

WHY WE NEED THE FORGIVENESS OF JESUS V42!
ACTS CH10:17-48

INTRODUCTION

A set of keys! Peter has already been told by Christ "I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" **Matthew Ch16:19!** How has he used these keys so far? Pretty well! **Acts Ch2:14-41**, used the keys for the Jews in Jerusalem, **Acts Ch8:14-17** he has used the keys for the Jewish Samaritans!

But how well will he use the keys for the Gentiles?

PERPLEXED PETER! V17-29

The structure of the Book of Acts is really interesting as Luke follows an essentially **geographical outline** that is initially set in Jerusalem Ch1:1-14, that then moves from Jerusalem (Ch1:15 – Ch6:7), through Judea, Samaria, Syria and Arabia (Ch6:8 – Ch9:31), on into Palestine-Syria (Ch9:32 – Ch12:24), then to the Gentiles in the eastern part of the Roman Empire (Ch12:25 – Ch19:20), and finally culminates in Paul's defences and the entrance of the Gospel into Rome (Ch19:21 – Ch28:31)!

According to v17 Peter is inwardly perplexed (baffled/puzzled), v19 he is pondering, v21 questioning what the three men want with him and in v29 asking Cornelius why he wanted him! Peter is really troubled! Although the heavens had been opened v11 and a voice heard v13+v15, Peter was still really troubled! So God the Holy Spirit works again for Peter, but works in such a way Peter will have to walk by faith, to truly understand what is happening:

1. v17+v18 as the three men arrive, in God's sovereignty, at the time Peter is perplexed!
2. v19-v20 - the Holy Spirit instructs Peter!
3. v21-v22 - the three men explain that Cornelius awaits to hear from Peter!
4. v24 - Cornelius, his relatives and close friends are present!
5. V28 - God has revealed to Peter truths around "clean and common" **Leviticus Ch11:1-47** – Unclean! The clean and unclean provisions of the law, were all temporary! ***They were initially there designed to keep Israel a holy and distinct people! That is, until the time when both Jews and Gentiles could receive the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ alone! That time is now!*** However for Peter and all other Jews there was an impassable gulf between Jew and Gentile, because of what they had previously been taught! ***The challenge for Peter is that he be willing to acknowledge God's right to determine what is clean and to redefine, through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, the boundaries of the Gospel! Gentiles (all other races that are not Jewish) no longer have to become Jewish proselytes! They no longer need to follow the traditions of the Jews, but the example of Christ!***
6. We see Peter walking by faith as he leaves for Caesarea!

PREACHING PETER! V30-43

Ch10:30 – 4 days ago and 3pm (Ch10:3), Ch10:8 - 1st Day, Ch10:9 - 2nd Day, Ch10:23 - 3rd Day, Ch10:24 - 4th Day.

It is 3pm again, remember Ch10:3? Cornelius was praying, presumably based on **Exodus Ch29:38-41** which sets out a pattern for daily prayer. God can speak to us when we are

praying and seeking Him – Acts Ch13:2 + Luke Ch3:2 + Ch9:29. An Angel appeared to Cornelius as he was praying, saying that his prayers and alms had ascended to the Lord as a “memorial offering.” A “Memorial offering/sacrifice” is an offering to God asking “Please Lord remember us with favour” (**Leviticus Ch2:2, 9, 16**).

God had remembered!

1. **V33 – When the people of God gather to hear His Word, His Gospel, they do so in the presence of God (Matt Ch18:20 + 1st Cor Ch5:4)!**
2. V34 – God shows no partiality! Peter now realises why he has been chosen, it is to deal with his prejudices and to share the Good News! According to John Stott “The tragedy was that Israel twisted the doctrine of election into one of favouritism, became filled with racial pride and hatred, despised Gentiles as dogs and developed traditions which kept them apart. No orthodox Jew would ever enter into the home of a Gentile, even a God-fearer, or invite such into his home (see verse 28). On the contrary all familiar intercourse with Gentiles was forbidden and no pious Jew would of course have sat down at the table of a Gentile” (John Stott, Commentary on Acts, pg185).
3. V38 – God anoints Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power!
4. V39 – God chooses the witnesses!
5. V39 – Hanging Him on a tree (Ch5:30 + Deut Ch21:22+23)!
6. V40 – God raised Him (Ch2:23; Ch2:36; Ch3:15; Ch4:10; Ch5:30)!
7. V42 – God commanded us to preach!
8. V42 – God appointed Jesus as JUDGE!
9. V43 – All the prophets bear witness

PASTORAL PETER! V44-48

“It was a marvellously comprehensive message, a precis of the good news according to Peter which Mark would later record more fully in his gospel, and which Luke incorporated in his. Focussing on Jesus, Peter presented him as a historical person, in and through whom God was savingly at work, who now offered to believers salvation and escape from judgment. Thus history, theology and gospel were again combined, as in other apostolic sermons. As Cornelius his family, relatives friends and servants listened, their hearts were opened to grasp and believe Peter's message, and so to repent and believe in Jesus” (Cited in John Stott, Commentary on Acts, pg192).

1. V44 - The Spirit falls!
2. V45 - The gift of the Holy Spirit is recognised!
3. V46 - The gift of the Holy Spirit is seen in “tongues and extolling God (enthusiastic praise)!
4. V48 - Baptisms!
5. V48 - Peter being Pastoral!

APPLICATION

Thinking and praying about running a “Christianity Course” on a Thursday lunchtime at ours for 8 weeks – Thursday May 25th, June 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th, July 6th, 20th + 27th!

Sometimes the gift of the Holy Spirit is given before baptism and sometimes after! - Ch2:41; Ch8:12; Ch9:17-18; Ch19:5-6.