

The New Testament Church
The Purpose of Pentecost #4 – The Conversion of Cornelius – Acts 10
 Pastor Paul Jehle – June 25, 2023

- I The Purpose of Pentecost – *to empower believers to be a witness and spread the gospel “to the world”*
- A. Passover led directly to Pentecost – Rebirth and Spirit Empowerment to “be a witness”
 1. The Feast of Passover marked the beginning of the year – a lamb slain for forgiveness of sin
 2. The Feast of Pentecost was 50 days later – Israelites from Egypt to Mt. Sinai
 - B. Pentecost is a covenant of change – three ingredients - to be empowered by the Spirit
 1. Led by cloud, baptism in water (conversion) and the Spirit (holiness)
 2. Led by fire, baptism in the Spirit, cleansing and judgment (sacrifices by fire)
 3. Receive Word, the Law (two loaves of bread) writing law in hearts (spread the Word)
 - C. Acts 2 Pentecost fulfilled Exodus 19 and empowered Philip (Acts 8) and Saul (Acts 9)
 1. A rushing wind, tongues of fire, and they spoke the Word in languages of the people
 2. Philip was empowered to embrace the Ethiopian Eunuch, breaking racial barriers
 3. Paul was empowered to embrace believers, breaking the barrier of his past
- II The Conversion of Cornelius – Acts 10 – *breaking the barrier to the Gentiles...*
- A. Roman Centurions - commanders of one hundred men – Jesus affirms their righteous calling!
 1. Promoted (elected or appointed) after 15-20 years of service, loved fame, took bribes...
 2. They led their men into battle, with a sword and a specially designed helmet
 3. Hated by Jews, Jesus healed servant (Mt. 8), and one declared “He is the Son of God” (Mk. 15)
 - B. God prepares Cornelius, *Cohors II Italica Civium Romanorum* (Vulgate) - Acts 10:1-8
 1. A cohort recruited in Italy and overseeing 580 soldiers, but not a Praetor (secret police)
 2. He was devout, feared God with his house, gave alms, respected by the Jews
 3. The Spirit tells him to send for Peter; sends devout soldier and two servants 32 miles to Joppa
 - C. God prepares Peter to instruct Cornelius – Acts 10:9-23
 1. Peter sees a vision *the next day* as this group draws near to where he is staying (timing of God!)
 2. At about 6 AM – as he is praying he becomes hungry
 3. On a sheet was let down all kinds of *animals, insects and birds* - ‘*Rise, Peter; kill and eat.*’
 4. *But Peter said, Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.*”
 - a. The dietary laws (Lev. 11 and Deut. 14) involved meat, fowl, fish and insects
 - b. Meat – *camel, rabbit, pig* were forbidden; *sheep, goat, ox, steer, wild game, deer* fine
 - c. Fowl – *eagle, hawk, falcon, owl, vulture, sea gull* forbidden – *goose, chicken, duck* fine
 - d. Fish – *shellfish, shark, catfish, eels, lobster, scallop* forbidden – *fins and scales* fine
 - e. Insects – *worms, snakes, snails, moles* forbidden – *locust, katydid, cricket, grasshopper* fine
 - f. Labeled “clean and unclean” it separated the Israelites from pagan practices and disease
 5. *...What God has cleansed you must not call common.* – v. 15 (this was done three times)
 - a. Did God do away with all dietary laws? No, though not binding now, they are instructive
 - b. Though set in the context of dietary laws, the point was the Gentiles as clean, not food
 6. The men appeared at his door (timing), Peter went to Joppa *God shows no partiality* the point
 - D. God opens the door to the Gentiles – Acts 10:30-48 - those outside of Israel, even their persecutors!
 1. Conversion plus the baptism in the Spirit that confirmed the universality of God’s call
 2. As he was preaching the gospel, the Holy Spirit “fell upon all those who heard the word.”
 - a. *...for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.* – v. 46
 - b. *And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord...* - v. 47
 - E. Lessons learned from the empowerment of the baptism in the Spirit and speaking in tongues...
 1. There is increased humility – *fan of burning up the chaff of the old nature* (God prepares you)
 2. Greater empowerment to share the gospel – *breaking down barriers* (God goes before you)
 3. Greater kingdom consciousness – His glory – the cloud – *who cares who gets the credit!*