

Part 10 – June 14, 2009

"God's Gospel, Available to All Regardless of Race, Religion, or Culture"

Acts 9:32-11:18

Aeneas & Tabitha (9:32-43)

- The authority of Jesus' name to heal (**v. 35**)
- The simplicity of the faith of the church

God's man to heal is near. Call for him and he will come and raise her (**Heb. 11:6; 1 John 3:21-22; James 5:14-15**).

- A command and a prayer

There are at least two important issues to be gleaned from this account:

1. The Apostles ministered with such power because a) they were filled with the Spirit (**Acts 2:4; 6:3**), b) their obedience of faith (**Rom. 1:5; 1 John 3:22**), and c) their prayers were according to God's will (**Acts 6:4**).
2. God has the *same* regard for all of His people (**James 2:1-9; 3:17; Eph. 6:9**)

Gospel Overcomes Racial, Religious, and Cultural Barriers (10:1-11:18)

Ephesians 2:11-18

- God now is ready to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles so His church will include all races and cultures.
- Cornelius would be His entre into the Gentile world

What we are seeing here is the secret work of God's sovereign plan to save those whom He foreknew (**Eph. 1:4**) for the glory of His grace (**Eph. 1:6**)

- God prepares Peter (v. 9-16)

Peter had been taught that one of the "marks" that distinguished Judaism from the false religions was the "dietary" requirements of the Law (**Lev. 11**). **But God** was now showing him that **in Christ** all of that had been fulfilled (**Col. 2:17**).

"Even the Gentiles are Being Saved!" (10:17-48)

- Peter realized that God was leading him to visit Cornelius (v. 17-23)
- Peter was careful to deflect all glory to God (v. 25-26)
- The Word of the Gospel preached in the anointing of the Spirit

Peter was overwhelmed by the goodness and mercy of God and humbled that God showed no favoritism of race or nationality (v. 34) but had regard for anyone who called upon Him (v. 35).

- Cornelius had to know Whom to call upon (Rom. 10:13; Acts 4:12).
- The heart of Peter's sermon: God and His work through Jesus Christ.
- The Word of the Gospel is applied by the Spirit (v. 43)

Peter was **witnessing** and **participating** in the Grand Fulfillment of God's Creative Purpose (Gen. 1:26) as he saw the fulfillment of God's promise to save the nations through the Messiah

"In your offspring shall all the [Gentile] nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:18)

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the [Gentile] nations" (Isaiah 42:1, 6)

"For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the [Gentile] nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering. For my name will be great among the [Gentile] nations, says the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 1:11).

"God is Saving Whom?" (11:1-18)

- When the startling news came that the Gentiles "had received the Word of God" (v. 1), there arose a controversy within the church.
- Not all of them had come to realize that their God-given traditions were merely shadows of the coming Reality in Christ, assuming that the mission of the Messiah was just for Israel.
- Peter allowed the work of the Holy Spirit to be his defense (v. 15-17)
- The result (v. 18)