



God will get **you** prepared
for what **He** wants you to do!

Acts 10:1-22

BETTER

Acts 10:9–17 (NKJV)

9 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.

10 Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance

11 and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.

12 In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

13 And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.”

14 But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”

15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.”

16 This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

17 Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon’s house, and stood before the gate.

- Chapter 10 is pivotal in the Book of Acts, for it records the salvation of the Gentiles. We see Peter using “the keys of the kingdom” for the third and last time. He had opened the door of faith for the Jews (*Acts 2*) and also for the Samaritans (*Acts 8*), and now he would be used of God to bring the Gentiles into the church.

- Now was the time to open the door of faith (*Acts 14:27*) to the Gentiles and bring them into the family of God.

- There were four acts to this wonderful drama.

Preparation

- Before God could save the Gentiles, God had to prepare Peter to bring the message and Cornelius to hear the good news.
- Salvation is a divine work of grace, but God works through human conduits. Angels can deliver God's messages to lost men, but they cannot preach the Gospel to them. That is our privilege—and responsibility.
- Caesarea is sixty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem and thirty miles north of Joppa (*Jaffa*).

- In that city lived Cornelius, the Roman centurion, whose heart had tired of pagan myths and empty religious rituals, and who had turned to Judaism in hopes he could find salvation.
- Cornelius was as close to Judaism as he could get without becoming a proselyte.
- There were many “God fearers” like him in the ancient world (*Acts 13:16*) and they proved to be a ready field for spiritual harvest.

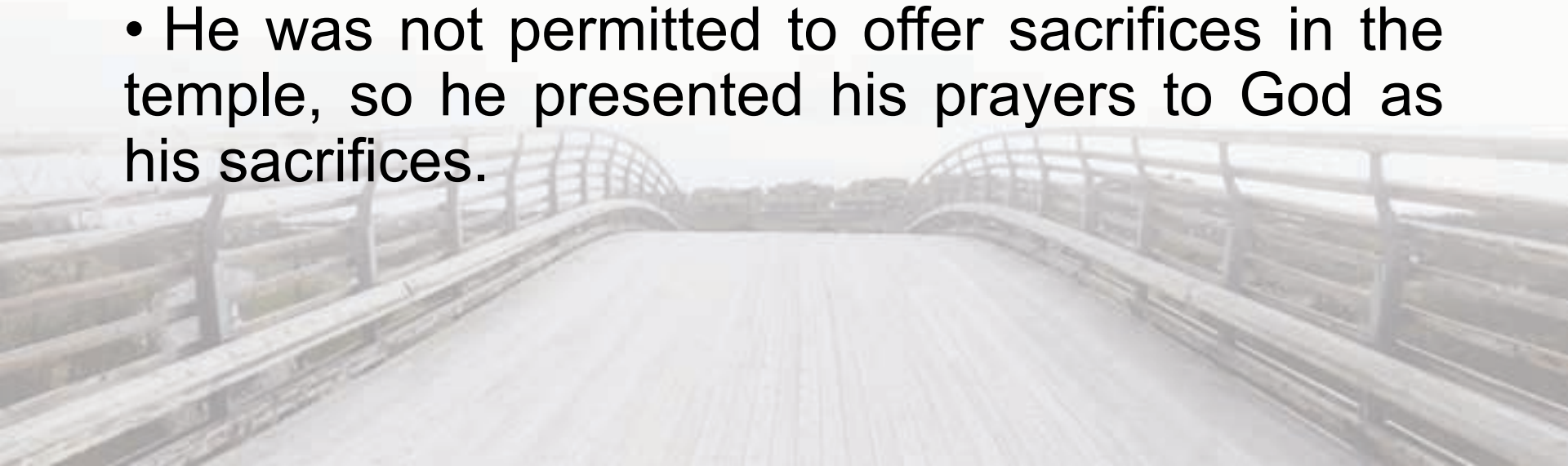


Cornelius

He had a genuine thirst and hunger for God.

It is interesting to see how religious a person can be and still not be saved.

- Indeed, Cornelius was sincere in his obedience to God's Law, his fasting, and his generosity to the Jewish people.
- He was not permitted to offer sacrifices in the temple, so he presented his prayers to God as his sacrifices.



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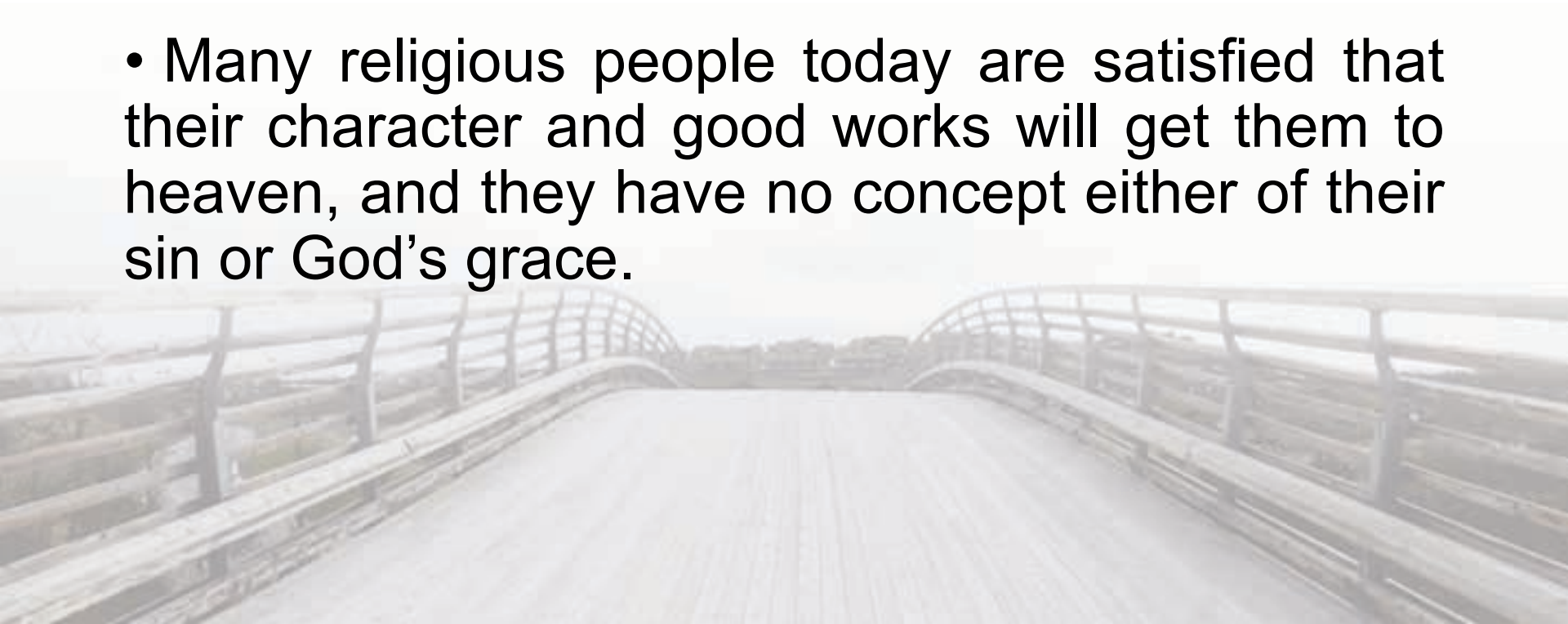
Psalm 141:1–2 (NKJV)

1 LORD, I cry out to You; Make haste to me! Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.

2 Let my prayer be set before You as incense,
The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.



- In every way, he was a model of religious respectability—and yet he was not a saved man.
- The difference between Cornelius and many religious people today is this: he knew that his religious devotion was not sufficient to save him.
- Many religious people today are satisfied that their character and good works will get them to heaven, and they have no concept either of their sin or God's grace.



Cornelius

In his prayers, he was asking God to show him the way of salvation.

Acts 11:13–14 (NKJV)

13 And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, ‘Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter,

14 who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.’

- God sent an angel to instruct Cornelius and, in true military fashion, Cornelius immediately obeyed.
- But why send for Peter, who was thirty miles away in Joppa, when Philip the evangelist was already in Caesarea?



- It was Peter, not Philip, who had been given the “keys.” Peter is anointed and prepared to minister to Cornelius.
- It is because of the anointing and preparation of a person that we should not jump over to place, and person because everyone is not anointed or have the authority to release and open the things of God in the spirit to us!



- Peter also had to be prepared for this event since he had lived as an orthodox Jew all of his life.

Matthew 16:18–19 (NKJV)

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- Peter also had to be prepared for this event since he had lived as an orthodox Jew all of his life.

Acts 10:14–15 (NKJV)

14 But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.”

15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.”



The Law of Moses was a wall
between the Jews and the
Gentiles, and this wall had been
broken down at the cross.



Ephesians 2:14–18 (NKJV)

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,

16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

The Gentiles were considered aliens and strangers as far as the Jewish covenants and promises were concerned.



Ephesians 2:11–13 (NKJV)

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Now, all of that would change, and God would declare that, as far as the Jew and the Gentile were concerned, “There is no difference” either in condemnation or salvation.



Romans 3:22–23 (NKJV)

22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 10:12–13 (NKJV)

12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Why did God use a vision about food to teach Peter that the Gentiles were not unclean?



- For one thing, Peter was hungry, and a vision about food would certainly “*speak to his condition,*” as the Quakers say.
- Second, the distinction between “*clean and unclean foods*” was a significant problem between the Jews and the Gentiles in that day.
- In fact, Peter’s Christian friends criticized him for eating with the Gentiles! (*Acts 11:1–3*) God used this centuries-old regulation (*Lev. 11*) to teach Peter a valuable spiritual lesson.

Acts 11:1–3 (NKJV)

1 Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

2 And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those of the circumcision contended with him,

3 saying, “You went in to uncircumcised men and ate with them!”

People who do not understand or know the plan of God for salvation, and reconciliation will often criticize what God is doing with you for His glory.

A third reason goes back to something Jesus had taught Peter and the other disciples when He was ministering on earth (Mark 7:1–23).



Mark 7:14–23 (NKJV)

14 When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand:

15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

16 If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”

17 When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable.

18 So He said to them, “Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him,

19 because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?"

20 And He said, "What comes out of a man, that defiles a man.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

23 All these evil things come from within and defile a man."



- At that time, Peter did not fully understand what Jesus was saying, but now it would all come together. God was not merely changing Peter's diet; He was changing His entire program!

- The Jew was not “clean” and the Gentile “unclean,” but both Jew and Gentile were “unclean” before God!



Romans 11:32 (NKJV)

For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

- God is not asking us to become any other ethnicity or religion to become a Christian, so this meant that a Gentile did not have to become a Jew to become a Christian.
- Even though Peter's refusal was in the most polite terms, it was still wrong.

- God's timing is always perfect, and the three men from Caesarea arrived at the door just as Peter was pondering the meaning of the vision.
- The Spirit commanded Peter to meet the men and go with them. The phrase "*nothing doubting*" (*Acts 10:20*) means "making no distinctions."
- Peter was no longer to make any distinctions between the Jews and the Gentiles.

