



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Cornelius Acts 10

Acts 10:1-8, *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, ²a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ³About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" ⁴And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. ⁵Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. ⁶He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do." ⁷And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. ⁸So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.*

1. Worship only the true and living God.

Cornelius was a Roman and Romans worshipped multiple gods. But Cornelius, despite his position as a commander of at least one hundred soldiers, abandoned the worship of the gods for the worship of the God of the Jews – the true and living God.

The extent to which he believed in this God is reflected in the way the Bible described him.

- A devout man,
- Feared God with all his household,
- Gave generously to the people, and
- Prayed to God always.

Peter also informed that he was a just man.

Acts 10:22, *And they said, “Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you.”*

Cornelius, though a Gentile, feared (worshipped) the true and living God.

He fasted and observed the Jewish hours of prayer.

It was when he was observing the Jewish prayer at the ninth hour (3pm) that an angel appeared to him.

Cornelius is regarded as the first Gentile convert to Christianity recorded in the Bible. The door of the gospel and the Holy Spirit baptism was opened to the gentiles in his house.

Like Cornelius did, Ruth, a Moabite, also abandoned the gods of her country to worship the God of the Jews. She told her mother-in-law, Naomi, that Naomi's God shall be her God.

Ruth 1:16, *But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.*

The Thessalonians turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God.

1 Thessalonians 1:9, *For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,*

Many have substituted some idols, both graven images and modern gods like money, power, fame, pleasure, etc. for the true and living God.

Anything that comes before God in our life is an idol or a god. But God says you should not worship any other gods besides Him.

Exodus 20:3, *“You shall have no other gods before Me.*

You should worship only the true and living God.

There is no other God besides Him

Isaiah 45:21, *Tell and bring forth your case; Yes, let them take counsel together. Who has declared this from ancient time? Who has told it from that time? Have not I, the Lord? And there is no other God besides Me, A just God and a Saviour; There is none besides Me.*

Jeremiah 10:10, *But the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth will tremble, And the nations will not be able to endure His indignation.*

John 4:23-24, *But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”*

2. God knows your greatest need.

More than anyone else God knows you and your needs.

The Bible says by their fruits, you shall know them.

Matthew 7:16, 20, *You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

²⁰ *Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*

People are watching you and have their opinion about who you are.

Are you using your position to bless people or to oppress them?

Are you making them better or bitter?

Proverbs 29:2, *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.*

Cornelius was a man of good reputation. But God knew him more than anyone did. It was because God knew Cornelius more than everybody that He orchestrated his salvation and that of his household.

God knows that it's not enough for one to be described as a nice person. He knows it's not enough for one to be religious. But one must be born again.

At this time, Cornelius was just religious. He wasn't born again.

People may approve of your life, but what is important is what God is saying.

Beyond what human beings know about you, God has the best knowledge of you.

God knows you in and out.

He knows who you are and even your greatest need.

Job 34:21,

Good people do need the saviour!

Call upon God.

Jeremiah 29:13, *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

3. Divine encounter is real.

Though the encounter with God is real but you may not be able to predict when.

You can pray, fast, sow seeds, and do other good works but you cannot predict the day God will encounter you, reward you and turn your life around.

The day God encountered Cornelius was just like any other day he had prayed and fasted in the past. He had no idea what was waiting for him that day. He just went to keep his usual

appointment with God in fasting and prayer one afternoon about three o'clock when he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him called his name and announced to him.

The angel gave him the description of Peter and where he is staying and how to get him.

Cornelius immediately acted on what the angel said, and the outcome of obedience was Peter's visit to Cornelius house, the salvation of Cornelius, his relatives and close friends and the receipt of the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon gentiles for the first time.

Suppose Cornelius had failed to keep his prayer appointment that day due to one reason or the other. He would have missed that divine encounter.

Zechariah also didn't know the LORD would encounter him that day he was serving God in the temple and an end came to years of childlessness.

Luke 1:6-8, *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.*

As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary and burn incense in the Lord's presence, but he had no premonition of angelic encounter. He was burning the incense and a great crowd stood outside praying. Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah inside the temple.

Luke 1:13, *But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.*

That was how Zechariah got his turnaround. Eventually the wife became pregnant and gave birth to John according to the word of the angel.

The day Moses had his divine encounter in the burning bush was just like any other day. He wasn't expecting any supernatural event as he was tending his father-in-law's sheep.

Exodus 3:1-3, *Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ²And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not*

consumed. ³Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn."

If you asked Moses what he was doing that day, he would have told you he was tending Jethro's sheep, which he had been doing for about forty years.

Moses followed his normal route and routine. But that day he didn't know that though he was leading the sheep, God was leading him. That encounter changed his life forever. The LORD spoke to him out of the burning bush and Moses stepped into the pursuit of his destiny – deliverance of Israelites from 430 years of captivity in Egypt.

You cannot predict divine encounter. Just be faithful walking with God and doing what He has committed into your hands.

4. God requires the same thing of all people.

Gospel reached Samaria in **Acts 8** through Philip. Until then the great commission given by Jesus was not taken up by the Apostles. Peter had the keys to the kingdom, but he had not opened it.

Peter opened it to Samaria now he was given the direction Gentiles.

Peter was given a vision to help him understand all people are proper candidates to hear the gospel be preached.

Acts 10:9-16, *The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. ¹⁰Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹²In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." ¹⁵And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." ¹⁶This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.*

Three times Peter sees an object like a sheet full of all types of animals and is told to rise, kill, and eat. Peter refuses to do so citing the fact he had never eaten anything common or unclean.

Yet a voice says that what God has cleansed you must not call common. The vision shows clearly God had removed the food laws of the Old Testament and hence all animals are to be considered clean today. Based upon that premise, a necessary

conclusion is drawn by Peter that Gentiles are no longer to be called common or unclean either.

Acts 10:28, *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 Peter speaks to Cornelius and his household.

Acts 10:34-35, *Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. ³⁵But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.*

Jews and Gentiles were now accountable to the same law and must meet the same requirements in order to be saved.

5. Esteem servants of God, but don't worship them.

Acts 10:25, *As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.*

What was Peter's reaction to this?

Acts 10:26, *But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man.*

Peter pulled him up and told him to stand up as he was a human being like him.

Cornelius then got up, and both talked as they went inside where others were assembled.

Christians should esteem or honour servants of God but must never worship them.

Servants of God must also teach believers that only God must be worshipped. No matter how much God is using them, they must never receive worship from any human being, including their members.

Only God deserves our worship. If, that day, Cornelius was just trying to honour Peter in the best way he knew, he went too far. But Peter corrected him.

Servant of God, if you were Peter, would you have done that?

At Lystra, Barnabas and Paul rejected being worshipped by the people. That was after Paul had told a man who was a cripple from his mother's womb to stand up straight on his feet and he walked.

Acts 14:11-15, *Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!"¹² And Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker.¹³ Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.¹⁴ But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out¹⁵ and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them,*

The ego of Paul and Barnabas didn't become inflated because they were being worshipped.

No. They tore their clothes and ran in among the multitude, crying out and telling them they were men like them.

Servants of God must be careful not to receive the honour due to God alone even if people, due to ignorance, overzealousness, try to give such honour to them. They must always wear the garment of humility.

Proverb 11:2, *When pride comes, then comes shame; But with the humble is wisdom.*

Proverbs 16:18, *Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*

The church is the bride of Christ. Jesus is the bridegroom; the pastor or church leader is, at best, the best man. The best man must never flirt with the bride. He must never demand from the bride the attention and honour due to the groom.

John the Baptist understood this very well.

John 3:29-30, *He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. ³⁰He must increase, but I must decrease.*

Don't desire or demand worship if people esteem you. Remain humble.

6. Evangelism at the core of Cornelius

Cornelius had been waiting for Peter and had called together his relatives and close friends to meet Peter.

Acts 10:27, *And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together.*

Acts 10:44, *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.*

It is our responsibility when you come to the light from darkness, we also should have the hunger and thirst for the souls left behind in the darkness.

What did Peter do?

Acts 10:23, *Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.*

Peter six brothers with him.

God did not tell him specifically to take people along, but Peter understood for the need.

Acts 11:1-2, *Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.² And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him,³ saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!"*

Acts 11:18, *When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."*

Conclusion:

Have you accepted Lord Jesus as your saviour?

If not call upon Him and He will save you!

Either you are good or bad you need a saviour!

Have you accepted Lord Jesus Christ?

Have you been baptised as yet?

Then you must be baptised!

Acts 10:47-48, *“Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?”* ⁴⁸*And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.*

Will you obey like Cornelius?

Will you obey like Peter?