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Lesson 33- Salvation to the Gentiles (pt 3): The Man, Jesus Christ

We are continuing our study in chapter 10 and learning about Cornelius, the first Gentile conversion to Christianity recorded in the New Testament and we have spent two weeks learning about the barriers that had to be broken down for Peter to be standing in this Gentile house, surrounded by uncircumcised Gentile people, ready to preach the Gospel unto Salvation to them. Now today we are going to focus on Peter's words to Cornelius from Acts 10:28-43. And the main topic of Peter's sermon is about Jesus Christ. Specifically the Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus and that He became a Man, and through this Man, Jesus Christ, our Kinsman Redeemer, all who believe in Him can be saved. So to begin we see Peter standing in this Gentile house surrounded by Cornelius' friends and family and he says...

28) Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

As we said last week, it was the tradition of men that was making it unlawful, ἀθέμιτος, to keep company with Gentiles... But God! ...has shown me a better way, that I should not call any man common or unclean because Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1 Jn 2:2; Mark 3:28-29.

29) Therefore, I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?

Remember God had to repeat Himself three times, but once Peter submitted by faith and acted in obedience, he came without objection, ἀναντιρρήτως, without raising a word. Peter is truly walking by faith and obedience here. Remember the Spirit never told him the whole plan. He just said, "*Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them.*" Acts 10:20. So Peter asked them, **for what reason have you sent for me?** And Cornelius tells Peter his encounter with the angel...

30-31) So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ³¹ and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.

Cornelius adds an intriguing detail here in verse 31 that we don't see in verse 4. Verse 4 says, "*Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.*" And in verse 31 it says, "**Cornelius, your prayer has been heard...**" This word "has been heard" is εἰσακούω. Not just heard but literally "into hearing." Cornelius' prayer came into the hearing of God. Which just adds a deeper significance to God hearing our prayers. He doesn't just hear them; our prayers of faith enter into God's hearing, 1 Pet 3:12; 2 Chron 16:9.

32) Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.'

Acts 11:14- *who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.*

33) So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.

Cornelius and his family and friends are gathered together in faithful expectation waiting to hear the words of Salvation that God has sent to them through Peter. Notice Cornelius says, **we are all present before God, to hear...** This is a divine appointment set up by God Himself and they have positioned their hearts before God to hear His Word. This is having ears to hear which as we will see will lead to Salvation, Acts 10:44.

Think about Peter. He is surrounded by all these people who are eagerly waiting to hear from God, but up until this point, God hasn't told Him exactly what to say. It wasn't like Peter was preparing his sermon on the trip from Joppa. He is being completely led of the Spirit and he begins speaking by the Spirit in verse 34...

34) Then Peter opened his mouth and said... Now this can be a dangerous thing for Peter as we have seen in the past, but not when he is being led of the Spirit. This sermon, just like his others, is absolute perfection, Acts 2:14-36; 3:18-26; 4:8-12; 5:29-32.

34) Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality."

This revelation came on the rooftop in Joppa when God told Him, "*What I have cleansed you must not call common*," Acts 10:15. And Peter says **I perceive**, καταλαμβάνομαι. Literally an intense receiving down into your soul. But this word is in the present tense meaning that the understanding of this revelation is still continuing. As Peter looks around the room and sees the eagerness of all these Gentiles waiting on the Word of the Lord to be spoken, as Cornelius explains the angelic vision and the divine appointment of God to bring them all here in this Gentile house. Peter says, I am perceiving, and I am continuing to gain a deeper understanding of this revelation that it is the will of God that Salvation be brought to the Gentiles as well. Because **God shows no partiality**. προσωπολήπτης, a combination of προσωπον- face, countenance, appearance + λαμβανω- to receive. To receive on account of one's appearance. God doesn't look at the outward appearance, but rather He looks at the heart, **1 Sam 16:7**.

35) But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

Peter is not talking about earning your righteousness by doing good works. Salvation is always a matter of the heart. Peter is merely continuing his statement that started in verse 34. He is saying, the Spirit is showing me... in truth, in reality, based on these circumstances that God has providentially put together, I am gaining a deep understanding that God does not receive someone based on their outward appearance or their race or ethnicity, but rather God looks at the heart and Salvation is available to every nation, not just the Jews, but to every person in every nation. To all who have a desire to know Him. To everyone who fears God and has a desire to pursue Righteousness. This person is accepted by Him. But this isn't salvation, it's just the first step to humbling your heart to God in order to receive Salvation. This is the heart of Cornelius. Peter is looking directly at Cornelius and his family, and the Holy Spirit is directing his words because Cornelius feared God, he gave alms to the Jewish nation, and he prayed to God always. This didn't make him a Christian, but it set his heart right to receive Salvation by faith in Jesus. A prideful arrogant heart will never be accepted by God for Salvation. Peter said this in his epistle, 1 Peter 5:5- "*God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble*."

Now that Peter has this sorted out in his own mind, he starts to preach the Gospel and Peter, being led by the Spirit, beautifully orchestrates this Gospel message by describing the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He begins with the incarnation of Jesus Christ...

36) The Word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all—.

He begins with the first step in the plan of Salvation, that is the Word being made flesh. This is the Logos. The Word that was in the beginning with God, Jn 1:1. And God began working this out through His Prophets in the old covenant, prophesying of the Messiah to come, **Rom 1:1-4**; 3:21; 1 Pet 1:10-11; Acts 3:18, 21, 24; 26:22; 28:25. This is the Word that was made flesh.

Notice this Word was **sent**. Who is sending the Word... God the Father. **The Word which God sent**. All through the Gospels, Jesus continually refers to Himself as being sent by the Father. John especially shows this, Jn 3:34; 5:36-38; 6:29, 57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3, 8, 18-25; Matt 10:40; 15:24; 21:37; Mk

9:37; Lk 4:18; 9:48; 10:16. This was the fulfillment of **Psalm 107:20** and **Isaiah 55:11; 48:16**. This is the Trinity in heaven sending the manifested Word to the earth, **1 John 5:7-8; 1:1-2; John 1:1-5, 14**.

And to whom is the Word being sent to first... **to the children of Israel**. This was the election for service we spoke about last week. Our Christian foundation is Jewish, built on the Apostles and the Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone, Eph 2:19-20. The Jews were elected to record the Scriptures as God gave His Word to the Holy Prophets and they were elected as God's Holy nation to usher in the Messiah for the Salvation of the whole world, Romans 3:1; Gen 22:18; Gen 49:10; 2 Sam 7:11-13; Lev 20:25-26; Ex 19:5. This is why Salvation was to the Jew first and then the Gentile, Rom 1:16. Even Paul being the Apostle to the Gentiles he always went to the Jewish synagogues first and then when the Jews would reject the Gospel, he would turn to the Gentiles; Rom 11:11-15; **Acts 13:46-47**.

Notice this next phrase in verse 36... **preaching peace through Jesus Christ**. This peace is not peace with men, but peace with God. A reconciliation to the Father through Jesus Christ, **Romans 5:1-2**. This word preaching is εὐαγγελίζω- to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. And notice it is the Word of God sent from the Father that is proclaiming peace **through Jesus Christ**, 2 Cor 5:18-19. Look at the oneness between the Father and Jesus. The Father sent Jesus who is the Word, but the Word is the Word of the Father and Jesus only says what He hears the Father say, and He only does what the Father tells Him to do. And He is doing everything through the power of the Holy Spirit. You can just see the beautiful Oneness of the Trinity at work for our Salvation, John 5:19, 30; 14:10, 24; 8:26, 28; 12:49-50.

Jesus in the flesh is the means by which God the Father is reconciling His people and He had to become a man to do so, but notice this last phrase in verse 36... **He is Lord of all**. Peter is saying that this Jesus is a man, but... He is also God. Son of God and Son of Man. Remember Peter's first sermon on the Day of Pentecost. He made this very clear, **Acts 2:36**. Not only is Jesus the Word of God, He is God Himself, 1 John 5:20; John 1:1-2.

Now notice what Peter is doing. He is teaching Cornelius who Jesus is. Peter is preaching the Gospel by exalting Jesus Christ. That's what we do as Christians, we always glorify Him.

37) that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

Some might ask, if Cornelius already knows this "word," then why is Peter even preaching to him? This is only confusing in the English translation. The Greek clears it up. The word here is NOT Logos, but rather ῥῆμα rhema. An utterance of the mouth. And this word "know" is οἶδα, meaning head knowledge. Cornelius doesn't know The Logos. He doesn't ginosko or intimately know the Word that became flesh, but only a head knowledge of what people were saying about Him. So Peter is describing the events of Jesus' life that Cornelius had heard about, but now Peter is pulling it together to show him that this God Man Jesus is the Christ whom God sent as Savior of the world.

He says this utterance or news about Jesus first began from Galilee, because that's where Jesus is from, and news of Him came about according to the whole of Judea after the baptism which John preached. John's whole ministry was to prepare the hearts of the people for the Messiah to come, Mark 1:3-4; Lk 3:7-17. So news began to spread about the Messiah coming, then Jesus was baptized in the Jordan by John which leads to verse 38...

38) how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

Peter is focusing on the humanity of Jesus by calling Him Jesus, that which is from Nazareth, Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ. Cornelius had heard of the signs, wonders and miracles, but now Peter is unlocking the Truth by giving Cornelius the understanding that this was God's plan of redemption. That the God of

Israel has sent His Word in the flesh as the Savior of the world and His name is Jesus. And **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power**. Peter says, this Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One of God the Father, anointed with His Holy Spirit and with His power. Notice the Trinity being taught. And Peter says that the amazing things Jesus did were a result of this anointing. He **went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him**.

Notice that last phrase... **for God was with Him**. Peter tells Cornelius that the God of Israel not only sent Jesus and anointed Him and endowed Him with His Spirit and gave Him His power, but God Himself was with Him, John 8:16, 29; 10:30. And just a side note that's not in Peter's sermon, but now because of Jesus, all of us who believe in Him have His Spirit dwelling in us and God is with us also, 1 John 2:20-27; 4:17; Eph 2:22; 3:17. Peter continues with the life of Jesus in verse 39...

39) And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

This "we" that Peter refers to are the Apostles that followed Jesus. And Peter tells Cornelius, you heard these things about Jesus, but we are witnesses to all these amazing things He did, and even witnesses to His death and resurrection. That's the main point that Peter is driving towards here. But notice he doesn't place the guilt of Jesus' death on Cornelius or even the Romans. He says, **whom they (the unbelieving Jews) killed by hanging on a tree**. Very different than his previous sermons to the Jews condemning them of rejecting and murdering the Messiah. Here to Cornelius, Peter preaches grace to the humble. Peter continues with the Gospel message of the Resurrection...

40) Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly,

Notice the constant reference to God the Father. To Cornelius Peter is explaining that God the Father raised up His Son Jesus from the dead on the third day and it was God the Father who **showed Him openly**. In the Greek it is even more specific saying that God the Father gave or granted Him (Jesus) to become manifest, ἐμφανής, to shine light in. In Acts 1:3 Luke says, **"to whom (the Apostles whom He had chosen) He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."** God the Father raised Him from the dead and granted Him to show Himself openly in His glorified body, but notice verse 41...

41) not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

Jesus didn't announce to the world that He had risen from the dead. He only showed Himself to those who loved Him, **John 14:21-23**. And these hand selected witnesses were chosen beforehand by God the Father to be His vessels to proclaim Jesus as risen from the dead. These were the only ones who had the privilege of seeing the risen Christ in His glorified body and to have this intimate Fellowship with, John 20:15-26; Matt 28:1-10, 16-20; Mk 16:1; Luke 24:13-34, 49-51; John 21:1, 14; 1 Corinthians 15:6-7; Mark 16:9-20; Acts 1:5. Notice how Peter describes this to Cornelius... **to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead**. Such an intimate description of our Lord. Think about this, He had just conquered sin and death, all authority was given to Him. The Trinity had been working on this plan for 4,000 years but yet in those 40 days in between His Resurrection and His Ascension, Jesus chose to eat with and spend time with the ones who loved Him, Jn 21:12-13; Lk 24:41-43. This was the whole purpose of the cross, to bring us together into Fellowship with our God. This intimate Fellowship only comes to those who are seeking Him. To those who are yearning to invite Him into their lives. And I believe this selected manifestation is a foreshadowing of those who will be taken at the rapture. It is only those who are in love with Jesus and eagerly waiting His return whom He is going to manifest Himself and catch away as His bride, Heb 9:28; John 14:2-3; 21-23; Matt 25:1-13; 1 Cor 3:11-15; 9:24-27; Phil 3:14; Rev 3:10; 19:7-8; Col 3:1-4; Eph 5:26-27, 32; 2 Cor 11:2-3; Rom 7:4.

42) And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

Jesus was ordained by God, notice God is the delegating force to Jesus Christ. He sent Him, He anointed Him, empowered Him, He raised Him from the dead, He granted Him to become manifest after His resurrection, and in verse 42 God has ordained, appointed the Man Jesus from Nazareth **to be Judge of the living and the dead**. It is because Jesus is a man that gives him the right to be Judge over all creation, **John 5:26-27; Acts 17:31**. The Man, Jesus Christ is the Righteous Judge because He is the Kinsman Redeemer and He has been granted this authority legally through His Resurrection, **Rev 1:18; 2:27; Ps 2:8**; Is 45:22-25; Phil 2:9-11. Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1 Jn 2:2, and He is the Righteous Judge and His judgment will come down to one question... He's not going to ask... Have you sinned, did you live a good life, did you do good works? The one question He is going to ask is... Do you know Me? Have you placed your faith and trust in Me and My Words of Eternal Life? If the answer is no, then they will hear the words... *"I never knew you; depart from Me..."* Matthew 7:23. But those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ for Eternal Salvation will have peace with God and everlasting life with Him. And that's what Peter tells Cornelius in the next verse.

43) To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.

All the Prophets have foretold of this Salvation... And this Salvation is only through His Name. It is only through everything in which His Name stands for. Everything Peter has just said about Jesus is upheld in His Name. And **whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins**. As Peter is uttering these words, I am sure he is seeing this Salvation in a whole new light. Whoever, Jew and Gentile alike, whosoever has faith in Jesus Christ will be saved through His Name because Jesus is our Kinsman Redeemer, the Man who bore the Righteous punishment for our sins, and He is the Man who was risen from the dead and exalted to the right hand of the Father. And all those who have faith in Jesus will receive remission of sins and have peace with God.

Those are Peter's final words to his sermon and next week we'll see the results...