

## Introduction

Two weeks ago, my mother had eye surgery. As I was waiting in the waiting room during her surgery, I spoke with the lady sitting across from me. Her name is Ruth Luckasson, and she is the Chair of the Special Education Department at UNM and an accomplished author. Her husband, Dr. Larry Davis, is a neurologist at UNM Hospital, and also an author. Ruth brought her knitting with her and knitted while her husband was having his eye surgery. She had been working on a gray scarf for two months. She skillfully knit the yarn together, and after more than 32,000 stitches, she finished the scarf that morning while in the waiting room. She tied off the end and then put it away in a plastic ziploc bag, saying that it will be a Christmas present for someone later this year.

In the book of Proverbs, one of several Hebrew words that are used for plan, is chasab (Strong's H2803), which means to plait, interpenetrate, weave, fabricate or plot. Proverbs 16:9 says that the mind of a man plans his way. The implication is that much thought and consideration needs to go into our plans. Plans are not casual or random thoughts. They are carefully considered, well thought out, and skillfully woven or knit together. This concept of weaving together a plan is not just for men; it is what God does also.

(Proverbs 16:9) "The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps."

Our text today is the culmination of a plan that God had skillfully woven or knit together. He communicated this plan to Abraham back in Genesis. He told him that he would be the father of many nations. On that day, God changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means father of nations. **God's plan of salvation was not just for the nation of Israel, but for all nations.** For thousands of years God carefully and skillfully wove together different parts of this plan.

(Gen 17:4-5) "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. {5} No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

As the time drew near for this plan to be fulfilled, God sent an angel to Cornelius and communicated the plan. He gave Peter a vision of unclean animals, and then spoke to him. The Lord told Peter to "get up, kill, and eat." Peter replied to the Lord, "by no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." Can you imagine telling God no to something that He asks you to do. Then, the Lord told Peter, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."

(Acts 10:13-15) "A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!" {14} But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." {15} Again a voice came to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy."

God was preparing Peter for Cornelius' visit. To the Jews, the Gentiles were unclean, and were not included in the commonwealth of Israel. The Jews did not understand that God's plan was for all people and all nations. The time for this plan to come to fruition was now, and God is knitting that final piece of yarn and finishing the plan. His heart from the very beginning was for people from every tribe, tongue, and nation to be reconciled to Himself. In our text this morning and next week, God is tying off the ends of this scarf. It culminates in the Gentiles receiving salvation, evidenced by the Holy Spirit being poured out on them, just as it was for the Jews.

## 21 Gentiles Added to the Church (Acts 10:23-48)

We pick up the story where it left off last week. Cornelius has sent three men from Caesarea to Simon's house in Joppa to bring back Peter. They arrive, and Peter invites them in. He goes with them the next day to Caesarea. Cornelius gathers family and friends to hear what God will speak to them. They exchange greetings and have a meeting. Second, we have the message. Peter shares the gospel with them. Third, we have the manifestation. Even before Peter can give an invitation, the Holy Spirit is poured out on them in the same way as He fell on the Jews at Pentecost. They hear them speaking in tongues and exalting God. In conclusion, Peter and his companions see that God has not withheld His plan of salvation from the Gentiles, but has now added them to the church. Therefore, he orders them to be baptized. Let's read our text for today.

### **Gentiles Added to the Church**

1. The Meeting
2. The Message
3. The Manifestation

(Acts 10:23-33) "So he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next day he got up and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. {24} On the following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends. {25} When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshiped him. {26} But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am just a man." {27} As he talked with him, he entered and found many people assembled. {28} And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. {29} "That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. So I ask for what reason you have sent for me. {30} Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments, {31} and he said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God. {32} 'Therefore send to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you; he is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea.' {33} "So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord."

(Acts 10:34-43) "Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, {35} but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him. {36} "The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all)— {37} you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. {38} "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. {39} "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. {40} "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, {41} not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. {42} "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. {43} "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

## 21 Gentiles Added to the Church (Acts 10:23-48)

(Acts 10:44-48) “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. {45} All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. {46} For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, {47} "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" {48} And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.”

### 1. The Meeting

Our text begins with Cornelius’ delegation of three men arriving at Simon’s house. Simon is a tanner. Tanners touched the carcasses of dead animals, and this was a despised profession to the Jews. Dead animals were unclean, and those that touched them would become unclean, so this was not the ideal place for a man like Peter to stay. Peter’s world was being turned upside down.

(Acts 10:23a) “So he invited them in and gave them lodging...”

So, while Peter is at a tanner’s house, he has a vision of unclean animals coming down. He is told to kill them and eat them. Peter responds by saying that he has never eaten anything unholy or unclean. Three times he is told to kill and eat. After the third time, the object was taken into the sky.

(Acts 10:11-16) “and he saw the sky opened up, and an object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, {12} and there were in it all *kinds of* four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. {13} A voice came to him, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat!" {14} But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." {15} Again a voice *came* to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no *longer* consider unholy." {16} This happened three times, and immediately the object was taken up into the sky.”

While Peter is perplexed about what this means, Cornelius’ delegation knocks on the door. While he is reflecting on the vision, the Holy Spirit tells him that he is to go with them without any misgivings. Any good Jew would have plenty of misgivings about accompanying a group of Gentiles. They would not do it, but God gives Peter a clear word that he is to go with them.

(Acts 10:17-20) “Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate...{19} While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. {20} "But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself.”

Peter greets them and asks their reason for coming. They tell them about Cornelius. This is a Latin name and means of the horn. Horns stood for power or rule, and often referred to a king (Cornu – Latin for horn). He is a centurion, which means that he has about eighty men under him. At that time, the Roman soldiers were operating under the Marian Reform, and a legion consisted of one or more cohorts. Each cohort had ten units. Each unit had six centuraie. Each centuraie would have ten contubernia. Each contubernia had eight soldiers. Cornelius had ten contubernias, and a total of eighty soldiers under his command. Cornelius had strong leadership skills.

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Cornelius is not only a strong military leader, but he is a well respected man. He is righteous and God-fearing, and well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews. What an introduction by Cornelius' own men. Then, they tell him that Cornelius has been directed by an angel to send for him to come to his house and hear a message. If you are Peter, you are not just being asked to accompany these Gentiles, but you are being asked to go into a Gentile home. Peter's theological and cultural world is being turned upside down. And last of all, he is told that they are waiting for him to give them a message.

(Acts 10:21-22) "Peter went down to the men and said, "Behold, I am the one you are looking for; what is the reason for which you have come?" {22} They said, "Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous and God-fearing man well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, was divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you."

**Peter invites them in and gives them lodging.** They have been on the road for two days, and they are probably tired and hungry. Peter has now crossed all the cultural boundary lines. He has invited Gentiles into the house to stay with him. And, on the next day, he got up and went with them from Joppa to Caesarea. It says that some of the brethren from Joppa also accompanied him. There were six men that went with Peter. They would witness the Holy Spirit being poured out on the Gentiles. It would not just be Peter's word, but it would be confirmed through other people.

(Acts 10:23) "So he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next day he got up and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him."

(Acts 11:12) "The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brethren also went with me and we entered the man's house."

On the next day, Peter enters Caesarea. It was thirty-six miles from Joppa to Caesarea. We think of that as a half hour drive, but if you are walking thirty-six miles, it is not a half hour journey. The average walking speed for most people is 3.1 mph. When I played professional golf, I was one of the fastest walkers on tour. I averaged about 4.1 mph. For people in good condition, who walk regularly, a distance of ten to twelve miles per day is maximum. Well trained walkers can walk twenty miles a day. Some competitors walk a marathon in a day, which is twenty-six miles. In those days, people walked a lot, so twenty miles would be a day's journey. This trip would be a two-day journey, which is what Peter and the group do. On the following day, they entered Caesarea.

(Acts 10:24, 27) "On the following day he entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends...{27} As he talked with him, he entered and found many people assembled."

When they arrive, Cornelius was waiting for them. An angel has spoken to him and told him to send for Peter. He has sent out a delegation of three men to get Peter, and now his delegation has returned with Peter and six other men. Cornelius is excited and full of expectancy. In fact, He has invited his relatives and close friends to come hear this message that God is going to give them through Peter. In verse 27, we find that there many people assembled. This was not just a handful of relatives and close friends. Cornelius has invited and gathered many people for this meeting. He has had an angel visit him. He has been given specific instructions to send for Peter. God is doing something way out of the ordinary, and Cornelius is excited and full of expectancy.

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We can learn a few lessons from Cornelius. **First we need to be full of expectation.** Lord, what message do you have for me this morning? What would you say to me today? That is how we should meet corporately with the Lord. What would you say to me today? **Second, we can learn to invite others to hear the gospel message.** The woman at the well invited the whole town to hear what Jesus would say. Zacchaeus invited all his friends to hear Jesus. Cornelius has invited all these people to come to this meeting to hear a message from God. Who are we inviting to hear the word of God. We need to be a people that are always reaching out and inviting people to our meetings. We should invite them to Men's bible study. We should invite them to the Women's Bible studies. We need to invite people to our Life Groups. We should invite people to our Sunday services. Jesus said that he who does not gather with me, scatters. Are we gathering or scattering. Cornelius was gathering people. I want to be one of those that gathers, not scatters.

(Matt 12:30) "He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me scatters."

As Peter enters, Cornelius falls at his feet and worships him. Peter corrects him, saying, "stand up, I too am just a man." There is no pride or self exultation. Peter knows who he is. He is a man that would deny the Lord three times before a cock crows. He is a man that has fallen away, and then returned to strengthen the brethren. He is a broken man, and God uses broken people.

(Acts 10:25-26) "When Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshiped him. {26} But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am just a man."

After entering, Peter tells them that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him. He also tells them that God has shown him not to call any man unholy or unclean. Peter understood that the vision was not about food, but about calling the Gentile unclean. This sounds simple to us, but this was not an easy or simple thing for a Jew to do. Peter is coming in a spirit of humility. He is not coming in a prideful or arrogant way, but as a humble and obedient man. God has told him to go, so he has come to them without any objections. Now Peter, asks for a second time, what is the reason that you have sent for me.

(Acts 10:28-29) "And he said to them, "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean. {29} "That is why I came without even raising any objection when I was sent for. So I ask for what reason you have sent for me."

We saw last week that Cornelius was continually praying. **Cornelius was a man of prayer.** In his introductions with Peter, he tells of how he was praying during the ninth hour, and a man stood before him in shining garments. If we go back to Acts 3, we know that Peter and John were on their way to the temple for the hour of prayer. They had an hour-long prayer meeting every day at 3:00 p.m. In our church culture, some people are uncomfortable with praying for thirty minutes once a month in a service, but the early church prayed together an hour a day at three o'clock.

(Acts 10:30) ""Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour; and behold, a man stood before me in shining garments,"

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Cornelius goes on to tell the message that the angel gave him. His prayers have been heard, and his alms have been remembered. He was not only a man of prayer, but **Cornelius was a generous man who gave many alms**, or gifts of charity. Cornelius was compassionate and gave to the poor. May our church be filled with people like Cornelius. May we be a church that prays continually and who take care of the poor. May we be a generous church. May we be a devout church that fears the Lord. I can see why his prayers were heard and his alms remembered.

(Acts 10:31-33) “and he said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms have been remembered before God.’”

Cornelius goes on to tell how the angel instructed him to send for Peter in Joppa, who is staying at Simon’s house by the sea. Simon tells how he sent for Peter. Finally, Cornelius says that they are all present before God to hear all that Peter has been commanded by the Lord. They are gathered together for the meeting. God has been knitting and weaving all these different threads of His plan together. They have had their introductions, and now they are ready to hear the message.

(Acts 10:32-33) “Therefore send to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you; he is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea.’ {33} "So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.”

## 2. The Message

Many years ago I was memorizing the sermon on the mount. As I was meditating and memorizing, I thought about how Jesus started. Matthew tells us that Jesus saw the crowds, went up on the mountain, and opening His mouth, He began to teach them. I asked myself, “why does He say that He opened His mouth and began to teach?” Isn’t it obvious that you have to open your mouth to teach. The impression that came to me was that sometimes you just don’t know where to start. Sometimes, you just need to open your mouth and get started. You may be in a witnessing situation that you do not know what to say. In those moments, you pray. Lord, use me. Lord, direct my thoughts and my words. And then, you have to trust the Holy Spirit to give you the things to say. You have to open your mouth and begin to share.

(Matt 5:1-2) “When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. {2} He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,”

It is interesting that Luke says the same thing about Peter. “Opening his mouth, Peter said...” Cornelius has told him to share with this group of people all that God commanded him to share. Peter is on the spot. He has already asked two different times why they have sent for him. He is still trying to figure out what is going on. He is still trying to put all the pieces together, and I don’t think he is crystal clear on what he is going to share. I think he prayed and asked the Lord to direct his thoughts and words. I think he is trusting the Holy Spirit to lead him, and so he opens his mouth and begins to share with them.

(Acts 10:34-35) “Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, {35} but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.”

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Peter's first point is that **God is not one to show partiality**. Every man who fears God from any nation and does what is right is welcome to God. This is a new concept. This is a new revelation. God has used Simon the tanner. God has used the vision of the unclean animals. God has spoken to Peter to not call anyone unclean, and he now knows that this is referring to the Gentiles. God has used the angelic visitation and message to Cornelius. Peter is putting all these together and shares that **God's plan of salvation is available to everyone**. It is not just for the Jews, but is available to men from every nation.

God revealed this mystery to Paul. In Ephesians 3, he said that by revelation this mystery was made known. It was not made known to other generations; it was hidden. Now, it has been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. Both Peter and Paul were apostles and God revealed this mystery to both of them.

(Eph 3:3-6) "that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. {4} By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, {5} which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; {6} to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

Paul defines the mystery for us. **The mystery is that "Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."** These are compound words with the prefix sun, which means to join together. The Gentiles have been joined together with the Jews and are heirs, members of the body, and partakers in Christ. Notice that Paul said that it has been kept secret for long ages past. God declared His purposes to Abram. In Genesis 12:3, God told Abram that He would bless him and that in him all the families of the earth will be blessed." All the families of the earth would include families from every nation.

(Gen 12:3) "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

Then, in Genesis 17, God tells Abram that he would be the father of a multitude of nations. Therefore, God changed Abram's name to Abraham, which means the father of a multitude of nations. God had all the nations in His plan from the very beginning, but it has been hidden from the Jews. It is just now being revealed to Peter.

(Gen 17:4-5) "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. {5} "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations."

Jesus declared the mystery to them, but somehow they missed it. In the Great Commission, He commanded them to "go therefore and make disciples of all the nations." **God had the nations in His plan from the very beginning. Our commission is to go to all nations.**

(Matt 28:19-20) "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, {20} teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

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Jesus reiterates this in Acts 1:8. He tells us that we are to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. God had all the nations in mind from the beginning. This plan is now coming to fruition, and the mystery is being revealed to Peter and the other apostles.

(Acts 1:8) “but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Peter’s second point in his message is that **Jesus is the Messiah**. He preaches peace through Jesus Christ. Jesus means savior and Christ means anointed one. Jesus is the anointed one or Messiah. He tells them that Jesus is Lord of all. Then, he explains how Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then, he tells them that Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil. Jesus’ Messiahship was confirmed through signs, wonders, and healings. Peter tells them that he and his companions are witnessed of all the things that Jesus did.

(Acts 10:36-39a) “The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all) {37} you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. {38} "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. {39} "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.”

Peter’s third point is that **Jesus was crucified and was raised up on the third day**. Then, Jesus appeared to certain witnesses that were chosen beforehand by God. The way that Luke writes this is that not everyone could see Jesus. He only became visible to certain people. Those certain people were those who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

(Acts 10:39b-41) “...They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. {40} "God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, {41} not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.”

Peter’s fourth point is that **Jesus has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead and everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins**. The way to escape the judgment is by believing in Jesus.

(Acts 10:42-43) “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. {43} "Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.”

That is the same gospel that we have been commanded to preach. All of us have sinned, and all of us will be judged for our sins. God had a plan to redeem us. He sent His Son Jesus to live a perfect life and die for our sins. When we believe in our heart that Jesus rose from the dead and confess Him to be our Lord, our sins are forgiven. We no longer face judgment. We have peace with God through Jesus.



### 3. The Manifestation

This morning if you believe that Jesus is the Messiah, but have never confessed Jesus as Lord, you don't have to wait until an invitation. Cornelius and his guests did not wait for the invitation. They put their trust in Christ while they were listening to the message. Luke tells us that "while Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message."

(Acts 10:44) "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message."

**When we receive Christ, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit.** Paul tells us in Ephesians 1 that "after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given us as a pledge of our inheritance." Cornelius and his group were sealed with the promise of the Holy Spirit because they listened to the message and believed in their hearts. This morning, if you believe, you can receive Christ also. You can be sealed with the Holy Spirit.

(Eph 1:13-14) "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory."

Paul tells us in Romans 10:9-10 that if we believe in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, and confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord, we will be saved. By believing in our heart we are made righteous, and by confessing with our mouth we are saved. You can do that right at your seat. Tell the Lord that you believe that He is the Messiah. Tell Him that you believe that He died for your sins and was raised up again from the dead. Tell Him that you want to receive Him as Lord of your life. If you tell the Lord that, He promises to forgive your sins and seal you with His Holy Spirit.

(Rom 10:9-10) "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. {10} For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

The Hebrew word for spirit in the Old Testament is ruach (Strong's H924c), which means breath, wind, or spirit. The Greek word for spirit in the New Testament is pneuma (Strong's G4154), which also means wind or spirit. We cannot see wind. We can see the manifestations of wind. We can see branches blow. We can feel the manifestations of wind. I remember one day I was sitting in the front row of the church I was pastoring in Atlanta. My oldest daughter Jennifer was dancing to a song called, "The Soldier." As she came toward my seat and twirled the presence of the Holy Spirit was so strong that it slammed me into the back of my chair. I do not think I have ever felt the Holy Spirit move so powerfully as that Sunday morning.

As a professional golfer, we always watched for the wind. The wind significantly affects the ball, so proper club selection depended on gauging the wind correctly. We could not see the wind, but we could see the manifestations, and we looked for those manifestations so that we could correctly judge the effect it would have on our shots. We looked at the tree tops. We would pick a few strands of grass and throw them in the air. We were always looking for manifestations of the wind.

## 21 Gentiles Added to the Church (Acts 10:23-48)

How would the Jews that came with Peter know that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit if there had not been any manifestations? They would not know that they had been sealed with the Holy Spirit unless there were some manifestations. Luke writes that “all the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles for they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.” **These manifestations were the tangible evidence that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit.**

(Acts 10:45-46) “All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. {46} For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God...”

Not everyone speaks in tongues when they become a believer or even when they receive the H.S. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12 that all are not apostles, are they? The answer is no. All are not prophets, are they? The answer is no. All are not teachers, are they? The answer is no. All are not workers of miracles, are they? The answer is no. All do not have the gifts of healings, do they? The answer is no. All do not speak with tongues, do they? The answer is no. All do not interpret, do they? The answer is no. All of these are rhetorical questions with the same answer. Not everyone speaks in tongues when they receive the Holy Spirit. These manifestations were given just so that Peter and his companions could see tangible evidence that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit.

(1 Cor 12:29-30) “All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? {30} All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?”

There are many Pentecostals who do not believe that you are saved unless you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, evidenced by speaking in tongues. I believe that they have taken a couple of verses out of context. It is clear in 1 Corinthians that not all Christians speak in tongues. We are given different gifts of the Spirit by the Holy Spirit. My primary gifting is teaching. Not everyone has the gift of teaching.

I was ordained in 1986 at Florida Shores Baptist Church. Shortly after becoming one of the pastors there, we had John Dean and a team from San Antonio come to our church and minister. In one of those services the Holy Spirit came down in power. There was a lady named Vickie Maser sitting about half way back on the right side of the auditorium. All at once she began speaking in tongues. It shocked everyone. All these Baptists had never seen or experienced anything like this before. Vickie was not taught to speak in tongues. She was not trying to speak in tongues. She just began speaking in tongues under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

When I became a Christian, I was in Duncan, Oklahoma for the Elks Labor Day golf tournament. I was staying at the Chisholm Trail Motel, and I could not get to sleep. In the drawers next to the bed, I found a devotional written by Kenneth Copeland. The second devotional in it talked about the peace of God. He said that the peace of God could help people sleep better. That perked my interest. A man going to Southwestern Baptist Seminary had been sharing the gospel with me. I saw a difference in his life, but my heart was not ready yet. On this particular night, my heart had been sufficiently softened, and this promise of sleep motivated me to get on my knees beside that hotel bed and receive Christ. I did not start speaking in tongues and exalting God. That was not the manifestation of the Holy Spirit that I experienced. However, I did have an experience. The peace

## 21 Gentiles Added to the Church (Acts 10:23-48)

of God came into my life immediately, and I went right to sleep afterwards. The Holy Spirit came in my life and sealed me. That is what the Holy Spirit does when we believe and receive Christ.

After Peter observes all that has happened, he said, “surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he? And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. **When we believe and are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the first act of obedience is to be baptized.** Baptism is a picture of our sin nature being put to death and buried. We are set free from sin. It is no longer our master. We are set free so that we can serve a new Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is a picture of us being raised from the dead to live a new life.

(Acts 10:46b-48) “Then Peter answered, {47} “Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” {48} And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.”

Then, Cornelius and his group ask Peter to stay. They want to hear more. They are like new born babies and they are hungry for milk, so they ask Peter to stay. In 1 Peter 2:2, Peter says, “Like newborn, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.” Cornelius and his companions needed to grow in respect to salvation, and they ask Peter to stay and feed them the word of God. **Another evidence of spiritual birth is to have a hunger for the word of God.** If you do not have a hunger for God’s word, ask someone this morning to pray for you. The doctors get concerned about patients that have lost their appetite. It is not a healthy sign. Something is wrong. If you have received Christ, ask God to reveal anything that would hinder you from having a good appetite. I believe that we sometimes fill our appetites with junk food. We fill our lives with worldly things that cannot satisfy us, but they do hinder us from having an appetite for God’s word.

(1 Peter 2:2) “like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,”

Isaiah tells all of us who are thirsty to come to the waters. He tells us to buy wine and milk without money and without cost. God provides the pure milk of the word without cost. He provides the wine of His Holy Spirit without cost. He wants us to drink and get our nourishment from Him so that we can grow in respect to our salvation.

(Isa 55:1) “Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”

### **Conclusion**

This morning, you may not have ever received Christ. This can be the day that you receive Christ and are sealed with the Holy Spirit. If you would like someone to pray with you, we will be happy to pray for you.

If you have received Christ this morning, please come up and let us know. We would like to help you get started in your relationship with Christ. There are some things that we can share with you that will help you get started. When I prayed to receive Christ, it was nearly a year before someone shared with me some things that would help me grow. Don’t wait a year. Let us share with you today.

## 21 Gentiles Added to the Church (Acts 10:23-48)

Some of you may just need some prayer for other things in your life. God is always wanting to touch lives. He has plans for welfare, not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope. God wants His people to prosper and be in good health. God's plan is for your soul to prosper. God's plan is for your relationships to prosper. If you need prayer in any area of your life, we are available to pray with you this morning.

Some of you may want more of the Holy Spirit. You know that you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit, but you want more. I want more of the Holy Spirit. I am always asking God to fill me with His Spirit. I am always asking God to speak to me, and to use me. If you are wanting God to fill you, we would love to pray with you this morning.

Let's pray.

**Introduction** (Acts 10:13-15, 23-48, Pr 16:9)

- God's plan of salvation was not just for the nation of Israel, but for all \_\_\_\_\_. (Gen 17:4-5)

**1. The Meeting** (Acts 10:11-16, 17-22)

- Peter gives them \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 10:23-33, 11:12)
- First, we need to be full of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Second, we can \_\_\_\_\_ others to hear the gospel message. (Matt 12:30)
- Cornelius was a man of \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 10:2, 10:30)
- Cornelius was a \_\_\_\_\_ man who gave many alms. (Acts 10:31-33)

**2. The Message** (Matt 5:1-2, Acts 10:34-43)

- God is not one to show \_\_\_\_\_. God's plan of salvation is available to \_\_\_\_\_. (Eph 3:3-6, Gen 12:3, 17:4-5)
- The mystery is that "Gentiles are \_\_\_\_\_ heirs and \_\_\_\_\_ members of the body, and \_\_\_\_\_ partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."
- Our commission is to go to all \_\_\_\_\_. (Matt 28:19-20, Acts 1:8)
- Jesus is the \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 10:36-39a)
- Jesus was crucified and \_\_\_\_\_ up on the third day. (Acts 10:39b-41)
- Jesus has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead and everyone who believes in Jesus receives \_\_\_\_\_ of sins. (Acts 10:42-43)

**3. The Manifestation** (Acts 10:44-48, Rom 10:9-10)

- When we receive Christ, we are \_\_\_\_\_ with the Holy Spirit. (Eph 1:13-14)
- These manifestations were the \_\_\_\_\_ that these Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 10:45-46, 1 Cor 12:29-30)
- When we believe and are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the first act of obedience is to be \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 10:46b-48)
- Another evidence of spiritual birth is to have a \_\_\_\_\_ for the word of God. (1 Peter 2:2, Isa 55:1)

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