



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Praying Leaders Cross All Barriers to Win Other Leaders

JUNE 24-26, 2015

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Acts 10:21-33 *“And Peter went down to the men and said, ‘Behold, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for which you have come?’ 22) And they said, ‘Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you.’ 23) And so he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the following day he arose and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24) And on the following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25) And when it came about that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshipped him. 26) But Peter raised him up saying, ‘Stand up; I too am just a man.’ 27) And as he talked with him, he entered and found many people assembled. 28) And he said to them, ‘You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. 29) That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. And so I ask for what reason you have sent for me.’ 30) And Cornelius said, ‘Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments, 31) and he said, “Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. 32) Send therefore to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you; he is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea.” 33) And so I sent to 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.” (NASB)

“THE REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE TO PETER CAME WHILE HE WAS ENGAGED IN PRIVATE PRAYER (V.9). GOD SPOKE TO CORNELIUS ALSO WHEN HE WAS IN PRAYER (V. 30). THIS CONFORMS TO A PATTERN FOUND IN BOTH OF LUKE’S VOLUMES: GOD USED PRAYER TIME AS AN OCCASION TO LEAD PEOPLE TO NEW AVENUES OF MINISTRY.”

AJITH FERNANDO

How does Peter carefully yet enthusiastically obey the command of God’s Spirit? What was Peter’s first step of obedience to his heavenly vision? How had God prepared the soil of these Gentile hearts? Is the summation of Cornelius a true expectation of the pastor by all those who attend church? Are Leaders usually neglected in our prayers and witness?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES & EVENTS:

- AUGUST 28: *LIFT - LEGISLATIVE INVITATIONAL FISHING TOURNAMENT, DELTAVILLE, VA*
- NOVEMBER 2: *TWELFTH ANNUAL CAPITOL COOKOUT AND PRAYER WALK*

As the obedient servants and soldier of Cornelius had worked their way through the city of Joppa on the seaside lane asking for the location of Simon the tanner, Peter had been hungry in prayer and a trance had come upon him. The heaven opened to him and he saw a sheet coming down, encompassing four dominions, in which was all the animals of Noah’s ark. When commanded to “slay and eat” Peter, being obedient to Scripture, replied, “Certainly not, Lord?” probably thinking it was a test. But by the third time, with the Lord’s response always being, “What things God has cleansed, you yourself do not continue to defile”, he began to reconsider. Then the Spirit told Peter, “Behold, three men are seeking you; but rise up, go down and go with them, evaluating nothing carefully, because I Myself have

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3/CANCELLED – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS, 14490 SMOKETOWN RD.

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY’S AT RT. 10 (IRON BRIDGE ROAD) & 301(12531 JEFFERSON DAVIS HIGHWAY)

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – NORFOLK – GOLDEN CORRAL, 6103 N. MILITARY HWY, NEAR THE NORFOLK AIRPORT

Virginia

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sent them.” Since they were calling for him at the door, Peter obediently responds and warmly greets his visitors.

“THE REFERENCE TO THE ENTIRE NATION IS ALMOST A TECHNICAL PHRASE AND SHOWS THAT CORNELIUS IS WELL KNOWN AMONG THE JEWS.”

DARRELL BOCK

I. IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE **ACTS 10:21-23**

When Peter answered the door and inquired why they had come, they spoke of Cornelius’ rank, response to God and reputation among Peter’s entire nation. Surely Peter had heard of him, but had never dreamed that he would be summoned by him for a mission to the capital. Obedient Peter being aware, both of available space and that the tanner wouldn’t mind because he was considered almost equally unclean by the Jews, he graciously invited them in for the meal and lodging. Breaking the barrier, they ate as equals and must have spoken excitedly about the supernatural direction that had occasioned their meeting as the day closed. Probably, Simon the tanner had gone out at Peter’s direction and recruited six other believers to go with them to enjoy this great opportunity and all ten of them left in the morning together.

“TWO WORLDS WERE ABOUT TO COLLIDE, AS SEVEN DEVOUT, ORTHODOX JEWS WERE ABOUT TO MEET A HOUSEFUL OF EAGER GENTILES. A MILESTONE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH HAD BEEN REACHED.”

JOHN MACARTHUR

II. INCREASING OPPORTUNITY **ACTS 10:24-29**

As they entered into Caesarea the next day, witnessing Cornelius was waiting for them, having invited all his relatives and intimate friends. Because Cornelius would have heard about Peter raising Dorcas from the dead, the

moment he met Peter, he “*fell at his feet and worshipped him.*” But Peter will not allow such and instead focused on equality, helping him up saying, “*Stand up; I too am just a man.*” Entering his house while talking with Cornelius, Peter is surprised by the crowd assembled and they are surprised by both his entering a Gentile home and his first words as an explanation and consolation to them. “*You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for.*” As a proper introduction to present his sermon, Peter requested a formal reason before them all as to why he had been summoned by Cornelius, the centurion.

“NO MAN WAS TO BE REGARDED AS EXCLUDED FROM THE OPPORTUNITY OF SALVATION, OR WAS TO BE DESPISED OR ABHORRED. THE GOSPEL WAS TO BE PREACHED TO ALL; THE BARRIER BETWEEN JEWS AND GENTILES WAS BROKEN DOWN, AND ALL WERE TO BE REGARDED AS CAPABLE OF BEING SAVED.”

ALBERT BARNES

III. IMPLORING OPTIMISM **ACTS 10:30-33**

Cornelius provides the supernatural scenario personally: “*Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments, and he said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.’*” Luke emphasizes prayer with every repetition. Even the arrival time matches the time of answer to prayer. Both have obeyed the answer to their optimistic prayers, Cornelius sent for Peter and Peter has been “*kind enough to come.*” The great Gentile barrier had been breached and the tide of grace flowing through it would encompass the world. Cornelius views all assembled before God and they want to hear from the Lord, revealing the state of their hearts.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Is your leadership characterized by prayer and a willingness to be a bold witness to even leaders?
- 2) Do you allow the normal social, race, economical, or political barriers to keep you from witnessing to others?
- 3) How does your leadership show that Christ is your Lord and your influence is active in inviting others to hear the truth?