

**Trapped By Injustice (Part 2)
(Meeting the Right People)**

February 12, 2023 (In-person)

Valentine's Day Question: How do you find and build a love relationship that lifts you and does not trap you?

Side Question: What if you are already in a relationship that feels like a trap?

Answer: Renegotiate the terms and culture of the relationship?

Valentine's Day Answer: Decide what you want to be and don't allow a relationship to change you. Don't give your strength to people that will turn your heart and priorities away from God and your best interest.¹

Question for the Year: Why People Don't do What They Say they are Going to Do?

Series Summary:

1. They have not **faced** their true condition (**Facing Our True Condition**)
2. They have not **met the right people** (**Embracing People That Reveal Your Condition**)
3. They have not **traveled** to see their condition (**Traveling to See Your Condition**)
4. They have not **embraced** their inherited condition (**Facing Our Inherited Condition**)

Statement: Peter grew up in a caste or racially divided culture. His exposure to the right people slowly changed his view. It took him a while to change. Paul even challenged him about his inconsistent attitude (**Galatians 2:11-14**)

Caste Defined:

- A caste system is an **artificial construction**, a **fixed and embedded ranking of human value** that sets the **presumed supremacy of one group against the presumed inferiority of other groups on the basis of ancestry** and often immutable **traits**, traits that would be neutral in the abstract but are ascribed life-and-death meaning in a hierarchy favoring the dominant caste whose forebears designed it. **A caste system uses rigid, often arbitrary boundaries to keep the ranked groupings apart, distinct from one another and in their assigned places.**

Source: *Caste: The Origin of Our Discontent* by Isabel Wilkerson

¹ **Deuteronomy 7:3-4 (NIV):** 3 Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, 4 for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods, and the Lord's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.

Personal Thought: *There were key people I had to meet, for God's plan for my life to come into place.*

I. How God Introduced Peter to The Right People

Text: Acts 10:21–23 (NIV):

1. God had to send the right people to Peter (Peter would never have gone on his own)

- 21 Peter went down and said to the men, “I’m the one you’re looking for. Why have you come?” 22 The men replied, “**We have come from Cornelius the centurion.** He is a righteous and God fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. **A holy angel told him to ask you to come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say.**” 23 Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

2. Peter had to be willing to go with the right people (The right person was a day away)

- The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the believers from Joppa went along. 24 **The following day he arrived** in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. 25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. 26 But Peter made him get up. “Stand up,” he said, “**I am only a man myself.**”

Note: He responded quickly and left the next day (How long would it take you to respond?)

- 27 While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 28 He said to them: “**You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile.** But God has shown me that **I should not call anyone impure or unclean.** 29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?”

Note: He admitted he was wrong to “call anyone impure or unclean.”

3. Peter Had to be willing to change his view of people Acts 10:44–48 (NIV)

- 44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

- Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. **They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.**” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Note: Peter realized God showed no favoritism but gave them the same spiritual experience. Two things made this moment possible in Peter’s life.

II. Two Things Made Bringing the Right People to Peter Possible

1. Cornelius was spiritually engaged and willing to reach out (Act 10:1-8)

- At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. 2 He and all his family were **devout** and **God-fearing**; he **gave generously** to those in need and **prayed** to God regularly. 3 One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, “Cornelius!”..
 - A. He was devout
 - B. He was God-fearing
 - C. He gave generously
 - D. He prayed

2. Peter Was Spiritually Engaged and Willing to go: Acts 10:9–15 (NIV)

- 9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, **Peter went up on the roof to pray.** 10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.
- 11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. 12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. 13 Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.” 14 “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” 15 The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

Closing Questions:

- **Could God send someone to give you a message about changing your views?**

Next Time: Traveling the Distance to See Your True Condition