



# FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE STUDY FELLOWSHIP

Sunday, April 18, 2021

## Report for 4/4/21 Easter

Bible Study Attendance	
Online Attendance	4
In Person Attendance	103
Total	107

Tithes and Offerings	
General Offerings	\$9,249.00
Designated Offerings	\$3,590.00
Total	\$12,839.00

### Prayer Needs

- \* Our country
  - \* Leadership
  - \* Kindness & Compassion
- \* Those affected by COVID
  - Be sure to check on folks
- \* Our church family
  - \* Commitment of Faith family to gathering for Worship
  - \* Knowing how to care for people during these trying times

### New at Faith

**Ladies Bible Study**  
Tuesdays 2 PM  
Contact Sarah Ruut  
469-323-9026

### Firepit Fridays at Faith

7:30 pm  
West Parking Lot  
Lifting Prayer to the Lord  
Contact Doug Spivey  
214-557-6867

### Ladies Potluck

**Fellowship Dinner**  
First Thursdays 6:30 - 8 PM  
Contact Laura Dawley  
972-983-9061

### EASY WAYS TO GIVE

- ◇ In Person Offering Boxes or Drop off at the Church Office
- ◇ Text Faithgiving to 73256
- ◇ Log into the Realm Connect app or give online to [faithprinceton.org](http://faithprinceton.org)
- ◇ Mail to PO Box 656, Princeton, TX 75407

### DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

Apr 11	2 Samuel 22-24	Apr 15	1 Kings 8-9
Apr 12	1 Kings 1-2	Apr 16	1 Kings 10-11
Apr 13	1 Kings 3-5	Apr 17	1 Kings 12-14
Apr 14	1 Kings 6-7	Apr 18	1 Kings 15-17

As Acts 9 was wrapping up, Luke changed from speaking of the conversion of Paul to describing the ministry of Peter. In our lesson this week from Acts 10, we see how God convinced Peter to step out of his comfort zone to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. Peter's vision of unclean animals coming from the sky was accompanied by a voice telling him to "kill and eat." Both the act of killing an animal and the eating of unclean meat would make Peter ritually impure. When Peter protested, three times the voice from heaven assured him: "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." (v 15 NASB).

It was no coincidence that messengers from Cornelius arrived at that moment. God was at work! He had impressed Cornelius to send for Peter (and even gave specific instructions on where to find him). God had begun to break down Peter's prejudism and false misconceptions to prepare his heart to be the messenger of the Gospel. And God was opening the door to welcome Gentiles into the community of faith in Christ Jesus. And aren't we glad God did all of that?--or else the Gospel may never have been opened up to the people of Princeton, TX.

God always accomplishes His purposes, and He calls us to join Him where He is working. His plan calls for us who know Him to share Him with those who don't, no matter how similar or different from us they might be. As you study Acts 10 this week, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you who your Cornelius might be. To whom will God send you to share the lovely Good News of Jesus Christ this week?

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*By the Book*™ A Chapter by Chapter Bible Study Series from Jerry Vines Ministries  
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### Let's Begin

*Acts 10 is one of the great chapters of the Bible. The lessons it teaches are crucial to the worldwide ministry of the gospel. Surprisingly, the events of this chapter rocked the church and threatened to divide it. One would think the profound focus our Lord possessed on reaching all the peoples of the world would have driven the church to be decidedly open to multi-ethnicity. It did not. The vision Peter received shattered his personal prejudice and blew open the door of the church. Cornelius and his Gentile household became a new standard for church evangelism.*

*The significance of this chapter cannot be over-estimated for today's church. The Gospel is intended for the entire globe. In our quest to understand the church's progressive mission to take the Gospel to the entire world, let's consider four progressive stages through which the church passed:*

- I. A Groping Centurion (vv. 1-8)
- II. A Growing Christian (vv. 9-18)
- III. A Gathered Congregation (vv. 19-43)
- IV. A Gracious Conversion (vv. 44-48)

### I. A Groping Centurion (vv. 1-8)

Cornelius is the hero of the Gentile nations. It was he who became the standard for global evangelism. What happened as Peter preached in Cornelius' house is legendary, being called the "Gentile Pentecost." Thus far, church growth had been almost exclusively Jewish. Nevertheless, the river of love flowing from Calvary was meant for the world. Consequently, every dam standing in the way cracked at the seams.

Several characteristics are revealed about Cornelius, but all of them fall into two categories — *sincerity* and *searching*. Let's begin with sincerity. Cornelius was a soldier, a military man. He was stationed at Caesarea, a city built on the Mediterranean shoreline. According to Luke, Cornelius served with the "Italian Regiment," a band of highly skilled soldiers numbering at least 100 men and possibly as many as 600 men. The cohort probably was composed of freedmen, originally from Italy.

#### Reflection Connection

*The Bible says Cornelius devoutly worshipped God and lived in reverence and fear. It also attributes genuine sincerity to him. Could it be said that Cornelius was saved? Why or why not? What role does sincerity play in our faith? Explain.*

Centurions are cast in a favorable light in the New Testament (cp. Matt.8:5-10; 27:54). Cornelius and his household particularly were "devout and God fearing." This means they possessed profound respect for the Old Testament Scriptures, and were worshippers of Almighty God, while at the same time had not fully embraced Judaism by being circumcised according to the Law.

The last place one might expect to find a prayer meeting is in an army barracks. But that's what was going on with Cornelius. Cornelius loved praying and was sincere and devout. Yet, like many sincere people today, he was an unsaved man (cp. 11:14). Neither goodness nor religious piety can save anybody from their sins. Jesus revealed this



truth to the rich young Jewish ruler (Mark 10:21). He also made it clear to the Pharisee, Nicodemis (John 3:3).

Cornelius was spiritually lost though sincere, but his search for the true and living God did not go unanswered. Tired of polytheism, idolatry, and superstition, Cornelius sought something spiritually better. Though he did not know it, he was seeking Jesus.

## II. A Growing Christian (vv. 9-18)

When God spoke to Peter about traveling to see Cornelius, he was about 30 miles away. However, he was farther than that spiritually. God's gracious guidance drew Peter and Cornelius together. Also, a part of God's guidance was making Cornelius a test case for Peter. There were things in Peter's heart that must change before he could effectively witness the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What was true of Cornelius is also true of us. Wrong attitudes of heart are hindrances in life which make us ineffective partners with the Holy Spirit.

Peter had prejudice in his heart. He knew the great commission and even outwardly accepted it. Still, he had prejudice clogging the channels of his compassion and love for the people of the world. So much unfaithfulness, unconcern, and prejudice in the church exists, it's virtually amazing anybody is saved at all! It's only by God's grace and mercy that any soul is saved from hell.

*It's only by God's  
grace and mercy  
that one soul is  
saved from hell.*

Thus, God's grace works through our *circumstances*. Peter was a strict Jew. Consequently, he'd never entered a Gentile home or sat at a Gentile table. In fact, he'd never transgressed a rigid, Levitical diet. And, being called to stay in the home of a tanner was extremely distasteful to a Jew. Slowly, God used circumstances to teach Peter that Jesus wants to save all people everywhere.

The second factor God's grace works through is *confrontation*. About noon, Peter was on the flat roof of the house. Believe it or not, the roof was a common place for quiet and meditation. As he lay there, maybe his thoughts went across the sea, wondering about the people of the world beyond. What was God's plan for them? Did God even have a plan for them?

God confronted him with a strange vision. A sheet having all kinds of animals on it descended from heaven. A voice commanded Peter to "kill and eat." The very mention horrified him. Nevertheless, in that lesson God gave him a vision of all mankind in need of the Gospel and God's determination to give it to them.

In one sweeping statement spoken three different times (v. 16), God showed Peter there was no place in His kingdom for prejudice, "And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common" (v. 15). There are no inferior races. Peter was wrong. The Jewish

### Reflection Connection

*Do you think prejudice in the church is real? Why or why not? If prejudice is real, what steps should be taken to overcome it? Be specific.*



leadership was wrong. Hitler was wrong. Slave owners in this country were wrong. God's grace is open to all the people of all nations.

### III. A Gathered Congregation (vv. 19-43)

The providence of God worked the details out. Upon teaching Peter the inclusiveness of the Gospel, God prepared a foreign congregation to receive the good news, "Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God" (vv. 32-33). What a congregation! To the last soul, they were all eager, all awaiting the preaching of the Word!

#### Reflection Connection

*How much excitement is present in the worship services of your church when the Word of God is preached? Explain.*

How easy for the Apostle Peter to preach to such an eager gathering. Those who understand the act of preaching to be monolithic (that is, one way or one sided) speech do not understand that Biblical preaching is a conversation between preacher, listeners, and the Holy Spirit through the "phone line" of the Word of God.

Two particular threads run through Peter's sermon. On the one hand, Peter preaches a *universal Savior* (v. 34), and on the other hand Peter preaches a *universal salvation* (v. 43). Let's examine each.

Peter proclaims Jesus Christ the *universal Savior*: "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (v. 34). Scripture teaches God has no favorites. Peter learned his lesson well. Jesus is for everyone. He is not a white man's Christ, a black man's Christ, or a yellow man's Christ. Jesus is every man's Christ!

Every human being is precious to the Lord Jesus, regardless of money, color, education, or culture. No man is common or unclean because of the providence of his birth. Christ died on the cross for all. His arms were outstretched to the entire globe. Thus, we must tell everyone about Jesus. That's the heart of missions, the core motivation for evangelism. Regardless of whom they are or where they are, Christ is their Savior and He wants to be their Lord.

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Jesus was clear about His mission for the church, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (1:8). Christ is a *universal Savior*!

Secondly, Peter preached a *universal salvation*: "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the



**Reflection Connection**

*If all people can be saved what do you think hinders them? Be specific. Why did you trust Christ, placing your faith in Him, but your close friend or even close family member will not?*

**Reflection Connection**

*What would happen if, during the pastor's message, a dozen people fell on their face seeking God? Would this be viewed as acceptable or not? Why or why not?*

Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (vv. 42-43). Salvation is as impartial as the dew or the rain. God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4). The mark of Biblical salvation is "whosoever will." All who want to be saved can be saved.

**IV. A Gracious Conversion (vv. 44-48)**

Before Peter could finish his message, the Holy Spirit fell in supernatural power. Here is Luke's description, "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God" (vv. 46-48). Clearly conversion dominates the focus of these verses. There are two aspects about conversion which Luke addresses. Let's examine each one.

*First, conversion is a sudden experience.* While Peter yet spoke, people visibly came under the convicting power of the Gospel.

Imagine Peter's response to the unexpected demonstration. It was as if the Spirit of God gently moved Peter to the side and began to do the work Himself. No one can stand in the way of the Spirit's flow. These people received Jesus Christ as Savior. And, they did so both suddenly and unexpectedly.

*Second, conversion is a sufficient experience.* Peter asks, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (v. 47). The visible marks of true conversion were all over these people. The Apostle Peter had no doubt God was at work. Therefore, Peter challenges anyone to pose objections to water baptism concerning those who've believed, though Gentile they may be. No one objected. Why? Simply because conversion is a sufficient experience to warrant baptism.

*No one can stand in the way of the Spirit's flow.*

This passage serves as a pattern for New Testament church membership. The church, by nature, is made up of believing members. That is, those who've been transformed by the power of the Gospel. Furthermore, those transformed offer public profession of their new found faith. These two prerequisites constitute church membership.

Also, baptism is for *believers only*. Being the outward confirmation of the inward work of grace, baptism initiates a believer into the local church.



### Golden Greek Nugget

In verse 10, Luke describes Peter as falling into a “trance.” The Greek word is the basis of our English word “ecstasy.” It is the same word Luke uses to describe the crowd’s response to the healing miracle performed by Christ (Luke 5:26). There, however, it is translated “amazed.” That term literally means “to stand out”; in other words, standing out from one’s self. Hence, the “trance” Peter experienced.

### Wrap Up

*Today may be your personal moment of decision. You may be a Christian struggling to accept people of another color or ethnicity. Prejudice is a sin which should be purged out of the life of every believer, and surely out of the corporate life of every church. We proclaim Jesus Christ as a universal Savior who offers universal salvation to all those who repent of their sin and turn to Christ in simple faith. Let’s continue our mission with God!*

