**9 – Attitude of Cornelius**

*Acts 10:30-33; James 1:19-21*

*Acts chapter 10 records the first conversion of a gentile. This is a pivotal point in the history of the church as it displays God’s impartiality and the ability for all men to have equal opportunity to be saved. Cornelius was a gentile, yet he was conscientious of God.*

* Centurion – in charge of 100 soldiers.
* **11:3** – He was uncircumcised.
  + Importance of gospel being brought to the gentiles.
  + **Romans 1:16** – Jew first then Greek.
  + **Ephesians 2:14-18** – broken middle wall of separation. (**cf. Galatians 26-29**).
  + Peter’s vision – **10:9-23** – God labeled some animals as common or unclean under old law to establish a point. That point had been established and God labeled them clean.
    - Peter later understood this to be concerning gentiles – **10:28-29**
* **While Cornelius was a gentile, he still feared God. (cf. 10:2)**
  + **This refers to a piety shown God.**
  + He likely learned from the surrounding Jews some forms of worship and participated in such.
    - **Cf. Romans 1:18-25, 31 (knew this to be wrong – knew righteousness judgment of God).** – Cornelius was in a society that was given over to idol worship. He knew this not to be acceptable because of the manifestation of God in creation.
    - He knew the Jews to be God’s people and used what he saw as a direction toward serving the one and only Creator.
      * His attitude was one which cared about God and spiritual things. Every man, as being God’s creation, has plenty of evidence as to whether there is a God,
      * **There are obvious implications to such. Ones that Cornelius recognized, and put forth effort to act accordingly.**
* **James 5:15 – *“The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”***
  + **Matthew 7:7-12 – promises to God’s CHILDREN. Prayer is a blessing of God to His children.**
    - Cornelius was not a child of God. He was a Gentile, and not yet obedient to the Gospel.
    - **However, his prayers and good deeds served as a memorial to God – reminder.**
      * **God saw and heard him and knew he feared Him.**
      * **God wants all to be saved – 2 Peter 3:9**
      * If an honest heart is seeking truth he will find it. God has ensured this possibility **(cf. Titus 2:11**).
  + His attitude was one before God to please Him. Not man.
    - Alms – good deeds (to the poor in this instance.)
    - **Cf. Matthew 6:1-7** – Practicing righteousness and doing good to others is supposed to be done before God. Not to impress men, but as a memorial to God (that is, an act of obedience and righteousness toward Him so that He knows of your love for Him).

**Receptive to further instruction**

* **10:4-6** – The angel implied that there was something Cornelius needed to do, yet hasn’t done.
  + This did not anger Cornelius. Instead, it moved him to action!
  + **V. 7** – He immediately took action and did what the angel told him to do.
* **10:47-48** – Peter commanded them to be baptized.
  + The implication in continuing in the scripture is that they obeyed what Peter had told them to do.
  + Cornelius did not come to God on his terms, or with his own expectations. He came to God for instruction and God gave it to him.
* **James 1:19-21** – This is the attitude which Cornelius displayed.
  + **Swift to hear, slow to speak** – often upon hearing the truth men jump to defend their preconceived ideas. They want to be right so bad instead of wanting to be right with God.
    - When someone argues against the necessity of baptism, they are obviously not practicing this verse.
    - Baptism is an obvious, perhaps the most obvious, principle of salvation in the bible (**cf. 1 Peter 3:21**). Instead of hearing in then doing it, they immediately jump to speaking!
  + **Slow to wrath** – the truth does not always sit well with hearers. In fact most of the time it does not. Instead of lashing out against the truth we must be willing to lay aside our emotions and do what it says.
    - **Contrast between Thessalonians and Bereans (cf. Acts 17:11).**
    - **Meekness – mildness; humility.**
      * “It is that temper of spirit in which we accept God’s dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting” (Vines)
* **10:24** – Another attitude displayed by Cornelius is his desire for his family to be saved. He call them together so they could hear the message too.
  + **We must have a love for our fellow man. God wants all to be saved, we must have that same desire.**