

I Have Other Sheep...

Ես Ուրիշ Ոչխարներ Ունիմ...

Acts 10:22-48

Last Sunday we started studying chapter 10. We are in the pagan city the **Caesarea**. God is going to shape **Peter** and **Cornelius** and **the community around them**. We will see the Good News of Jesus Christ spreading all over...

Last week the title of my sermon was **Building Bridges**. The best example about this topic is our **Lord Jesus Christ himself**. John writes:

¹⁴ **“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—** ¹⁵ **just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.** (John 10:14-16 NIV11)

Let me show you on the power point a summary of those verses.

There are three groups in the passage:

1. The sheep in the pen (NIV), **the Israelites**
2. **The flock** (the sheep who listen, know his voice, and follow Jesus)

Jesus also spoke about the “others”:

3. I have **other sheep** that are not of this **sheep pen** (16).

These are the Gentiles, you and me. Again, some do believe and thus belong to the flock while others don't.

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. (16)

Circles 1 and 3 collide and their intersection is the **ONE FLOCK**, that is the church of Jesus Christ. This is John's announcement about the church.

This is the reality of Acts chapter 10. **Welcome to Jesus... open to everyone...**

- Peter saw a vision about what to eat, what is clean and what is not clean. God gave him to eat whatever was on the “plate.” God called Peter to the **gentile world**, not any gentile, but the **Romans** who were the occupiers of Jerusalem.

- We ended last week saying, Peter went down from the roof, he was on same level with the messengers who were sent by Cornelius. Peter listened to them, and invited them to his house.

Let us continue:

-Journey to Caesarea:

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." (Acts 10:23-26 NIV11)

- Here we go, Peter is on move, with the three messengers who came from Joppa, and as we read, Peter took with him some believers. According to chapter 11 those were six people. Those were eyewitnesses going with Peter. I assume all were Jewish who were converted to Christianity.

- They arrived the next day. Cornelius was expecting, not only him, but also his relatives, and more, close friends.

We have a community here.

- Peter enters the house, Cornelius falls down in reverence. Yet Peter quickly puts things in perspective: "**Stand up, I am only a man myself.**"

How important is to know who we are?

Let me be "charajji" in Armenian (naughty guy); it is nice to see for a change a Roman official on his knees. Yet, Peter did not lose his focus.

On the other hand, I see here Cornelius' hunger to find out what God is telling him...

Peter, on the other hand, focused on God because God is the center of all this. Asking him to stand, let him be equally on the same level...

-Peter Confesses and builds a bridge...

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?" (Acts 10:27-29 NIV11)

- The next level of communication is that now Peter went to the living room and there was a large group waiting. Now, his words were building bridges. He confessed that he did not associate with gentiles before. **BUT GOD...** has showed him new discoveries. Peter is informing them that he is obeying God.

“A big shift has taken place in Peter’s thinking, for he now realizes that no longer are the typical Jewish distinctions among people significant. They have been rendered void once and for all. In this episode Jew and Gentile have come together.”¹

Illustration: When you visit people, go with an open ear to listen, open heart to feel their pain. Acknowledging people’s pain opens doors to build bridges... God does amazing things in that relationship...

Peter is learning from this experience... How can I help you, Cornelius?

³⁰ Cornelius answered: “Three days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me ³¹ and said, ‘Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. ³² Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.’ ³³ So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us.” (Acts 10:30-33 NIV11)

Peter hears the vision a second time with same details. Peter is solving the message of the puzzle, putting together his own vision and this vision. Cornelius is a Yahweh-fearing man. He loves God. Cornelius is ready to learn from Peter. Peter acknowledges that they are in the presence of God. In a gentile home, they are in the presence of God. Do you see how God is shaping Peter?

-Peter tells who is Jesus the Lord and the Messiah, Kerygma

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism ³⁵ but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. (Acts 10:34-35 NIV11)

Peter is going to tell the story of Jesus; scholars call it the **kerygma**, which simply means **proclamation**. “Peter opened his mouth and preach the gospel. What Peter preached is the **life and ministry of Jesus**... Christ’s life is the gospel. The power of God unto salvation is the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is given here in summary form.”²

Peter starts with the **lesson that he learned**. We need to be humble to say, “I am mistaken; God is teaching me that there is **no favoritism with God**.”

God’s message is open to all nations. It starts with the fear of the Lord, with means having faith and obeying God.

The message:

³⁶ You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. ³⁷ You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. (Acts 10:36-38 NIV11)

1. This message of peace.

John Stott says: “This is message of peace reconciliation with God and neighbor through Jesus Christ who is Lord of all not just of Israel.”³

Building bridges, this is an amazing message of reconciliation between Jews and the Gentile world.

Q: Without the peace of Jesus, how can we be witnesses to the world?

Q: Without a relationship with God and each other, what message do we have for the world?

2. John the Baptist preached about the Lamb of God coming. Peter says: “You know about it, you heard about this.

3. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth, the historical reality, Jesus of Nazareth. “On Pentecost Peter briefly mentioned that Jesus’ miracles were God’s accreditation of Christ (2:22).”⁴ Here we find God anoint him by the Holy Spirit.

“When Jesus announced God’s kingdom, he did so in the teeth of nationalist expectation of imminent armed revolt against Rome. No, declared Jesus: it was a message of peace. But to underwrite the message, God anointed Jesus with the spirit and power: in other words, he really was the “the Messiah,” the anointed one, even though his form of kingship didn’t look like what people expected.”⁵

4. We are witnesses before the death of Jesus

³⁹ “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, ⁴⁰ but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. ⁴¹ He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ⁴² He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” (Acts 10:39-43 NIV11)

Peter further explains what happens to Jesus; he was crucified, and God rose him from the dead (center teaching, death and resurrection).

5. **We are witnesses after his resurrection.** God chose to whom the resurrected Jesus would be seen. He gives more detail about the risen Lord who ate and drank, like further proves that the risen Lord was a reality and not just a vision or dream.

6. **We should preach the message of salvation**

7. **God ordained Jesus as a judge.** Whoever believes in him receives forgiveness. Salvation is secured by Jesus. For everyone who believes in HIM.

Summary of this sermon:

Peter is saying: “Cornelius, the God whom you have worshipped from afar has done all this, as part of his global plan to set everything right at last; and, at every stage, Jesus in the middle of it all! God has thus fulfilled the purposes for which he called Israel in the first place; and you, Cornelius, and everyone everywhere who believes this message, will receive a welcome at once, without more ado, into the family whose home has, written in shining letters above the door, the wonderful word ‘forgiven’.”⁶

Then what?

Application:

In 2nd chapter after first sermon of Peter, people asked “**what shall we do?**” Peter responded saying to them: **Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ.**

Here, something else happened:

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. (Acts 10:44-48)

Wait a minute. Where is the altar call?

God sends His Spirit on all who heard the message, with the sign of speaking with tongues. And the six people who came with Peter witnessed that.

How did Peter feel? I mean he is there to preach and ask them to accept Jesus as their Savior. Peter did not do any of those, and God's Spirit came on them.

-Why did God send His Spirit on this crowd? (*They were not even circumcised?*)

-How do you feel that God came and touched you where you are?

No rituals, no religious ceremonies, no favoritism, no privileged people...

They were not even baptized...

God is coming and touching a community believer of Yahweh, who were considered a second class gentile community.

God's Spirit is assuring them He is with them. The Lord himself will go before them and they will be with God; God will never leave them nor forsake them.

Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." (Deut 31:8 NIV)

How do you think Peter felt?

Jesus gave Peter keys of kingdom of God **"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven"** (Mat 16;19)

Jesus chose Peter to be his **apostle**, someone with a **mission**, with the **message of the Good News**.

Yes, but God can reach out to anyone with you or without you.

You do your part; the rest is in God's hand.

Peter witnessed God's Spirit at work, another lesson of humility.

1. Ajith Fernando, *The NIV Application Commentary*, Acts P 323
2. R.C. Sproul, *You Will Be My Witnesses to the End of The Earth*, P 158
3. John Stott, *The Spirit, the Church and the World*, p 190
4. Ajith Fernando, *The NIV Application Commentary*, Acts P 336
5. N.T. Wright *Acts for Everyone (book1)*, P 169
6. *ibid* p 169-170