

When Was Cornelius Saved?

“There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always.”

Acts 10:1-2



“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

Acts 10:34-35

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Cornelius was accepted with God, born again by the Spirit of God, and in possession of eternal life long before he heard of Peter, for his righteous actions and God's declarations about him prove this easy conclusion. No unregenerate man can or will do the things that Cornelius did fervently and zealously, which things were accepted by God in heaven!

Cornelius had been elected by God the Father before the world began (II Tim 1:9); the Son of God had obeyed and died for him some years earlier (Heb 10:10-14); and the Spirit had applied the work in the vital act of regeneration during his life (Titus 3:5). Peter, Cornelius's pastor, states these three facts plainly for all who will read (I Pet 1:2).

God had already made an incredible change in his life by giving him a heart that separated him from other Italians. The life-giving voice of the Lord Jesus Christ had called for him to live spiritually, and he lived as certainly as Lazarus came forth from the tomb. He only needed Peter to loose him from some Roman and Jewish burial clothes!

Peter brought the gospel to save Cornelius from despair over his sins (Luke 7:36-50; Rom 7:24-25), from Jewish ignorance of salvation (Rom 10:1-5), from Roman idolatry and superstition (I Thess 1:9-10), from ignorance about life and immortality (II Tim 1:9-10), and from confusion about the resurrection (I Cor 15:2). He needed to learn the way of God more perfectly (Acts 18:24-28), and how to prove his election (II Pet 1:5-11), including that repentance, baptism, and church membership please God (Acts 2:37-47).

It is absurd to make Cornelius a lost sinner that pleased God by works of the flesh! It is absurd to believe he had to make some silly decision for Jesus in order to be justified and born again. He was already serving the Lord far beyond a fleshly decision. He needed Peter to direct his new man in the way of righteousness, not help him get born again.

The word of God is plain. Except a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3:3). The kingdom of God cannot be shown to a man not born again, because he cannot and will not see it. If a man believes on Jesus, he is already born again (I John 5:1). If he loves the brethren, he is already born again (I John 4:7). If he does righteousness, he is already born again (I John 2:29). These are evidences of eternal life!

Men do not want a sovereign God, so they corrupt the doctrine of salvation to make their own freewill their saviour. They want to be in charge. Because Cornelius is an extensive salvation story, they corrupt it as well. They make Peter and Cornelius cooperating saviours. We believe Jesus Christ saved Cornelius by Himself ... before he met Peter!

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“Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

Acts 10:34-35

Preliminary Reading: Psalm 14; Psalm 53; Acts 10; Acts 11; and Acts 15.

Introduction:

1. The salvation experience of Cornelius is recorded by the inspiration of God (Acts 10:1-48; 11:1-18; 15:6-11).
2. God has endorsed it as a valid and accurate description of how and when a man is saved. Let us learn it well.
3. The only aberration we can see is God giving the Holy Spirit before baptism to encourage Peter and the Jews.
4. Salvation can mean several things in the New Testament – as the [five phases](#) clearly reveal – so this must be kept in view with a question such as our title. It is our duty to read distinctly and obtain the sense (Neh 8:8).
5. Paul, by authority of God, charged pastors to rightly divide the word of truth, including Acts 10 (II Tim 2:15).
6. A brother spoke to a dying man this week, who had absolutely no visible interest even considering the Lord, which staggers the mind of a believer, because fearing and seeking God are the first thoughts of his new man.
7. Most today are very ignorant of Bible doctrine, especially the *ordo salutis* of salvation, for they have replaced sound doctrine with fables and entertainment, according to the warning of our brother Paul (II Tim 4:1-4).
8. Charles Spurgeon and Billy Graham imagined the goal of preaching to be the regeneration of dead sinners, so the human will and any means to extort decisions were exalted as the sacramental means of being born again.
9. The entire Christian world is driven by “decisions for Jesus” in order to get lost and perishing sinners born again, even though the Bible from many angles declares that regeneration must precede faith or good works.
10. By nature, all men are eager servants of sin and the devil, until God rescues them (Eph 2:1-3; Luke 11:14-22).

Cornelius’s Condition (10:1-4)

- A. Cornelius was a devout man – solemnly serious about religion – but this description by itself does not prove his spiritual condition with God (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 8:2; 22:12; vs. Acts 13:50; 17:4,17).
 1. However, with the following context, we know that the Holy Spirit is using the word spiritually.
 2. As we proceed through the chapter, we find that Cornelius had a devout soldier as well (10:7).
- B. Cornelius **feared God** before he met Peter. This proves he had eternal life already. Let God be true!
 1. The Holy Spirit testified that Cornelius indeed feared God (Acts 10:2 compared to 10:35).
 2. Unregenerate men in a state of sin do not fear God at all (Romans 3:18 compared to 3:9-18).
 3. All men by nature are fools, and they do not fear God or seek God (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Titus 3:3).
 4. Wicked men sin without regard for offending God, proving their lack of fear (Ps 36:1; Lu 23:40).
 5. God must totally change a man’s heart before he will fear God (Psalm 10:4; 55:19; 65:4; 110:3).
 6. God’s covenant, which is the basis of salvation, is with those that fear him (Ps 25:14; Luke 1:50).
 7. God has promised well to those that fear him, but not to the wicked (Ecclesiastes 7:18; 8:12-13).
 8. The wicked profanely reject the knowledge God does send them (Rom 1:20-28; Eph 4:17-19).
 9. Cornelius feared God, and so did his whole house, which says much about all parties (Ps 34:11).
- C. Cornelius **gave alms** before he met Peter. This proves he had eternal life already. Let God be true!
 1. The Holy Spirit testified that Cornelius gave alms – gifts to the poor – to the people (Acts 10:2)
 2. God not only acknowledged the alms: He also accepted and approved them (Acts 10:4,31,35).
 3. God does not accept the sacrifices of the wicked, no matter what they do (Prov 15:8; 21:4,27).
 4. It is an undefiled man with pure religion that gives godly alms to the people (Jas 1:27; Ps 41:1).
 5. The righteous are contrasted from the wicked by their consideration of the poor (Prov 19:7).
 6. Giving alms is the act of a man whose righteousness is forever (Psalm 112:9-10; II Cor 9:9).
 7. Willingness to distribute allows the rich to lay hold on, or confirm, eternal life (I Tim 6:17-19).
- D. Cornelius **prayed always** before he met Peter. This proves he had eternal life. Let God be true!
 1. The Holy Spirit Himself testified that Cornelius indeed prayed to God always (Acts 10:2).
 2. God acknowledged that the prayers were accepted and approved before Him (Acts 10:4,31,35).

3. God hears the prayer of the righteous, but not the prayers of the wicked (Pr 15:8,29; John 9:31).
 4. The Lord sees and hears the righteous, but His face is against evildoers (Ps 34:11-18; I Pet 3:12).
 5. Unregenerate men in sin do not seek after God, yet Cornelius did (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Rom 3:11).
 6. Unregenerate men do not have any desire or time for God, but Cornelius did (Ps 10:4; Gen 6:5).
 7. The manmade idea of a “sinners’ prayer” as the request of a lost soul for regeneration is totally ludicrous, for no unregenerate man can or would pray sincerely, and God would not hear him!
- E. Cornelius **did righteousness** before he met Peter. This proves he had eternal life. Let God be true!
1. Fearing God, giving approved alms, and praying always are all parts of working righteousness.
 2. Peter perceived and acknowledged this when he first encountered Cornelius (Acts 10:34-35).
 3. There is no natural man that is righteous or good, no, not one (Ps 14:1-3; 53:1-3; Romans 3:10).
 4. A man doing righteousness is a born again, righteous man (I John 2:29; 3:7,10; III John 1:11).
 5. Good works are the certain evidence of eternal life (Matthew 7:21; Eph 2:10; James 2:14-26).
 6. It is an absurd proposal that a man approved by the Holy Spirit as fearing God and working righteousness was still in desperate need to be saved! Let God be true, but every man a liar!
- F. Cornelius was **accepted by God** before meeting Peter. He already had eternal life! Let God be true!
1. Peter perceived and acknowledged that Cornelius was already accepted with God [perfect tense, passive voice], by virtue of his present actions of fearing and working (Acts 10:34-35).
 2. Do you grasp the order of events in these words, “A man that breathes and talks well is resuscitated”? If you have a Th.D., you will not know which event came first in these words.
 3. God accepts those elected and predestinated in Jesus Christ the beloved (Ephesians 1:3-6), which is the acceptation that counts, since nowhere is eternal life dependent on our accepting Christ.
 4. The key in eternal life and salvation that God knows and accepts us (Gal 4:9; II Cor 5:9-11).
 5. It is near blasphemy to think or say God accepted a wicked man, for the holy God of the Bible cannot and will not do such (Ex 34:7; Ps 7:11; 82:2; Pr 18:5; Hab 1:13; Nah 1:3; Matt 7:21).
 6. God had already planned, paid for, and applied righteousness to Cornelius through Jesus Christ; God was reconciled toward him; he needed the news to believe it himself (II Cor 5:18-21).
 7. God had already worked in Cornelius to will and do of His good pleasure (Phil 2:13; Eph 2:10).

His Need for Peter (10:5-8)

- A. Cornelius needed to know what to do for peace, assurance, and to please God (Acts 10:6,33), which he would have never know without a gospel preacher persuading him of all three things.
1. If he was like David, Paul, or us, he needed to know there was full and free salvation in Christ.
 2. If he fretted over his inferior status as a Gentile, he needed to know he was a spiritual Israelite!
 3. Can you grasp how much he as a Gentile needed to hear Peter’s opening perception (10:34-35)?
 4. How much do you appreciate I John 1:9? What would your life be like without knowledge of it?
 5. Cornelius saw all the Jewish legalism from the Law of Moses, but Peter saved him from all that!
 6. Think baptism. How many years would it have taken Cornelius to figure out how to answer God!
 7. Think about the Lord’s Supper. How many years would it have taken him to figure that one out!
- B. Cornelius needed to hear about Jesus and forgiveness of sins (Rom 7:22-25; 10:1-5; II Cor 5:18-21).
- C. The gospel is to those who are saved, to manifest and to reveal life (I Cor 1:18,22-24; II Tim 1:9-10).
- D. The gospel is to establish men and give spiritual gifts, like Paul with saved Romans (Rom 1:11-17).
- E. Preaching exposes men, death unto death, life unto life, but never death unto life (II Cor 2:14-17).

Peter’s Vision (10:9-29)

- A. Peter was a Jew, and he did not associate with Gentiles by both Jewish tradition (10:28; John 4:9; Gal 2:12) and by the Lord Jesus Christ’s personal instructions (Matthew 10:5-6; 15:24).
- B. He did not know it was time for the last phase of the Great Commission, moving beyond Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria to the uttermost part of the earth, which Jesus had prophesied (Acts 1:8).
- C. There was a strict reluctance to preach the gospel to Gentiles until this watershed event (11:19-21).

- D. The vision does not say enough to independently prove Cornelius's sin cleansing, but that Peter could meet with Gentiles (10:28).
- E. Consider the reputation Cornelius had with the devout soldier and the Jewish nation. Unregenerate?
- F. Note that Cornelius had gathered his family, relatives, and close friends to hear from Peter, which is just one more item in the extensive list of noble and virtuous acts of this righteous man (10:24).

Peter's Confession (10:30-35)

- A. Cornelius related to Peter exactly what had happened several days earlier when the angel appeared.
- B. The angel promised Cornelius that Peter would speak to him, like Philip to the eunuch (Ac 8:26-40).
- C. Note that Cornelius had a large crowd together, and they wanted to hear the word of God (10:24,33).
- D. What kind of man is so intent, eager, and ready to hear God's commandments? A lost child of hell?
 - 1. Cornelius was full of faith – he just did not know the right object for it yet, Jesus of Nazareth!
 - 2. If Jesus had been there, He would have said, "I have not seen so great faith in all of Israel!"
- E. Peter, being an apostle, had the gift of discerning spirits; and he could speak authoritatively about Cornelius, just like he had earlier discerned and condemned Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8:14-25).
- F. God gave Cornelius the ability and certain knowledge to know Cornelius's spiritual condition.
 - 1. Peter first confesses that Cornelius's racial status as a Gentile did not mean a thing to God.
 - 2. He then confessed that Cornelius truly feared God and worked righteousness in the present tense.
 - 3. He concluded by stating that such actions were evidence of his previous acceptance with God.
 - 4. A perfect tense, passive voice verb construction of "is accepted" proves the point grammatically.
 - 5. If the verb is made present or future, then working righteousness becomes a condition for life, which no one but a Campbellite or Catholic will admit while sober!
- G. Fearing God and doing righteousness, including repentance and faith, are evidences of eternal life.
 - 1. Go back and review the Bible reasons at 10:2 why these two actions are evidence of eternal life.
 - 2. The rejection of this Holy Spirit inspired declaration of Cornelius's spiritual condition is profane.
 - a. It is a horrible disgrace and theological shame that men make these conditions of eternal life.
 - b. It is a horrible disgrace and theological shame that men make these of a sinner in the flesh.
 - 3. If Cornelius was not already legally justified here, then God accepted him under condemnation!
 - 4. If Cornelius was not already born again here, then God accepted the will and works of the flesh!
 - 5. Except and until a man is born again, he cannot even see God's kingdom, said Jesus (John 3:3).
 - 6. Except and until a man is born again, he cannot even hear preaching, said Jesus (John 8:43,47).
 - 7. A man that believes [present tense] Jesus is the Son of God is born [perfect tense, passive voice] of God already (I John 5:1). This is clearly indicated by the Greek and English verb tenses.
 - a. Which is first in time, the perfect tense or the present tense, regardless of sentence order?
 - b. Can you understand this: "Whosoever breathes like normal is resuscitated"? Which is first?
 - c. How about this: "Whosoever enters the room is approved of headquarters"? Which is first?
 - d. But I John 5:1 can also be confirmed as teaching faith as evidence by comparing I John 2:29 and 4:7, where adopting any other conclusion makes righteousness and love to be conditions.
 - e. By reading further, we can realize that evidence is the intent, for it is clearly stated for both righteousness and brotherly love and faith (I John 3:7,10,14; 5:13; III John 1:11).
 - f. By reading John's epistle further, we find more proof of priority for regeneration (I Jn 4:15).
 - g. And I John 5:1 can also be confirmed as teaching faith as evidence by reading I John 5:4.
 - h. And I John 5:1 can also be confirmed as teaching faith as evidence by reading I John 5:13.
 - i. And this agrees with what John wrote about the order in his gospel (Jn 1:13; 3:3; and 8:47).
 - j. Those who make John's books about believing to be a condition for life are ignorant or liars.

Peter's Preaching (10:36-43)

- A. Cornelius and his household had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ only in general and vague terms, because Peter will later confess under examination that they heard it first from him (Acts 15:7).
1. The good news that God had sent to Israel by John and Jesus had been widely disseminated.
 2. The proof of the kingdom of God was visible to those with eyes – God worked with Jesus Christ.
 3. Peter identified himself as a chosen apostle to witness the good works of Jesus before His death.
 4. Peter charged the Jews with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, though the Romans executed it.
 5. Peter declared the resurrection of our Lord and that he was one of the chosen witnesses of it.
 6. Peter confessed the commission of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel of Christ as coming Judge.
 7. Peter confirmed agreement with the Old Testament prophets that faith would bring forgiveness.
- B. *What about Peter declaring that “whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins”?***
1. Does this verse contradict the previous declarations and the rest of Scripture (II Peter 1:20)?
 2. Since Cornelius was already accepted with God, this remission of sins cannot be legal or vital.
 3. The verb construction is clearly conditional, for it is a present action with a future consequence.
 4. There is another very real remission of sins, a practical forgiveness for fellowship (Ps 32:1-5; I John 1:9), which is entirely conditional on hearing of Christ and believing in God's faithfulness.
 5. When born again men, saved men, hear the gospel, they perceive it as a wonderful message God's power and wisdom displayed in salvation by Christ (Rom 1:16; I Cor 1:18,22-24).
 6. Without being born again, saved, or called, men reject it as foolishness (I Cor 1:18,22-24; 2:14).
 7. If you press this phrase to be legal remission of sins, then baptism is needed for legal remission of sins, which only Campbellites dare to hold consistently (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; Acts 2:38).
 8. Remission of sins is by the precious blood of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:22; 10:18).
 9. It was this remission of sins that ignorant Jews missed until hearing the gospel (Romans 10:1-5).
 10. Jesus alone reconciled us to God, but there is a word of reconciliation for us (II Cor 5:18-21).
 11. Jesus Christ alone purchased and gave eternal life, but the gospel brings it to light (II Tim 1:10).
 12. Therefore, the remission of sins that is obtained by believing in Jesus Christ is the subjective remission of sins for the assurance, peace, and consolation of our own consciences and hearts, which in a regenerated new man can be a very significant and important blessing of the gospel!
 13. And it is the objective forgiveness of sins that opens the way for fellowship with God (I Jn 1:9).
 14. There is another very real remission of sins, the final and formal declaration of forgiveness on Judgment Day, which is evidenced and subjectively claimed by belief in the Lord Jesus Christ (II Thess 1:10; I Tim 6:12,17-19; II Tim 1:18; 4:8; Heb 6:18).
 15. Books will be used to prove all men sinners, but the Book of Life will save us (Rev 20:11-15).
 16. Paul was serious himself about this future aspect of being forgiven formally (II Cor 5:9-11; Phil 3:8-11), which is evidenced by faith and good works flowing from faith (II Pet 1:5-11).
 17. And Peter's use of “whosoever” was to continue his inclusion of Gentiles from his opening remarks, that the blessing of reconciliation and acceptance with God was not a Jewish matter!
 18. Peter said believing would only occur through Jesus name: life from Christ (John 1:4; 17:2-3)!
 19. This remission of sins is to be understood no further than Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16. Grasp it!

Cornelius's Response (10:44-48)

- A. God sent the Spirit on Cornelius before baptism to encourage Peter (Acts 2:38; 11:15-17; 15:8).
1. There were Jews witnessing this event, and Peter would have to answer later to Jerusalem.
 2. These Gentiles praised God in foreign languages that the Jewish hearers could fully understand.
 3. The gift was identical to the gift they had received at Pentecost to assist in this momentous event.
 4. Notice Peter's words to the Jews with him, “Can any man forbid water?” He implicated them all!

- B. Peter did not even get near an invitation, for God confirmed Cornelius when he began (11:15).
 - 1. There was no invitation, no “sinners’ prayer,” no decision for Jesus, and no public profession.
 - 2. God gave the divine sign from heaven that these were His people and they should be baptized!
 - 3. They obviously believed the message of Peter, or God would not have given them the Spirit.
- C. Cornelius now needed to hear everything else that God has commanded saints to do (Matt 28:19-20).

Peter’s Defense (11:1-18; 15:6-11)

- A. ***What about Peter saying his purpose was to bring salvation to Cornelius’s house (Acts 11:14)?***
 - 1. Does this verse contradict the previous declarations and the rest of Scripture (II Peter 1:20)?
 - 2. See the explanation above for Peter’s words about obtaining the remission of sins (Acts 10:43).
 - 3. Notice the issue – Gentiles receiving the gospel – not Gentiles gettin’ saved and goin’ to heaven!
 - 4. Cornelius was saved from the despair of not knowing about salvation, which left him and his household under the guilt of their sins, without the joyful knowledge of liberty in Jesus Christ!
 - 5. The gospel and doctrine of Jesus Christ does save men in a practical way unrelated to eternal life and heaven (Acts 2:40; 13:47; 18:24-26; Rom 10:1-5; I Cor 9:22; 15:2; II Cor 7:10; II Thess 2:13; I Tim 4:16; Heb 2:3; Jas 1:21; 5:19-20). God’s approved men will rightly divide the Bible.
 - 6. There is a wonderful salvation in our own minds of assurance and peace that the Bible also teaches (Rom 5:2; 7:24-25; I Tim 6:17-19; Jas 2:14-26; II Pet 1:7-11; I John 1:8-10; 3:18-19).
 - 7. Cornelius also needed to be saved from Roman idolatry and superstition and from Jewish legalism based on the Law of Moses. Both of these were enormous blessings of the gospel.
 - 8. Cornelius also needed to be saved from hopeless, carnal living to the abundant life in Christ.
 - 9. If you teach any other explanation, you have Cornelius dead in sins yet fully accepted with God.
 - 10. If Cornelius was not born again, how were his works of the flesh so pleasing to God and men?
 - 11. If Cornelius was not born again, what was Peter going to do with his flesh to get him born again?
 - 12. If Cornelius was not born again, why did he fear God, give alms, and pray to God all the time?
 - 13. If Cornelius was not born again, why did he want to hear and obey Peter so very eagerly?
 - 14. If Cornelius was unsaved, what did he need to be saved from? what did he need to be saved to?
 - 15. There are more salvations in the New Testament than being born again (I Tim 4:16; Jas 5:19-20).
- B. ***What about apostles and brethren in Jerusalem saying that repentance brought life (Acts 11:18)?***
 - 1. Does this verse contradict the previous declarations and the rest of Scripture (II Peter 1:20)?
 - 2. The apostles and brethren in Jerusalem did not say that repentance brought life. Read it carefully.
 - 3. Repentance is a violent change of turning from one way of life to another and hating the former, which is not something that a man in the flesh will ever do sincerely (Rom 8:7-8; Gal 5:17)!
 - 4. Repentance is a gift from God, only given to some, so it is the evidence of life (II Tim 2:25-26).
 - 5. Why did John baptize unto repentance, when his baptism was the act of repentance (Matt 3:11)?
 - 6. Repentance is not the condition or the means for being born again or gaining eternal life; it is the evidence of regeneration and eternal life and how sinners can lay hold of eternal life.
 - 7. Only those with renewed hearts are pricked by the gospel and willing to repent (Acts 2:37-38).
 - 8. Do a simple comparison. Which comes first, confession or life (Rom 10:9-10 cp I John 4:15)?
 - 9. Does a man repent in order to be born again, or must a man be born again to repent (John 3:3)?
 - 10. The implication is that God had already granted repentance to the Jews. But to how many of them (Matt 13:10-17; John 12:37-41; Acts 5:31; 28:23-29; Rom 11:7-10; II Cor 3:14; 4:4)?
- C. ***What about Peter telling apostles and elders that Cornelius purified his heart by faith (Acts 15:9)?***
 - 1. Does this verse contradict the previous declarations and the rest of Scripture (II Peter 1:20)?
 - 2. God used Peter for Gentiles to hear the word of the gospel and believe, not get born again (15:7).
 - 3. Look at the context! God bare witness of the condition of their hearts before the Spirit (15:8)!
 - 4. What kind of hearts did they have? Evil hearts of unbelief? Or regenerate hearts full of faith?
 - 5. God opened the heart of Cornelius and his house to believe the gospel and reject all false notions.

6. Peter saw a future sense of salvation – the final phase – that was by the grace of Jesus Christ, which would save the Jewish apostles and elders just as surely as it would save Gentile elect.
7. Purifying a heart is not a legal or vital matter, but a practical purifying (II Cor 7:1; Jas 1:8; 4:8)!
8. The knowledge of the forgiveness of sins can purify our hearts practically (Ps 51:10; I John 3:3).
9. If you make faith a condition in this text for a righteous legal standing before God, then faith from an impure heart pleases God for being made pure! That is absurd! Get the order right!
10. If you make faith a condition in this text for purifying your heart by regeneration, then the faith of the flesh and the will of the flesh are the means for being born of the Spirit (John 1:13; 3:6)!
11. If you make faith a condition in this text for purifying your heart by regeneration, then what schemes will you invent to move the five brothers of the rich man to exercise faith (Luke 16:31)?
12. Peter wrote that believing the truth through the Spirit to love the brethren without hypocrisy is what purifies the heart, which follows eternal life (I Pet 1:22; Titus 3:3; I John 3:10,14)!
13. How does faith purify a heart? A regenerated heart must precede faith, so what does faith purify?
 - a. It must be the same benefits understood and previously explained for Peter’s words at 10:43.
 - b. It is not more than granting repentance to recover yourself from the devil (II Tim 2:25-26).
 - c. By following Peter’s reasoning, God purified their hearts from Gentile superstitions by faith!
 - d. And not only that, but the gospel purifies hearts from Jewish legalism (Romans 10:1-17).
 - e. It is by the gospel that consciences are cleansed from fear and guilt (Heb 9:9,14; 10:2,22).
 - f. Knowing Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for sins, a good conscience can answer God (I Peter 3:21).

Conclusion:

1. Cornelius was elected by God the Father in Christ Jesus before the world began; he was legally justified at the cross of Calvary by His Savior’s gracious death; and he was vitally regenerated sometime before Acts 10 by the power of the Holy Ghost. After Peter practically converted him to obey the truth of the gospel, he waited in faithful expectation of finally and formally being judged righteous in the coming great day of judgment.
2. The keys to Acts 10 are the [five phases of salvation](#), and separating and ordering [regeneration and conversion](#).
3. Gospel salvation is indeed a salvation, but it is not eternal election, legal justification, or vital regeneration.
4. For those who want to make faith in the gospel a sacramental condition for eternal life by dead sinners, they better start preaching abortives, infants, the retarded, and the heathen in hell in order to be consistent!
5. Cornelius was saved in two different ways by two different means at two different times, as part of God’s singular gracious dealings with him and his house. He was born again without Peter, and converted by Peter.
6. Can you remember and contend for the truth of God’s grace that regenerates before hearing the gospel, for it is this doctrine of Scripture that gives God the glory and delivers from the heresies of decisional regeneration?
7. Can you grasp in your own life the changes God made before and after believing and obeying the gospel, or do you believe that you changed your own heart to cooperate with a preacher in being born again?
8. We agree with Paul that we are bound to give thanks to God for choosing and saving us, which salvation is not only eternal life but also deliverance from the lying and damning deceit of false religion (II Thess 2:9-17)!

For Further Study:

1. The study outline, “[When Were You Saved?](#)” which details the five phases of salvation taught in the New Testament.
2. The sermon outline, “[Why Preach the Gospel?](#)” which explains the purpose and effects of preaching the gospel.
3. The sermon outline, “[Why No Invitation?](#)” which explains the origin, heresy, and perversion of the modern invitation.
4. The sermon outline, “[Salvation By Works](#),” which explains that faith and especially good works are proofs of salvation.
5. The sermon outline, “[Revelation 3:20 Reclaimed](#),” explains the perversion and correct application of this famous text.
6. The sermon outline, “[John 3:16 Revisited](#),” explains the perversion and correct application of this famous text.
7. See A.T. Robertson, the Greek authority; G. R. Berry’s, [Interlinear and Literal Translation of the Greek New Testament of the Authorized Version](#); and J.M. Pendleton’s, [Christian Doctrines](#), about the verb tenses in I John 5:1.
8. Here is a [hilarious explanation](#) of Cornelius by Campbellites! Here is [another](#)! Here is [another](#)! Here is [another](#)!