

Acts 10

Sunday 3/19/2006

The Bible told you that one of the things that it was going to do for you is it was going to form a network of Bible doctrine that protected you from getting caught up in heresy. By this time, only coming through the first one and halfway through this one, a little bit more than halfway through, you certainly ought to be able to see that. When you start to take the Bible's approach to understanding it the way God intended for you to understand it, all of these things begin to come into play.

By now, just by coming through the seven baptisms up to this point, we have very definitely defined the book of Acts for you and broken it down. As I said last week, probably one of the most confusing places in all the Bible, and I mean this with all my heart, one of the most confusing places in the Bible is Acts 2. You've got things going on there and every cult, every religion that's confused and messed up on something in the Bible will usually hang their hat in Acts 2. Acts 2 is an absolute necessity for you to understand and break down, as is all of the book of Acts.

In the last couple of times now, you have seen how these seven baptisms have absolutely broken down for you and kept the correct Bible doctrine teaching so you won't get messed up in heresy. It's so obvious now that you ought to go out of here; in fact, you ought to be well on your way from the last couple of times of understanding the whole book of Acts, at least the first seven chapters. I really gave you a breakdown of the whole book.

Today, we're going to put the finishing touches on the book of Acts. When you leave here today, if you take the last two messages and you take this one, you're going to basically understand how to break down and rightly divide the book of Acts. Again, just as a way of reference, if we had the baseline of Acts done now, say we were in our Bible study—I know we're just starting Genesis, but if we were a long way down the road—this is what I'm talking about when you would be adding all this material on top of all that we already know. Of course, the good thing is you're not missing anything because much of Bible teaching is repetitiveness. It has to be. We'll get into this some other way, some other angle and get the same material, either on Thursday night or all the different things that we do.

You should be able to see by this time when I told you when we started our study that we're beginning to build a network of Bible doctrine, laying out the whole concept of how the Bible takes care of itself. Putting these baptisms together has laid out for you the major picture of your Bible. We understand now the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. We understand now how the book of Acts begins to detail that out.

So far, we have come up through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John up to Acts 7. We've seen the ministry of John the Baptist and his baptism. We saw the coming of Christ and his ministry for three years. We saw his crucifixion, his death. Last week we finished up in Acts 7, focusing on Acts 2, but showing you how those first seven chapters all deal with the nation of Israel.

We have laid out so far this concept: We know now that the nation of Israel got three chances to get the kingdom of heaven. We know that.

1. The first one was John the Baptist.
2. The second one was Christ himself.

They killed John the Baptist. They crucified Christ.

3. So they get one more chance based on Christ's prayer on the cross. That chance takes place in Acts 1 through Acts 7, with Acts 2:38 being the focal point of that concept. We saw Israel's baptism in Acts 2:38 under the ministry of Peter, who was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew. We saw how that unfolded the third and final chance for the nation of Israel to get the kingdom of heaven.

Today we're going to put together the rest of the book of Acts and we're going to study the fifth baptism. This will be the baptism that's found in Acts 10.

I. The Church's Origin and Transitional Nature

One of the major issues that befuddle theologians, and you find this all the time, and this is one of the major questions that people who study the Bible talk about all the time, is when did the church really start? That's a question that without answering that question, you're always going to have some problems with the Bible. Theologians disagree on it all over the place. Of course, theologians are simply theologians. Most theologians don't know anything about the Bible. I'm not a theologian. I'm a Bible believer.

When you come to the Bible, it becomes very obvious when the church comes into effect. I want to define that for you before we go any farther here, because I think it's very important. It's a very big piece of your puzzle. You want to put this down someplace and put this in your Bible. If you want to put this someplace ahead of time, what I would do, if you've got a wide margin Bible between the Old Testament and the New Testament here, God, through the Holy Spirit of God, knowing through the foundation of the ordination of the world to come, knew that we were going to do this, gave you a blank page before Matthew started. This is why this wide margin Bible is the only official one by God. I would use that. I would put what I'm about to give you right in there so you know that.

Let me just say something to you. Let me give you what people believe about where the church started.

- Some people believe that the church started with John the Baptist. We talked about them. They're called Baptist writers. They believe that the body of Christ starts with John the Baptist.
- You've got another group that believe that it started with Paul. They believe that Paul started the church absolutely. When Paul started the church, they're called hyper-Calvinists. What they believe is, because Paul started the church, the only

thing they accept in the Bible is Paul's writings. They don't accept anything else. They throw out 1 Peter, 2 Peter, Hebrews. All they take is Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. They're called hyper-Calvinists. They're hyper. Hyper is too exact. So they believe that the church started with Paul.

➤ Then you have the majority of Christians who think that the New Testament starts because they read Malachi right here and then they turn over here and it says the New Testament of Jesus Christ. So that's where they think it started, because it said that page there, the New Testament. So they think that's where it starts. That's not any good either. That's not where it starts.

This is how it works. You need to know this. Because we know that when we started coming through, I showed you how Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John bring you from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John bring you from the Jew to the Gentile. It brings you from all of that. It transitions from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Of course, the Book of Acts is another transitional book. Those series of books, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and then the Book of Acts all transition what is taking place from the Old Testament into the New Testament.

The mistake people make is they don't believe that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Book of Acts are transitional books. They don't see the transition because they don't think there's a difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. What happens is they think that on 33 A.D., on Saturday afternoon, when Christ came out of the tomb at 6:05, that that's when the church started right there. Of course, it's not that exact. The beginning of the church and the formulation of the church is a very key component of your Bible, and you have to understand that the church transitions in just like everything else transitions. In other words, there's not one place in your Bible that you can go that says, "Okay, when the sun came up on this day, the church started." It is a transition.

Let me show you how it transitions. Here's how it works. Anybody can see Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John in the Book of Acts, you can see this thing, and I showed it to you last week, how it transitioned. By the way, this transition takes about 10 to 14 years. That's another mistake people make. We get so locked into our Bibles by reading them and just reading it that we think that it's all right there. You can turn one page in your Bible and jump five years in time. If you don't know that, you're in trouble. You've got to be careful because turning your page in your Bible from one page to another can put you in another whole dispensation. So you've got to be careful. You've got to know the time element of your Bible. That's some of the stuff that we'll work on.

II. The Church as a Mystery and Its Stages

First of all, remember that the church is a mystery. That is something that nobody in the Old Testament knew about the church. The devil didn't know about the church. The devil knew a lot of things about the Bible. He knew a lot of things that God knew, but there's some things that the

devil didn't know. The devil did not know about the church. I know that from the way he operates in the Old Testament. He didn't know anything about the church. Nobody knew anything about the church because the Bible says in the book of Ephesians that the concept of the church was a mystery that God kept to Himself until He revealed it.

Does that mean that God wasn't doing and putting the church in effect before He revealed it? Certainly He did. But the key is the church may have been here and the church may have been operating as we transition through, but nobody knew until God revealed it.

Let me show you how this worked. As I said, this is like a 10 or 12, 13, 14 year process.

➤ In Matthew 10, we find that God takes the 12 apostles and He sends them out. That's where the church gets called out. But it's not a church in any of the sense that we know of it yet. It's just in its infancy being called out.

➤ Do you know what the word church means? It comes from the word that means "called out." The word church comes from the word *ekklesia*, which means "called out assembly." The church, you and I, as individuals, the church of Jesus Christ, have been called out of the world. That's what the word church means. It means to be called out. The church isn't this building; the church is you. You, because you have been saved, are now part of the church, have been called out. You're called out. Called out of the world.

➤ When God in the early part of Matthew, when He's walking around, what is He doing? He's calling 12 men. When He calls those 12 men, He gets them together, then He sends them out. He called them out from their occupations. That's why they tell you what they did. One was a tax collector, one was a fisherman. He tells you what they did. He calls them out from the world, and then He sends them out. That is the calling out in its infant form of the church. When He calls them out and He sends them out, He's still dealing with the kingdom of heaven. Because this calling out is a called out group, but the New Testament hasn't went into effect yet. So here we see the beginning of the transition. The calling out of the ten is the calling out of the infancy of the church, even though nobody knows it yet. He calls it out before He puts the New Testament into effect.

I know that every Christian thinks that, as I said, when you finish the Old Testament and you start in Matthew, because you got that page there that says, "This is the New Testament of Jesus Christ," that's where the New Testament starts. No, the Bible says in the book of Hebrews, back there in Hebrews 9:16, it says that the New Testament cannot go into effect till the death of the testator, or the man who is the author of that testament.

Hebrews 9:16

For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

So then, even though in your Bible, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are collectively in what we commonly call the New Testament, from a Bible standpoint, no New Testament comes into effect until Christ dies. That would be the last chapter, the last two chapters of every book. So everything up to that point is still in the Old Testament.

That's why a lot of people get messed up, because they try to take the stuff in the New Testament before that and apply it to you and me in the church. Now you understand that we aren't in the church yet. The church has been called out in an infant form, but the church has not went into effect till Christ dies. The moment Christ died on the cross, the church went into effect. The New Testament started, because now we have the death of the testator. It had been called out, and now it is officially in effect. But it ain't plugged in yet. It has no power.

Where does the power come from? The power comes when Christ in Acts 1 and Acts 2 comes down, and the Holy Ghost comes down on them, and Jesus Himself said in Acts 1, "You shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come." That's where the church gets plugged in. It gets called out in Matthew 10. It goes into effect technically at the death of Christ, and then it gets empowered in Acts 1 and Acts 2.

But now we got a third part of this transition, a fourth part of this transition. Nobody knows it. Nobody is aware of what the church is, what is going on. That's why they're still looking for the coming King and the coming Kingdom. That's why when you watch the book of Acts, it starts out in Acts 1, as I told you last week, where they're running around and they're saying, "Are you going to restore it?" It came to Israel. He doesn't answer them. So everybody is skirting around in the first seven chapters of Acts trying to get everything done for the nation of Israel. It's all taking place in Jerusalem. It's not anywhere else other than Jerusalem.

Do you know why? Two reasons: because they already told Him in Matthew 10 when they went out, they're not to go outside of Jerusalem. They're staying in Jerusalem because they know that when He comes, if He does come, that's where He's coming. They're not running out going all over the world. They're staying in Jerusalem. They know that the church has been called out. The church has went into effect in the New Testament guidelines. It's now been empowered and nobody knows it, except God, because God is waiting to see what Israel does. Of course, we know in Acts 7 what Israel does. They get their final chance and they kill Stephen.

When that takes place, and I gave you this last week, immediately something changes. This is why Acts 7 is your pivotal point in your Bible. Immediately something changes. Here's what happens: Immediately the gospel, a revival, breaks out with the Samaritans, half Jews, half Gentiles. By the time you get to Acts 8 at the end of the chapter, an Ethiopian eunuch gets saved. Total, complete African, Hamitic, Hamite from the land of Ham who is nothing connected with the nation of Israel. We see now that in the next chapter, Acts 9, the Apostle Paul gets saved. Who is he? He's now the one that is going to bring the revelation of the church, now what it is, to everybody on planet earth.

From Acts 9, you find an absence of Paul. Now they disagree on how long it is, and I'm not sure you can get exactly how long it is, but I'll tell you this: When Paul gets saved in Acts 9, he doesn't show up again till Acts 11 or 12. It'll go to the end of 11, beginning of 12. Do you know how long that is in your Bible? It's anywhere from 8 years to 13 years, where Paul isn't there. In your Bible, that's just one page. See the problem you get in?

I had an old boy preaching one time down there in Alabama, and he was preaching on Adam and Eve. He was preaching on Adam and Eve, and he was talking about when God brought the woman down to the man, and he turned a page, and when he turned a page, three or four pages of his Bible stuck together, and he wound up in Genesis 6. He's down there preaching, and he says, "And Lord brought the woman down to the man," and he turned over there and said, "And she was three score cubits wide and 400 cubits long." He got into the ark. A couple pages make a big difference in your Bible.

What you got here is from when he gets saved in Acts 9 to up around the next time you find him. He's gone. You don't find him at all. You don't find him in Acts 10 where we're at. You don't find him in Acts 11. He pops up in Acts 12, and he comes back, but that time frame is anywhere from eight years, maybe to 13, 14 years. You can't get it for sure. But he's gone. He's absent. We're going to talk about where he's at when he goes in just a little bit.

What Paul does is he, in his ministry, he reveals. Do you know the book that reveals the church? Nobody understood what the church was and what God intended till the book of Ephesians was wrote. The book of Ephesians was wrote somewhere around the date of 55 A.D. That's almost 20 years after Christ was crucified. So it's a transition. The church got called out in Matthew 10 because the church means "called out." It goes into effect in Matthew 28 at the death of the testator. It gets powered up in Acts 2, but it doesn't get revealed till Paul writes the book of Ephesians. So there's no one point that you can say this is where it absolutely starts because God fixed the thing that it had to transition in. That's what you've got, and that's very important to understand that.

This baptism number five is found in Acts 10, and it's going to follow right on what we've already studied the last couple of weeks as we looked at the last couple of baptisms. I said, here's what we know: We know that Israel gets three chances to get the kingdom of heaven. John the Baptist, Matthew 3; Christ himself, Mark 11 at the triumphal entry; and then of course Acts 1 through Acts 7. Then I told you, when they reject their third chance in Acts 7, then it goes to Acts 8, then it goes to Paul in Acts 9, and then Acts 10 is where we're at today, and then Acts 11, and they're first called Christians in Acts 11, and then it never goes to the Jew again, it just goes to the Gentiles. The church now is in effect.

III. Acts 10: Cornelius's Vision

What we're going to do today, I want you to turn to Acts 10. We're going to have to read this chapter, just like we read Acts 2, and it's 40-some verses here, but we'll come through it, and you'll understand a little better how we break it down.

Here's what it says.

Acts 10:1-8

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

I want to just draw your attention to this. If we're going to study the Bible, let's study it here. Look at verse 9. You've got a paragraph mark in verse 9. Paragraph marks are very important in your Bible. They will break down the Bible's stories for you in most cases. They'll definitely break down the context. So now, in other words, when we want to study the book of Acts 10 here, we're going to study it by just reading up to the paragraph marks and then looking at what we got. You'll find that this whole chapter, which looks complex, is broke down around four paragraph marks. Each section tells you another part of the story. When you break it down story by story, just like Genesis, when you break it down story by story, you get the understanding of how it works.

The first part of that story is Acts 10:1-8. This is where Cornelius gets his vision from God. I want you to look at Cornelius for a moment. Cornelius is a religious man. He's giving alms to the poor, and he's following the Old Testament. Do you know who Cornelius is? He's a Gentile who has become a Jewish proselyte. Let me explain what that means. A proselyte is somebody who gets proselytized to become part of somebody else's religion. In the Old Testament, if a Gentile wanted to become righteous with God, there were no Gentile churches. There were no Christian churches. There were no Christians. If a Gentile in the Old Testament wanted to get God's righteousness, he had to come and accept the religion, the God, the sacrifices, and all of the law that God had given to the Jew. He had to become a Jew even though he was a Gentile. We call this a proselyte Jew. In other words, he's a Gentile who takes up the Jewish faith.

The greatest example of that in the Bible is in the book of Ruth. Ruth is a Moabite. When she gets connected there, she says, "Your God shall be my God, your people shall be my people." She was becoming a Jewish proselyte. She's becoming one of God's children even though she

was not born through the line of Abraham. That's called a proselyte. Cornelius is a full-blown Italian. Yet he has accepted the Jewish Old Testament faith and he has proselytized himself; he's a proselyte. You find him back there in Acts 1, when the day of Pentecost, when he began to list the nations, he says "Jews and proselytes." This man here, Cornelius, is a man who is a Gentile who somewhere in his life got the teachings of the Old Testament, recognized who God was, recognized what he was doing with Israel and said, "If I'm going to get God's righteousness, I've got to get in on that." He became a Jew through a proselytation of him accepting the Jewish religion. That's why you see down here, the Bible says that he is a devout man, kept the law, he feared God with all his house, and he gave much alms to the people. That's exactly what they're doing in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

John 1:9

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

One of the things you find in the book of Acts, and I'm just going to throw this as a sideline, but it's very important: This is a very confusing time. The Jews were following the Old Testament and then bang, John the Baptist shows up. John the Baptist comes preaching the kingdom before the crucifixion. Then Christ shows up and he comes as their king and they crucify him. Then Peter shows up with a different baptism after they crucified him. What God is doing here, and that's why it has to be a transition, that's why from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from the end of Israel to the beginning of the church, it all has to be a transition because God is doing a number of things. What he's doing here, and he's showing you what he's doing, and he does it a number of times in the book of Acts, he is, if God is starting the church and nobody knows it, then he is required to get everybody who is believing what he has said up to this point the truth of now, of what the gospel of the church is going to be. Here's a man, Cornelius, who's a proselyte Jew, who now needs the truth of the New Testament death-bound resurrection with Christ. All through the book of Acts you find God using men, Paul, Peter, and some of the other apostles to illuminate everybody who has not got the truth yet that Christ died on the cross. This is where Cornelius gets in. So we see that during this time, we see that this transition begins to unfold.

IV. Paul's Absence and Revelation

We see that Paul is absent here. Do you know where Paul's at? When Paul got saved, here's what happened. Here's what you know for sure. We know he went to Arabia for three years. We know that from the book of Galatians. Arabia is where Mount Sinai is. Mount Sinai is where God met with Moses and gave him the law and told him what he wanted him to do to Israel. Undoubtedly, Paul goes to the same place, I would probably say, the same spot. And God reveals to him through the process of three years, the whole mystery of the church, body of Christ. He's gone in Arabia for three years where God, and he meets with God, and God instructs him about the coming kingdom of God, the church. He's there for three years, and then he goes and he meets up with Peter, and then he meets up with the Lord's literal brother, James.

Do you know what he's doing? He's trying to find out everything he can about who Jesus was. Because up to this point, all Paul ever knew about Christ was he was a renegade, and he tried to persecute and kill the people that were following him. Now he has to find out everything he can. First thing he does is he goes to Arabia for three years. Did you ever find it significant that that's how long Christ took to train the apostles before he went back to heaven? Three years of training in the Bible is key. I ought to have you up and running in three years' time if you do everything the way you're supposed to do it. Once you decide you're going to buy into the Bible and you're going to take that thing, you can be up and ready to go and ready to be used of God in three years' time. That's the model. I know that that's the model because Christ spent three years with his twelve, and then he left and said, "It's all yours, boys." God spent three years with Paul, and he said, "Okay, son, you got all you need. Take off." That's how long it takes to get a good, basic understanding of the Scriptures and the Bible that you can become effective for what God wants you to do if you give God that three years. That's how long it can take.

Of course, after that, he heads over to the Lord's brother, James, and he wants to find out everything about Christ in his earthly ministry. He's getting the boast of Bethworld. He wants to learn everything about the spiritual nature of Christ in the church, and then he runs over to James, the Lord's literal brother. Of course, if you know your Bible, you know that Christ had literal brothers and sisters. They're even named for you in the Bible. He wants to find everything from James about Christ growing up. When he gets it all together, he shows back up in Acts 11 after some time, and it's a thing where he really begins to understand all that God has for him.

Of course, he lays this out in Galatians 1:12-17. He says this in verse 16, and I'll not read the whole thing, but he says this:

Galatians 1:16-17

To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:

Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

You see? Once he gets what he got from God, then he immediately goes down to Jerusalem, and he confers with Peter and the apostles, and then he runs to the Lord's literal brother and wants to find out everything he can. He's covering all the angles. That would be a lot like you and me, spending three years studying the Old Testament then the New Testament. You find out the Old Testament, then you find out the New Testament. You learn everything you can about the Bible. That's what he's doing. He didn't have a New Testament. All he had was an Old Testament. So he has to rely on the people who saw Christ. He can't open up Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and say, "Oh, here's what he did." No, no. He's got to go to the very people who walked with him for three years, the apostles, and then the one that walked with Christ all of his life, the Lord's literal

brother, who was part of his family, who recognized and understood Christ in the human side of things.

V. Acts 10: Peter's Vision and Doubt

What we've got here is this: Peter has a tough time grasping this concept. Peter has been given the keys of the kingdom. What you have down here, in the first segment here, we have Cornelius being told in this vision to go to Peter, because the gospel now has went to the Gentiles. God in Acts 10 is making that transition begin to move. So he first, in the first section, up to the first paragraph mark, he tells Cornelius, "Go to Peter."

While he is on his way seeing Peter, and this will be your second paragraph mark, Acts 10:9-18, Peter goes up on the roof. When he's up on the roof there, he becomes very hungry. The Bible says that heaven opens. God brings down out of heaven kind of like a picnic blanket. On that picnic blanket is all the stuff that Peter, as an Old Testament, pork abstaining Jew, is not allowed to eat. I mean, there's Gates Barbecue on it. There's everything you could ever want. God says, "Have at it, Peter. Are you hungry? Help yourself." Peter says, "Whoa, Lord, in all my life, I've never eaten anything unclean. I follow the law. I'm not going to start now." God says, "Peter, when I cleanse something, don't call it unclean." Peter didn't get it. In fact, the Lord repeats that vision. The Bible says three times, three times, three times. Of course, the reason why he does it three times, if you look down there in verse 19, just as God gave Peter the vision three times, that vision of those unclean animals are going to match up with the three Gentiles who, as he is on that roof, are driving down Highway 24, coming into Jerusalem in the accord that the apostles were driving in last week. As he's standing there saying, "Wow, what was that vision all about? I saw it three times." The doorbell rings. He goes down and he opens up the door, and there stand three Gentiles, one for each time he saw the vision. Peter still doesn't totally get it. He says down here, as Peter pondered that thing in his mind, and then the Lord says, "Peter, don't doubt anything that I showed you. Just go with the light that I give you."

All right, next paragraph marks in verse 9.

Acts 10:9-18

On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Now, the TV camera switches from Cornelius over to Peter, two stories. While Peter doubted in himself what the vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate, and called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

So the third paragraph mark then would be verses 19 through 33, and this is where Peter doubts. He still doesn't totally get it. So what you got down through here, he meets up with Cornelius, and they start to talk back and forth, and then Cornelius tells him the story of what God has done in his life in verse 30, verse 33, and how God has told Cornelius and his friend to go seek out Peter. This chapter breaks down real easy and gets us to the next baptism.

All right, verse 19, paragraph mark. There's our third one, or our second one.

Acts 10:19-33

While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me.

And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come.

Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

See Peter makes a lousy pope. If you go over to the Vatican and get to see the pope, you've got to fall down and kiss his foot. They say Peter's the first pope. Well, if he is, he's a lousy pope. Couple of reasons. He was married, for one. Of course, the popes are probably too, but that's another story. But when he falls down, Peter says, "Stand up, I'm just a man like you." I'm not the vicar of Christ. See how easy the Bible figures those things out for you?

VI. Acts 10: Peter's Sermon and the Gentile Baptism

When he lays this thing out, Peter still doesn't have it figured. In fact, it takes quite a while for Peter to get this whole thing together. So here's what Peter does. He says, "Okay, Lord, okay, okay, okay. I guess that you, for whatever reason, you've allowed the Gentiles to come in. Okay, that's all right with me, and obviously now you want me to preach to him, and you want me to tell him. Okay, no problem."

So then the fourth paragraph mark starts in verse 34 and down through the end down here. When you start to read this sermon, Peter opens his mouth and he begins to preach. When he begins to preach, and we're going to look at it here in a second, do you know what he's preaching? He's preaching the exact same five messages he preached up there in Acts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. He's just preaching what he knows to preach. He doesn't get it. Look what he said, verse 34, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation he has feared him and worketh righteousness that he has accepted with him the word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all."

All right, verse 34, paragraph mark. The camera switches back to Peter. Peter opened his mouth. He does that a lot.

Acts 10:34-43

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Do you see where he's going with this? If you would study his five sermons that he preaches in Acts 1 through Acts 6, they're not all exactly right, but they all have the same content. Verse 35, "but every nation," that's what we saw, went back there in the millennial context. Look at verse 36, "the children of Israel," see? Look at verse 38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost." You see, it's Jesus here, Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost, with power, who went before doing good and hearing all that were oppressed of the devil. That's all what he did in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. "And we're witness, and we were witnesses of all the things that he did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem whom they slew and hung on a tree." He's coming down to that thing and he's basically saying what he said in every sermon so far that he's preached to the nation of Israel. "Hey, this same Jesus whom ye have crucified, God hath made bold Lord in Christ." He's coming down here and he doesn't know, all he knows is he's going by the light that God gave him. God is sending the Gentiles, he hasn't figured it out. Why? God says, "Eat this unclean food." He says, "I can't do that." God says, "Listen Peter, just do what I'm telling you to do. Just what I have cleansed, don't call unclean." The Bible says, as Peter thought on his vision, ding dong, ding dong. He comes downstairs, opens the door, three Gentiles. God says, "Peter, don't doubt in your heart. Just do what I'm telling you to do. I've sent you these three guys." "Hey Cornelius, help him out. Tell him the testimony." He comes in and says, "Oh yeah, it was just the other day God came down to me and told me da da da da da da." Peter's saying, "He did. Wow, he did. He told you to come to me." "Oh, now here's what Peter comes to. Okay Lord. Excuse me boys. Okay Lord, I don't know what you're doing here. You told me in Matthew 10 to go to the whole house of Israel and not even go to the Samaritans. And here we got this Gentile Italian down here. And now I'm supposed to, all my life I've read, I'm not supposed to have anything to do with the unclean Gentiles. And now there's three of them down here. What are the neighbors going to think? What do you want me to do here? I mean, I guess, I mean, you gave

me this vision. I don't fully understand it, but I get this much of it. I guess now you want me to preach to these Gentiles and tell them what I've been telling everybody else." The Lord says, "Peter, yeah, I'm done with you. Just, I'll tell you what, you start the message, I'll finish it."

So Peter goes up and he says, "Okay, boys, open your Bible, Acts 2." He starts coming down talking about the nations. He starts talking about the nation of Israel, what God did in Jerusalem. He comes on down through this message down here. Do you know what he says? He says, "And God raised him up the third day and showed him openly." Do you know what that lines up to? That lines up with what he said in Acts 2. "The same Jesus, he has crucified God who made both Lord and Christ." He's saying, "You guys killed him and now God has raised him up and showed him openly." He's preaching the same contextual message as he's done and all down through there. It says down here, look at verse 42. "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, Israel, and to testify that which is ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and the dead." "And he gave all the prophets into him, give all the Old Testament prophets witness." What did the Old Testament prophets witness to? The church? No! Second coming of Christ. "That through his name, whosoever believe in him should have the remission of sins."

Do you know what he's doing? He's getting up down here and Peter's got the best intentions. But he doesn't have the complete mystery. He's following what God has told him to do. He said, "Okay Lord, you want the Gentiles in? Fine. I'll preach to him. I don't know what you're doing, but boy, this is going to make a lot of people mad. But okay, Lord, if this is what you want." He begins to preach to the Gentiles the same messages that he preached right down through Acts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 about the fact that Israel has crucified the Messiah. What he's getting ready to say, what he has, he has made, he has matched his sermons almost point for point. What he is getting ready to tell these Gentiles, "It's all right, boys. You got to be repent. You got to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin. And then you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." He's given them the same message point by point that he's given the nation of Israel.

God says, "You start it, I'll finish it." Look at verse 44, last paragraph mark.

Acts 10:44-48

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Now he gets it. What does he get? You see, Peter is getting ready to lay this thing out. He's coming down through here preaching the same message. He preached all through Acts 1 through 5. Now when he's getting ready to say, "Okay, boys, you got to be baptized, repent, be baptized

in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin. He shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit of God stops him and the Holy Spirit of God falls on him. Peter goes, "Whoa!" When he hears them speak with tongues, he gets it. Why? Because Thursday night somebody asked a question about, we got into this thing and I showed you that tongues were for a sign and it was the Jews that required the sign. So when Peter sees the evidence among these Gentiles that they have the Holy Ghost because they speak with tongues, that's when he gets it because he may not understand the vision, but he understands who the signs are to. When he sees this guy speak with tongues, he says, "That's it. I got it. I got it. Can any man forbid that these be baptized with water to have the Holy, receive the Holy Ghost just like we do?" Ah, he got it.

But watch what happens. This is your next baptism. He doesn't baptize them in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. He doesn't. Peter starts to come up through that thing. God finishes the message and right in the middle of it while Peter yet speak these words, bang! The Holy Spirit of God falls on him. The Bible says in verse 46, "For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God, then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water that these should be baptized which have the received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" And he, verse 48, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." Different baptism. Acts 2:38, they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. That was Israel baptism. This is Gentile baptism. Peter's now got it. He's got it. That's a different baptism in Acts 2.

VII. Comparing Baptisms and Exposing Heresy

Let me tell you something, folks, and this is something you're going to learn about the Bible. Nobody can mess up a heretic in bad doctrine like God can. Brother, he will fix your wagon, man. If you ever notice the difference between Acts 2:38 and Acts 10, when you compare the two passages, here's what you got. In Acts 2:38, it said this:

Acts 2:38

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Now that was the baptism we just looked at last week. Now notice the baptism in Acts 10.

4. Nobody repents. In fact, the guy that they've come to, Cornelius, is in another fellowship with God. Israel was. Cornelius was a devout man who worshipped God, who did everything God told him to do. He didn't even like the nation of Israel. There's no repentance for this guy. He's already following God, but he's following the light that God had given him, and now God is transitioning this thing through.
5. In Acts 2, they're told to repent. They're told to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. In Acts 10, nobody repents.
6. Nobody's baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
7. There's no remission of sins.
8. If that wasn't all, in Acts 2, they had to be baptized first and then get the Holy Ghost. In Acts 10, they get the Holy Ghost first, then they get baptized. It's not even the same.

9. In Acts 2, they're baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. In Acts 10, they're baptized in the name of the Lord.

You see, it doesn't match up any way, shape, or form. Do you know why? Because they're not the same baptism. This is Gentile baptism. When you and I got baptized in water, this is the authority that we got baptized under right here, Acts 10. This is our authority for us as a New Testament local church to baptize.

Now, I'm going to show you something great about the book of Acts, and this is a little add-on here. In the book of Acts, if you come through the book of Acts, you're going to find at least six ways. At least six ways people get the Holy Ghost. Six different times in the book of Acts, starting with Acts 1, where they come down to the day of Pentecost, when it came down in the Old Splash, the first one, you're going to find from there five other places where the Holy Spirit of God comes on people, and they get the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Not one or the same. None of them are the same.

That never bothered a charismatic for some strange reason. Somebody asked me one time, "Why in the book of Acts, when God gave the Holy Spirit of God at least six times, in detail, why in detail did he do it a different way every time?" Do you know what the answer to that is? Same reason Jesus never called his mother, "mother." Did you ever notice that? Did you ever notice all through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus never called his earthly mother, Mary, "mother"? Never did! Never called her mother. Do you know why? He called her "woman." Do you know why he never called her mother? Because he knew that down the line there was going to be some church organization that was going to make Mary the mother of God. It wasn't going to be because he set that doctrinal teaching. So he refused to call her mother, so if some church down the line said Mary was the mother of God, they could not go to the Bible to prove it. See where that thing works? Somebody says Mary is the mother of God. Show me where? Show me where? Show me where he called her that. He called her woman.

When you get to the point where you make it, God loves to put us in the position that you got to either choose what he says or what man says. You realize that when you're faced with a decision that a religious leader says Mary was the mother of God and Jesus himself says that she wasn't, you got a decision you got to make? Life is choices. I'm telling you, he never called her mother because he did not want to give credibility to some religious organization that was going to damn the world to hell because they were going to make Mary some spiritual plane with Christ because Mary was the mother of God.

Do you ever stop and think about that? If Mary was the mother of God, then that means Mary's mother was the grandfather of God, the grandmother of God. How come you never hear any teaching on the grandmother of God? If she was the mother of God and she had a mother, then that was the grandmother of God. See? How come you never hear that? How come she's not a saint? Why is it that Mary is the mother of God? Jesus fixed it that if you wanted to believe that, you were going to have to make it up on your own because Jesus refused to substantiate that heresy.

I'll tell you something, I'll tell you another reason. That's why Jesus never baptized anybody. I told you this before. We've got a lot of people running out there saying how you get saved, you get baptized. "If you really want to get saved and go to heaven, you've got to get baptized in water for baptism and regeneration. The water going down under regenerates you and that's what salvation is." There are millions and millions and millions and millions and millions and millions and millions of people in hell today because somebody told them you've got to be baptized to get your sins washed away. You've got to baptize your baby to get away original sin. You've got to get baptized to get your sin away and then you're a child of God and they do that and they believe that. When they die, they go to hell like a bullet.

Do you know why? Jesus never baptized one person in his life. Never did. Do you know why? The Bible says that he had his disciples. Did Jesus save anybody? Sure he did. Saved all kinds of people. Well if baptism is salvation and Jesus saved people, how did he save them without baptizing them? Do you know how complicated it becomes? God loves to put you and I in a position that you've got to take what the Bible says versus over here what man says. You couldn't find anybody, you couldn't find a baby baptizing that Bible anywhere. You couldn't find an adult being baptized for salvation anywhere.

But you see, when you don't know how to rightly divide your Bible and get the seven baptisms in order, then you get in the book of Acts or you see John and you can't rightly divide it out. Now we know. We know that Acts 2 was the baptism of Israel before the crucifixion. Now we know that Acts 2 was the baptism of Israel after the crucifixion and now we know the transition has started. They made their last blowout and rejected Christ and now it's moving to the church and that's why here somebody has baptized in the name of the Lord. And he's a Gentile. Why? Because God's done with the nation of Israel on this side of the tribulation period. That's why. That's why. That's why.

Remember last week I told you about an Acts chapter back there in Acts about the Philippian jailer in Acts 16. Remember that story I told you how that he they were in jail and he asked the three questions in Acts. He says, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Here's a great example. Here's a guy to get saved. Now here we are. Now we just saw Acts 2. You had to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin and then you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. All right. Then we come to Acts 10. These people while nobody does nothing, it falls on them and then they get baptized. Now watch this. In Acts 16 coming down through here. Here's a case where a guy gets saved. Nobody lays hands on him. He never speaks in tongues. He gets no baptism of the Holy Ghost anywhere. Holy Spirit God doesn't fall on him. He just got saved. Then he got baptized. See, he's one of the six. Six different ways that a man gets the Holy Spirit of God in the book of Acts and none of them match.

Do you know why he did that? He did that. He messed up every charismatic on this planet. I told you Acts 2 was the way to go because all you got to do is go to Acts 10 and say, "What about this?" You got to go to Acts 16. "Well, what about this?" How come they don't line up all the way through? Do you know what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11, I think it is? He says that it's okay for heresies to be among you. He says there needs to be heresy among you because you know what? Heretics and people who teach bad teaching prove what the truth is because they're always going

outside the Bible to get what they believe. A heresy and a heretic is one of the easiest things to spot when you know your Bible because every one of them is going to ignore what the Bible says to teach them.

For instance, somebody believes that baptism is the way to get to heaven? Ignore the fact that Jesus never baptized. Somebody wants to call Mary the mother of God? Ignores the fact Jesus never called her his mother. Somebody wants to teach you got to get baptized with the Holy Ghost and all that stuff? He ignores the fact that since times in Acts, when he gives the Holy Spirit of God, he never does it the same way so you could say this is the way it has to be. Because the book of Acts doesn't lay down. You want to know how it is? We haven't got to it yet. We're going to get to it next week. You want to know how it is? It isn't found in the book of Acts. How it is is found in the book of Ephesians. The book of Ephesians is a book written to the church. That's how it is.

Now, I want you to see this. It says that he's baptized in the name of the Lord. When we baptize people, you'll notice that when we put them down, we take that person and we ask them if they know for sure they've been saved and they say they do. We say, "Okay, upon your perfection of faith, I baptize you, my brother, my sister, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Do you know where we get that from? We get that from Matthew 28. Look at Matthew 28:19. This is where we get it from. This is how you learn your Bible.

Matthew 28:19

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

You see that thing? You notice it doesn't say in the name of the Father and the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Ghost. It says in the name singular of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. In other words, there's one name in your Bible that fits all three identities of the Trinity. Do you know what that name is? Lord, Lord, Lord, Lord. In Jude 1:5, you find that God is called Lord and also throughout the Old Testament. Philippians 2:11, you'll find that Jesus is called Lord. In 2 Corinthians 3:17, you'll find the Holy Spirit of God is called Lord. That's why it doesn't say in the name of the Father and the name of the Son and the name of the Holy Ghost. It says in the name singular of the Father, Son, Holy Ghost. There's one name for all three identities of the Trinity and it is the word Lord. The Holy Spirit of God is Lord, Jesus is Lord, and God is Lord. That thing is Gentile baptism given to a full-blown Gentile once God has moved from the nation of Israel and now is entering into dealing with the church age and bringing it through.

VIII. Conclusion: The Transition from Israel to the Church

Finalization. Let me bring it through and pull it all together, and then we're done. Let's start back from the beginning. Here we go. Israel gets three chances. I'm sure glad there's only 66 books in the Bible. We need a bigger room.

Israel gets three chances.

10. First chance, John the Baptist. John the Baptist showed up before Christ shows up six months. He says, "Repent ye, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Make straighten his paths. Get baptized down in Jordan." What do they do? They kill him. First chance, gone.
11. Christ manifests Himself. He comes down there for the next three years. He calls out the twelve. He does everything He's supposed to do. One week before His crucifixion, Palm Sunday, He goes down in Jerusalem. He goes down to Palm Lees. We studied it. Israel, the common people accept Him, but right down at the end of that chapter in Mark 11, the scribes and the Pharisees show up, and they reject Him, and they crucify Him. One week later, He's killed. Second chance, gone.
12. On the cross, Christ says, "Father, Father, forgive them. They know not what they do." God honors that prayer. Gives them one more chance. That's why in Acts 1, they're running around, and they say to Jesus, who's now resurrected, "Will you restore the King Israel this time?" He says, "Not for you to know." Won't give them a definite answer. They got one more chance. So He calls Peter, who got the keys to the kingdom. He calls Peter. He says, "Peter, you got six chapters to get this thing done." Now, it's not what He said, but that's what happened. You got six chapters to get this thing done. Peter goes to work. He preaches five sermons. All five sermons are different, but they all say the same thing: He was God's son. You killed Him. Israel killed Him. You got to repent. You're in sin. Remission of sin. Holy Ghost won't come until you get baptized in the name of the person that you killed. Jesus Christ, the man you crucified. He preaches that all the way down.

Finally, Stephen gets up in Acts 6, Acts 7. He puts it to them. He lays them out. Half of chapter 6 and all chapter 7 is just hail Columbia. He flat puts it to them. He calls them everything in the book. He lays out their sin, how they killed the prophets. When He's done with that thing, it's a great lesson. I call that wipeouts in the ministry. Here's a guy that never got to finish a sermon. He never got to say, "Okay, every head bowed, every eye closed." This thing just not him. Never got to give out the hot dogs that he had for him. He never got down to the end and they raised up and they took him out and they killed him. But when he looks up, he sees Jesus standing, waiting to come back. We've covered all this material. That is the pivotal point right there, Acts 7.

Next thing, Acts 8. Samaritans. Gospel goes now to half Jews, half Gentiles. End of the chapter. Ethiopian eunuch gets saved. In the next chapter, Acts 9, Paul gets saved. He heads off for the next eight or nine years to get his teaching, what he needs. We continue to move on. The next thing, Acts 10, where we're at right now. God reveals to Peter, and you know what? They had a tough time getting it. Peter still didn't get it after here. It is until Paul comes back and comes down and talked about in the book of Galatians where Paul confronts him and says, "Look, Peter, you better get this doctrine straightened out." It's in Acts 15 where it happens. You look at this thing down here, and so Peter's doing the best he can, and God comes down and changes the whole thing. Now here's a Gentile that doesn't get baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Nobody lays hands on him. He comes to the place where it all reverses on what has happened so far. The Holy Spirit of God falls on him without anybody doing anything. They speak with tongues, then Peter gets it, and then we move right on through from Acts 10, where this happens, they're first called Christians in Antioch. Paul shows up now at the end of that chapter, chapter 12, and then the missionary journeys go out totally to Gentiles. From Acts 12 to Acts 28, it's all Gentiles.

There's not one more miracle done in Jerusalem. Everything is focused on the Gentiles, and Paul writes every book that he writes to the Gentile church between Acts 15 and Acts 28. It all fits right in that category.

This baptism here in Acts 10 is a Gentile baptism that is different from the Jewish baptism because God is done with the nation of Israel. So they're baptized in the name of the Lord, Father, Son, Holy Ghost. They were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ because of the one they crucified. Simple as that. When you break it down that way, the Bible becomes so simple. That's the way God intended it to be. The book of Acts, admittedly, will be one of the hardest books in the Bible that a man will ever crack. Not because it's hard, because man refuses to study the Bible the way God intended it to be studied. When man gets his fingers in it, it's always going to get messed up. From Genesis to Revelation and everywhere in between.

That's why when you understand this, you realize that Acts 10, which is now your fifth baptism, we've got two left. Next week we're going to look at the, I told you when we started that there was one true baptism in your Bible, but the Bible says there's seven baptisms. I told you that the other six were all pictures of the true one. Next week, we're going to study the true one. Up to this point now, the book of Acts should be laid out for you fairly well. You know where it started, the first seven chapters, how it breaks down almost chapter by chapter. Here we are in Acts 10, all finished with the Jews now. We're moving on to the Gentile church. It's just from this point on, Paul shows up again, and then we start to move into the mission. That's where the gospel goes into Europe. It goes into Asia Minor. It goes all to those Gentile nations that are talked about throughout the Bible. So that's where you're at. All right, let's have a word of prayer.