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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this lesson is to look at two biblical evangelism examples where Peter and Jesus tell the good news to Gentiles, resulting in them becoming children of God.

Biblical evangelism is presenting the gospel to people with the purpose that the hearer will become a believer.

We need to discern how we share the gospel or part of our testimony that will benefit the hearer, in order for them to relate to our message.

Therefore we need to present the message in a way for the hearer to respond to a loving father who desires a meaningful relationship with them.

**There are two forms of evangelism-**

**A. Public speaking to a group of people like in an evangelism service, or large crusades.**

This is where we make a bold declaration of who God is, a good and loving Father who desires to have a meaningful relationship with his sons and daughters. In our crusades or church meetings we will always be looking for opportunities to display the power of God through miracles and healings.

**B. Sharing our own personal journey and experiences with someone.**

And, this is where we share our testimony and how Jesus has changed our lives, which then provides a way to tell the good news of Jesus in a more natural progression.

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## 2. Central Theme of Biblical Evangelism

It is critically important that in sharing the good news, we focus on the fact that God desires a loving relationship with us. Entrance into the kingdom of God and having eternal life is not based on good works. Nor is it feeling guilty about being a sinner.

We saw in [Fellowship of the Mystery of His Will](#), that the Original Intention of God was to have Sons and Daughters, and that He would do this through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection.

In this study we are going to find that evangelism needs to be biblically based, in order for people to have a correct understanding of God is.

This way may not be the way we have seen other Christians evangelise. They may promote a method that brings conviction of sin, being based on the fear of an angry God wanting to punish them if they do not repent.

For example:

- Proclaiming that they need to repent from their sins' and show godly sorrow, as evidence of repentance.
- Focusing on the point that Jesus died on the cross for their sins
- Others teach that to bring conviction to the sinner, we need to show how they have broken God's laws and commandments.
- Salvation is through the cross, rather than the giving of a new heart and a New Covenant
- Teaching that man is evil, rather than Jesus' righteousness will replace their sins.
- Focusing on Jesus is their saviour, rather than His Lordship of a kingdom.
- Having the person recite the 'sinner's prayer'.

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However, in reading the scriptures, we find a completely different way of presenting the gospel.

To help us with our sharing the good news, we will look at the first major evangelism of a group of Gentiles by Peter.

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### 3. Apostle Peter's Biblical Evangelism of a Gentile Household

When something is mentioned for the first time in the Bible, we need to pay particular attention to its meaning. This is called the Law of First Mention. Acts 10 is the first full explanation of how a gentile household came to Christ. This is the first message to a person who is not Jewish after the birth of the church and the New Covenant.

Peter has just been shown in a vision where God tells him that the Gentiles are not be called unclean.

**ACTS 10:9-15**

**THE NEXT DAY, AS THEY WENT ON THEIR JOURNEY AND DREW NEAR THE CITY, PETER WENT UP ON THE ROOFTOP TO PRAY, ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR. THEN HE BECAME VERY HUNGRY AND WANTED TO EAT; BUT WHILE THEY MADE READY, HE FELL INTO A TRANCE AND SAW HEAVEN OPENED AND AN OBJECT LIKE A GREAT SHEET BOUND AT THE FOUR CORNERS, DESCENDING TO HIM AND LET DOWN TO THE EARTH. IN IT WERE ALL KINDS OF FOUR-FOOTED ANIMALS OF THE EARTH, WILD BEASTS, CREEPING THINGS, AND BIRDS OF THE AIR. AND A VOICE CAME TO HIM, "RISE, PETER; KILL AND EAT." BUT PETER SAID, "NOT SO, LORD! FOR I HAVE NEVER EATEN ANYTHING COMMON OR UNCLEAN." AND A VOICE SPOKE TO HIM AGAIN THE SECOND TIME, "WHAT GOD HAS CLEANSED YOU MUST NOT CALL COMMON." THIS WAS DONE THREE TIMES. AND THE OBJECT WAS TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN AGAIN.**

#### A. God does not see Cornelius as a sinner

So we find that God considered Cornelius to be a devout and God-fearing man! Therefore, if God does not consider that persons who do not follow Jesus Christ, are necessarily bad or unclean, it is important to have the same attitude as Him. For this reason, we discussed the goodness of man in more detail in [Unregenerate Man is Good](#).

**ACTS:10:1-2**

**THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN IN CAESAREA CALLED CORNELIUS, A CENTURION OF WHAT WAS CALLED THE ITALIAN REGIMENT, A DEVOUT MAN AND ONE WHO FEARED GOD WITH ALL HIS HOUSEHOLD, WHO GAVE ALMS GENEROUSLY TO THE PEOPLE, AND PRAYED TO GOD ALWAYS.**

#### B. Jesus is Lord

The first component of Peter's message to Cornelius and his household was the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

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**ACTS 10:36  
HE IS LORD OF ALL**

The old way of sharing the gospel is a tendency to focus in our evangelism on Jesus being saviour, more than on His Lordship.

But here we see that Peter in his biblical evangelism of the Gentiles, refers to the Lordship of Jesus rather than salvation from our sins. And his focus is on the gospel of the kingdom, not on Jesus "saving us from our sins".

We see the same principle in the well-known scripture regarding people being born again.

**ROMANS 10:9  
THAT IF YOU CONFESS WITH YOUR MOUTH THE LORD JESUS AND BELIEVE IN  
YOUR HEART THAT GOD HAS RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, YOU WILL BE SAVED.**

There is no reference to "accepting Jesus as Lord and Saviour" as part of the 'sinner's prayer'. It is about confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. This confession is what declares His mastery and kingship over your life.

**C. Testimony of power evangelism**

Then, after His Lordship, we find that Peter refers to a testimony about the power of Jesus to release the captives.

**ACTS:10:38  
HOW GOD ANOINTED JESUS OF NAZARETH WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WITH  
POWER, WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD AND HEALING ALL WHO WERE  
OPPRESSED BY THE DEVIL,**

The testimony of what Jesus did in your life is incredibly powerful. This is because when you testify about what Jesus did, the same anointing that set you free, becomes available to the listener if they mix it with faith.

As well as this, Revelation 19 teaches us that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. So when we tell of what Jesus has done in our lives, we are giving the testimony of Jesus. We will discuss this in detail in Evangelism and the Anointing.

**REVELATION 19:10  
... WORSHIP GOD! FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY."**

**D. Jesus died, but no explanation of what happened on the cross**

The majority of leaders will tell you that you must include an explanation of WHY Jesus died on the cross in your evangelism. Yet we don't see this in Peter's biblical evangelism of Cornelius' household.

**ACTS 10:39  
AND WE ARE WITNESSES OF ALL THINGS WHICH HE DID BOTH IN THE LAND OF  
THE JEWS AND IN JERUSALEM, WHOM THEY KILLED BY HANGING ON A TREE.**

Peter talks about the cross, but he found no need to explain why Jesus died on the cross. Nor do we have to explain WHY Jesus died every time we evangelise.

It may seem that I am labouring the point, but just because famous evangelists have used this in the past we do not need to keep doing it today.

**E. Jesus resurrection**

Next Peter shares about the resurrection:

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**ACTS 10:40**  
**HIM GOD RAISED UP ON THE THIRD DAY, AND SHOWED HIM OPENLY,**

Elsewhere, we find that the apostles focused more on the resurrection than the cross in their preaching.

**ACTS 4:33**  
**AND WITH GREAT POWER THE APOSTLES GAVE WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD JESUS. AND GREAT GRACE WAS UPON THEM ALL.**

This is correct biblical truth because we are reconciled to God through Jesus death, and saved through His resurrection.

**ROMANS 5:10**  
**FOR IF WHEN WE WERE ENEMIES WE WERE RECONCILED TO GOD THROUGH THE DEATH OF HIS SON, MUCH MORE, HAVING BEEN RECONCILED, WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE.**

Having said this, in Salvation 101, we found that salvation is in reference to Jesus delivering us when we need rescuing. Salvation is not a particularly good term to describe the new birth or adoption as sons and daughters. Although being born again definitely saves us, salvation starts as soon as anybody calls on the name of Jesus Christ.

#### F. Jesus will judge the living and the dead

**ACTS 10:42**  
**AND HE COMMANDED US TO PREACH TO THE PEOPLE, AND TO TESTIFY THAT IT IS HE WHO WAS ORDAINED BY GOD TO BE JUDGE OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.**

Following this, part of Peter's message was that Jesus will judge the living (those who are of the family of God) and those who are dead (those outside the family of God.) This is called the Great White Throne of Judgement, after Jesus final return. I will discuss this in detail in Judgment of God 101.

#### G. Faith in Jesus alone is what brings us into the family of God.

**ACTS 10:43**  
**TO HIM ALL THE PROPHETS WITNESS THAT, THROUGH HIS NAME, WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS."**

Let's see what Peter misses out, yet is so common in the gospel message today:

- Godly sorrow is not a necessary component - it was due to sexual immorality in a particular CHURCH which they needed to show godly sorrow for.
- Law is not mentioned - why would he? Cornelius is not a Jew.
- Repentance is not mentioned, just faith in Jesus alone!
- Emphasizing the message of the cross and that He died for your sins, which is not part of the Biblical message of the good news - you can talk about that later.
- Sinner's prayer is not used. I use a totally different prayer based out of the New Covenant and new birth..
- Confess Jesus as your saviour is not mentioned.
- Fear-based "rapture" or "anti-Christ" message - yes people will come to belief in Jesus, but if their initial view of God is catastrophic and angry, they will not see Him as a loving Father.

## H. Reference to what the prophets spoke

Again, looking at verse 43, Peter refers to the prophets. It appears that Cornelius had some understanding of Old Testament scripture because Cornelius was considered God-fearing, devout and had an understanding of alms-giving, which is a Jewish custom. Different prophets (eg Jeremiah, Hosea, Ezekiel) wrote about a coming New Covenant. Peter refers to the prophets because they prophesied that as part of the New Covenant that was to come, there would be the cancellation of sins. That covenant did not say, repent from your sins, it simply stated that there was remission of sins, which means sins are taken away. Thus, the book of Hebrews summarises the New Covenant:

### **HEBREWS 8:8-10**

**I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MIND AND WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. NONE OF THEM SHALL TEACH HIS NEIGHBOR, AND NONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM. FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, *AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE.*"**

God forgets their sin when people simply believe that Jesus is the son of God and declare that He is Lord of their life.

## I. Signs and wonders confirm the Word of God.

Confirming that Peter's sharing the gospel was anointed, The Holy spirit fell on all who were present. I have experienced the same in my crusades:

### **ACTS 10:44-45**

**WHILE PETER WAS STILL SPEAKING THESE WORDS, THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL UPON ALL THOSE WHO HEARD THE WORD. AND THOSE OF THE CIRCUMCISION WHO BELIEVED WERE ASTONISHED, AS MANY AS CAME WITH PETER, BECAUSE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT HAD BEEN Poured OUT ON THE GENTILES ALSO.**

This does not mean that we do not talk about repentance at all. We need to prayerfully consider each situation, as each situation will be unique. For example, if a person is weighed down by shame, guilt and sin, then talking to them about repentance will help them immensely. Remember the purpose is to set the captive free, not weigh them down more which is what the Pharisees did. We discuss repentance separately in Repentance 101.

Remember that Cornelius was a righteous man in the sight of God before he was a new creation, therefore he did not necessarily need to 'repent' at that point. And that repentance simply means to change your mind. In reality he was repenting by deciding (ie changing his mind) to follow Jesus.

For some people their sins is a huge burden that God wants to remove which is what Jesus preached in His evangelism of a Gentile:

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## 4. Jesus' Biblical Evangelism of a Samaritan

As we go through Jesus' evangelism of the Samaritan, we will see a similar biblical message to Peter's.

**A. Use of the natural to start a conversation**

**JOHN 4:7**

**A WOMAN OF SAMARIA CAME TO DRAW WATER. JESUS SAID TO HER, "GIVE ME A DRINK."**

From this we learn that we don't need to start with 'spiritual' topics, to start a conversation about the Father and Jesus

**B. Engaging Curiosity**

**JOHN 4:10**

**JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO HER, "IF YOU KNEW THE GIFT OF GOD, AND WHO IT IS WHO SAYS TO YOU, 'GIVE ME A DRINK,' YOU WOULD HAVE ASKED HIM, AND HE WOULD HAVE GIVEN YOU LIVING WATER."**

**C. Using the knowledge of what the person already knows about God, to offer eternal life.**

**JOHN 4:13-14**

**JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO HER, "WHOEVER DRINKS OF THIS WATER WILL THIRST AGAIN, BUT WHOEVER DRINKS OF THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM WILL NEVER THIRST. BUT THE WATER THAT I SHALL GIVE HIM WILL BECOME IN HIM A FOUNTAIN OF WATER SPRINGING UP INTO EVERLASTING LIFE."**

**D. Using the Gift of the Holy Spirit**

Using the word of knowledge to expose the CONSEQUENCE of sin - the shame she was experiencing

**JOHN 4:16-18**

**JESUS SAID TO HER, "GO, CALL YOUR HUSBAND, AND COME HERE."**

**THE WOMAN ANSWERED AND SAID, "I HAVE NO HUSBAND."**

**JESUS SAID TO HER, "YOU HAVE WELL SAID, 'I HAVE NO HUSBAND,' FOR YOU HAVE HAD FIVE HUSBANDS, AND THE ONE WHOM YOU NOW HAVE IS NOT YOUR HUSBAND; IN THAT YOU SPOKE TRULY."**

- Jesus saw her as someone bound by the shame of not being able to hold a relationship, not as a sinner
- Jesus saw the good in her and that she spoke the truth
- There was no call to repentance - just wisdom to set her free from the consequence of sin: "you need to separate from that man who is not your husband"
- He did not judge her.
- There is no condemnation

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## 5. Summary

Biblical evangelism of Gentiles focuses more on:

- Lordship of Jesus rather than Saviour
- Power of God to deliver rather than law
- Faith in Jesus alone, without focusing on the need for godly sorrow and repentance
- Focus on the consequences of sin rather than sin
- Lack of judgement and condemnation