

Expanding the Menu – Part 2

Acts 10:11-48

Pastor Arlyn

Message Transcript

Morning anchored family. Good to see each one of you on this beautiful Sunday. And what a privilege it is to be able to share the Word of God with you again we are in Acts chapter 10. As we continue our chapter by chapter, verse by verse study through the Bible. Sunday mornings, New Testament, Wednesday nights, Old Testament. Last week, we set our sights for verses one through 23. We didn't get nearly that far, we didn't even get halfway. I tend to blame it on the congregation when that happens. We only made it to verse 10. So we did really little more than open up the story. We just started to open up the story. But we did at least thoroughly cover the vision that the Lord sent to Cornelius there and Caesarea, he saw an angel of God who had a message for him, that the Lord had took notice of his prayers and his alms and that the Lord had a fuller message to give to him. And that he would do that through the apostle Peter. So Cornelius, last week, we read, sent two of His servants and a soldier to track down Simon Peter in Joppa, about 40 miles away. And then the story shifts to Peter. And we got started into that we, we took a two verse step into Peter's story because now everything shifts to Peter, the Lord has got to notify Simon Peter about what's happening. He's already spoken to Cornelius and now the Lord is going to speak to Peter about that as well so that Peter is ready on his end. For the story of Cornelius and Peter, we put it like this, God was working on both ends. And the reason why is because they were both praying. When you're not praying, and the Lord is doing a work amongst you, usually you miss out on it, or it takes you a while to get caught up with the Lord. When you're praying, when your heart is prepped and soft and sensitive to the moving of the Holy Spirit, then you don't miss a step you don't skip a beat when the Lord is working in your midst. I like the NIV. The NIV puts it like this, we have to walk in step with the Spirit. You have to keep up with the Lord, unless you're going to be surprised at times and set back to a disadvantage. So we read there in verses nine and 10, shifting to Simon Peter that the next day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the house top about the sixth hour to pray and he became hungry and wanted something to eat. But while they were preparing it he fell into a trance. I don't know if that's because it was just taking them so long to get the food ready. That's happened to me before Sunday mornings after service, in the afternoon, we always go over to my mom's place and we have lunch there as a family, they call it dinner. I don't know why they call it dinner, dinners later in the evening. But we have, maybe it's because when you eat the lunch there you don't end up eating dinner. That like becomes, though I think that's probably it. We go over there and sometimes it just feels like the food takes forever. And I guess my mom just doesn't understand how much energy this takes to get up here and do this. When I leave here I'm hungry. I think Peter was feeling the same kind of thing, just fading away, fading away wanting some food, he falls into a trance. A spiritual experience with the Lord where time and space just sort of pass away and there Peter is with the Lord receiving a vision from the Lord and that brings us current. So let's take a look at what happened during Peter's trance verse 11. New ground, here we go. Verse 11, Peter saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. Verse 12, In it were all kinds, now that is a significant Bible term that goes all the way back to the creation account in Genesis one where we're speaking about different kinds of animals. So this is a notification here early on in Peter's vision that what he's seeing is all different kinds of animals meaning all different species, clean animals and unclean animals according to the law of Moses and Leviticus chapter 11. He was seeing kosher animals he was seeing unkosher animals, all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. Verse 13, and there came a voice to him: Rise, Peter, kill and eat; that's all I would need to hear. So long as I

had me a knife and a Fire. That's all I would need to hear. Now for the word sheet in verse 11, I want you to think tablecloth. That word in the Greek for sheet, it can mean either a sheet or a sail. But considering what's happening in this story, you know, there's this giant sheet let down from heaven to the earth, and it's got all sorts of food products on it, ready to be processed. So essentially what this is, is a gigantic tablecloth loaded with a wide variety of animals to kill and eat; clean animals, unclean animals, kosher and kosher. This is a tablecloth, this is a table setting. The Lord is sending Peter in his vision, food from heaven, and everything is on the menu. Everything. The Lord tells Peter, dig in. Go kill any, you want some filet mignon, have yourself some filet mignon, there's some cows on there. Do you want some chicken? Go for it. Those are kosher foods. But Peter, everything is on the menu. If you want some buttered lobster, that was on the no no list from Leviticus 11 But now if you want some buttered lobster, Peter, go for it. If you want some shrimp, I don't know why anyone would do that to themselves, but Peter, if you want some shrimp shrimp, go for it. You want some honey glazed ham? Oh we're gonna have to stop early. If you want some honey glazed ham, there's some pigs on there. Peter, go for it, slay and eat.

How about this? For the first time ever the Lord told the Jews, if you want bacon, go for it. And I would say if he was a smart man, he would go straight for the bacon. Everything is on the menu. So this vision is perfect. Because Peter is starving. He is very hungry. And it's like his hunger is spilling over into this trance. You've had that happen before, right? You're hearing something for real while you're sleeping, or something's happening in the background and you incorporate that into your dream. You work that right into your dream. Have you ever had that happen before? I told you my story before, right, about the waterfall in my basement? That's when I was living with my mom and dad. And my dad just put a new fitting on the water softener. You remember the story? Did I tell you this story before? Alright, well, he put a new fitting on the water softener in the basement and I had a little apartment setup down there. And he said, Just keep an eye on that. I think it's fine. It seemed like it fit a little weird, but it's the right part. So I think it's fine, but keep an eye on it. Well, it was in the middle of the daytime. I was actually exhausted from work. So I went in there to take a nap and oh my goodness, I had this wonderful dream about waterfalls. There was water everywhere. It was just beautiful and scenic. What do you think happened? That thing was gushing like Old Yeller. Is that what that's called out there? Old faithful, old yeller's a dog. Gushing like Old Faithful and I just incorporated that right into my dream, that's kind of what is happening to Peter, this hunger, It's just being incorporated right into this vision because the Lord knows that he can incorporate that hunger in this vision and teach Simon Peter a very important spiritual lesson. Verse 14, but Peter said, by no means, let me put that in in modern terms for us, slang. Peter said, no way, Lord. Peter, rise kill and eat. No way, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common, or unclean. Not a single bite of unkisher food in his lifetime. Even when Jesus was on the earth with the disciples, their diet was 100% kosher in compliance with Leviticus chapter 11. So first of all, elephant in the room. You just cannot ever, and I mean ever say No way, Lord, you cannot do that. You just can't say that to the Lord. You can say no way, son. No way daughter. Parents like that, kids don't. You can say no way, friend, you can say no way, foe. You can even say No way, Jose. But you can never say no way, Lord, because the moment you say no way, Lord, He is no longer Lord. You've just dethroned him in your life. You've just taken your preference, or your choice, or your will, or your decision, and you've elevated that above the command of God in your life. So it's something you can't do. You can't say, No way, Lord, the only thing you can say to the Lord is Yes, Lord. If you're saying, Yes, Lord, that means he is Lord, you're listening. If you're saying, No, Lord, that means you're the Lord. So this is wildly inconsistent thinking on Simon's part for him to say, Lord, I can't do Your will for me, because it's against your will. I can't do what you're telling me to do, Lord, because it's against your law. That's wildly inconsistent thinking, as if the Lord would ever command us to do something that is against his law, as if the Lord would ever ask us to partake of anything that is spiritually unclean or unkosher for us. By virtue of the fact that the Lord says, do this, that's a proof that it's the right

thing to do. It is the right thing to do, because the Lord said it, if anyone knows right and wrong, it's the Lord. If anyone knows clean and unclean, it's the Lord. Righteousness and sin, the Lord, kosher and kosher, the Lord. And as crazy as it is, there are professing Christians that do this to the Lord all the time. They say no way, Lord. They don't realize they're saying that, but they are saying that. We have a word for it, and it is called legalism. Legalism, you know what legalism is in this church, I would assume. If you've been around here for any length of time you do. Legalism is when you as a person, or as a church, group, or organization, it's when you make up rules and laws, in addition to the laws and the commandments of the Lord. In other words, you create for yourself guidelines and regulations and laws and rules that the Lord has never commanded in His Word. And that becomes more important to you than what the Bible says about those things. You know, there are people like that, I used to be one of them, where you can show them in the Bible that hey, look what you guys believe, it says right here that's wrong. Or what you guys are so afraid of and call sin, what you guys forbid, the Lord says, that's a liberty. Look, it's right here in the passage. And they go, No way, Lord. No way. I can't do what that verse seems to be clearly saying, Why? Because, well, my church group doesn't believe that, my church group is against that, or I've just always been this way and that's always been wrong for me. So legalism is when you do just that, you say, No way, Lord, I'll just stick with my church group. I'll let my church group I'll let my past the belief system establish right and wrong for me. And even if I see it in your word, is not going to change my viewpoint, because I'm going to stick with my group. But I say to that, I'm going to stick with the Lord. You can do what you want. If you want to call anything and everything sin, you're making life oppressive. You are building a belief system of bondage. I'm the kind of person that I want to look through the Bible and if there's a liberty in here, and I feel like it's beneficial to me, because All things are lawful, but not all things are beneficial. If it's all if it's a Liberty, and it's beneficial to me, I'm just gonna do it. I'm like the apostle Paul, I want to know what my liberties are because I don't want to live a religiously bound life. I want to live a life that is free in Christ, that I can be expressive with my liberty that the Lord has given to me, rather than self imposed chains, rather than a belief system of bondage. Verse 15, And the voice came to him again a second time, what God has made clean, do not call common or unclean or unkosher. So for starters, this is great news for the Jews. Because the Lord just announced to Peter that the Lord has cleansed all of those items that were on the No-No list from Leviticus 11. The Lord says they are all cleansed. The menu has been expanded, there's nothing that you should be withholding from for religious purposes. So it is genuinely an occasion where we see something that was a sin for the Jews in the Old Testament, because it truly was, would have been a sin for the Jews in the Old Testament. But we're seeing in the Scripture, something that was formerly a sin for the Jews in the Old Testament, no longer a sin for them in the New Testament, why? Because it was a type, and it was fulfilled, and then it vanishes away in Christ. So anyone that would tell you, there is no difference between the old covenant and the New Covenant, there have been no changes, God did not ease up on his laws from Old Covenant to new covenant, we still have to live by everything we read from the Old Testament, if you believe that you're not getting that information from the Bible. There were changes from Old Covenant to New Covenant from Old Testament to New Testament, all of those things that the Lord has set up as types and shadows, and foretellers of Christ and His Kingdom, when Christ fulfilled them, they vanished away, there was no longer a need for them. And this is one of those items, the kosher diet from Leviticus chapter 11. Now, if you want to stick to that, for health purposes, I think that's a good idea. There's a lot of wisdom in those laws that the Lord gave to the Jews in Leviticus 11. You want to stick with it for health reasons, you're smart, you're wise. If you want to stick with it for religious reasons, you've got that wrong. So be careful about that.

Now, of course, there's a deeper and much more important meaning behind this vision that we're studying right now. And we are inching toward it in our study, so hang in there for just a moment. Let's read verse 16. This happened three times, and the thing, the tablecloth with the food stock, was taken up at once to heaven. So three times, this happened. Three times the Lord lets down this sheet from heaven, and says, dig in Simon

Peter, and three times Simon Peter said no way, Lord. Why three times? The answer, this is Simon Peter. It took Simon Peter three times for everything. It wasn't until the third time on just about everything that Simon Peter needed to be taught if it was pertaining to breaking him free from a deep seated conviction. This is a true story. It took three tries. If you remember, in Matthew chapter 26, and Mark chapter 14, Luke chapter 22, Peter came into that night, the night of Christ's betrayal, just absolutely bold and confident that he was completely devoted to the Lord. That no matter who else forsook the Lord, Simon Peter was going to be right there with Christ, fighting for him, dying for him if he needed to. And the Lord tried to tell him on that night, Peter, before this night is over, you're going to deny me three times. And guess what Peter essentially said? No way, Lord, not so. Yeah, wasn't the first time that Peter has said no way, Lord, to the Lord. No way, Lord, that's impossible. That's not going to happen, even if everyone else deserts, even if I have to die fighting for you, I'll still be right there with you. Deep seated conviction. Then after three denials, and the rooster crow, Peter was freed from his deep seated conviction, and was then convinced that Christ was right about his frailty about his weakness. Then you had John chapter 21, where Jesus sought to restore the ministry of Peter after those three denials. So he called him back into ministry didn't he? How many times, three times. Feed my lambs, tend My sheep, Feed my sheep three times. And here we are now in Acts chapter 10. The Lord is trying to break Peter from another deep seated conviction that he holds, so three times it is, but before you make fun of Simon Peter, first of all, remember you're gonna see Him in heaven, but second of all, how many times does it take for the Lord to say the same thing to you before you finally start to act on it? Maybe once, that's definitely the case for me as the pastor, I always get things on the first try. Oh, good. Maggie's not up here, she can't tell the truth. Maybe you're quick To listen to the Lord, and just momentarily, spontaneously depart from your deep seated convictions when the Lord speaks to you, maybe that's you. Or maybe it takes you three times, or 12 times. I think it takes me more than three, if I'm being honest, the Lord has to tell me things over and over again, before I can finally let go of the deep seated convictions that are in my heart.

Verse 17, Now, while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean. So in other words, Peter does not fully understand what is happening yet. But I assure you three times will be enough, because the Lord is going to follow up on those three times. And he's going to speak to Peter, and the Lord is going to help Peter to connect all of the dots that he needs to connect. So it's in process, but it's coming, it's buffering, you know, Peter's brain is buffering. And just as he's there, perplexed about the vision that he saw and what that might mean it says, Behold, the men who are sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate. Well, isn't that convenient timing. The vision has just ended, Peter's sitting there, you know, kinda like, What on earth was that? That is the last time that I pray hungry. From now on, I eat first and then I pray, that was wild, what was that about? And as Peter's there, perplexed over that vision and what it all means, all of a sudden, there's a knock at the door. And those servants and that soldier sent from Cornelius days ago, they're right there. Perfect timing in that moment, looking for Simon Peter. It's one of the Lord's classic setups. I tell ya, no one tops the Lord, when it comes to perfect timing. And when it comes to the perfect alignment of divine appointments, the Lord has blown my mind with this countless times in my life, where I just stand amazed when I see everything tie in, in that one moment, in that perfect timing, that perfect setup. And you're just amazed. Only the Lord could do that, no one tops the Lord in that sort of thing. Verse 18, and the servants of Cornelius called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter was lodging there Verse 19, And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, I take this to mean, in that still small voice of the Spirit, those nothings and those promptings from the spirit, where you don't hear words, but sure enough, you're convinced in your heart at what the Lord is saying to you. So the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men are looking for you. Verse 20, Rise and go down, that would be from the rooftop to the front gate, Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, no questions asked, no doubt about it. Just go with them for I have sent them. So the Lord says, I am in this, Mr. Apostle. I am working

on something here. Don't question. Just go. Once again, last time I'll say this, God was working on both ends, God spoke to Cornelius. God confirmed it to Peter. And I say this, again, I bring it up again, just to make a very important point, that we need to be cautious about those who would come to us and tell us what the word of the Lord is for us. We got to be very cautious about that. Now, sometimes it's true. You got a good brother or sister and you trust them and they come to you with a word from the Lord and it is the Lord. But not always, not always. And when someone comes up to you and tells you what the Lord says that you are to do with your life, you can see why you might want to put some thought and prayer into that, right? First John chapter four verse one, Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. So yes, you need to know that people aren't always right when they deliver those messages from God to you concerning God's will for your life. But you also need to know that if what they're saying is true, just as the Lord did for Peter, he will do for you. He will confirm it with you. You. So when someone comes up to you and says, The Lord just told me we're supposed to get married. I actually have had that happen before. And I can prove that it wasn't from the Lord because four different women told me that for different young ladies, which meant I would have been married to four different ladies at the same time, that was not the Lord's will. So if someone comes up to you and says, hey, the Lord told me, we're supposed to get married, you need to say, I'm gonna take that to the Lord. I'm gonna pray. And if that's true, then the Lord will confirm it with me. Whatever the situation might be, when it comes to God's will for your life, something that serious of a matter, make sure you pray, and you get confirmation from the Lord as well. Let the Lord confirm it. Let the Lord overrule it, especially if you don't want to marry that person.

Verse 21, and Peter went down to the men and said, I am the one you are looking for. What is the reason for your coming? Now keep in mind, Peter hasn't figured it all out yet. He is only on to the second phase of this, Peter does not yet know that the Lord is going to have him to offer up the gospel invitation to these Gentiles. This is still phase two. That's phase three. Phase two is essentially this: Peter, the Gentiles don't have rabies, or cooties, so you can hang out with them. That's phase two. That's as much of the message right now, as Peter understands. But he does understand that much. Verse 22, And they said Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God fearing man, and again, that is code speak for he is a convert to Judaism. He is a Gentile, reading on, who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation. And we talked about that last week. Centurions always had a very good reputation among the people, even the Jews. Now I say it like that because the Jews had a very deep seated hatred for the Roman rule that was over them. And Centurions were a part of that. They resented that and yet even the Jews generally had a whole lot of respect for centurions, because we talked about the quality of character that the centurions typically wear, and Cornelius, he is no exception to that rule. Cornelius is a good guy, and even the Jews like him. So Cornelius, he goes on to say, Cornelius was directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house, and to hear what you have to say. Verse 23, So he, the apostle Peter, invited them in to be his guests. The next day, he rose, and went away with them. Peter invited Gentiles into the house to overnight with him. In Judaism, that was so far across the line, so contrary to the law, that Peter would be in a lot of hot water here, first of all, he'd be pronounced ceremonially unclean. He wouldn't be allowed to participate in anything happening at the temple or the synagogue. So this was a big deal. But what it does is it shows growth on Peter's part, he's getting there. He understands the message, but I do have to cry party foul here. Because this is not Peter's house. This is Simon the Tanner's house. Peter is a guest, a guest who just invited other guests to overnight at this guy's house. And I don't think you're allowed to do that, are you? You know, like, Hey, I'm over at the Hilldock's, come on over, bring the family. Bring the friends, bring your sleeping bags, we'll make a night of it. No you can't do that can you? You can't invite yourself and other people over to people's houses. But that's what Peter does. As a guest he invites other guests, they overnight. Verse 23, reading on, so they overnight, they leave the next day, and reading on, some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. So if you flip over to Acts chapter 11, verse 12, that elaborates on this,

Peter actually selected six fellow brothers, fellow Christian brothers from Joppa to accompany him to Caesarea on this trip to visit with these Gentiles, which was an exceedingly wise move on Peter's part. This guy does know what he's doing. He wants witnesses, so there's seven of them total, seven is the number of completion he's got a perfect set of witnesses that can establish everything that's happening here because, and I don't know if Peter fully understands this at this point, but this is a scandal in the making. He is going to immediately take heat for this. As soon as he gets back to Jerusalem. Listen to this, Acts chapter 11, verses two and three, When Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision Party criticized him saying, you went to uncircumcised men, Gentiles, and ate with them? What were you thinking, Simon Peter, but the truth is, they didn't even know the half of it. Not only did Peter hang out with Gentiles, not only did Simon Peter eat with Gentiles, but he let these Gentiles in the church. He ends up, in this chapter offering up the invite of the gospel to them, these Gentiles, they take Peter up on that offer, they get saved, they get filled with the Holy Spirit. You need to leave early? That's the rest of the chapter right there in summary. We'll see you next week. And Peter has got to answer for that. And you're gonna see in the next chapter there, Acts chapter 11, verse 12, that Peter had six guys that could help him establish every word, every action as he's reporting to the Jerusalem Council, and most importantly, they can establish what they witnessed. They can tell the Jerusalem Council you're not going to believe what the Lord did. The Lord opened their hearts to faith in the Gospel. The Lord filled them with the Holy Spirit, just as He did with us on the Day of Pentecost. It was God that did this. And so that's very important that Peter has that wise move on the part of Simon Peter. Verse 24, and on the following day, they entered Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives, and close friends. I really like this guy, Cornelius. What a great example he is for us in just about every way, he doesn't know exactly what this message from Peter is going to be, but he knows what it's going to be about. He has been praying to have a relationship with the Lord. And He knows that Peter is showing up with the answers that he needs. He knows that the Lord, we're going to see it right in the text, he knows that what Peter is bringing, by way of message is the Lord's answers to Cornelius that he has been praying for concerning knowing God and having a relationship with Him. And what does Cornelius do? He doesn't keep it to himself. He calls up his immediate family, he makes sure that the immediate family is there. He calls up the extended family, his relatives, you know, first and second and third cousins and fourth uncles on the mother's side and what have you. And he even invites his buddies, He wants everyone to hear because he knows a message from Heaven is coming. And he wants to make sure that everyone that he cares about is hearing that message. A great example. For us that should just be the natural outflow concerning the sharing of the gospel. We should want all of our family to be saved, we should want them to hear the gospel and have that opportunity. We should want all of our friends even our foes, knowing that if our foes hear the gospel, they might believe and they might be converted and they might no longer be enemies. Verse 25, when Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him. What do you know, I guess the Catholics were right. He was the first pope. No, I'm joking. I'm joking. The Catholics were wrong about Peter being the first pope though. Peter wasn't the first Pope, Peter wasn't a pope at all. Besides, if Peter is or was the first pope then Peter has some splainin' to do because Peter was married. Right? We're told in Matthew chapter eight, verse 14, that Jesus healed Simon Peter's mother in law. If you have a mother in law, what do you have? You have a wife. Simon Peter was married, Paul confirms that in first Corinthians chapter nine verse five, Simon Peter had a wife and Catholics don't allow their Pope's or their priests to have wives. Kudos to them though. Because Pope Francis has recently just announced that they are going to re evaluate that rule for Catholic priests. I don't know if anything will come of it. They probably been reevaluating it for centuries. But there's a chance, what do you really think? But there's a chance, there's a chance, and I would say it's about time. Smart move, The Bible doesn't make that law. Neither should the Catholic Church.

Now, since we are on the topic, let's talk about the Catholic church a little bit more. I want to first say, we're not bashing the Catholic Church, we never do that. We love the Catholic people. They're the Lord's people, many of them truly saved. We at this fellowship, take issue with some of the tradition and some of the ritualism and some of the things like prayer to saints, prayer to Mary, believing that Mary is a co Redemptoris. Honestly, if you just drop off those things from the Catholic faith, I've got a whole lot less problem with that. There are a lot of good things that happen in the Catholic faith. So don't think that we're criticizing here or being overly critical. But this is truth that there is still the worship of Peter that takes place in Rome every year. 10 million Catholics show up at St. Peter's Basilica, to kiss the feet of the statue of Simon Peter. And I've shared this with you before, over the years, the feet on the statue of St. Peter, there in Rome, Vatican City, St. Peter's Basilica has had so much human contact over the years that the kissing and the rubbing the feet for good luck and the whatever, it has completely rubbed away the toes on the statue of St. Peter. I've shared that with you before. I came with picture proof today. So I got two videos. No, not two videos. I don't have time for that. I got two photos to show you real quick show. The first one this is what the statue of Peter at St. Peter's Basilica there in Rome should look like oh yeah, there we go. This is what it should look like. I'm like what's happening here? That's what the feet should look like. That's what the statue should look like. Now show the other one. This is what it actually looks like right now. That is the feet of the statue of Peter at St. Peter's Basilica. So obviously, okay, you can take that down. I think we're all getting sick. So obviously Peter is against being worshiped. This is against his wishes. He doesn't want worshiped, but it does make for a really good point for us that when you let people worship you everyone involved is going to be defeated. You had to see that coming right. But really it's true. If we receive glory that belongs only to the Lord we don't have a foot to stand on. We won't even be able to toe the line, church.

Oh, good, I was expecting a tough crowd today. How did Peter feel about worship? Look at verse 26. But Peter lifted him up saying, probably knock it off weirdo. He lifted him up saying stand up, I too, am a man. Peter has the opportunity to receive the glory that belongs only to the Lord and He refuses it. I'm just a man. I'm nothing more than a human being just like you. Worship is reserved for the Lord. That is the best thing that you can do, as a leader, it's a lesson that comes up regularly in this fellowship because it's in the Bible regularly. And that is as leaders, we have to be really good at deflecting the worship from us and to the Lord. Jesus told us Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven, not you. We don't want to receive any of the credit, any of the glory, that belongs all to the Lord. Trust me. It does. It does. Verse 27, and as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered, a whole crowd has showed up. Verse 28, And he said to them, you yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean. So there There you have it bingo. Peter clearly understands the point of the vision. The vision wasn't about kosher and unkosher food at all. Well, I mean, it was a little bit, but only partially. The bigger lesson was, this vision was about Simon Peter, and the Jews, their attitudes toward the Gentiles. Do you understand that connection? The connection between the vision and the message is that Peter had the same attitude toward the Gentiles that he had toward unkosher food, the same exact attitude. And the Lord says it's time to drop the discrimination. It's not like the Jews are clean. The Jews are clean animals and the Gentiles are unclean animals. There are no clean and unclean people in general, when it comes to the Lord's viewpoint. The Lord sees everyone as a person that he loves, as a person that matters equally. And so we need to see it that same way in the church, young or old, rich or poor, red and yellow, black and white. They are precious in his sight. The Lord doesn't discriminate against anyone when it comes to salvation. Not anyone. Verse 29, So when I was sent for, I came without objection, I ask then, why you sent for me. Verse 30, And Cornelius said, four days ago, about this hour I was praying in my house at the ninth hour and behold, a man stood, by the way, if you questioned last week, whether Cornelius was praying during the ninth hour, as I said he was,

there's your verse. It didn't tell us initially, but it tells us there in verse 30, he was praying at the ninth hour and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, that is also another new detail, two new details to the story in that verse. Verse 31, And that man had said before me and Brett clothing, said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your arms have been remembered before God, verse 32, Send therefore to Joppa and ask for Simon who is called Peter, he has lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner by the sea. Verse 33, So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come now therefore, we are all here in the presence of God to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord. So I really like this. In verse 29, Peter says, May I ask why am I here? What do you need me for? What's this about? And then in verse 33, Cornelius says, we were gonna ask you the same question. You're supposed to talk to us. We're not here to answer your questions. You're here to answer our questions. We're under the understanding that the Lord sent you with a message for us, and that's why we're all gathered to listen and to learn. Verse 34, So Peter opened his mouth and said, Truly I understand that God shows no partiality at his own whopper of a revelation. Peter's revelation, this is big when you think about it, his revelation is God has no preference whatsoever when it comes to a person's nationality. God does not prefer the Jews over anyone else. You might have some scriptural things banging around in the back of your brain competing with that statement of truth. But I assure you, there's nothing there that doesn't fit perfectly with what the Lord is now teaching Peter. You might say, wait a minute, didn't the Bible say that the Jews were the apple of God's eye? Yes, that's true. They were the apple of God's eye. They are the apple of God's eye. God chose them to reveal himself to the entire world. God picked them for that purpose. They were special in that way. You might say, Well, wait a minute, What about the ministry of Jesus wasn't that exclusively to the Jews? And there were a few Gentiles that benefited from the overflow blessings of Christ but in general that was reserved for the nation of Israel. Yes, that's true. Jesus even said, I have not come but for the lost sheep of the house of Israel. My ministry is to the Jews. He was reserving the rest of that for this group, the church. Maybe you're wondering, wait a minute, doesn't then after Jesus, The Bible talk about how the gospel was always to go to the Jew first and then the Gentile afterwards? Yep, that's true too, order of preference. That makes sense. It was the Jewish nation that gave the world the law and the Christ, so they get first dibs on the Gospels. It's just good methodology you strike against the odds. You go to the group that's close. The group that was waiting for the Messiah, you go to them first because they should be ready, right? Methodology. That's good stuff. But that doesn't mean that you go to the Jews first because God prefers them over the Gentiles. You know what God prefers? A heart that seeks after him. If you have that I don't care what your background or upbringing was, I don't care what your social status is. If you have a heart that is after the Lord and you're seeking Him, the Lord is going to take notice of that. Verse 35, but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. Not that fearing God and doing right produces or equates to salvation. Of course not, but simply that God will accept those kinds of people into His family via salvation through Christ. He'll take notice of that kind of stuff, and he'll bring them into full light and full salvation. Verse 36, As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all. Verse 37, you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed, verse 38, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, he went about doing good and healing all who are oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him, verse 39, and we are witnesses of all that he did, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging Him on a tree. Verse 40, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear. Verse 41, not to all the people, but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. That just verse just really grips me this morning. We ate and drank with Christ, after he rose from the dead. Verse 42, And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judged of the living and the dead. Verse 43, To him, all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins, through his name,

that's worth underlining right there. Everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins, verse 44, while Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on; That is very exacting language that signifies that we're speaking about the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Remember those terms? Falling upon, coming upon, overflowing, filling, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.

Verse 45, and the believers from among the circumcised, who had come with Peter, were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out; there's that distinguishing language again, think of the glasses back from that study about the Holy Spirit. The water being poured out so that it overflows. So that's the reference that is being spoken of here, referring to that third relationship or experience with the Holy Spirit. Verse 46, poured out even on the Gentiles, verse 46, for they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, and hang on just there for a second, I just want to point out that the evidence, the proof, the gift, the manifestation of the Spirit that came as a proof, as an evidence that these folks were baptized with the Holy Spirit was the gift of tongues. That was not always the case. That was not always the evidence, but in this case, it is. And what were those tongues saying? They were extolling God, because that's always going to be the case, when someone speaks in tongues, they are praying to the Lord, they are worshiping, they are praising, they are extolling, they are exalting God, never is a word in a tongue going to be a message from God to man. You remember all that, from that study about the Holy Spirit? It's always going to be from man to God, a prayer or a praise. It's never going to be thus saith the Lord, You are my people. No, that's a prophecy, a gift of prophecy. We had one of those this morning, a gift of prophecy. But a message in tongues and an interpretation of a tongue is always going to sound like a praise or a warship. Remember, Paul told us that He who speaks in an unknown tongue speaks not to man, but to God. Verse 47, can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have, verse 48, And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days. Worship team if you would come on up, we will close on this point. They were listening to Simon Peter's sermon, and the Holy Spirit interrupted Peter, and fell upon these Gentile seekers. Now, this is actually running the gamut for Peter. Peter has been interrupted by all three beings of the Triune Godhead. God the Father interrupted Peter at the Mount of Transfiguration. Remember that story? The father said to Peter speaking from heaven, This is My beloved Son, Jesus, hear him. So he was interrupted by God the Father there. After that story of the paying of taxes to Caesar, Peter came in was getting ready to say something, and the Lord interrupted him, Jesus interrupted him, the son. And now here we have the Holy Spirit, interrupting Peter, I think the Lord had an affinity for doing that cutting Peter off. But as he's preaching before he's even done, the Holy Spirit falls, and these folks are filled with the Holy Spirit. So we have mentioned here, that they were filled with the Holy Spirit, the evidence speaking in tongues, we have mentioned here that they were baptized in water as a sign an outward token of their salvation. But we don't read anywhere here about them being saved, do we? We don't read about them saying a sinners prayer. And I just want to clear this up, If you've been here for a while, you know this too, the sinners prayer is not like some kind of magical abracadabra statement that makes a person saved. When does salvation happen? We read it right back in verse 43. Everyone who believes in Him, receives forgiveness of sins. Jesus told us that if you believe in Him whom the Father has sent, you pass from death to life, that's salvation, belief, faith in the heart. So as a sermon's happening, and a person comes to faith in Christ in their heart, that's salvation. That moment, because in that moment of faith, that's everything in the formula for salvation. That is an understanding that you're a sinner, that you need a savior. It's a belief that he is the savior that he died for your sins. So that moment of faith, it's repentance too, it's where you decide, wow, this is true. And I'm going a different direction in my life. That's repentance. That moment of faith in the heart, that is salvation. Why do we do the sinners prayer? Just to make sure. An overabundance of caution, we just want to make sure because part of salvation is the eventual truth that that salvation is going to come out,

it's going to be confessed. And that's why we have confession of salvation by mouth via the sinners prayer and baptism itself.