

## A Conversion Theologians & Preachers Stumble Over

I recommend reading Acts 10, 15 & 21:15-26 in conjunction with this Bible study; theme is the conversion of Cornelius' household. As with all my studies, only a King James Bible is used unless showing errors of other translations. What follows is my commentary regarding issues often avoided or ignored within these texts because of either not rightly dividing the word of truth or rejection of wording in a KJB.

We'll start in asking a question... what DOOR did Peter open?

To set the scene, both Peter & a devout Gentile, one that feared God with all his house, having good report among all the nation of the Jews, giving alms to the People (Israel) and prayed to God always, received special visions from God for an arranged encounter.

Here is the irony surrounding this Gentile's conversion in Acts 10:

- A. It is Paul, not Peter who was the apostle of the Gentiles... "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:" **Romans 11:13**
- B. Matthias (Acts 1:15-26), along w/Peter, will sit on one of the 12 thrones judging Israel; not Paul... "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." **Matthew 19:28**
- C. It was Paul & Barnabas who opened the 'DOOR of faith' to Gentiles; not Peter... "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." **Acts 14:27**
- D. Paul didn't get HIS gospel from Peter, but from Christ... "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." **Galatians 1:11-12**
- E. Peter preached the gospel OF the circumcision; Paul, the gospel OF the uncircumcision... But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as *the gospel* of the circumcision *was* unto Peter; **Galatians 2:7**
- F. Outside of Cornelius, there's no record of Peter ministering to other Gentiles... "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." **Galatians 2:9**
- G. Non-covenanted Gentiles (heathen) were saved via Paul's gospel & ministry, UNSEARCHABLE in the prophets & HID in God... **Ephesians 3:6-9** That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Here are three HUGE take-aways in Acts 10 that's mostly avoided in preaching & commentaries:

1. Some 10 years AFTER the 'preaching' (Mk 16:15-16) & 'teaching' (Mt 28:19-20) commissions given by the Lord, Peter still finds "...it IS an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean." **Acts 10:28**
2. The gift of the Holy Ghost fell on these Gentiles BEFORE being baptized w/water... "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." **Acts 10:44**. Exactly OPPOSITE of what Peter was preaching to the Jew (Cp. Acts 2:38)!
3. Peter then baptizes these Gentiles ONLY in the name of 'the Lord' & not in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Ghost (Cf. Matt 28:19-20). Not an issue? What formula or authority were you baptized under? And... why?

Next is a quandary that Acts 10 presents that's basically ignored completely!

Cornelius was a DEVOUT, GOD-FEARING man which contradicts those who mis-interprets Paul's argument in Romans 3, when proving both Jew & Gentile guilty before God, where Paul quotes... "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. **Romans 3:11-12**; "There is no fear of God before their eyes." **Romans 3:18** Other Gentiles are mentioned who feared God (13:16)! Also, where Paul quotes... "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" **Romans 3:10**, presents a contradiction where we find... "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth. **6** And THEY WERE BOTH RIGHTEOUS before God, WALKING in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord BLAMELESS." **Luke 1:5-6** Now, couple this with Peter's statement regarding Cornelius... "Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that FEARETH HIM, and WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS, is accepted with him." **Acts 10:34-35**

Here's the issue... if it was Paul who was the apostle of the Gentiles, opening the 'door of faith' to both Gentile and heathen through HIS gospel and preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, then WHAT DOOR did Peter open for the Gentile in Acts 10? Peter's lesson learned in Acts 10 is revealed some 10 years LATER in Acts 15, at a council held in Jerusalem between the Apostles, elders, Barnabas & Paul, over what to hold converted Gentiles to in regarding the law (Acts 15:19-29; THE JEW WASN'T EXCUSED FROM OBSERVING THE LAW! (Acts 21:17-26)). James found justification, as to the NOW inclusion of Gentiles, though from their perspective it wasn't going to happen till AFTER the establishment of the kingdom (Acts 15:13-18). Peter's lesson learned was that... "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as *he did* unto us; **9** And put no difference between US and THEM, purifying THEIR hearts BY FAITH." **Acts 15:8-9**. This is followed by a REMARKABLE confession... "But WE believe that through the GRACE of the Lord Jesus Christ WE SHALL BE saved, EVEN AS they." **Acts 15:11** A REVERSE pattern is being recognized by Peter!

The gospel theme of John the Baptist, Jesus & His disciples pre & post ministries was that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Along with offering the kingdom to Israel, so was the remission of sins... **Luke 1:77** To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins;; **Luke 3:3** And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

**Luke 24:47** And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among (NOT TO) all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

After the resurrection, along with remission of sins, was also granted the gift of the Holy Ghost... "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." **Acts 2:38**

Along with authority to remit sins (John 20:23), Peter was also given the KEYS of the kingdom... "And I will give unto thee the KEYS of the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." **Matthew 16:19**

This brings us back to the question as to what DOOR Peter opened to the Gentiles in Acts 10; the DOOR to the KINGDOM OF HEAVEN! Why did Jesus seemingly have to twist Peter's arm catching Peter by surprise? Because Peter didn't think the Gentile would be ministered to till AFTER the return of Christ... "Unto YOU FIRST God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless YOU, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." **Acts 3:26**

Without being able to discern the differences between justification 'by faith' from that of justification 'through faith' (Rom 3:29-30) and Paul's gospel from Peter's gospel, these often avoided or ignored passages CAN'T make Bible-sense! TODAY, Paul declares... "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;" **Titus 3:5** TODAY, Paul declares... "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith WITHOUT THE DEEDS OF THE LAW." **Romans 3:28** Israel failed because... "But Israel, which followed after THE LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, hath not attained to THE LAW OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. **32** Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not BY FAITH, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;" **Romans 9:31-32** On the flip side for the Gentile... "What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which FOLLOWED NOT AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, have ATTAINED TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, even the RIGHTEOUSNESS which is OF FAITH." **Romans 9:30** The Gentile being justified BY faith WITHOUT the deeds of the law EQUALS justification 'through faith' which is 'of faith'! This deduction can't be made any clearer than in Romans 10:

**Romans 10:4-10** For Christ *is* the END of the law FOR righteousness to every one that believeth. **5** For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. **6** But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*;) **7** Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) **8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; **9** That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. **10** For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Is the reader relying on their own works of righteousness today, in this age of grace, or on the righteousness of Christ which is by grace, through faith & without works (Eph 2:8-9)?

In closing, here's a hypothetical question for those FB friends that are more familiar with the Bible... If Israel would have repented & Christ returned BEFORE Peter was given opportunity to... "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved." **Acts 11:14**, what would have happened to this God-fearing Gentile household? Remember, the kingdom was being offered to Israel (Acts 3:19-20). Jesus spoke of... "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd." **John 10:16**. It is 'my conviction' they would have shown up within the 'sheep' collected at the return of Christ (Matt 25:31-40), that is TYPOLOGY of Rahab's treatment of spies at the destruction of Jericho... "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace." **Hebrews 11:31**. Matthew 25 is a future tribulation setting; not today!