

## Acts 10 and God the Son

### Prayer

### Introductory Questions

- Why, once again, is it helpful to teach people about God the Father *before* we explain the concepts of sin and God’s judgment? Why is it helpful to teach people about sin and God’s judgment *before* we tell them about Jesus?
- If you were talking to a non-Christian who knew little about Jesus, what truths about him would you want to emphasize? Why those truths in particular?

### Introduction

Acts 10:34–43 records one of the Bible’s most important sermons. That sermon and its effects marked a major turning point in the book of Acts—the conversion of a group of gentiles and their reception of the Holy Spirit. It is filled with essential truths about Jesus Christ: he was crucified by sinful men, God raised him from the dead, and he is Lord over all.

A proper understanding of Jesus is essential for our lives, so we begin with this brief summary:

1. **Jesus is the eternal Word of God—fully God (in his essence) and fully human:** “1 In the beginning was the Word [God’s self-expression], and the Word was with God [the Father], and the Word was God [in his essence]. 14 The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We observed his glory, the glory as the one and only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1, 14).
2. **Jesus died as a sacrifice for sin and God raised him from the dead, which is the gospel:** “3...Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3–4).
3. **Jesus is therefore the only way to God:** “12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
4. **Jesus is the reigning Lord over all people and things:** “36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah” (Acts 2:36).
5. **Jesus is coming back to bring final salvation to his people and judge God’s enemies:** “7 “Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him.” So it is to be. Amen” (Rev. 1:7).

We organize Acts 10 passage into three sections: (1) The Setting (vv. 1–33), (2) The Message (vv. 34–43), and (3) The Results (vv. 44–48). We conclude this lesson by summarizing central truths about Jesus, who is God the Son.

## 1. The Setting: Two Visions from God and a Divine Appointment

30 Cornelius replied [to Peter], “Four days ago at this hour, at three in the afternoon, I was praying in my house. Just then a man in dazzling clothing stood before me 31 and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your acts of charity have been remembered in God’s sight. 32 Therefore send someone to Joppa and invite Simon here, who is also named Peter. He is lodging in Simon the tanner’s house by the sea.’ 33 So I immediately sent for you, and it was good of you to come. So now we are all in the presence of God to hear everything you have been commanded by the Lord.” (Acts 10:30–33)

Acts 10:1–11:18 records the mission of the apostle Peter in Caesarea and the conversion of a Roman centurion named Cornelius. God brought them together through two supernatural visions. In Acts 10:1–8, an angel of God appeared to Cornelius and directed him to send messengers to Joppa to find Simon Peter. In Acts 10:9–16, Peter saw a vision of a sheet descending from heaven that included *unclean animals*. Three times a voice commanded Peter to kill and eat the animals, even those that were on the “do-not-eat list” in the Mosaic law. God therefore declared that all animals were clean, which implied the abolishment of the dietary laws in the Mosaic law (Schnabel, *Acts*, 491). The wall between Jews and gentiles was removed in Christ (Eph. 2:11–22)! The messengers found Peter, and they led him and other believers to Cornelius (Acts 10:17–24). When they finally met, Cornelius explained his vision to Peter (vv. 25–33), which sets the stage for *a sermon that, by God’s grace and the power of the Holy Spirit, marked the full inclusion of gentile believers into the people of God.*

- What was the *significance* of God declaring *all animals clean* (for Peter, for Cornelius and his household, and for us), even those that were forbidden for Jews to eat?
- What keeps us from being more receptive to God’s promptings to help our family members, friends, and neighbors to know God personally?

## 2. The Message: Jesus is the Anointed, Crucified, and Risen Lord!

- “34 Peter began to speak: “Now I truly understand that God doesn’t show favoritism, 35 but in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”” (Acts 10:34–35)
- “36 He sent the message to the Israelites, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. 37 You know the events that took place throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John preached: 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how he went about doing good and healing all who were under the tyranny of the devil, because God was with him. 39 We ourselves are witnesses of everything he did in both the Judean country and in Jerusalem, and yet they killed him by hanging him on a tree. 40 God raised up this man on the third day and caused him to be seen, 41 not by all the people, but by us

whom God appointed as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.” (Acts 10:36–41)

- “42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead. 43 All the prophets testify about him that through his name everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 10:42–43)

Peter began by stating that God the Father does not show partiality—to Jews or gentiles (v. 34). Instead, “in every nation the person who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him” (v. 35). The heart of the sermon is verses 36–43, which teach us important truths about God the Father and Jesus Christ (with vv. 42–43 highlighting the offer of salvation):

- God sent his message to the Israelites, proclaiming the good news of peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord over all (v. 36).
- Beginning from Galilee and after the baptism that John the Baptist proclaimed, God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power. Jesus performed many good works during his earthly ministry, including healing those who were oppressed by the devil, because God was with Jesus (vv. 37–38). Peter and others witnessed these works (v. 39).
- The Jews killed Jesus by hanging him on a tree (v. 39).
- God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day to appear to those whom God chose “as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead” (vv. 40–41).
- Jesus offered salvation to people by commanding Peter and the other witnesses to preach and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead (v. 42).
- God’s Old Testament prophets bear witness to the truth that everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins through his name (v. 43).

We learn many things in this sermon about God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, the will and work of the Father, Son, and Spirit are inseparable.

- How were the core truths of the Christian faith first explained to you?
- What truths from Peter’s sermon do you want to use as you share the gospel?

### 3. The Results: The Coming of the Spirit and the Conversion of the Gentiles

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and declaring the greatness of God. Then Peter responded, 47 “Can anyone withhold water and prevent these people from being baptized, who have

received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” 48 He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay for a few days. (Acts 10:44–48)

The Holy Spirit interrupted Peter’s message and came down on those who heard the word (v. 44). The circumcised believers “were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles” (v. 45), evidenced by them speaking in tongues and praising God (v. 46). Peter prompted everyone to acknowledge the appropriateness of them being baptized, and he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (vv. 47–48). After Peter reported to the church in Jerusalem what had happened in Caesarea, the believers became silent, and then they glorified God for granting the gentiles repentance (11:18).

- A preacher-teacher, the Word of God, the Holy Spirit, and your own repentance and trust in Jesus—how did those elements come together in your conversion?
- What obstacles interfere with you sharing your faith more faithfully?

### Sound Doctrine: God the Son

The God of the Bible is the one, true God, and he exists eternally as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deut. 6:4; John 1:1; Acts 5:3–4). How does the Bible present God the Son?

1. He is fully God in his essence and fully human (John 1:1; Luke 1:35).
2. He exists as the perfect image of God the Father (Col. 1:15; Heb 1:3).
3. He does everything God wants him to do and says everything God wants him to say; he perfectly fulfills the work God has for him to do (John 5:19; 12:49).
4. He is the one *through whom* God the Father *created* the world, *saves* his people, and *condemns* those who will not trust in Jesus (John 1:3; 3:17, 36; Acts 17:31; Heb. 1:2–3).
5. In order to establish and maintain a balanced portrait of Jesus, we must keep in mind each of the following ten categories. Jesus, the eternal Word of God: (1) became a human (John 1:14), (2) lived a perfect life (Heb. 4:15), (3) died to atone for sins (1 John 2:2), (4) was raised from the dead by God (Acts 2:24), (5) ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9), (6) sat down at the right hand of God to rule (Heb. 1:3), (7) sent the Holy Spirit into the world (John 15:26), (8) intercedes for his people (Heb. 7:25), (9) will return in judgment (Rev. 19:11–21), and (10) will rule forever in the new creation (Rev. 21:23; 22:1,3).

Like God the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jesus is worthy of our ultimate trust, love, and worship (John 14:15; Gal. 2:16; Rev. 5:12).

- What makes it so challenging to maintain a balanced portrait of Jesus?
- What is one thing that you can do in response to this lesson?

### Prayer