

# Coming Together to “Fill the Heart”

## *The Story of Cornelius*

### Introduction

1. Today we have come together in this place to worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn 4:24).
  - A. Many have come so as to give God the opportunity to “fill the heart” with His wonderful message.
2. Most understand that in order to “fill our hearts” with the word of the Lord, we must first be here, and secondly we must possess an attitude of wanting to know what God would want us to do.
3. Such was the case with a man in the Bible named Cornelius.  
**Acts 10: 1-2, 24, 27, 33**
  - A. Cornelius was a devout man, he feared God, with ALL his household, he gave alms, he prayed to God always.
  - B. Yet there was more that he must do (V6).
  - C. He gathers up his relatives and friends and waits for the preacher to tell him what he must do.
    - 1) So we have here a good man, with a good attitude, willing to submit to God’s directions.
    - 2) He “came” to “fill the heart.”
4. The story of the conversion of Cornelius serves to show us at least three things.
  - A. When one truly seeks God, they can learn the truth.
  - B. One is not saved, even though good morally, until they obey the Lord.
  - C. The gospel is not just for a selected class of people, but rather for ALL men.  
**Acts 10:1-48**

## The Conversion of Cornelius

### 1. An Angel Appears to Cornelius...

- A. He announces that his prayers have been noticed by God
- B. He is instructed to send for Peter because **"He will tell you what you must do."**
- C. He sends two servants and a devout soldier to Peter (10:7-8).

### 2. Peter Has A Vision...

- A. While Cornelius' men are traveling toward Peter, Peter has a vision.
- B. An object, like a sheet, comes down from heaven filled with all sorts of creatures (10:11).
- C. Peter is told to "kill and eat" (10:13).
- D. Peter objects because he has never eaten anything common or unclean.
  - 1) The voice was commanding Peter to engage in an act forbidden under the Mosaic Law, for that law prohibited the Jews from eating the animals it declared unclean.
- E. The voice tells him *"What God has cleansed you must not call common."* (10:15)
  - 1) The only reason any animal was declared unclean or common under the Old Law was because God said so. Now God is saying all is acceptable for consumption.
    - a. **The purpose of this vision will soon be discovered.**

### **3. The Spirit Tells Peter To Go With The Messengers...**

- A. As Peter is trying to figure out what this vision must have meant, the messengers arrive (10:17-18).**
- B. The Spirit tells Peter to go with them, “*doubting nothing; for I have sent them*” (10:19-20).
  - 1) Quite possible Peter would have had serious doubts about going with these Gentiles, had he not received this special revelation.****
- C. Peter takes 6 men with him as they leave and head to see Cornelius (10:21-23; 11:12)**

### **4. Peter Arrives At Cornelius’ House...**

- A. Cornelius has gathered his family and close friends (10:24)**
- B. Peter deflects an attempt by Cornelius to worship him (10:25-26).**
- C. Peter explains that his presence was a violation of Jewish custom, but now understands “*I should not call any man common or unclean*” (10:27-28)**
- D. Peter asks why he was called and Cornelius recounts the appearance and instruction of the angel (10:29-32).**
- E. Cornelius and his household are now ready to “*hear all things commanded you by God*” (10:33).**

## 5. Peter's Sermon to Cornelius and His Household...

- A. He first begins letting them know that God shows no partiality (10:34-35).
- 1) Perception that was based upon the vision of unclean creatures.
  - 2) Perception continued with the Spirit's instruction to go with the messengers.
  - 3) Perception that was made clear with the Spirit falling upon the Gentiles (11:15-17; 10:44-46).
    - a. The purpose of the Spirit falling upon the Gentiles can be understood by:
      1. The effect it had on the Jewish brethren present and Peter's response (10:47).
      2. The reaction of the Jewish brethren in Judea when Peter told them what happened (11:17-18).
      3. Peter's explanation at the council held later in Jerusalem (15:7-11).
- B. Peter proceeds to preach Jesus Christ to them (10:36-43).
- C. Peter commands them to be baptized in the name of the Lord (10:48).

## **Coming Together to “Fill the Heart.”**

**Like Cornelius, we should all want to come together to have our hearts filled with the word of God, ready to act upon His command.**

### **1. Religious People Need To Be Saved...**

- A. Sadly, many people believe that if you are religious, you will be saved**
- B. That if you go to church, are morally good, do good deeds, you will have earned the right to enter heaven.**
- C. Yet we see in Cornelius that he was:**
  - 1) Devout, feared God, gave alms, prayed to God and still he needed to hear *“words by which you and your household will be saved.”***
- D. Religion is not what saves, it is the blood of Christ!**

### **2. The Gospel is for ALL...**

- A. God is no respecter of persons (10:34-35).**
- B. God desires ALL men to be saved in accordance with the scriptures.**  
**John 3:16; Mark 16:16**

