

GOD'S CALLING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Lesson Fourteen

IN ACTS: Cornelius

Burden to Impart:

God is not a respecter of persons. His salvation in Christ is not only to the Jewish people, but to everyone who believes in Jesus.

Memory Verse: "To this One all the prophets testify that through His name everyone who believes into Him will receive forgiveness of sins." (Acts 10:43).

Facts to Teach:

1. Peter was the leading apostle in the early days of the church. The Lord used the Apostle Peter's preaching as the keys of His kingdom (Matt. 16:19) to open the door of faith for about 3,000 Jews on the day of Pentecost. He also used Peter to open the doors of faith for the non-Jews, the Gentiles, in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48).
2. Since the Apostles mainly preached the gospel to the Jews, the Lord had to do something special to cause them to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. The Lord did this by two miracles. Firstly an angel appeared to a pious Roman soldier in answer to his prayers and told him to send for Peter, who was in a nearby town (Joppa). Then the Lord gave a vision to Peter which indicated that he should contact the Gentiles, whom he considered to be "unclean." Peter saw a great vessel like a sheet full of animals and reptiles descend from heaven. The Lord told him to, "Rise up, Peter, slay and eat." Peter, answering according to the Jewish law said, "By no means, Lord," for he considered the animals to be unclean. Then the Lord answered, "What God has cleansed, do not consider common." Later, Peter understood that since the Lord Jesus had died on the cross for all men, God would save whoever believed in Him, not only the Jews, but the Gentiles also.
3. By these two miracles Peter came to Cornelius' house and found a group of people awaiting him, Cornelius' relatives and intimate friends. While Peter preached to them the good news about the Lord Jesus and they received his words, something wonderful happened. God poured out the Holy Spirit upon them, as had done upon the Jewish believers on Pentecost. They were filled with God's Spirit, miraculously spoke in other languages, and magnified God.
4. Thus, with such evidence of God's having accepted and saved - these Gentile believers, they baptized them all.