

Obeying Christ Cures Prejudice

International Bible Lesson

Acts 10:24-38

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“Then Peter began to speak: ‘I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism’” (Acts 10:34—NIV).

Peter went to the home of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, after Cornelius learned from an angel that he should send for Peter to teach him about God. Cornelius was not a Jew, but he believed in the true God of the Jews. Cornelius feared God and the fear of God is the first step toward wisdom. Cornelius did what was right and he helped the poor according to the moral law of God, but Cornelius knew that he lacked something and he prayed for God to give him what he lacked. He prayed at the set times for the Jews to pray, and during one of these times God sent an angel to him in answer to his prayers. God not only sent him an angel to prepare him for Peter’s visit; God also gave Peter a vision which convinced him that no ceremonial food laws or racial prejudice should prevent him from sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with others, especially with people who feared God and made every effort to do what is right as far as they knew how. Therefore, when Peter first met Cornelius, he told him that according to the former laws of the Old Covenant he could not come into his home; but God had made a New Covenant that Peter did not yet completely understand, and that New Covenant revealed the fact that God was Lord over all and God wanted to save from destruction all who would believe in His Son, Jesus, the one God sent to give eternal life to all who would believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

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Thinking Further

1. What kind of influence did Cornelius have over others? Why might this influence have been important in this situation?
2. What reason did Peter give for going into the house of Cornelius? Was this a good reason in your opinion? Give a reason for your opinion.
3. What reason did the angel give for coming to Cornelius?
4. What kind of person did Peter say was acceptable to God? Do you think that type of person needs to learn about Jesus?
5. What truths about Jesus did Peter say they all knew about Jesus? And what reason did Peter give them for Jesus doing all of the things Peter lists?