



## PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

ACTS: Church 101

Acts 10:1-23

Sunday, November 21, 2021

Prejudice = "judge beforehand." It is to form an opinion before all the salient facts are noted.

Where does prejudice come from?

### **ACTS: A Review**

- We've been exploring the birth, development and rise of the early church as described by Luke in the book of Acts.
- We've studied how after the resurrection of Jesus that the Holy Spirit came upon and took permanent residence inside the apostles and other followers of Jesus on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem.
- We noted how this understanding that Jesus was the promised Messiah of Israel took hold and eventually started to clash with the Jewish religious leaders.
- We discovered how God began to move the good news of Jesus Christ both geographically and ethnically as Peter took the gospel north to the Samaritans and then west.

Matthew 16:13 (NIV) *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"* <sup>14</sup> *They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."* <sup>15</sup> *"But what about you?" He asked. "Who do you say I am?"* <sup>16</sup> *Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* <sup>17</sup> *Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by My Father in heaven."* <sup>18</sup> *And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.* <sup>19</sup> *I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven...*

### **EXECUTING THE DIVINE PLAN**

Acts 10:1 (NASB) *Now there was a man at Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort, <sup>2</sup> a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and gave many alms to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually.*

#### **1. God PREPARES those whom we will encounter. 10:1-8**

Isaiah 55:6 (NIV) *Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near.* <sup>7</sup> *Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.*

Jeremiah 29:13 (NIV) *You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart.*

John 7:17 (NIV) *If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own.*

Acts 10:3 (NASB) *About the ninth hour [3 p.m.] of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, "Cornelius!"* <sup>4</sup> *And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, "What is it, Lord?"* *And he said to him, "Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God."* <sup>5</sup> *Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter;* <sup>6</sup> *he is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea."*

Acts 10:7 (NASB) *When the angel who was speaking to him had left, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier of those who were his personal attendants,<sup>8</sup> and after he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.*

Acts 10:9 (NASB) *On the next day, as they [Cornelius' staff] were on their way and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.<sup>10</sup> But he became hungry and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance...*

## **2. In executing His divine plan, God also prepares ME. 10:9-18**

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

Mark 7:14 (NIV) *Again Jesus called the crowd to Him and said, "Listen to Me, everyone, and understand this."<sup>15</sup> Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'<sup>16</sup> If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."<sup>17</sup> After He had left the crowd and entered the house, His disciples asked Him about this parable.<sup>18</sup> "Are you so dull?" He asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'?<sup>19</sup> For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body." (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean.")<sup>20</sup> He went on: "What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.'<sup>21</sup> For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,<sup>22</sup> greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.<sup>23</sup> All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.' "*

Matthew 16:23 (NASB) *But He [Jesus] turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."*

John 13:8 (NASB) *Peter said to Him [Jesus], "Never shall You wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."*

Jonah 4:1 (NIV) *But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry.<sup>2</sup> He prayed to the Lord, "O Lord, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."<sup>3</sup> Now, O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live."*

Acts 10:17 (NASB) *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;<sup>18</sup> and calling out, they were asking whether Simon, who was also called Peter, was staying there.*

## **3. In executing His divine plan, God ORCHESTRATES our encounters. 10:19-23**

Acts 10:19 (NASB) *While Peter was reflecting on the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you.<sup>20</sup> But get up, go downstairs and accompany them without misgivings, for I have sent them Myself."<sup>21</sup> 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?"*

Acts 10:22 (NASB) *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." <sup>23</sup> 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.*

## **A PREJUDICE REJECTION PROGRAM**

1. This week, try to **CATCH** yourself every time you prejudge someone because of their differences.
2. **ASSOCIATE** negative images with prejudiced thoughts.

Proverbs 26:18 (NASB) *Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows and death, <sup>19</sup> so is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, "Was I not joking?"*

3. **REPLACE** your prejudiced thoughts with positive thoughts.
4. Above all, **PRAY** for those who might be on your sheet of scorn; seek with them God's forgiveness and salvation.