

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 22: Common Ground

- We are going to read about a very prominent Christian who came face to face with his own misconceptions and prejudices.

1. Turn with me to Acts Ch. 10

- **V. 1** – This man is an Italian and he is in charge of 100 Roman soldiers in a coastal community in Israel about where Tel Aviv is today.
- **V. 2-6** – There are several things to touch on here:
 - a. "If Jesus is the only way, what about the person who has never heard about Jesus?"
 - What we have here is the starting place of a definitive answer.
 - This centurion had not met Jesus or heard of His saving work, but he was living up to the light he had.
 - **Rom. 1:19-20** God has given clear evidence of His existence through the creation...enough to leave every person without excuse.
 - The creation screams there is a God, if they don't listen to that; they won't listen to your preaching.
 - b. But living up to the light they have still does not save them...so what then?
 - This clearly illustrates that God will go to great lengths to get the gospel to them.
 - c. Here's another question for you: Why didn't the angel give Cornelius the gospel?
 - God has no other program by which He is communicating the gospel except through His church.
- **VV. 13-14** This vision happened three times:
 - There are 2 things we can know from this little episode:
 1. These animals were not kosher this is why Peter raises an objection.
 2. Peter is not as far along in his theology as maybe we thought.
 - You don't call Him Lord and say "No" to Him!!
 - Peter's problem was that his idea of God was not the same as God's idea of God.
 3. This vision Peter gets is to prepare him to speak to the Gentile Cornelius who is in a sense as unclean to him as the animals on that sheet.
- Be satisfied with the Scriptures, pour yourself into the Scriptures, God speaks first and primarily through the Scriptures.
- Don't pursue visions...if God wants to give you a vision, He knows where to find you!!
- **VV. 17, 22** God who was working on Cornelius was also working on Peter thoughts to move him to Cornelius.
 - We don't miss the opportunities God is bringing our way to speak to those He's already working on.
- **VV. 23-25** – Cornelius is still a pagan, don't mistake it...he needs to hear about Jesus!!
- **VV. 26-28** – That was a big step!! This was the first time Peter had ever been in a Gentile house.
 - The distance across that threshold further than most missionaries go today, because it was so taboo for Peter to be there.
 - I can practically guarantee you that Peter did not think of himself as prejudiced...If anything, he thought of himself as very progressive having over seen the mission to the Samaritans in recent days.
 - I say that to say that I don't think our real prejudices are realized either.
 - Church down here has got to look like church up there: No racial, economic, occupational, age, dress requirements.