Why Send For Peter?

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday September 24th, 2023

Text: Acts 10:5

### Intro

1. A popular teaching among the religious world on baptism is that it’s not essential for salvation.
   1. Either it’s optional, mandatory, or not necessary altogether.
   2. Those that teach it is optional or even mandatory teach it is an outward appearance of an inward grace (Not found in Scripture).
   3. Also, it is taught that it is the entrance into a particular denomination.
2. While men may teach that baptism is not essential, the Word of God plainly teaches that it is *(Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:27; I Pet. 3:21).*
3. The conversion of Cornelius challenges many popular teachings on salvation today, such as “Faith Alone,” “The Sinner’s Prayer” or by “Direct Operation of the Holy Spirit.”
4. Acts 10:5:
   1. “Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter”
5. Acts 10:5 poses an important question in light of the many teachings on how to be saved today…
6. “Why send for the apostle Peter?”

#### Why Send for Peter…?

* 1. If “Morally Right” Saves?
     1. Acts 10:1-2
        1. Cornelius was a “centurion of what was called the Italian cohort.” Centurions were Roman non-commissioned officers (NCO) who commanded at least 100 men (century = 100) and they acted as local law enforcement as well as soldiers in battle. They were not always considered moral because they took what they wanted from the provinces they oversaw.
        2. Cornelius is described as a man who was a “devout man and one who feared God with all his household...”
        3. He was a man who not only exercised self-control in his own life but also managed his own house! (Righteous – Acts 10:22)
        4. He also was engaged in good works as it says of him that he “gave many alms to the Jewish people.”
     2. So many people think that just living right is all that is required to be saved. “So-and-So is a good person” (Fill in the blanks!).
     3. Lots of people think that doing “good works” justifies one before God and saves (Matthew 7:21-23).
  2. If Saying a Prayer Saves?
     1. Acts 10:2
        1. It also said of him, that he “prayed to God continually.”
        2. He not only “prayed to God continually” but his prayer in Acts 10 was answered by an angel who told him to send for Peter! (10:3-6)
        3. His prayer was answered not with salvation but with a command to send for Peter! (10:5)
     2. Popular teaching today is that a prayer will save souls, but that is not taught anywhere in the Scriptures!
  3. If Angels Preach to Men?
     1. Acts 10:3-8
        1. All that the angel did was to tell him to send for Peter who was residing in Joppa. Peter had been in Lydda *(Acts 9:32-35)* and stayed on in Joppa after raising Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead *(Acts 9:36-43).*
        2. Cornelius understood the words of the angel and explained it to his men (Acts 10:22).
        3. Muhammad – AD 610: Said an angel taught him the gospel was corrupt and gave him the words for Islam, the Koran (Q’uran). *(Gal. 1:6-9)*
        4. Joseph Smith – AD 1830: Said an angel told him the gospel was corrupt and gave him the words for the Book of Mormon. *(Gal. 1:6-9)*
     2. I Cor. 1:21: It is the gospel that saves and God designed it to be preached, not by angels *(Muhammad – AD 610; Joseph Smith – AD 1830),* but by men, the followers of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20: “Go” & “Teach”)
  4. If Men Are Saved by Visions?
     1. Acts 10:3
        1. Cornelius was clearly given a vision but this did not save him!
        2. He was given instructions to send for Peter in Joppa! (10:5)
     2. There are people who claim to have seen visions and this is their confirmation that they have been saved – A vision didn’t save Cornelius!
  5. If Holy Spirit Baptism Saves?
     1. Acts 10:44-46
        1. The account says, “The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message.”
        2. Peter and the Jews with him were able to tell because they “were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God.”
     2. Prevalent teaching today in many denominations is that the only baptism that saves is Holy Spirit baptism!
     3. Acts 11:15-18
        1. Peter explained to Jews in Jerusalem what the baptism of the Holy Spirit was for: “God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”
        2. Peter saw the seal of approval from God that Gentiles could be saved by the Holy Spirit falling on the Gentiles as it did on the apostles at the beginning (Day of Pentecost – Acts 2).
     4. The Holy Spirit baptism on the Day of Pentecost was a sign to the Jews assembled that the message was from God *(Acts 2),* and here the baptism of the Holy Spirit was again a sign to the Jews (Peter and company) that God saves Gentiles as well as the Jews! *(Acts 10:34-35)*
  6. Why send for Peter if Cornelius could have been saved in these supernatural ways?

#### Why Send for Peter?

* 1. Cornelius Needed to Hear the Word of God (Acts 10:30-33)
     1. Acts 10:30-33: When God answered his prayer He didn’t preach to him but had him send for a preacher to hear what God commanded!
     2. Acts 11:12-14: Peter recounted the words of the angel who told Cornelius to have Peter “’brought here; and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.’”
     3. Hearing is the first step in conversion:
        1. Acts 2:22: “Men of Israel, listen to these words…”
        2. Rom. 10:14: “…How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?”
        3. Rom. 10:17: “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (KJV, NKJ: “God”). *(Sound words come from Christ – I Tim. 6:3)*
        4. Acts 15:7-9: Peter said, “…by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe.”
     4. The words Cornelius heard from Peter are recorded in *Acts 10:34-43.*
  2. Men Are Saved by Gospel Preaching (Acts 11:13-14)
     1. I Cor. 1:21: It is the gospel that saves and God designed it to be preached, not by angels or directly by the Holy Spirit, but by men, the followers of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20: “Go” & “Teach”) from the words inspired by the Holy Spirit!
     2. Rom. 1:16: The gospel “is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek” (II Thess. 2:14: Gospel calls).
     3. Cornelius had to first hear the gospel to “call upon the name of the Lord” *(Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; Rom. 10:13)* and how would he “hear without a preacher?” (Acts 10:33; Rom. 10:14)
  3. Obedience is Necessary (Acts 10:47-48)
     1. Once the word is preached men must decide to obey or not *(Felix: Acts 24:24-27; Agrippa: 26:27-28).*
     2. Heb. 5:9: “He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation.” *(Matthew 7:21; John 14:15: Must do His commandments!)*
     3. Cornelius’ conversion , the first Gentile convert, ended the same way as all NT conversions, in obedience to the gospel by baptism! (Acts 10:48)
  4. Repentance is Commanded (Acts 11:18)
     1. Acts 17:30; II Pet. 3:9: “All men everywhere are commanded to repent!”
     2. Cornelius repented – Acts 11:18
  5. Baptism Saves! (Acts 10:47-48)
     1. I Pet. 3:21: “Baptism now saves us.”
        1. “By the resurrection of Christ” *(Rom. 6:3-4: Baptism symbolizes Christ’s death, burial, and His resurrection; “newness of life”)*
     2. Acts 10:47-48: After recognizing none could refuse them water *(water immersion in the name of Christ – Matthew 28:19),* he “ordered them to be baptized in the name of Christ” (Commanded, or ordered, makes it not an option!).
     3. Acts 22:16: Ananias was sent by God to teach Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:10-12) and he told him to “Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.” *(Fulfillment to Joel’s prophecy – Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21)*
     4. Cornelius and his household “called on the name of the Lord” as prescribed by God, through baptism – Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
  6. Peter was sent to Cornelius to give him a chance to hear and obey the gospel to be saved!

## Conclusion

1. Acts 10:33, 47-48; 11:14, 18: Cornelius and his household heard, believed, repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ!
2. Baptism is essential to salvation *(Mark 16:16):* just as belief *(John 3:16; Rom. 10:17),* repentance *(Acts 2:38),* and confession of faith *(Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10)* are necessary in order for one to be saved (One of those alone will not do it!)
3. Jesus Himself said, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” *(Mark 16:16).*
4. If you have not made the decision Cornelius and his household made, why not obey the gospel now, recognizing that “now is ‘THE DAY OF SALVATION!’” *(II Cor. 6:2)*
5. If not a Christian, repent and be baptized into His name!
6. If a Christian in error, don’t wait till it’s eternally too late. Repent and be renewed!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!