

Acts 10:34-48  
Peter, Witness to the Resurrection

*Summarize Acts 10:1-33*

### **Gentiles Hear the Good News**

<sup>34</sup> So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), <sup>37</sup> you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,<sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

### **The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles**

<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. <sup>45</sup> And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. <sup>46</sup> For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, <sup>47</sup> “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” <sup>48</sup> And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.

#### Prayer:

Thank you, gracious God, for your mighty acts among the Jewish nation when you sent your Son, born of a woman, to live among them, to die and to rise on the third day. We thank you that these events were not hidden in a corner but were well known all over Judea among both Jews and Gentiles. Instruct us today through your scriptures that we might know more of Christ, and what he did 2,000 years ago, to make his resurrection, his Lordship and his glory known to them and to us today. Amen.

This sermon today has a goal, a purpose. Its purpose is for us to understand why the apostle Peter believed that Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead. But before we get there, we need some background.

Peter, also known as Simon, or Simon Peter, was the leader of Jesus' apostles and God had appointed him to a special place in redemptive history. He was a devout Jew but God showed him that Jesus the Messiah had come not only to save believing Jews but also to save Gentiles (non-Jews, like the Romans) – to grant to them forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Remember that before his ascension Jesus had met with his disciples and gave them the “great commission:”<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” They were to preach the gospel and make disciples not only among the Jewish people but also among the Gentile peoples- all those various people groups who were not Jews, who were ignorant of the Law of God, of the OT scriptures and who worshipped and served other gods besides Yahweh, the Creator of heaven and earth.

God in the OT had sometimes spoken of his will to make himself known among the Gentile nations, as in Psalm 67:

“[may]...your way may be known on earth,  
your saving power among all nations,”

but the Hebrew people had done little to make Yahweh known among the nations. Jonah went to Nineveh in Assyria only because God forced him to go.

But with the Advent of the Messiah, the anointed one of God, Jesus of Nazareth, whom God had send to rescue a people for his name out of all the nations, the situation changed radically - a new day of salvation arrived for the people groups of the earth.

The vision of the unclean animals that Peter saw and was commanded to eat was a powerful illustration that the Lord used to show Peter that the Gentiles were no longer to be considered unclean people but they too are to be included among the people of God as they would come to faith in Christ.

So Peter is sent by the Lord to the Roman centurion Cornelius and Cornelius is there in his house with his relatives and close friends waiting for the arrival of Peter. They wanted to hear what message he had for them from God.

Remember now that Peter, along with the other apostles, had been appointed by Christ to be witnesses to Christ, to his life, death, and resurrection. **What is a witness?** It is someone who has seen something or experienced something and tells others what he has seen or experienced. Witnesses are often used in court trials to tell what they had seen or heard or knew about the person on trial.

The apostles were commissioned by Christ to tell the people what they knew about him – to tell what he did and what he taught. They were to spread the Good News that God had sent a Savior to the earth's people.

So, now Peter, who has been preaching around Jerusalem, like a little bird that is pushed out of its nest and forced to learn to fly, is pushed out of his comfortable Jewish culture and sent to visit a gentile man at his home.

And what Peter does is to witness to Cornelius and the people there what he had seen and knew about Jesus Christ. These people had adopted the Hebrew religion – they had seen and understood Yahweh God as he is revealed in the OT scriptures. They had participated in worship at the synagogue – they were what was called “God-fearers” – they had come to reverence and fear and worship the God of the Hebrews – probably much more devout than the majority of the Hebrews. These people had been prepared by God to hear and receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is what God does, by the invisible working of his Spirit, he prepares people to receive the gospel and he sends messengers to them with the message of the Gospel.

So Peter opens his mouth and begins to deliver his gospel message to the people gathered in Cornelius’ house. He begins by acknowledging that God accepts people from every nation who fear him. Then in verse 36 he begins to talk about the Good News sent through Jesus Christ who is “Lord of all.” This is no insignificant description of Jesus – Peter calls him “Lord of all.”

When Peter had preached previously in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost he explained how the OT had predicted that the Messiah, the One anointed by the Spirit who would deliver God’s people from evil, how the Messiah would be raised from the grave and ascend into heaven, and this happened in Jesus Christ and therefore Peter declared in Acts 2:36, “<sup>36</sup> Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

By calling Jesus “Lord and Christ” Peter was declaring that Jesus was no less than the promised Messiah, the coming of God himself in human flesh, to rescue his people from their sins and bring them into his everlasting kingdom.

When the NT calls Jesus “Lord” it is assigning to him a divine title. Phil 2:10-11:

“...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.”

So in Acts 10:36 Peter echoes what he had preached on the Day of Pentecost, he tells Cornelius and the people there that “Jesus Christ is Lord of all.”

Why does Peter say that “Jesus Christ is Lord of all”? There are three reasons he gives:

### **I. Because of all the Good Works Jesus had done.**

Peter reminds the people gathered there in v. 37, “<sup>37</sup> ***you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea...***” The mighty works of healing and deliverance that

Jesus had done had become well known throughout the nation. Great crowds followed him, there were many testimonies of people being healed and set free from evil powers. Anyone who listened to what people were talking about on the streets would have heard of the prophet from Nazareth who had been doing such wonderful deeds of mercy among the people. And his ministry was not just to the Jews, but Gentiles also were being blessed.

Peter had been there. He had seen Jesus' works. He had been at Jesus' right hand for three years. When Jesus did some of his special acts of healing like healing Jairus' 12-year-old daughter, Peter had been with Jesus, along with James and John to minister to the girl. Peter had been there, he had seen all that Jesus did.

***He declares that Jesus Christ is Lord of all...***

## **II. Because God raised him from the dead on the third day.**

A. Peter had had a personal visit from the risen Jesus:

The third day here was the Sunday of Resurrection. Many had heard of Jesus' R'n but Peter had been there. He was a personal witness.

*Mk. 16 :7* – On early R'n morning, the angel's command to the women at the tomb.  
<sup>7</sup> But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee.

In Luke 24: we read that when the two disciples on the road to Emmaus went to Jerusalem and found the eleven disciples that they told them, <sup>34</sup> saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and <sup>(AT)</sup>has appeared to Simon!" This was on Resurrection Day evening so the Lord had appeared to Peter at some point during the day.

Why a special visit to Peter? We believe it was because Peter of all the disciples was the one who denied knowing the Lord Jesus. He had wept bitterly when he realized what he had done. No doubt his remorse was great, his guilt weighed on his mind, and his heart was broken. But Jesus knew all this and Jesus went to him to console him and comfort him and assure him of his forgiveness. How much Jesus cares for his sheep: he tenderly nourishes and cares for them.

But this was not the only appearance of the resurrected Christ that Peter saw. He was there with the others when the report came to them from the two disciples who had been on the road to Emmaus.

Let us go to Luke's Gospel, chapter 24: 36-42

<sup>36</sup> As they were talking about these things, <sup>(AW)</sup>Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" <sup>37</sup> But they were <sup>(AX)</sup>startled and <sup>(AY)</sup>frightened and <sup>(AZ)</sup>thought they saw a spirit. <sup>38</sup> And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> See my hands and my feet, that it is I

myself. (BA) Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”<sup>40</sup> And when he had said this, (BB) he showed them his hands and his feet.<sup>41</sup> And while they still disbelieved (BC) for joy and were marveling, (BD) he said to them, “Have you anything **here to eat?**”<sup>42</sup> **They** gave him a piece of broiled fish,<sup>[b]</sup><sup>43</sup> and he took it and ate before them.

What is happening here on Resurrection evening  
Jesus is proving that he wasn't a ghost...

Showing them his hands and feet – evidently with the nail wounds still there.

He invited them to touch him – as the women had previously grasped his feet on R'n morning – and felt the physical solidness of his R'n body.

And here with the eleven disciples, to further confirm the physicalness of his resurrected body, he asked for something to eat and they gave him a piece of broiled fish and he took it in his hands and ate it before them.

He didn't go over in a corner but ate it right in front of everybody. As he swallowed the fish they could not see it go down his throat and esophagus, they could not see it in his stomach. Why not? Because all those organs were covered with flesh and what went into the body was hidden from human view- just like if one of us ate something in front of us all. As the person would chew and swallow there would be nothing else visible to the viewing eyes. Only the throat muscles move as the food is swallowed.

So Jesus eating this fish was just as real and common as it had always been. No doubt they had eaten fish together on many occasions. This occasion, in a way, was not different from the previous occasions.

We can imagine Peter telling Cornelius and the household:

“Jesus ate fish with us many times. We remember after he fed both the 5,000 and the 4,000 with fish and bread - we did not just stand there and watch all the people enjoying the food, but we joined in and partook of the feast also. We helped consume the bounty but there was so much food that we picked up 12 and 7 basketfuls after each meal. It was a time of enjoyment and all of us joined the others.”

***He declares that Jesus Christ is Lord of all because...***

**III. God made him to appear to the apostles who “ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. “**

It is interesting that Peter focuses in on this special activity of eating and drinking with the resurrected Christ as a key component in his belief that he is Lord and Messiah. Why is this?

- A. **Identifying marks** of a physical resurrection from the dead: a person must be able to be able to see, hear, touch, smell and taste – that is, to exercise the 5 senses. It is only the eating that enables the resurrected person to experience

those two special senses associated with eating: smell and taste, essential attributes of fully restored body, raised from the dead back to life.

- B. Eating and drinking with Jesus had been a significant part of their lives together for three years.

When Peter thought of the Lord's appearances, this eating and drinking naturally came to the forefront of his mind because it was a characteristic activity when Jesus appeared to them.

Matt. 9:10 at the house of Matthew the tax collector:

<sup>10</sup> And as Jesus<sup>[b]</sup> reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples.

John 12:1-2

Six days before <sup>(A)</sup>the Passover, <sup>(B)</sup>Jesus therefore came to Bethany, <sup>(C)</sup>where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup> So they gave a dinner for him there. <sup>(D)</sup>Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

(Judas there so probably other disciples also)

Luke 5:33-34

<sup>33</sup> And they said to him, <sup>(A)</sup>"The disciples of John <sup>(B)</sup>fast often and <sup>(C)</sup>offer prayers, <sup>(D)</sup>and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours eat and drink." <sup>34</sup> And Jesus said to them, <sup>(E)</sup>"Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

Besides this meal together on R'n even Peter would have remembered their meal on the shore of the Sea of Galilee would have come to his mind:

John 21:9-14

<sup>9</sup> When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." <sup>11</sup> So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. <sup>12</sup> Jesus said to them, <sup>(Q)</sup>"Come and <sup>(P)</sup>have breakfast." Now <sup>(Q)</sup>none of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. <sup>13</sup> Jesus came and <sup>(R)</sup>took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. <sup>14</sup> <sup>(S)</sup>This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

Note:

After fishing all night to no avail, Jesus knew these men would be hungry. Jesus performed an activity he had probably done before, - he cooked a meal for them.

He served them. It doesn't say specifically he ate with them, but surely he did. Why? Because of Peter's testimony, "We ate and drank with him." It doesn't say, "he watched us while we ate and drank" but "we ate and drank with him." The meaning seems clear: they all ate and drank together. By this common social, fellowship activity, Jesus joined in with his disciples in one of those meals that he had previously enjoyed so many times with them.

The disciples would have said something like this, "Jesus is alive. He's back with us. We're eating and drinking with him again. How wonderful!" They had no doubts – here was irrefutable proof once again that Jesus had physically resurrected from the dead. Jesus' eating and drinking with them sealed it for them.

It wouldn't be long before Peter himself would be sitting down and having a meal with Cornelius and his friends. A meal like he had enjoyed with Jesus and the disciples many times.

In fact, on the last night of Jesus' life on earth, he had had a meal with his disciples – together they celebrated the Passover Meal. Hear from Matt. 26:26-30

Matt. 26:26-30 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and (B)after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; (C)this is my body." <sup>27</sup> And he took a cup, and when he (D)had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, <sup>28</sup> for (E)this is my (E)blood of the (A)covenant, which is poured out for (G)many (H)for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>29</sup> I tell you ***I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you (I)in my Father's kingdom.***"

This promise of Jesus to drink with them in his Father's kingdom had a preview, it seems to me, when he ate and drank with them after his R'n. There will be more to come when Jesus returns to usher in his eternal kingdom when his people will join him in their resurrection bodies for "the marriage supper of the lamb." (Rev. 19:9).

Applications:

So as Peter is testifying, witnessing to Cornelius and the others gathered there of his belief that Jesus is Lord and Christ, whom God raised from the dead, one of his main proofs was that Jesus ate and drank with them.

1. Jesus' full humanity was resurrected – even his sense of smell and taste! His body was not partially resurrected but fully and completely resurrected.
2. People of all cultures can relate to the resurrected Jesus eating and drinking with his disciples. One of the most common and joyful human activities – eating and drinking together is a sign of life and vitality and fellowship among people with mutual affection for one another.

The resurrected Jesus was not a ghost – he was a fully resurrected man who could see,

3. Whenever you eat at table, your taste, smell, touch, seeing, and hearing are what the resurrected Son of God also experienced when he ate with his disciples. He is as alive now as is your sense of smell, taste, touch, hearing, and seeing.
4. Our resurrected state should include eating and drinking. Jesus said he would drink the cup with us in his kingdom and we will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb. In the New Jerusalem the trees will bear fruit not just to look at but, I'm sure, to pick and eat!

*Closing prayer to the sermon...*

-by Jeff Gregory, pastor  
Good Shepherd Church  
A Baptist Reformed Fellowship  
8441 Hunnicut Rd.  
Dallas, TX 75228  
Phone: 214-934-8126

[www.gscddallas.org](http://www.gscddallas.org)