all the more hated by any patriotic Jew.

Cornelius:

was a Roman centurion in a cohort stationed at Caesarea, the headquarters of the government of Palestine. He was part of an “Italian legion”

"Thirty-two Italian cohorts were stationed in the different provinces of the empire. They were made up of Italian volunteers and were considered the most loyal Roman troops."

Rome had a total of 28 legions,

Roman military set-up

Legion – usually 5,500 to 6,000 men; roughly equal to a division.

Each legion had 59 centurions and consisted of 10 cohorts.

Cohort – 550- 600 men - roughly a battalion.

The first cohort was larger than the others,

it was divided into 5 double centuries of about 800 men total.

Cohorts 2 thru 10 were 6 centuries, about 80 men each.

Since each legion also had about 120 horsemen, the total legion was about 5500 men.

The cohort was divided into centuries or about 100 men; roughly a company

Over each century there was a centurion.

If you were the Centurion over cohorts 2 thru 10 = 80 men

If you were the Centurion over cohort 1 = 160 men

If you signed up with the Roman legions you signed up for 25 years, it was a very serious obligation.)

The parallel to the centurion in our military organization is a company sergeant-major.

Centurions were the backbone of the Roman army.

"Centurions are desired not to be overbold and reckless so much as good leaders, of steady and prudent mind, not prone to take the offensive to start fighting wantonly, but able when overwhelmed and hard-pressed to stand fast and die at their posts."

Cornelius knew what courage and loyalty were.

God speaks to Cornelius about Peter

Cornelius, a Gentile who served God

2) He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.

Cornelius was a God-fearer.

God-fearer: In New Testament times it had become term for Gentiles who, weary of the gods and the immoralities and the frustration of their ancestral faiths, had attached themselves to the Jewish religion.

They did not accept circumcision and the Law;

But they attended the synagogue

They believed in one God and in the pure ethic of Jewish religion.

Cornelius was a man who was seeking after God, and as he sought God, God found him.

Cornelius was a man given to charity; he was characteristically kind.

His search for God had made him love men, and he who loves his fellow men is not far from the kingdom.

Cornelius was a man of prayer.

Perhaps as yet he did not clearly know the God to whom he prayed; but, according to the light that he had, he lived close to God.

He was a man who obviously had a real relationship with God, yet outside of the channels accepted by the Judaism of the day

God, by an angel, tells Cornelius to get Peter

3) One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

4) Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked.

5) The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. 6) He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea."

9th hour = 3 PM

His alms and prayers are accepted before God.

God sent an angel to Cornelius to speak to him directly, but God used a man to preach the gospel to him.

"Angels may help to connect men with God's appointed preachers; they are never allowed to do more."

Cornelius responds with a healthy fear of the heavenly and holy and obeys

Cornelius likely didn't know who Peter was; but he knew that he should do what God told him to do.

Joppa is about 30 miles away, south of Caesarea.

Jonah, the prophet, took a ship from Joppa and refused obedience to the divine call."

Peter was already on the way to unlearning some of the rigidity in which he had been brought up.

He was staying with a man called Simon who was a tanner (Ac.9:43;Ac.10:5)..

Peter had begun to see that Christianity abolished these petty laws and tabus.

"Simon the tanner" - a tanner was despised.

A tanner worked with the dead bodies of animals and therefore he was permanently unclean (Num.19:11-13)

If a girl was betrothed to a tanner without knowing he was a tanner, the betrothal was void.

His house had to be at least 50 cubits outside the city.

It was his uncleanness that made it necessary for Simon to dwell on the sea-shore outside the city.

No rigid Jew would have dreamed of accepting hospitality from a tanner.

No doubt this tanner was a Christian.

Peter obeys the command of God and sends for Peter

7) When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. 8) He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

household (of 3) shared... 2 servants and a trusted aid

"Declared all these things" –

he apparently trusted them and explained all to them,
they must have been devout also.

PETER LEARNS A LESSON

Acts 10:9-16

"On the next day, when they were on the way and when they were getting near the city, about midday Peter went up to the housetop to pray. He became hungry and he wanted something to eat. When they were preparing the meal a trance came upon him. He saw the heavens opened and he saw a kind of vessel coming down. It was like a great sheet and it was let down by the four corners to the earth. On it there were all four-footed animals, all animals that creep on the earth and all that fly in the air. A voice came to him, 'Rise, Peter, kill and eat.' But Peter said, 'By no means, Lord, because I have never eaten anything common or unclean.' And the voice spoke again the second time, 'What God has cleansed, do not you reckon common or unclean.' This happened three times; and thereupon the sheet was taken up into heaven.

Peter on Simon the Tanner's roof

9) About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. 10) He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.

Time gap = 3PM to Noon the following day = 21 hours to go 30 miles.

As God was speaking to Cornelius and Cornelius was sending the messengers to call Peter, God was also speaking to Peter himself

– the second half of this mission from God.

Typically, this is how God does things;

He speaks to several people about a matter, not just one;

thus confirmation is provided.

Before Cornelius could be welcomed into the Church, Peter had to learn a lesson and unlearn some falsehoods born out of tradition.

Strict Jews believed that God had no use for the Gentiles.

Sometimes they even went the length of saying that help must not be given to a Gentile woman in childbirth, because that would only be to bring another Gentile into the world.

At midday Peter went to the roof to pray.

The housetop was normally used in that culture as a sort of "patio";

A place away from and above the day's activities and bustle

The house-roofs were flat, the houses were small and crowded, people often went up to the roof for privacy.

It was there he had a vision of a great sheet being let down.

Peter's vision

11) He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. 12) It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. 13) Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

14) "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15) The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

16) This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

Often above the flat roof of the houses they would stretch an "awning" to shade the heat of the sun

The word used for sheet is the same as is used for a ship's sail.

In today's sailing language a sheet is a line – a rope

Peter on the roof top may well have been able to look out onto the waters of the Mediterranean and see the ships' sails in the distance.

The sheet with the animals in it appeared to him and the voice told him to kill and eat.

To an observant Jew, to eat a Levitically unclean animal is unthinkable (Col 2:14, 16, 17).

He sees all sorts of kosher **and** un-kosher animals together mingling in the sheet

Interesting that when Peter was so hungry, that God spoke to him through a vision regarding food!

Jews had strict food laws, recorded in Lev.11.

Generally speaking the Jew might eat only animals which chewed the cud and whose hoofs were cloven.

All others were unclean and forbidden.

Then comes a command that he should Rise, Peter, kill and eat.

A voice came to him; how does God speak to us?

Rarely in an audible voice; more often, it is a speaking to our inner man via the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives.

Peter was shocked and protested that he had never eaten anything that was unclean.

"Not so, Lord" - is an oxymoron (a self-contradictory phrase).

His response is both absurd, yet typical of us:

he says no the his Lord;

the only legitimate answer to a request of our Lord is yes.

Peter had a bad habit of telling Jesus, "no" (Matthew 16:22, John 13:8).

The voice then tells him not to call what God had cleansed unclean.

The response from God is clear:

What God has cleansed [declared clean] you must not call common [impure, unholy, and unacceptable to God].

In Old Testament thought, there was the holy and the common.

The holy was made common when it came into contact with something common, and could only be made holy again through a ritual cleansing.

When something was made holy it was called consecration;

When it was made common it was called desecration.

For deep emphasis, God repeats this vision three times so that there could be no possible mistake or dodging of the lesson.

As far as Peter is now concerned, the application is only valid regarding the eating of foods;

God will show Peter that He is really getting at another point.

Once Peter would have called a Gentile unclean; but now God has prepared him for the visitors who would come.

THE MEETING OF PETER AND CORNELIUS

Acts 10:17-33

"When Peter was at a loss in his own mind to know what this vision could mean, look you, the men who had been sent by Cornelius had asked their way to Simon's house and stood at the door. They spoke and asked if Simon who was also called Peter was lodging there.

When Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, 'Look you, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and go with them without any hesitation, because it is I who sent them.'

So Peter came down to the men and said, 'Look you, I am the man you are looking for. Why have you come?' They said, 'Cornelius, the centurion, a good man and a God-fearer, one to whose worth the whole nation of the Jews bears witness, was instructed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to listen to the words you would give him.' So he asked them in and gave them hospitality.

"On the next day he rose and went with them and some of the brethren from Joppa came with him.

On the next day they came to Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had invited along his kinsmen and his closest friends.

When Peter was going to come in Cornelius met him and fell at his feet and worshipped him. Peter raised him up and said, 'Rise; I, too, am a man.'

So he went in, talking with him as he went. He found many who had assembled there and he said, 'You know that it is against the law for a man who is a Jew to have contact with or to visit one of another race. But God has shown me not to call any man common or unclean. So I came without any objection when you sent for me.'

So Cornelius said, 'Four days ago from this time, I was praying in my house at three o'clock in the afternoon, and, look you, a man stood before me in shining clothes and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your deeds of charity have been remembered before God. Send therefore to Joppa and send for Simon who is also called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, on the sea-shore.' Immediately I sent to you; and I am most grateful that you have come. Now then we are all present before God to hear all that God has enjoined you to tell.'"

God makes Peter aware of the arrival of the messengers from Cornelius

17) While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. 18) They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there.

19) While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. 20) So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

Just as the vision ends, the messengers come, and God speaks to Peter about how he should receive these Gentile visitors.

Not only did he have a vision, but the Spirit was talking to him.

Knowing the Jewish outlook towards Gentiles, the emissaries of Cornelius came no farther than the door

Peter asked them in and gave them hospitality (Ac.10:23).

When Peter arrived at Caesarea, Cornelius met him at the door, no doubt wondering if Peter would cross his threshold at all,

Peter came in (Ac.10:27).

In the most amazing way the barriers are beginning to go down.

That is typical of the work of Christ.

In the early days of Christianity it was typical that surrender to Christ broke the barriers down; and it can still do that when given the chance.

Peter goes with the messengers back to Caesarea to see Cornelius

21) Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?"

22) The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." 23) Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

Two visions bring together 2 men 30 miles apart.

10 journeyed: the number of witness: Boaz in Ruth, etc.

2 household servants and

a soldier;

the apostle Peter;

6 Christian Jews (11:12).

See how God gradually prepared Peter to come to this point long before

- by bringing "half-Jews" (Samaritans) into the church back at chapter 8; and
- Peter's willingness to stay with an "unclean" Jew (Simon the Tanner).
- Even the act of inviting these Gentiles into the house where he was staying, and letting them spend the night there was an offense against Jewish custom regarding the treatment of Gentiles.

Yet, it was not an offense against the laws of the Old Testament.

God never wanted the Jews to become like their Gentile neighbors; yet He wanted Israel to be a beacon light, so that the nations would come to God through the example and compassion of Israel.

The meeting between Cornelius and Peter

Peter comes to Cornelius' house and explains why he has come

24) The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along. The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25) As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. 26) But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

27) Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 28) He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. 29) So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"

Cornelius was waiting for them: what faith in God Cornelius has!

He is waiting for Peter to come, knowing that since God motivated him to call Peter in the first place, God would bring the plan to completion.

Cornelius didn't know Peter, but must have thought him to be a special man of God; the reaction of falling down at his feet and worshipping Peter is understandable, though wrong.

Whenever worship is offered to men or angels (Revelation 19:10), it is refused;

but Jesus received such worship freely (Matthew 8:2; 9:18; 14:33; 15:25; 28:9),

Jesus is more than a man and greater than any angel (Luke 4:8).

Peter refused both to be treated by Cornelius as if he were a god, and to treat Cornelius as if he were a dog.

He went in → Peter is actually entering the house of a Gentile, something that Jewish custom strictly prohibited.

The subject of this chapter is both the conversion of Cornelius as well as the conversion of Peter."

Peter explains the message he received in the vision, realizing that God wasn't just (or even primarily) talking about food in the vision.

Cornelius explains why he sent for Peter

30) Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me 31) and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. 32) Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' 33) So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."

4 days ago God commanded me to send for you

I obeyed

I have gathered my like minded friends to wait your arrival believing you would also obey and come at God's command

You have arrived – Thank you for coming

Preach and Teach on

What has God told you to tell us ???

THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL

Acts 10:34-43

"So Peter opened his mouth and said, `In truth I have come to understand that God has no favourites; but that in every nation he who fears him and acts righteously is acceptable to him.

As for the word which God sent to the sons of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ--this is he who is Lord of all-- you all know the affair that happened all over Judaea, after the baptism which John preached--you know about Jesus of Nazareth, about how God anointed him with the Spirit and with power, about how he went about healing all who were under the sway of the devil because God was with him; we are witnesses of all he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

And they took him and hanged him on a tree.

It was he whom God raised up on the third day and made him evident, not to all the people but to the witnesses elected beforehand by God, to us who were with him and who ate with him and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

And he gave us orders to preach to the people and to testify that this is he who was set apart by God, to be the judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets testify that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

What Peter said to Cornelius gives us the very essence of the first preaching about Jesus.

- (i) Jesus was sent by God and equipped by him with the Spirit and with power. Jesus therefore is God's gift to men.
- (ii) Jesus exercised a ministry of healing. It was his great desire to banish pain and sorrow from the world.
- (iii) They crucified him.
- (iv) He rose again.
The power which was in Jesus was not to be defeated.
It could conquer the worst that men could do and in the end it could conquer death.
- (v) The Christian preacher and teacher is a witness of the resurrection.
To him Jesus is not a figure in a book or about whom he has heard.
He is a living presence whom he has met.
- (vi) The result of all this is forgiveness of sins and a new relationship with God.
Through Jesus the friendship which should always have existed between man and God, but which sin interrupted, has dawned upon mankind.

Peter's short sermon to the Gentiles at Cornelius' house

34) Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism 35) but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. 36) You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. 37) You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—38) how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

39) "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, 40) but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. 41) He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42) He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. 43) All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Note: Peter is talking to a Gentile group, he is opening the door to them!

Peter's preaching to the Gentiles is essentially the same as his preaching to the Jews: he presents the person and work of Jesus Christ, with an emphasis on the resurrection of Jesus and our responsibility before God in light of these things.

In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality

The foundation for Peter's understanding that the gospel should now go forth to Gentiles;

The prevailing Jewish thought was that God did show partiality, in essence loving the Jews while hating the Gentiles.

A Jewish man would begin every day with a prayer thanking God that he was not a slave, a Gentile, or a woman;

A basic part of the Jewish religion in the days of the New Testament was an oath that promised that one would never help a Gentile under any circumstances,

even to the extent of giving directions if they were asked

even refusing to help a gentile woman at the point of her sorest need - when she was giving birth - because the result would only be bringing another gentile into the world.

If a Jew married a Gentile, the Jewish community would have a funeral for the Jew and consider them dead.

It was thought that to even enter the house of a Gentile made a Jew unclean before God.

When the Jews showed racism they were not being faithful to the Old Testament; the idea that God shows no partiality is also stated in Deuteronomy 10:17 and 2 Chronicles 19:7.

The Gentiles could give as well as the Jews

They despised the Jews as weird traditionalists, and

They believed that the Jews were evil plotters who worshipped pigs
– they refused to eat pork!

With the spread of the gospel; Christianity was the first religion to disregard racial, cultural and national limitations.

The brief sermon concludes with an understanding of the broadness of God's promise of salvation: whoever [Jew or Gentile!] believes in Him will receive remission of sins.

Peter's point in saying but in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him

not to imply that men like Cornelius were already right with God and need not become Christians;

point is that they need not feel excluded from God because of their national background.

The group at Cornelius' house was prepared to hear the message Peter brought;

our blessing is increased greatly when we prepare ourselves to hear the word of God.

THE ENTRY OF THE GENTILES

Acts 10:44-48

"When Peter was still saying these things the Holy Spirit fell upon those who were listening to his word. All the Jewish believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles too, for they heard them speaking with tongues and magnifying God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone stop water being brought? Can anyone stop those who have received the Holy Spirit, as we too received him, from being baptized?' And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus. Then they asked him to wait with them for some days."

Even as Peter was speaking things began to happen

Even the Jewish Christians could not argue against this;

The Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his friends.

They began to speak with tongues.

This to the Jews was the final proof that God had given his Spirit to the Gentiles too.

These God-fearing Gentiles are saved, filled with the Holy Spirit and baptized

44) While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45) The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46) For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

47) Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." 48) So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

The Holy Spirit was doing the greater work in the hearts of those listening, and Peter went with the flow.

Their salvation:

apparently, each one of these Gentiles responded to the message of Peter with believing faith in their hearts, so that they were actually saved while they listened.

The moment of a person's salvation isn't necessarily when they raise a hand or come forward at an evangelistic invitation; it is at the moment they surrender to God and embrace Jesus in the sincerity of their hearts. Gentiles had probably been saved in the eight years since Pentecost; but they were saved as they embraced Judaism as well as Christianity;

Gentiles may have been saved but they were saved as Jews, not Gentiles.

Their filling with the Holy Spirit was accompanied by the demonstration of spiritual gifts;

this was both a filling with the Holy Spirit in the sense that He indwells and abides in every believer, and

a filling in the sense of a special empowering with gifts and graces from the Holy Spirit.

The Jewish Christians present were amazed; they may have understood that God was now "starting" to love the Gentiles, but who would have thought God would fill Gentiles with the Holy Spirit the same as Jews?

When they spoke with tongues, it was to magnify God, not to teach men; **the audience was God, not man**, consistent with the principle of 1 Corinthians 14:2.

The baptism did not save them; it instead recognized the salvation they had already received.

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the evidence of salvation; not its cause

Baptism in water was an act of confession / profession,

It should not be confused by the giving of the gifts or the "baptism of the Spirit."

It is the personal witness of the convert of what God has done to and in him.

These Gentile converts, as always in Acts, were water baptized there and then.

In Acts there is no trace of one set or class of people being able to administer baptism.

The great truth was that it was the Christian Church which was receiving these converts.

It is not the minister who is receiving a new Christian; it is the Church which is receiving the born again child on behalf of Jesus Christ and accepting responsibility for him.

They asked Peter to wait with them for some days.

Why? That he might teach them more.

New life in Christ is not an end but a beginning.

The coming of Gentiles into the church was not a "new" plan, but something promised long before.

The Old Testament looked for the day when a light would shine in the darkness of the Gentile world (Isaiah 60:1-3).

God promised Abraham, and his descendants, that the blessing which came through him would extend to all nations (Genesis 12:1-4).

Remember Jesus' promise of other sheep, not of this fold in John 10:16.

The first Gentile that Jesus dealt with in His public ministry was a Roman centurion from Capernaum; when Jesus healed the centurion's servant,

He declared that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8:5-13).

Cornelius was an undoubtedly good man; yet he needed Jesus.

Even good people, who are respectful towards God, still need to come to Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Gifts of the Spirit

1 Cor 12, 13 and 14.

1 Cor 12: Not everyone receives the same gift; Gives them all severally as He will;

1 Cor 12:4-11. Body consists of a variety of members;

1 Cor 12:27-30. Rom 12:3-8: **Your gift is a key to your calling.**

1 Cor 14: Speaking in unknown tongues.

No two spiritual gifts are the same.

Permanent: "without repentance"; Rom 11:29.

No gift to be put above another.

1 Cor 13: The rebuttal: "A More Excellent Way."

(13:10: "that which is perfect.")

The Gifts Are for Today!:

1) Our Lord announces them in John 14-17; without termination!

2) No doctrine to be built upon "completion of the canon":

a) 1 Cor 13:10: "That which is perfect is come..."

" Seven thunders uttering their voices - Rev 10.

b) 66 books (not 70)!

3) One valid example destroys "theological" rebuttals..

Are we a Contradiction?

Union Without Communion?

Profession Without Experience?

Life Without Health?

Movement Without Progress?

Battles Without Victory?

Service Without Success?

Trials Without Triumph?

Are we on the right side of Easter...

But on the wrong side of Pentecost?

On the right side of Pardon...

But on the wrong side of Power?

Justified but not sanctified?