

Acts- Church Afire! “God Shows No Favoritism, Acts 10:1-35”
Sermon Summary & 5-Day Devotional Mar 29th, 2026 By Rev. Paul Hudson

Sermon Summary

Palm Sunday marks a time of both celebration and reflection, as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the peace He sought to bring—a peace the city failed to embrace. Similarly, Acts 10 takes us on Peter's journey to Cornelius, a story that introduces a monumental shift in the early Church towards inclusivity. God prepared Peter, in a seemingly insignificant way, to step into His grand plan that would profoundly impact Christianity. This scriptural moment demonstrates how God's preparation can transform lives and shift perceptions, urging us to have eyes open to His work, seeing beyond current circumstances to divine intentions.

In Acts 10, God instructs Peter through a dramatic vision to reconsider entrenched beliefs about clean and unclean. This vision is pivotal—not just about dietary law, but about people and barriers that prevent God's love from reaching all nations. Peter's initial reluctance echoes the struggle many face in letting go of deep-seated conventions. God's message of no favoritism challenges believers to embrace diversity, eliminate prejudice, and welcome individuals previously considered outsiders. The Gentiles' inclusion marks a revolutionary broadening of God's covenant—an invitation to the global community to join His family.

This story of Cornelius and Peter expands the Church's mission to accept and love all people, transcending ethnic and cultural divides. Through Peter's recognition of God's work in Cornelius, we see a model of openness and grace intended for everyone. The early Church set a precedent for current believers, demonstrating that transformation occurs when we follow God's guidance toward acceptance and unity. Acts 10 inspires us to actively engage in God's mission, reaching out both within our communities and globally, ensuring the message of Christ's salvation extends to all whom God calls clean.

Key Takeaways

1. God's Preparation is Purposeful.

God prepares us in various ways for His plans, just as He prepared Peter through his environment in Joppa. Peter's stay with Simon the Tanner, in a place regarded as unclean, was instrumental in readying him for the inclusion of Gentiles. Recognizing God's preparation involves seeing beyond our immediate circumstances and discerning His broader work in our lives. We are encouraged to trust that even mundane or challenging situations are intricately woven into His divine purpose. This calls us to be attentive and receptive, noticing the spiritual sensitivity we are developing along the way.

2. Embrace God's Inclusive Vision.

Peter's vision of the sheet containing all kinds of animals dismantled his notions of clean and unclean, reflecting God's inclusive plan. God calls us to look past labels and boundaries, never underestimating those who appear far from Him. This vision challenges today's Church to see individuals through God's eyes, accepting the diversity He celebrates. Acts 10 invites us to broaden our embrace, extending love and compassion to all, mirroring the inclusive nature of God's kingdom. We are called to actively eliminate prejudice and open doors to those longing for the gospel.

3. Redefine Community Boundaries.

The story of Cornelius and Peter illustrates how God expands community boundaries, integrating diverse backgrounds into His family. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, represents those typically seen as outsiders. The Church's mission extends beyond familiar confines, urging believers to

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invite people from every nation and background to partake in God's kingdom. This story encourages us to break barriers and embrace those who differ from us in ethnicity, culture, or tradition. It is a call to recognize unity and foster relationships that reflect God's unfailing love and grace, redefining the church community.

4. Faith Involves Openness to Change.

Acts 10 exemplifies the importance of being open to transformation and divine redirection. Peter's response to his vision required abandoning traditional beliefs, demonstrating the flexibility necessary in faith. God's work often involves change, stretching our understanding to align with His truth. This story challenges us to be receptive to spiritual growth and adaptable in our faith journey, trusting that God's plans surpass our existing framework. Foundational shifts may initially appear uncomfortable but yield powerful transformations that fulfill God's broader mission for His people.

5. Recognize God's Call to Action.

God's instructions to Peter to visit Cornelius show a direct call to action. Similarly, God positions us for meaningful interactions, guiding us to bring others into His fold. This narrative symbolizes the active role we play in sharing the gospel, responding to God's promptings with faith and courage. Just as Peter embraced his mission, we are encouraged to be vessels of God's grace, stepping into opportunities He presents. Our willingness to act becomes instrumental in expanding His kingdom, as we participate in His divine mission to touch lives with His love.

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Day 1 — Recognize God's timing and preparation.

Supporting Scripture: Acts 10:9-16

In Acts 10, we find Peter having a vision that challenges his understanding of who is clean and unclean. God shows Peter that He is preparing to do something new. This reminds us that God often gets us ready for changes in our lives long before they happen. He places us in situations and environments to prepare our hearts and minds for His plans. As Peter stayed in Joppa, God was working in his heart, getting him ready to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. It encourages us to live with spiritual sensitivity, so we can see God's preparation and not miss His work in our lives.

Reflection Question: How are you noticing God's preparation in your life right now?

Day 2 — Embrace others as God does.

Supporting Scripture: Romans 11:11

Romans 11:11 teaches that the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's plan was intended to show Israel that salvation is open to all. This can inspire us to embrace those who are different from us. God's love has no boundaries; it reaches every culture, ethnicity, and background. When Peter welcomed Cornelius, he demonstrated this truth. We can learn to view others not as unworthy or unclean, but as individuals God longs to save. In our diverse world, God calls us to love and embrace all people as He does.

Reflection Question: Who in your life needs to be embraced with God's love?

Day 3 — Understand the significance of Peter's vision.

Supporting Scripture: Acts 10:34-35

Peter's vision of the sheet filled with animals challenged his traditional beliefs. God declared no one was impure whom He had made clean. This revelation shifted Peter's understanding of God's work among the Gentiles, showing that God does not show favoritism. It teaches us to reevaluate our perceptions that might exclude others from God's grace. God wants us to see with spiritual eyes, acknowledging that He accepts those from every nation who fear Him and do what is right. Are there old perspectives you need to leave behind?

Reflection Question: What old perspectives might God want you to change?

Day 4 — See with spiritual eyes.

Supporting Scripture: Luke 19:41-44

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When Jesus approached Jerusalem, He lamented its lack of spiritual insight. They did not recognize the Messiah, and peace was hidden from them as a result. This moment serves as a reminder to be spiritually awake and aware, to discern God's presence and recognize His work. If we focus on only what's visible or conventional, we might miss what God is doing today. Cultivating a sense of spiritual sensitivity can help us see His plans unfold and embrace His movement around us. Are you open to recognizing God's activity beyond your expectations?

Reflection Question: How can you deepen your spiritual sensitivity to God's work?

Day 5 — Be willing to be sent.

Supporting Scripture: Acts 10:22-23

Cornelius' prayers and deeds reached God, prompting Him to send Peter to share the gospel. Our lives can reflect a similar openness to God's leading. Peter's willingness to go when called resulted in a pivotal moment for the early church, as the gospel began to reach beyond Jewish boundaries. God prepares hearts like Cornelius', and He prepares messengers like Peter to spread His message of salvation. We should be ready and willing to be sent, to reach those God has put in our path. Who might God be preparing you to share the gospel with?

Reflection Question: Who might God be preparing you to share the gospel with?