



GRACE

REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

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THE BOOK OF ACTS

Sermon Notes

The Spread of the Gospel to the Gentiles, Part III

The Holy Spirit Descends on the Gentiles

Acts 10:34-48

August 12 2007

- I. **Peter Declares God's Impartiality**
- II. **Peter Proclaims the Gospel**
- III. **The Holy Spirit Descends on the Gentiles**

- ❑ One of the most significant truths about God and the Gospel is that there is no one who is not in desperate need of a Savior. In other words, God does not show favoritism.
- ❑ This was a difficult concept for the Jews to grasp. They firmly believed that God favored them, as chosen nation, in some real way over the other nations. However, this was not the case.
- ❑ In fact, the Jews had taken the Old Testament Law, and added to it. This 'new law', was, of course, not biblical; however, it became the basis of exclusion whereby the Jewish people viewed those who did not conform to it in some way morally, and righteously inferior. So much so, that the Jews viewed the Gentiles as unclean dogs.
- ❑ Yet, this was the reason Peter received a divine vision, in Acts 10:10-16. It was through this vision that the Lord revealed to the Apostle that no man is 'unholy or unclean'. As basic as this truth may seem, it was a revelation for Peter.
- ❑ It was God's way of preparing him for the proclamation of the Gospel message to Cornelius and the Gentiles gathered at his home in Caesarea.
- ❑ In Acts 10:34-48, Peter delivers et another speech that reveals: (1) the impartiality of God [and everyone's need for a Savior] and (2) the essence of the Gospel message. Further, it is through the proclamation of the Gospel [the 'keys of the kingdom'] to the Gentiles God saves those gathered in the home of Cornelius through the descending of the Holy Spirit.

I. Peter Declares God's Impartiality [Verses 34-35]

- Luke begins his record of Peter's speech by stating **Verse 34**, 'Opening his mouth, Peter said: 'I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality.''
 - The phrase, 'Opening his mouth' was a common Greek expression that was used to indicate that what the individual was about to declare was something of great importance.
 - Peter begins by saying that he now realizes [through God's revelatory vision] that 'God is not one to show partiality.'
 - The word translated 'partiality' is *Prosopolempsia* in the Greek. In Leviticus 19:15 in the Septuagint [LXX], that is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, judges were prohibited from perverting justice by discriminating in favor of either the rich or the poor. The reason for this, was, as revealed in 2 Chronicles 19:7, the judges in Israel were to be as God was, and 'the LORD our God will have no parting in unrighteousness or partiality or the taking of bribe.'
 - The Greek word translated 'partiality' or [as in the NIV] 'favoritism' is based on a Hebrew idiomatic expression meaning '**to lift a face.**'
 - 'Lifting a face' was a Hebrew expression that described God as a monarch who lifted the face of a petitioning subject. In the Ancient Near East, when the king 'lifted the face' of a petitioner, it meant that the king was bestowing upon him or her royal favor.
 - Therefore, in this particular context, what Peter is declaring in his speech is that God does not 'lift the face' of individuals on the basis of race or ethnicity.
 - The truth of God's impartiality is repeated throughout the Old Testament [Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:25; James 2:1,9; 1 Peter 1:17; 22:12].
 - The impartiality of God preserves one of the most fundamental truths in all of Scripture: **there is no one like God.**
 - One of the aspects of our fallen human nature is that we prefer people who are like us. Fallen human nature seeks out people who are like themselves in race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, etc.
 - Thus, in our fallen human nature, we must continually guard against such sin and injustice.
 - However, this is NEVER the case with God. God does no favor anyone because **there is NO ONE like our God.**

- The ancient Israelites believed that there was something inherent to them, as a people, which God preferred over the other nations. Yet, this tragically missed the mark, as God's ways are higher than man's.
- **There is an infinite chasm that separates God and man.** This is true because, first of all, we are CREATED BEINGS. God, on the other hand, is self-existent. There was a time when we were not, yet God is eternal.
- Throughout the Scriptures, God declares this truth. There is no one like God because He created out of nothing. He is infinite, self-existent, and eternal. [See Isaiah 6; 40; 41; 44; 46; 48; 55:8-9]. We, on the other hand, are finite and dependent upon Him for everything. This Creator/Creation distinction applies to ALL men, regardless of race.
- Further, the Creator/Creation distinctions preserves the truth that God is not like us, in that He is never 'impressed' by worldly things such as talent, wealth, or socio-economic status. The reason is because, once again, God is the Creator of everything! The totality of the wealth in the entire world does not even begin to compare with the infinite 'supply' of resources at God's disposal!
- Yet, not only are we CREATED, but we are SINFUL.
- Every man who has ever lived [with the exception, of course, of Christ], and every man who ever will live, has and will sin – regardless of race or ethnicity. Therefore, Jews and Gentiles, as sinners, are no different in our standing before God. Everyone, without distinction or exception, has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Therefore, everyone is in desperate need of a Savior.
- This truth [the universal sinful nature of man], which Peter declares here, is exactly what the Apostle Paul spends the first three chapters of Romans demonstrating.
- He, then, declares in Romans 3:9-18:

'What then? Are we [Jews] better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written,
 'THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE;
 THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS,
 THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS FOR GOD;
 ALL HAVE TURNED ASIDE, TOGETHER THEY HAVE BECOME USELESS;
 THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD,
 THERE IS NOT EVEN ONE.'
 'THEIR THROAT IS AN OPEN GRAVE,
 WITH THEIR TONGUES THEY KEEP DECEIVING,'
 'THE POISON OF ASPS IS UNDER THEIR LIPS';

‘WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING AND BITTERNESS’;
‘THEIR FEET ARE SWIFT TO SHED BLOOD,
DESTRUCTION AND MISERY ARE IN THEIR PATHS,
AND THE PATH OF PEACE THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN.’
‘THERE IS NO FEAR OF GOD BEFORE THE EYES.’

- Also, in Romans 3:21-26:

‘But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.’

Dr. Douglas Moo writes [concerning Romans 3:21-26], ‘[Paul’s] ‘no distinction,’ as we would expect, has to do with the absence of any basic difference among people with respect to their standing before God. Jews may have the law and circumcision; Americans may lay claim to a great religious heritage; ‘good’ people may point to their works of charity; but all this makes no essential difference to one’s standing before the righteous and holy God...Paul, then, is indicating that all people fail to exhibit that ‘being-like-God’ for which they were created...’

- Peter, then continues, in **Verse 35**, by saying, ‘but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.’
 - Thus, the community of faith is made up of people from every nation.
 - The Old Testament actually declared this. In fact, Israel’s election was, according to the prophets of old, an act of God’s grace, not His partiality.
 - In fact, God had been gracious to even the pagan nations through acts of ‘deliverance.’

Amos 9:7 states:

‘Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to Me,
O sons of Israel?’ declares the LORD
‘Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt,
And the Philistines from Caphtor [Crete] and the Arameans [Syrians] from Kir?’

- Also, the LORD speaks of a ‘Day’ when God would bless ‘Egypt My people’ and ‘Assyria the work of My hands’ and ‘Israel My inheritance.’ Isaiah 19:25
- Furthermore, it is prophet Micah who so powerfully declared, in Micah 6:8, ‘...O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justice, to love kindness, And to walk humbly with your God?’

- This **'requirement'** is, most certainly, universal.
- Yet, not only did the Old Testament declare that the community of faith would be made up of people from every nation, but the New Testament boldly proclaims this as well.
 - Christ, Himself, in John 10:16, speaking of the 'fold' of sheep, that is, the totality of the people of God, states, 'I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.'
 - Further, in Revelation 5:9, John writes, 'And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.'
- NOTE: One of the incredible aspects of the diversity of the Church, the Bride of Christ, is that it reflects the very nature of who God is. God is Trinity: One God, Three Persons. He is both Unity [in His Divine Essence – One God] and Diversity in His Persons [Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – Three eternally distinct Persons].

- **Yet, the words by Peter, in Verse 35, present a very real problem...an impossibility, in fact.**
- If, as the Scriptures, in both the Old and New Testaments, declare, 'There is NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE,' then how can **anyone** fulfill God's requirement to 'fear Him and do what is right...?'
- This, of course, prepares both the ancient and modern reader for Peter's proclamation of the Gospel. In fact, **if anyone could fulfill this 'requirement' in themselves, there would be no reason for Peter to continue in his speech [by proclaiming the Gospel message].**

II. Peter Proclaims the Gospel [Verses 36-43]
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- After demonstrating the universal need for a Savior, Peter, then, declares the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- It is important to understand that this Gospel that Peter proclaims is not just *any* Gospel, but it is the true Gospel...the Apostolic Gospel. And, as such, it is the same Gospel that we are to proclaim today.

- ❑ James Montgomery Boice wrote, ‘Christians are always tempted to reinterpret, rework, or re-create the gospel because they think if they do that, somehow they will make it more appealing to the people to whom they speak.’
 - In other words, we, as modern-day believers, do not have the freedom to deviate from the apostolic Gospel; for if we do, it is no longer reflective of the one true, living, and holy God; but, rather, becomes a reflection of sinful man.
 - Man’s Gospel may soothe pain temporarily. Only God’s Gospel saves eternally.
- ❑ Peter’s Gospel presentation can be broken down into three primary divisions: (1) the Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ; (2) the Death of Jesus Christ; (3) the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Life and Ministry of Christ

- ❑ The first section of Peter’s presentation of the Gospel included the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.
- ❑ Peter begins saying, **Verse 36**, ‘The word which He sent to the sons of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ (He is the Lord of all) - ’
 - In other words, God sent the Gospel message to the Jews people [‘the sons of Israel’], preaching **‘peace through Jesus Christ.’**
 - This is the essence of the Gospel message: ‘peace through Jesus Christ.’
 - This is essential because not only is there an infinite chasm between sinful man and God, but man, apart from Christ, is at war with God. In other words, there is **no neutrality** with respect to our relationship with God. We are either enemies of God (Romans 5:10), with our ‘weapons’ ‘pointed at Him’ or we are at peace with God in Christ.
 - In fact, the Scriptures clearly teach that ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself...’ (2 Corinthians 5:19). Furthermore, the Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:19-20: ‘For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him [Christ], and through Him [Jesus Christ] to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of the Cross.’
 - Remember, Biblical peace is NOT the absence of physical, worldly conflict [although it will eventually include this!]; rather, the peace which the Scriptures speak of **in Christ** is reconciliation with God. Furthermore, it is only through reconciliation with God that true reconciliation with man can occur [i.e. between Jews and Gentiles, see Ephesians 2].
 - The reference to ‘peace through Jesus Christ (who is Lord of all)’ emphasizes the truth that **the ‘great wall’ separating God and man was not race [as the Jews would have like to have believed], but sin.**

- After recording Peter's words concerning 'peace through Jesus Christ', Luke adds, parenthetically, that '**He is Lord of all**'.
- In the context of God's impartiality, it is necessary that we understand that the risen and exalted Jesus Christ is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is Lord of the whole world, *without distinction*.
- He is just as much the Lord of the Gentiles as He is the Lord of the Jews. Both Jews and Gentiles are of equal 'worth', as both were created in the image of God.
- This is why John writes in 1 John 2:2 that 'and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.'
 - Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, without distinction of race.
 - These words by Luke echo Isaiah 52:7 and **Isaiah 57:19**: 'Creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far [Gentiles] and to him who is near [Jews],...'
 - The Apostle Paul also uses Isaiah 57:19 to emphasize the same truth as Peter and Luke concerning the universality of the Gospel and the reconciliation of both Jew and Gentile to God in Christ.
 - NOTE: The inclusion of the Gentiles in the community of faith would have been of great importance to Luke who was himself a Gentile.
- Luke continues his record of Peter's speech **Verses 37-39**: 'you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea, starting from Galilee, after the baptism which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.'
 - Notice how Peter begins this portion of his sermon by telling the Gentiles, '**you yourselves know the thing which took place throughout all Judea...**'
 - This, of course, was a reference to the public ministry of Jesus Christ. Jesus was a real, historical person, and the Gentiles had, no doubt, heard of Him. Many had seen him [although it is uncertain if anyone in Cornelius' home had]. The importance of the public ministry of Jesus, and, as a result, the eyewitnesses, gives Old Testament validity to the claims of Peter and the apostles, for on the basis of two or three is a testimony declared true.
 - Peter mentions 'the baptism which John proclaimed' and the anointing of Jesus of Nazareth with 'the Holy Spirit and with power.'

- This portion of Peter’s sermon is a reference, most certainly, to the baptism of Jesus.
- It was at the baptism of Jesus that our Lord identified with man, undergoing the ‘humiliation’ of baptism. Therefore, it is in our baptism that we identify with Christ.
- It was also at the baptism of Jesus [by John the Baptist] that the Holy Spirit visibly descended upon Jesus, authenticating Jesus as the ‘anointed’ Son of God: the long-awaited anointed One, literally, the Messiah.
 - In the Old Testament, kings, the anointed ones of Israel [see 2 Samuel 1], were anointed with oil.
 - However, Jesus Christ [**the Son**] is anointed by **the Father** with **the Holy Spirit**. It is through this anointed that Jesus fulfills the three Old Testament offices of Prophet, Priest, and King.
 - NOTE: The Holy Spirit was ‘on’ Jesus before His baptism. Of course, it was the Holy Spirit who conceived Christ in the womb of Mary. However, at the baptism, the Holy Spirit **visibly** descended upon Jesus, anointing Him for His public ministry.
 - In Luke 4:17-21, Jesus, Himself, quotes from Isaiah 61:1-2, in a synagogue in Nazareth, saying, ‘The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me...’ Jesus was claiming that this very passage was fulfilled in Christ that day.
 - Further, just as Peter’s sermon emphasized the LORD’s Gentile mission, so Jesus explanation of Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4 emphasized His Gentile mission.
- Peter then continues, saying, **Verse 38** ‘God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.’
 - In other words, it was Christ’s identity as the anointed Son of God which led to His activity, that is going ‘about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.’ One’s ACTIVITY always corresponds to his or her IDENTITY.
 - In fact, it was the Holy Spirit at work in the Incarnate Christ which enabled Him to perform such miraculous works and pointed to His identity as the anointed Son of God.

John Calvin writes, ‘For the power wherein Christ exceeded proceeded from the Spirit alone. Therefore, when as the heavenly Father anointed His Son, He furnished Him with the power of His Spirit.’

- Peter specifically speaks, in **Verse 38**, of Christ's work in 'healing all who were oppressed by the devil...'
 - In fact, the Apostle John, in 1 John 3:8, writes, 'The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.'
 - Therefore, Peter declares that the Incarnate Christ was the Anointed Son of God.
- Peter also re-emphasizes the truth in **Verse 39**, that 'We are witness of all the things He did...'
 - Again, the presence of eyewitnesses throughout the life and ministry of Jesus Christ verifies the truth of the events, in accordance with Jewish Law.

The Death of Christ

- Then, Peter declares, again in **Verse 39**, that 'They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.'
 - Peter's description of Jesus' death, once again, bring to mind Deuteronomy 21:22-23 which declares that a man is **accursed** who hangs on a tree.
 - In other words, as the One appointed by God to die for the sins of His people, the Lord Jesus Christ became accursed in our place.
 - In so doing, Christ abolished the 'great wall' of sin separating God and man; therefore, reconciling to the two.

The Resurrection of Christ

- The Apostolic Gospel did not end with the death of Christ; rather, it emphasized His resurrection.
- In the typical manner of the speeches in Acts, Peter indicates that although men put Christ to death, God raised Him **Verse 40**.
- Yet, for Luke, it was essential that one understand that Christ's resurrection was not a mere 'spiritual' resurrection. The resurrected Christ was not some 'bodiless phantom.' Rather, He underwent a historical, **bodily resurrection**.
 - This is why Peter states in **Verse 41**, that '[He became visible] not to all people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us **who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.**'

- The truth of Christ's bodily resurrection is essential because it underscores the totality of Christ's redemptive, salvific work. Christ came to redeem all of man, both BODY and SPIRIT.
 - Furthermore, it is on the basis of Christ's bodily resurrection that we, too, shall be bodily resurrected.
- Peter, then proclaims in **Verse 42**, that it is Jesus 'who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead.'
- Christ's future role as Judge reveals His identity as the apocalyptic Son of Man, first revealed in the prophecies of Daniel in Daniel 7:13-14 [and John 5:22, 27]:

'I kept looking in the night visions,
 And behold, with the clouds of heaven
 One like a Son of Man was coming,
 And He came up to the Ancient of Days
 And was presented before Him.
 And to Him was given dominion,
 Glory and a kingdom,
 That all the peoples, nations and men of every language
 Might serve Him.
 His dominion is an everlasting dominion
 Which will not pass away;
 And His kingdom is one
 Which will not be destroyed.'
- Thus, in his speech, Peter reveals Jesus Christ as BOTH Son of God and Son of Man.
- NOTE: Only Jesus was both. Adam was *not* a son of man, as he did not have an earthly father or mother. In fact, Luke refers to Adam, in Luke 3:38, as 'the son of God' because God was his father. Yet, everyone descending from Adam, is a son of man. However, only Christ is both Son of God [as He is the eternal Son of the Father], and Son of Man, as He had an earthly mother, Mary. He is, indeed, the **unique Son of God**.
- Peter concludes his Gospel presentation by stating **Verse 43**, 'Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.'
- In other words, all of the Old Testament had pointed to Christ.
 - Yet, what is most significant, here, is that Peter is declaring the universal need of forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
 - Peter begins by declaring God's impartiality, and he concludes by emphasizing the universality of the need for faith in Jesus Christ.

- Jesus Christ is both Savior and Judge.
- Certainly, this was the Apostle Paul's emphasis in Romans 10:12-13

'For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for 'WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'

III. The Holy Spirit Descends on the Gentiles [Verses 44-48]

- Luke concludes Chapter 10 by describing the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Gentile believers in Cornelius' home: **Verses 44-46** states, 'While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.'
 - Notice the relationship between the Spirit and the preaching of the Gospel.
 - The Holy Spirit always acts consistently with the Word.
 - Furthermore, this passage underscores the truth that We are never saved in a vacuum; but through the foolishness of Gospel preaching. We are / were born again through the proclamation of the Gospel / the Word of God and the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit.
 - The Spirit was sovereign here. Peter, in no way, 'forced' God's hand, nor can we today. Rather, it appears that Peter was not even able to finish what he was preaching when the Spirit sovereignly descended upon the Gentiles.

'The visible sign represents to us...what an effectual instrument of God's power the preaching of the gospel is; for He poured out His Spirit as Peter spoke, to the end He might show that He sends not teachers to that end, that they may beat the air with the vain sound of their voice, but that He may work mightily by their voice, and may quicken the same by the power of the Spirit, to the salvation of the godly.'

John Calvin

- It is clear from **Verses 45-46**, that the descent of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by a manifestation of the gift of the Holy Spirit through speaking in tongues – that is discernible foreign languages...just like what happened to the Jews on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.
- Yet, the modern reader must not forget the context in which this event occurred. This was a fulfillment of Acts 1:8.

‘It needs to be stressed that Acts 1:8 is not addressed indiscriminately to all believers, regardless of time and place, but directly only to the *apostles* (cf. v. 2 where the ‘you’ of v. 8 is explicitly identified as the apostles), and concerns the foundational task of bringing the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome completed by them (cf. Colossians 1:6, 23). It does apply today, but only derivatively, as we build on the apostolic foundation and hold fast to their foundational gospel witness. Where this is not grasped, one result is an unintentional, but common, misuse of the verse. Most assuredly the local congregation, or any other larger or smaller locale in the Western world serving as a base for contemporary missionary activity, is not ‘Jerusalem’! Rather we today are part of ‘the ends of the earth’ reached by the gospel in the period beyond its foundational spread.’ Richard Gaffin

- What occurs here in Acts 10:44-48 is a **once-for-all, never-to-be-repeated act in Redemption history**. In other words, never again would the Gospel initially open the kingdom to the Gentiles through the preaching of the Gospel.

‘Specifically, one of Luke’s purposes is to document the foundational (i.e., apostolic) spread of the gospel from Israel to the nations. He is intent on recording the initial, once-for-all establishment of the new covenant church as made up of both Jew and Gentile, through the ministry of the apostles and those associated with them.’ Richard Gaffin, *Perspectives on Pentecost*

- At the Day of Pentecost, there were multiple reasons for the manifestation of the gift of tongues. First of all, it demonstrated a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, such as Joel 2:28-32. Secondly, it demonstrated that, with the exaltation of Christ, we were now in the ‘Last Days.’ Thirdly, it demonstrated judgment upon the nation of Israel [as the wonders of God were being told in discernible foreign languages]. Fourthly, it miraculously ensured the spreading of the Gospel to the nations. And [there are certainly other reasons] it generally represented a true miracle and authentication of the claims of Christ and the power of God through Person of the Holy Spirit.
- Yet, here in Acts 10, the purpose of the Gentiles speaking in tongues seems to be quite different. The main purpose appears to be to objectively and irrefutably reveal to the ‘circumcised believers’, that is the Jewish Christians, that these new Gentile converts were regenerated and indwelt with the same Holy Spirit that they were [beginning at the Day of Pentecost], and as a result were full-fledged members in the new covenantal community.
 - This seems clear in **Verse 45**: ‘All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.’
 - God had transformed Peter’s understanding of the Gentiles through a vision; He was now doing the same for the ‘circumcised believers’ through the speaking in tongues of the Gentiles.

As John MacArthur writes, ‘[God] knew that the Jewish brethren with Peter would be hard to convince, so He granted the same manifestation experienced by Jewish Christians at Pentecost. It should be noted that here, as throughout Acts, speaking in tongues is a group, not an individual, phenomenon.’

- Finally, Peter said, in **Verses 47-48**, ‘Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?’ And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.’
 - Peter’s statements and actions here indicate that he has been radically transformed by the power of God. He realizes that God has saved these Gentiles in exactly the same manner, accompanied with exactly the same signs as the Jewish believers at Pentecost. Therefore, Peter rightfully concludes that they should be welcomed into the new covenantal community through exactly the same ‘rite’: water baptism.
 - This is the same sequence of events that also occurred at Pentecost in Acts 2:37-41.
 - Furthermore, Peter realized that he did not have the right to deny the ‘sign’ of baptism to those God had clearly saved through the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet, tragically today, **the standards of ‘righteousness’ for many Christians are higher than God’s [which of course is sin]!**
 - It is interesting to consider that when Peter ordered that the Gentile converts ‘be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ’, the ones doing the baptism were quite possibly some of the Jewish believers, thus teaching them through the humble act of baptism, to welcome the Gentiles into the community of faith with no reservations.
 - It is also interesting that it does not appear that the new converts were compelled in any way to be circumcised.
- Luke concludes this section, in **Verse 48**, by saying that ‘Then they asked him to stay for a few days.’
 - Therefore, Peter remains with the Gentile Christians and fellowships with them, no doubt sharing meals with his new brothers and sisters in Christ.
- ❖ This passage in Acts 10:34-48 reveals what the Apostle Paul later summarized: **‘in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks.’** (1 Corinthians 12:13)