



Acts

Lesson 9, Chapter 10

The gospel had now advanced from Jerusalem, north at least as far as Tarsus, west to the Mediterranean Sea, and even as far south as Ethiopia. Many had personally experienced or witnessed the power of Christ at work through His apostles. This power was also seen in the miraculous conversion of Saul who before was the church's number one enemy. He was now one of the most dynamic propagators of the message of the risen Christ.

In chapter 10 another major event takes place that will change the direction of the Church. It is difficult to comprehend the extent of the religious and social division that existed between the Jews and the Gentiles. It certainly was not God's intention to breed division nor did the Old Testament encourage it. God's plan was to bless all nations through one specific family (Gen. 12:1-4). But the natural tendency of fallen man leads to pride, and pride became Israel's stumbling block. They twisted the blessing of God's election into one of favoritism and developed traditions that encouraged and justified their racial prejudice. The result was

a wall of hate that was raised and cemented into place by their hardened hearts. This prejudice was so embedded in their culture that no orthodox Jew would ever enter the house of a Gentile, much less share the gospel. This major gap between a Jew and Gentile had to be bridged before Christ's command to take the gospel to all nations could be obeyed. Fortunately, God doesn't wait for approval from anyone before He carries out His plans. In chapter 10, God's plan is set in motion through a Gentile named Cornelius. The obedience of Cornelius to God's instruction removed the first stone in the wall of hate that separated Jew and Gentile. In response to his vision, Cornelius sent servants to Joppa to bring Peter to Caesarea to speak to the Gentiles there. Peter, having received instructions from God, went with them willingly. The wall between Jew and Gentile was beginning to fall. But it would take much convincing before other church leaders would accept this new revelation. This challenge will take Peter into his next assignment.

READ CHAPTER 10

1. Give some information about Cornelius. From that information speculate on why God would choose him to appeal to Peter on behalf of the Gentiles.

2. What is interesting about the timing of Peter's vision? Vs. 9 & 30

3. *Read Leviticus 11. How does this explain Peter's unwillingness to do what the Lord told him to do in Acts 10:13?*

4. *What had Peter been taught by Jesus about this issue? See Matthew 23:25-28 and Mark 7:15-23.*

5. *Since the man coming to speak to Peter was a Gentile sent by God, what significance do you think Peter's vision had other than accepting previously unclean food as clean? Vs. 28*

6. *Summarize the gospel message that Peter gave the Gentiles from vs. 34-43 in 3 main points.*
 - 1.

 - 2.

 - 3.

7. *What was the end result of the people speaking in tongues? Vs. 45*

8. *Read Galatians 2:11-14. What does this passage tell you about the level of difficulty in what Peter was doing in Acts 10?*

9. *What kinds of prejudices do you see in your own life and the lives of others that sometimes are very difficult to break?*

Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
