

Come ALL and Equally Experience God's Love in the Lord Jesus Christ

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Date: 30 August 2015

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[0:00] If you would take your Bibles and go to the book of Acts chapter 10, if you're visiting with us, you can pull out that black Bible in the chair in front of you.

Go towards the back and go to page 100. Acts chapter 10, page 100 in that black Bible. Acts 10, we're going to do the whole chapter today.

It all just kind of flows together. Acts chapter 10, I'll read the whole chapter and then we'll go into our study.

Acts 10, starting in verse 1. Now there was a certain man at Caesarea named Cornelius, centering of what was called the Italian cohort, 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.

About the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had come to him, and he said to him, Cornelius, and fixing his gaze upon him and being much alarmed, he said, What is it, Lord?

[1:30] And he said to him, Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now dispatch men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon who is also called Peter. He's staying with a certain tanner named Simon whose house is by the sea.

And when the angel who was speaking to him had departed, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier of those who were in constant attendance upon him, and after he explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

And on the next day, as they were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. He became hungry and was desiring to eat.

But while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance and he beheld the sky opened up and a certain object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground. And there were in it all four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air.

And a voice came to him, Arise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, By no means, Lord, for I've never eaten anything unholy and unclean. And again a voice came to him a second time, What God has cleansed no longer considered unholy.

[2:42] And this happened three times and immediately the object was taken up into the sky. Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked direction for Simon's house, appeared at the gates.

And calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.

And while Peter was reflecting on the vision, the spirit said to him, Behold, three men are looking for you. But arise, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them myself.

And Peter went down to the men and said, Behold, I am the one you're looking for. What is the reason for which you've come? And they said, Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man, well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to this house and hear a message from you.

And so he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next 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 called together his relatives and close friends. And it came about that Peter entered, and when it came about that Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet and worshipped him.

[3:57] But Peter raised him up saying, Stand up. I too am just a man. And as he talked with them he entered and found many people assembled. 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.

Yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. And so I asked for what reason you've sent for me. 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. And he said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.

Send therefore to Joppa, invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you. He is standing at the house of Simon the Tanner by the sea. So I sent you immediately. You've 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. And open in his mouth, Peter said, I must certainly understand that God is not one to show partiality.

[5:05] But in every nation, the man who fears him and does what is right is welcome to him. The word which he sent to the sons of Israel preaching peace through Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all. You yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee after the baptism, which John proclaimed, Jesus of Nazareth.

How God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power. And he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. Verse 39.

And we are witnesses of all the things he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And they also put him to death by hanging him on a cross God raised him up on the third day and granted that he should become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen before him by God, to us, who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead.

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 of him. All the prophets bear witness that through his name, everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins.

44. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed.

[6:26] Because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also, for they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. And Peter answered, Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who receive the Holy Spirit just as we can eat.

And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And they asked him to stay on for a few days. It was passed by Congress June 4, 1919.

It was ratified on August 18, 1920 and went into effect August 26, 1920. 95 years ago. It was celebrated just this past week.

Do you know what it is? Anyone? Neither one. Prohibition of the IRS.

No. The right for women to vote. The 19th Amendment. Literally, it reads like this.

[7:38] It prohibits the denial of the right to vote based on sex. Equality. That's the buzzword today, right?

Equality to vote. You're supposed to have marriage equality now. You're supposed to have job equality now.

You're supposed to have race equality, pay equality, medical benefit equality. Etc, etc, etc. Right? That's the word.

No partiality. Everyone should be equal. And yet, interesting, most people don't realize that God also believes in equality. His kind of equality.

Done His way. Here in the book of Acts, just do it. Let God use you to fulfill His mission.

[8:42] Be who you are. Today, we're going to see in Acts chapter 10, Come all and equally experience the love of God in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Come all and all can experience God's love in the Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone can come.

It's for anyone. It's for everyone. Come all and equally experience God's love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jews and Gentiles are equal in the Lord Jesus Christ. So, we are loved, embraced, close to, cared for, held, clenched, accepted, welcomed, adopted, received, shown grace, mercy, and compassion in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian, He loves you so much in Jesus Christ. Christian, He loves you so much in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[9:57] You don't deserve it. And yet, He was gracious to you. He loves us in Jesus Christ. And that's the only reason why He will love us is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Look, without the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, there would be no good news for anyone.

But now, the good news, it goes out to the whole world. We are responsible to our Creator. We deserve His just judgments, condemnation to hell, and yet, He shows mercy and grace in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repent. Turn away from sin and trust Jesus and God's love will flow to you. That's what this chapter is all about. That God's love and His grace and His salvation is not just for Jews.

It's now, it's all. Actually, it never was just to Jews. It's always been to all, but that's, we'll get to that. But it's been opened up.

[11:09] You don't have to become a Jew anymore. You just repent and put your trust in Jesus. So may God give us grace to embrace this truth and express it in His church by abandoning prejudice and bigotry, calling all people to turn from their sin, demonstrating that repentance in a new life.

And, may we display that same grace in our relationships with each other. As God has been so gracious and kind and merciful to us, may we just flow out that type of grace and mercy to each other in our relationships with each other in His church.

Those are good sounds. Don't you like those sounds? This is one of the most important chapters in the book of Acts. Actually, the New Testament. Actually, really, really, in the whole Bible. One of the most important chapters.

The gospel went to a Gentile and his whole household for the first time. And all of it is directed and confirmed by God. God is orchestrating all of this.

And really, you have the conversion of Gentiles, but you also have the conversion of Jews. And I say, conversion of Jews? What do you mean? Well, see, now Gentiles are in.

[12:30] In other words, Gentiles are part of the new covenant now. God's way of reconciliation and salvation is offered to anyone and everyone who responds in repentance and faith.

Jewish believers would need to learn to welcome Gentiles into the church based on their trust in Jesus Christ. They need to learn this. They're not used to this. you're supposed to get circumcised and then you're supposed to do all this ritual and then you're supposed to follow the law and da-da-da-da-da-da.

No, no, no, no, no. Not like that anymore. Since Jesus is Lord of all, the gospel is offered to all. Anyone can respond to the message of Jesus. Anyone. You turn from sin, trust in Christ. You don't need to become a Jew. Why?

Because Jesus fulfilled the law. All three aspects. The moral, the judicial, and the ceremonial. He fulfilled it all. So restrictions are no longer applicable.

[13:39] Now we're under the law of Christ. And you see God's hand throughout this whole scenario. He's just orchestrating everything. He was directing all the main characters to bring about the salvation of this Gentile and his closest associates opening the door for all people to come.

Any ethnicity can come. He had prepared Cornelius' heart, the heart of his associates, to hear this truth.

Which leads us to our first point. First point is this. God, we see, prepares to reveal his love. This love, come all and experience God's love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is preparing, he prepares to reveal this love, and notice how he does it, through visions, circumstances, and direct commands. You see this from verse 1 all the way to verse 33.

God is just setting this up. Directing everything. Vision to Cornelius. Vision to Peter. Setting up circumstances. As Peter's like thinking about this stuff, the guys show up.

[14:46] And then direct command, get down there. All these, you see all these different things happening. God is orchestrating, he's preparing all this to reveal his love. So start in.

And I'm going to go quickly through this, so to speak, especially these first 33 verses. And then we'll get to what is the love, God reveals his love, which is 34, and then how God confirms his love.

34, and then he confirms his love in verse 44. So we'll get to that. But I'm going to say a few things about these verses. Notice verse 1. Caesarea, a man named Cornelius.

Caesarea was where the Roman prefect lived. A very strong Roman population. A heavenized city full of Gentiles. Actually was the place where the war between Romans and Jews began, was in Caesarea, which happens in 66 AD.

Kind of interesting. A centurion was a commander of 100. One of six units of 100 within a cohort. A cohort had 600 men. Part of a legion, which is 6,000 men.

[15 : 59] So this guy was kind of a cool, high social standing type guy. And notice what kind of man he is. Verse 2. A devout man, he feared God with his whole household, gave many alms to the people, which actually the Jewish people, prayed to God continually.

So, he was devout in that Cornelius fear God. He was a God-fearer. Exposed to the God of Israel as a Gentile. Most likely not circumcised.

Didn't really do temple worship. Maybe synagogue type stuff. Maybe not. A sympathizer of the Jews, but definitely he believed the true God was the God of Israel.

And that's who he prayed to. But he was still unclean. He adopted the piety of Judaism, giving alms, praying. He gave generously.

And given his high social standing, he probably had a little bit of bling-bling coming in, some money. He prayed to God, the God of Israel, at all times.

[17 : 07] Now, a question. Did God hear his prayers? Yes. But he was still unsaved. He needed to hear the gospel to experience salvation in Jesus.

Friends, can I just take a moment and let's just unravel this point here. No religion, no matter how honestly motivated or how sacrificially carried on by ritual or goodness, is able to achieve salvation from God's judgment.

It can only be done in the Lord Jesus Christ. And God is setting this up. So God has been preparing Cornelius' heart. He embraced the God of Israel and now God's going to complete this by having him hear the gospel.

By having him hear of how God loves sinners. So notice verse 3. He gets shocked, engages daily prayer time, about 3 p.m.

He sees a vision, in a vision of an angel who called his name. He's massively startled and surprised. Notice he says, verse 4, he's fixing his gaze, much alarmed, what is it Lord?

[18 : 22] Probably thinking he's going to drop dead. It's not every day an angel shows up at your front door. Your prayers have been heard. You have ascended your alms as a memorial before God.

Despite Israel's stupidity and foolishness by crucifying the Messiah, God's message still made an impact on this centurion and God's going to give him the whole truth.

By the way, notice, Cornelius didn't deserve it. Actually, no one does. No one deserves this. As God opens hearts to the truth and people respond, he continues to grant more grace to those who trust him, seeking to do his will.

And that's what he does with Cornelius. Dispatch men, send for a man named Simon who's called Peter, staying with a certain Tanner, blah, blah, blah, boom, angels gone.

Why did the angels just give him the gospel? Interesting, isn't it? The angels didn't even give him the gospel, told him, send men to Joppa. 31 miles away, which is a day journey.

[19 : 34] So he sends them a day, they stay there for a day, they come back for a day, so it's even going to be four days. God works in time, he's directing everything at the perfect time. Notice what Cornelius does.

Kind of waits around, goes, has breakfast, finishes up lunch, maybe, and he doesn't do that, notice, done speaking, summoned to his servants, this is what happened, bam, they're gone, the Joppa.

They're gone. Notice now, verse 9, Peter's vision. Next day, we're up on the housetop to pray.

This is about noontime, 12 o'clock. The outside stairway led to the roof. There's a nice little area, you can pray undisturbed up there.

Still have those even in the Middle East today. He got hungry, I'd be hungry at noontime too. So here they are preparing, making preparation for the food, and he fell into a trance.

[20 : 40] Notice how God is going to take advantage of this time while he's hungry. God was going to communicate with him, says there, verse 11, he built, the sky opened up, certain object like great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners.

Four footed animals, crawling creatures, all these types of birds, and these types of animals, put into the linen sheet. And then notice the command, rise, sacrifice, and eat, there in verse 13.

Actually, it's killed, but there's a little footnote there that says sacrifice, that's the actual meaning of the word, implying a ritual killing before eating. Now this would shock Peter, because this food was common, it was unclean, it was unholy, ew, he just didn't do that.

Notice what he says, 14, by no means more. He emphatically refused. I've never eaten anything unholy and unclean.

He would not do it. And by his rejection, he believed he was being obedient, maybe faithful, maybe he thought this was a test of his loyalty to the Lord. it. Yet, the reply would shock him even more.

[22:01] 15, a voice came to him a second time, what God has cleansed is no longer considered unholy. What God has cleansed, do not consider it common.

God had declared clean what was once unclean, unholy. Stop calling these things unholy, what God has now cleansed. See, friends, now the new era has come.

By making unclean food holy or clean, God showed how the Gentiles were now accepted in the new era, in this new time, in the new covenants.

Now that Christ has come, he's lived, he's died, he's risen, he ascended, the new time has come. So what was the point then of the dietary laws?

What's the point of these dietary laws you see in the Old Testament? To keep Israel a holy and distinct people reflecting the Lord himself. And to be like this until Israel and Gentiles will receive forgiveness of sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone, which happened at Jesus coming.

[23:16] What had once separated Jews from Gentiles has now been removed in Jesus Christ. Christ. Or here I'll put it a simple way. Unclean food, now clean, portrays unclean Gentiles, now clean.

That's the easier way to put it. Unclean food is now clean. That portrays unclean Gentiles, now clean. Now Peter's not going to get this until later.

Okay, mind you. So these food laws, they had social implications. They're removed. The Gentiles can now be a part of God's new community because the Lord Jesus Christ has broken down that dividing wall that separated them from each other.

That's why we read from Ephesians chapter 2. God has made the two into one new man. One person. There was hostility. There was separation between Jews and Gentiles.

But now they're now one in Christ. And notice how determined God was to convince Peter of this. Verse 16. And this happened three times.

[24:31] So God had this happen not just once, not twice, three times he did this to get through Peter's head. God has now expanded the gospel to all people as promised from the Old Testament.

Now Gentiles will have to become Jews to have messianic salvation. Which for us would be a good thing because I don't think anyone is Jewish here. At least not that I remember.

Oh Suzanne is. Well maybe not. Anyone in here is Jewish. So we're all Gentiles. Jesus. And this is good for us.

How do you see yourself today? An unclean animal? An ugly creeping thing? Yes that's you. By the grace of God he put you in that sheet and pronounced you clean in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He took you, me, he took us as unclean things. He put us in the sheet and declared us clean because of Jesus Christ. And friends once we are so engulfed with the riches of God's grace towards us and Jesus Christ it will make a difference in how we treat each other in God's church.

[25:53] It will make a difference in our passion to proclaim the good news to others. It will make a difference. When we really understand that I am that unclean animal put in that sheet but now I'm in that sheet and now I'm declared clean.

We really understand that that same grace will make a difference in how we treat each other. That grace will make a difference in how we're proclaiming the gospel to others. It will make a difference. So notice 17-18, Peter's just thrown off. The vision is through him for a loop. He was perplexed, he's puzzled.

So while he's tripping out on this vision, notice the circumstances. The men who've been sent by Cornelius, having asked direction for Simon's house, they appear at the gate, they're calling out asking, hey Simon, is this guy named Simon Peter here?

You see God's sovereignty in all this. And while they're finding out the info, and notice verse 19, Peter's reflecting on the vision, notice the spirit knocks on Peter's head, well maybe not that much, but gets Peter's attention, he says, behold, three men are looking for you, arise, don't answer to accompany them, without misgivings, or without refusing, doubting nothing, keep their mouth shut,

and get down there.

[27 : 26] In other words, don't discriminate against them, go with them, notice the spirit says, I myself have sent them. Don't doubt, just go.

God is totally orchestrating the whole thing, the vision, the circumstance, and now the direct command. Peter, stop, you stop blabbing your mouth, get down there. So Peter goes down, verse 21, hey I'm the guy you guys are looking for, what are you guys here for?

In their answer, Peter most likely pieced together the reason for their vision. Notice their answer, Cornelius, a centurion, righteous, he's God fearing, he's well spoken of by the Jews.

The angel appeared to him, told him to send for you, but notice the added fact here, the end of verse 22, to send for you, to come to his house and hear a message from you.

That's added information, we didn't get that before. So Peter had a message that Cornelius and the others had to hear. Okay, so now, we come to a stop here.

[28 : 38] There's going to be a dilemma that Peter has to face. For a Jew to enter a Gentile home, that's like, you just don't do that. You might as well just slice your wrist right there, you know what I'm saying?

I mean, you just did not do that. But yet, Peter was told by the Lord, you better go with those guys, because he had no choice. Don't ask questions.

But first, before he goes with them, notice what happens. 23, he invited them in and gave them lodging. Now, that's like the first step. You might say, why?

He hosted them overnight, which is not necessarily too big of a deal because they're coming to his house. Gentiles. But the implication is that they had fellowship. And Jews didn't do that with Gentiles.

They wouldn't come to your house for lunch today. Jews wouldn't do that. And they probably still wouldn't do that. As a matter of fact, they wouldn't come to your house today. It was a huge no-no for any Jew who followed Judaism at all.

[29 : 38] Notice what happens. Next part, verse 23, next day he rose, went with them. Good move, Peter, good move. He brought some men from Joppa. some of his associates he brought with him.

We actually find out in chapter 11, which we'll look at next week, he brought six guys. They're actually Jewish believers. So there's a total of seven. So it wasn't just Peter by himself or just him and another guy.

There was like seven of them. So there's quite a few witnesses of what's going on, okay? 24, they came to Caesarea. Notice it says Cornelius was waiting for them.

And notice what he did. He invited his close friends, close kinsmen, family to hear Peter. He thought it was so important. He invited those he loved.

So here's the fourth day after Cornelius' visit from the angel and Peter stood before them. 25. Now that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, fell at his feet, worshiped him, did some form of homage.

[30 : 43] Whatever he did, he was giving Peter more than just mere respect. At least you see that from Peter's response because notice he stands him up and he says, look, I'm human too. Or I'm a mere mortal.

Don't give me that, that type of homage. And then notice the next part, 27. As he talked with him, he entered and found many people assembled.

Whoa! Whoa! So you can imagine he walks into a room. There's all these Gentiles in here. So it's not just hanging out with Cornelius and a couple other people.

There's a whole room full of Gentiles. I mean, talk about getting out of your comfort zone. Yikes! Awkward! What do I do? And then notice what he says.

You know how awful it is for Jude to hang out with you guys. I'm feeling really uncomfortable here. Right? You guys know this.

[31 : 46] Someone from another nation with a bunch of Gentiles. It was unlawful. It was not permitted for fear that Gentiles were unclean and they would make the Jew unclean.

Yet, he says, God showed him that he should not call people of different nations unholy or unclean or common. That's why he says in 29, that's why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for.

Why did you guys send me? Well, Peter's going to find out in a few moments, actually, that the vision goes farther than just calling Gentiles clean.

It's that Gentiles have complete and total access to the Father just as much as Jews do as only through Jesus Christ alone. So then, 30 through 33, Cornelius relates the whole story. God directed all the events the whole time. And they're praying. This man in shining clothes, he says, stands before me, your prayer has been heard, your alms have been remembered before God.

[33:01] Send a job, invite Simon, call Peter, tell him to come here. 33, so I sent you immediately, you've been kind enough to come. Kindness to come.

Outside of Jewish law, you come to be with me, to be with us. And then notice this next part. So I'm going to slow down here. Slow down.

This is the 15 mile per hour zone because the school's in. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you've been commanded by the Lord.

Peter. This is huge, friends. Do you realize what he's saying? Hearing the message from Peter was an even greater experience of being in God's presence than being addressed by an angel because it was God's word.

Do you get that? God. I mean, this is a big deal what Cornelius is saying here. So we're here before God. You're going to speak.

[34:12] We want to hear what you have to say because what you're going to say is God's word. See, it's not about having some angelic experience or appearance.

It's about listening to the word of the Lord, the good news of Jesus. So when you're doing your evangelism and people tell you, I had an angel appear to me, you just say to me, you know what? God's word is even more important than that. And even Cornelius understood that. So here, I know we went through real fast those 33 verses, but I want to do that on purpose.

And now, God's preparing to reveal his love. He does all this stuff and then comes boom right here. It's like the climax. God reveals his love.

For sinners, Gentiles, 34 to 43. Notice how Peter begins, opening his mouth, I most certainly understand that God is not willing to show partiality.

[35:20] In other words, he makes no distinction in how he reacts to people. All have the same potential access to God, says one writer. Now, God doesn't distinguish between ethnicities at all.

So what does he distinguish? What is acceptable? Notice he says, verse 35, but in every nation the man who fears him and does what is right is welcome to him. What does this mean?

that people who fear God and do right, they earn salvation from God? Is that what he is saying? No. Cornelius didn't earn righteousness.

His response led God to send Peter to reveal more of God's way to him, to reveal God's love, to give him the gospel. God had already been working in Cornelius' heart and now Peter presents the whole truth, which he's going to do in a moment.

In other words, what really Peter is saying, Peter's statement, is another way to express when a person truly responds to the gospel. God is welcome to any and everyone who comes to him with humility and contrition.

[36:41] Are you familiar with Isaiah 66, verse 1 and 2? The heavens are mine, the earth is my footstool, where is a house that you can build for me? O Israel.

But to this one I will look, says the Lord, to one who is humble and contrite of spirit and who trembles at what? At my word.

Peter should have known this. His Jewishness got in the way though. Friends, I mean, I said this earlier, much earlier, this is important for us to know.

it was always God's intention to bless the nations through his chosen people. Genesis chapter 12 verse 3. And he gives his blessing through the means of faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ.

All are accepted in Christ. You can only be accepted by God in Jesus Christ. There's no other way. There's no other way. God has given us favoritism.

[37:46] So may we never forget that God has shown favor to us solely because he will never show favoritism. Else it's not called grace.

Now some people might say, well that seems kind of arbitrary that God just kind of arbitrarily gives grace to whomever. No, no. God has a perfect purpose. God has his millions upon millions whom he saves to display that he's a gracious, merciful God who's slow to anger and abounding in love. That's why he does that. Because he wants to show who he is. Now Peter reviews the gospel.

Specifically. 36, the word which he sent to the sons of Israel. The word is what? A message of peace through Jesus Christ.

He is Lord of all. The word is the apostolic preached message about Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ one can have peace with God. He's Lord of all so it's to all.

[38:53] Anyone can have peace with God. And it's only through Jesus Christ. Jesus is exalted and is Lord over all people. Since he is Lord of all, the gospel can go to all, says one writer.

Thus to all the nations, Jews and Gentiles, can experience peace with each other in Christ because they have experienced peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice what he says there in verse 37. You yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea starting from Galilee after the baptism which John proclaimed Jesus of Nazareth.

You know, you're aware of his ministry. Jesus was not doing all his stuff in like a box. public discourse was taking place. People knew.

All he was doing in Judea, all he was doing among the Jews, starting with the baptism, he's going to talk about his ministry, he's going to talk about his death, he's going to talk about his resurrection, he's going to talk about the hand, he's the judge.

[39:56] Notice what he does. The baptism of John, after which, excuse me, after the baptism which John proclaimed, Jesus of Nazareth, notice his ministry, 38, how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit, and with power.

He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. In his healing ministry, Jesus confronted the evil, the evil one, the evil, and the suffering that people were experiencing. God's presence, Peter says, was with Jesus, enabling him to encounter the evil one, because he inaugurated God's kingdom on earth.

And they, the apostles, they witnessed all that he had done. Verse 39, we are witnesses of all the things which he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They were eyewitnesses of his works. They were eyewitnesses of his ministry.

And then notice what he says, the next part of verse 39, and they also put him to death by hanging him on a cross. And yet, verse 40, God raised him up on the third day and granted that he should become visible.

[41:10] 41, not to all people, but to witnesses who were chosen before him by God, to us. So he, he's talking about how these Jews, they put him to death, the cursed death of being hung on a tree, on a cross.

But God raised Jesus Christ from the dead on the third day. And then God granted that he be made visible to those chosen by God as witnesses, the apostles, those who ate and drank with him.

This stands out as most important. They attested to his resurrection, and then, not just the apostles, but then there was 500 people who actually saw him and they ate with him and they were with him. Which goes even deeper in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

So here he talks about the baptism of John, Jesus' ministry, doing good, healing those oppressed by the devil. He talks about his death, he talks about his resurrection, and that we saw him visibly. 42. And he ordered us, solemnly charged us to preach to the people and to solemnly testify that this is the one who's been appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.

[42:25] God commanded him to preach to the people, warned them and testified to them about Jesus Christ. He was the one appointed to be the judge of the living and the dead. He will come to judge all people.

He is the one who possesses full authority over life and death. So he, the resurrected Jesus, is the ultimate judge at the end of time. So now is the time to believe.

Now is the time to trust in him. If you're here and you're not a follower of Jesus, now is the time for you to trust in Christ. Don't wait. God should judge you and Jesus will come to judge, but he's the one who will save you if you turn away from sin and put your trust in Jesus alone.

Who lived, who died and rose. Notice what he says in verse 43. Of him all the prophets bear witness that through his name everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins.

This Jesus, the prophets, testified. They testified to the message of the Lord Jesus. Through his name, people receive forgiveness of sins when they believe in him.

[43:41] So faith in Jesus brings forgiveness. And notice he's linking his death with forgiveness so his death is a vicarious atonement. It's in the place of sinners. And it does something.

It brings about the redemption that you can find in Jesus Christ. Forgiveness of sins comes because he died for sinners. He died in the place of sinners. And because of his resurrection, Jesus has received the title of exalted Lord.

Thus receiving the right and authority to dispense forgiveness to sinners who believe. To be saved one must go through the great judge of the living and the dead.

You must go through him. And yet, he's your savior. You can appeal to him for forgiveness of sins. Not to any person. Not to a priest.

Not to me, a pastor. Not to anyone else. But to Jesus alone. You get forgiveness and you appeal to him. The only way one can have peace with God is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

[44 : 52] peace. So here's Peter. Speaking this gospel truth. God set everything up. Peter just expands on the gospel.

Talk about when Jesus was baptized, his ministry, his death, his resurrection, and now he's the judge of the living and the dead. There's forgiveness of sins.

And then notice what happens now. This is the third point. God now confirms his love. God now confirms his love. 44. While Peter was still speaking.

So he probably had more things to say. I mean preachers always got more things to say. Okay, I heard some laughs there and you didn't get that. Go, wake up some of you people.

He had more things to say. But while he's still speaking these words, notice, God confirms his love, God confirmed Peter's message, and that these Gentiles had responded to his message by giving them the Holy Spirit.

[45 : 55] The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the Word. And not just giving them the Spirit. Notice, no hands were laid upon them.

They were not even baptized. Remember, it was Samaria. Samaritans were baptized first, but they didn't receive the Holy Spirit. Remember that? So then Peter and John came down, and they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

It didn't happen like that here. When did this happen, something like this? The Spirit fell upon them just like it fell upon those in the upper room.

Just like that. The same way. And this shocked the Jews that were with Peter. They were like, you've got to be kidding me.

What's going on? All the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. Why?

[47 : 00] For they were searing them, speaking with tongues and exalting God. Hey, wait a second, we were the ones doing that. What are you doing? You can't do that. Shut them up. You can't do that.

No. Friends, God made it crystal clear that salvation had come upon the Gentile world. The new age has definitely unquestionably come. Gentiles were saved the same way Jews would be. God confirmed it. That's why there's tongues. That's why he did this. Because they were not Jews. They weren't even close to being Jews.

They weren't circumcised nothing. But it needed to be confirmed. God needed to make it crystal clear that this is what was going to happen.

God had to confirm in this way so that these Jews understood without a shadow of doubt that because the Spirit fell upon these Gentiles the same way it fell upon the Jews, speaking in tongues, praising God, God was making no distinctions.

[48 : 08] Tongue speaking, which is a true language. We would take that. Remember, we took that view. This is a true language being spoken. And God praising confirmation made it obvious this was from the Lord Himself.

There's no divisions. There's not going to be a Jewish church and then a Gentile church. That's why there shouldn't be an Israeli church and a Palestinian church, a Saudi Arabian church and a Yemeni church, a black church and a white church.

It shouldn't be like that. we are all one in Christ. There should be Jews and blacks. There should be Saudi Arabians and Palestinians.

There should be Albanians with Croats and Serbians and Russians. that makes us all we're one in Christ. And then Peter speaks up.

Anyone want to keep these guys from getting baptized? Yeah, I don't think so. Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized if received the Holy Spirit, can he?

[49:20] And the way it's structuring the Greek is like, you guys aren't going to keep them from being baptized, right? Right? And that's why he says, and he ordered them to be baptized.

Oh, yeah, sure, Peter, we'll do it, no problem. Don't mess with him. Holy cow, he's saying that. And he baptized them. These should be baptized in the name of Jesus, Doug.

The Spirit was the sign that they had responded to Jesus and God confirmed it. By the way, baptism, is the means by which one publicly calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, indicating his or her commitment to the Lord Jesus in repentance and faith, identifying with others. God directed an epic making event in this chapter. Gentiles, who, before the coming of Jesus, had to become Jews to be saved.

He had to become a Jew. They were now accepted in the fellowship of God's new community, the same way Jews were, repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. So these uncircumcised Gentiles were given the confirming spirit to show that God had truly accepted them in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[50:46] He confirmed it. They were baptized. Oh, and then something else, the end of verse 48, then they asked him to stay on for a few days. Now see, this is a big deal even more so.

So first, Peter comes and he's with them and now he's staying with them. This is absolute Judaism, no, no, taboo. But it showed that now there's fellowship with the Gentiles.

All barriers between Jews and Gentiles have come down. They're now one in the Lord Jesus Christ, saved through faith alone. Jews and Gentiles are equal in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So friends, let me say this to you once again. Be encouraged with this. Relish in this statement. You are loved, embraced, close to, cared for, held, clenched, accepted, welcomed, adopted, received, shown grace, mercy, and compassion in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian, he loves you so much. He loves you so much in Jesus Christ. And that's the only way he will love you, is because of Jesus Christ.

[51:59] Without the personal work of Jesus, there would be no good news. But the good news, it goes out to anyone and everyone. You are held accountable to God, your creator.

You do deserve his judgment, but yet he will show you compassion in Jesus Christ. Jesus, he will give you his love. Come, he says.

So may God give us grace to embrace this truth and express it in his church. May we abandon prejudice, may we abandon bigotry, may we call all people to turn from their sin and to demonstrate that repentance in a way that they live.

In the way that they live, a new life. And may that same grace make a difference in the way we treat each other in our relationships as well. Because God says, come all, experience my love in the Lord Jesus Christ.

May we give that same love to each other. Can you, as we come to our time of silence where you can ponder, ponder that truth.

[53:07] Ponder the fact that Jesus loves you. Ponder the fact that God loves you in the Lord Jesus Christ. You don't deserve it. Just relish in the fact, the truth that God loves you in Jesus Christ.

Relish in the gospel truth. As we take a few moments, I'll let you take a few moments to have a time of silence. Ponder what we've seen in God's word. And I encourage you to take a moment and really embrace this concept that God loves you in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And then we'll do our time of giving our last two songs in our closing prayer. to take a few moments to ponder and think about the gospel. Amen.