

Lesson 13 – Acts 10:24-48

Gentiles Believe the Gospel

Isn't it exciting when a new concept becomes clear? All of a sudden, you get it.

When Peter walked into Cornelius' house, he didn't understand what was going on. Cornelius was a Gentile. Peter admitted to his host that he had come only because God told him to. Imagine Peter slowly beginning to understand that everything Jesus had done He had done for everyone, not just for the Jews. Even though Jesus had come to the Jews and lived and worked among them, what He accomplished was for all humankind.

The members of Cornelius' household already knew some things about Jesus (Acts 10:37–38):

- They knew of His ministry in Judea beginning with His baptism by John.
- They knew that God had anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power.
- They knew that He had performed miracles and healed many people.

They needed to know more, so Peter told them about (vv.39–43):

- Jesus' death on the cross.
- His resurrection.
- His appearing to His followers after His death.

Jesus had given His followers a message to preach, that He was the promised Savior.

For the Gentiles

The promise of the Messiah did not come *from* the Gentiles, but it was *for* the Gentiles. In the Old Testament, the Law was given to the Jews through Moses. The Law did not restrict the Jews completely from interacting with Gentiles, but some rabbis and Jews of Jesus' day thought it did.

Cornelius had come to believe in the Lord and was looking for the fulfillment of God's promise of the Messiah. Gentiles who came to believe in the One True God could attach themselves to the nation of Israel in various ways. [TM note: see Ruth 1:16] However, Cornelius had not been circumcised. Consequently, he remained separate from the worship of the Jewish people. The events occurring in Acts 10 are the Lord's clear instruction to all involved that one need not be Jewish or follow all the laws of the Jews to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is for all people.

Salvation and righteousness have always and only come through faith. The Apostle Peter, Cornelius, and all who gathered were being instructed by the Lord that the Gentiles too were to hear the preaching of the Gospel. In this way, Christ's work of redemption for them could be heard and believed.

Into the Word: Acts 10:24-48

1. THE MEETING

- vv.24, 27 Cornelius called together his *relatives* and *close friends*.
- vv.25-26 Cornelius bowed down and worshiped Peter, but Peter understood worship only belongs to God, so he said, "*Stand up; I too am just a man.*"

Imagine! Peter walked 30 miles to meet with this Gentile soldier and did what no upstanding Jew would have done – enter Cornelius' house.

2. THE CONVERSATION

- vv.28-29 Peter began by telling Cornelius, his family, and friends what they already knew: how unlawful it is for a Jew to *associate with a foreigner* or to *visit him*.

However, Peter said that God had shown him that he was not to judge what was *unholy* or *unclean*.

- vv.30-31 Cornelius then explained how he had been praying and was visited by a *man in shining garments* from the Lord. God knew about Cornelius' generosity and heard his prayers. God's messenger had then told Cornelius to send for *Peter*.
- v.33 Cornelius concluded by telling Peter the reason they have all gathered is to hear *all that you have been commanded by the Lord*.

3. THE MESSAGE

Compare Peter's understanding in verse 28 with verses 34-35:

- v.28 he used to believe non-Jews were *unholy* or *unclean*.
- vv.34-35 Peter said: "I most certainly *understand* now that God is not one to show *partiality*, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is *welcome* to Him."
- vv.36-42 Peter's Message is a summary of the life and work of *Jesus Christ*.
- v.43 Everyone who believed in Him receives: *Forgiveness of sins in Christ*

4. THE EFFECT

- vv.44-46 Cornelius and his household were sent the *Holy Spirit*. Similar to their own Pentecost experience, this was amazing to the Jewish believers who were with Peter. A new era in Christian history had begun. God had sent the Holy Spirit to the uncircumcised Gentiles. Salvation was for all who received Jesus by faith.
- vv.47-78 Peter then called for the new believers to be *baptized*. The believers asked him to stay for a few days.

New Ideas:

Jesus Christ the Judge

"And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42).

This statement Peter makes about Jesus is similar to what we confess in the Apostles' Creed when we say, "He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

Jesus identified Himself as "judge." Read the following verses and summarize what He said.

John 5:22 God the Father has given the responsibility of judging to His Son Jesus

John 5:30 I judge justly because I judge according to My Father's will

At the end of time, Jesus, who knows all hearts, will judge all people according to the state of their hearts. Those who depend on Him for the forgiveness of their sins will be welcomed into eternal life with Him.

[TM reference- Matthew 25:31-34]

Memory Verse

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

Acts 10:43

Extra Memory Challenge

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Discussion Questions

Each teacher should encourage, as much as time permits, discussion and inquiry on the part of students. Not every aspect of the following questions is addressed here, and students may have thoughts related to but not mentioned in this guide. The obligation of the teacher, then, is to understand as deeply as possible the Scriptures that are being discussed, in order to answer as well as possible any questions a student might have.

1. Read Acts 10:25-26. Cornelius bowed down to worship Peter. Right away Peter stopped him. Based on Peter's reaction, what attitude should a Christian have toward "great" people in sports, movies, or music? How is showing respect for another person different from worshiping them? [TM reference: Romans 12:10, Romans 13:7b]

Consider the meaning of the word worship: reverent honor given to and homage given to God or any other sacred person or image. The First Commandment tells us that we are to have no other gods but God Himself. Peter knew he was no different than you and I and no human is worthy of worship. There are people in government, entertainment and sports that are gifted, talented people but all that they are has been given to them by God. They deserve our respect and we can learn from watching them. This is very different from worship. Romans 12:10 tells us to give preference to those people in authority over us, to acknowledge their talents but not to worship them because they are not perfect and have faults too. Romans 13:7b tells us to honor people who are worthy of honor.

2. Why is it to our great benefit that Jesus is the one appointed to be Judge of the living and the dead, as verse 42 tells us? Also read I John 2:1-2 and I John 4:10.

I John 4:10 tells us that Jesus paid the price for our sins and I John 2: 1-2 tells us that Jesus is our advocate before the Father on our behalf. Jesus stands before God and tells the Father we stand not guilty because He paid the price for our sins. Consider LSC Question #218 and 219. Jesus is the perfect one to Judge us because we stand in Him righteous before God the Father

Daily Devotions

Sunday:	Genesis 12:1-3
Monday:	Galatians 3:6-9
Tuesday:	1 Peter 2:6-9
Wednesday:	Ephesians 2:11-18
Thursday:	Luke 2:25-33
Friday:	Isaiah 49:5-7
Saturday:	Revelation 7:9-12

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH: THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE AFLC

* An Introduction to the Fundamental Principles

A fundamental principle is a basic rule or code of conduct which serves as a guideline to support an organization's existence and structure. Lutheran Free Church (LFC) founders Georg Sverdrup and Sven Oftedal, seeking only the truth of God's Word, wrote the Fundamental Principles to guide the doctrine and practice of the LFC. The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC) adopted the Fundamental Principles from the LFC. [TM note: These Principles can be found in the book "Roots of Freedom. They are the guide for all the work of the AFLC in the local congregation and for the work the congregations do together, World Missions, Home Missions, AFLBS and AFLTS.]

1. Why do we need principles to live by?

We need a written statement that will keep us focused and that will guide us as to our reason for existing, both as a congregation and as an association of free and living congregations. It is always easy to stray from who we are and from what our purpose is. Our principles keep us together in the Kingdom's work.

2. What does "fundamental" mean?

Webster's Dictionary says fundamental means "serving as a basis, supporting existence or determining essential structure, function: basic."