

The Power of Inclusivity

Peter shares the gospel with the Gentiles, and they receive the Holy Spirit

The Empowered Church Series - Part 20

Acts 10:34-48

June 10-11, 2023

Introduction

- **A History of God Revealed** – God didn't have to let us know what He's like or have connection to Him. We take it for granted that He does. Everything we know about Him, He had to show us. Human beings cannot fathom God alone and certainly not the importance or personal nature of God. The Bible says that God gives to His creation both General Revelation and Special Revelation. General is what everyone can experience (creation, wild animals, creation around us, science, etc.), Special is when something is tailored (Scripture, direct communication, visions, etc.). **But the point is that God told us about Him BECAUSE He wants a relationship with us.** There is no necessity for God to reveal himself to His creation if they are simply tools to be utilized (trees, rocks, plants, etc.). Awareness suggests relational intent and certainly demands a response.
 - Ro 1:19–21 – *“For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”*
- **The Power Plan** – This year, 2023, is the Year of Power at Bridgeway and that means that we want all that God has for us to bless us, to equip us, to direct us, to empower us. We need His power to breathe, to learn, to teach, to live. We need His power to get saved, to be healed, to be freed. **But isn't that what everyone needs? Yes. They may not want it, and that is the differentiation between experiences in this world** (surrendered vs. un-surrendered). **But God's intention is that ALL of His creation would experience His presence and power.**
- **The Good News for the World** – **the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is HOPE.** Every being that needs hope needs the good news of Jesus Christ and that's everyone. **Jesus didn't come to save the select few, He came to save all.**

The POWER of the GOSPEL is for EVERYONE

- **Recap** – Last week we saw two men (Cornelius & Peter) have radical supernatural experiences that God used to get them together. Peter's vision has significant implications:
 - **Unclean Foods Declared Clean** – after thousands of years of strict rules about what Hebrews/Jews could eat and not eat, Peter is told by God that He's changing the rules because he changed the scenario with the cross. At first Peter couldn't fathom how this would be okay. God corrected him.
 - **Unclean People Declared Clean** – It was soon thereafter that Peter realized that if foods could be declared clean, then perhaps this whole divine appointment with Gentiles,

wasn't an accident. Maybe God was declaring them clean as well. As mind-blowing and personally offensive that may have been for Peter, he knew God was calling the shots. All he could do was adjust, pivot, and adapt to this new revelation.

- **And Now** – Peter had this dramatic revelation and now it was time to do something about it. Revelations we receive, if they are legit, usually involve an adjustment and something to do with it. Sometimes it's just a personal blessing that builds our relationship with God, but sometimes it's to alter our focus or direction. So, what was Peter going to do, now that he knew Gentiles are being included too?

Lesson

- **Radical Inclusion**
 - **God Tells Peter that Gentiles are Accepted**
 - **Ac 10:34–35** – “So Peter opened his mouth¹ and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,^{2 35} but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”
 - **Peter Preaches³** – He knew that this was not a revelation that he could keep to himself. It wasn't just about him, it was about the Church as a whole. He was uniquely in a position of leadership to discuss this, and it was appropriate for him to lead this movement.
 - **God shows no partiality** – what does that mean? Doesn't the Bible say that God works differently with different people? (Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated?). Yes, but in context it's speaking of salvation and inclusion INTO the family of God. It's not about equality of how God operates with all people, it's the most important matter on the table: God will save ANYONE that surrenders to him regardless of ethnicity or background.
 - **The Power of impartiality (inclusion).** Peter wouldn't have said that if he didn't prior think there was partiality prior. And that's true. The gate to God went through the Jewish people and the Jewish religion. Yes, pagans could be drawn by God (Abraham is a perfect example), but they didn't have the benefits of a close God, a personal God, a God that did miracles in their midst and talked to them, like the Jews did. There was absolutely partiality. That's what 'chosen people' is all about. So, when we finally see that the doorway was blown wide open and that God was going to get personal with everyone, it changed the dynamics dramatically. Being wanted, being chosen, being precious is incredibly powerful for identity.

¹ “The expression “Then Peter spoke up” (literally, “Peter opened his mouth”) is one that is used to introduce some weighty utterance. The first words that Peter spoke were words of the weightiest import, sweeping away the racial and religious prejudices of centuries.” NICNT (New International Commentary of the NT) by F.F. Bruce.

² “Gk. προσωπολήπτῆς (“respector of persons,” lit. “lifter of faces”) reflects the Hebrew idiom nāsā’ pānīm, “lift (someone’s) face” and hence “show favor” or, in a pejorative sense, “show favoritism.” This idiom is rendered in Greek by πρόσωπον λαμβάνω and similar phrases (cf. Luke 20:21; Gal. 2:6); the nouns προσωπολήπτῆς (here appearing for the first time in Greek literature and the only time in the NT) and προσωποληψία (“partiality”) are formed on the basis of this phrase (cf. Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; Jas. 2:1; 1 Pet. 1:17).” NICNT

³ “In the house of Cornelius Peter may have spoken Greek, but some have thought it more probable that he spoke in Aramaic through an interpreter. This speech, at any rate, is more strongly marked by Aramaisms than Peter’s speeches in the earlier chapters in Acts. The presence of Aramaisms suggests that the speech is not Luke’s free invention, but a rather literal reproduction of what he found in his source (whether written or oral). The Greek of verses 36–38 in particular reads somewhat awkwardly, as do the fairly literal renderings in the older English versions, but it is claimed that it can be turned back word for word into idiomatic and intelligible Aramaic.” NICNT

- **The Importance to the author⁴** – Luke is a Gentile. This really, really matters to him. It's not that he only recorded it for that fact, it's that even the writers were going through their own process as this was all happening.
- **In EVERY Nation** – We don't tend to think about nations as much anymore. We think of people groups regardless of WHERE they live, at least in America. In other parts of the world, the national borders really matter and they certainly did in the ancient world, and most certainly with the Jewish people and the nation of Israel. The fact that they had been taken over by Rome was devastating. They no longer had the national label and badge of honor (it was a long, long time before they would get that again). So, when it says that God is going to work with EVERY NATION, that meant that God was going to open up His heart and blessings and personal interaction with different people groups and countries, which was a shock.
- **Unity & Diversity - The Power of a Fuller representation of God** – Working with people groups that don't like each other is highly problematic. Unity is difficult and diversity is complicated. God expects us to do both simultaneously. Why is diversity such an important factor in the family of God? There are a million blessings for our growth, but if we were to **rank the blessings, one that is perhaps highest on the list is: Fuller representation of the nature of God (fuller revelation).** In other words, **how God reveals Himself through** women is different than men, so we need genders getting together. How God works with the younger generation and the older generation is different so we need intergenerational connection. How God works through the Black church, the Hispanic/Latino church, the Asian church and the White churches is very different which is why we need to get together. How God works through the Slavic people is different than through the Taiwanese, which is different through all people groups, which is why we need multi-ethnic movements. **We simply won't get a full enough view of who God is and what God does without unity and diversity.**
- **What would be threatening to Israel** – For thousands of years they were the gateway to God, in a sense. People had to convert to their ways. But now it was wide open. That's a power and control shift. They aren't going to deal with that very well. Imagine if the one thing you were known for, the one thing that made you 'special' (at least in your mind), suddenly was spread out to everyone, it's a hit not just to your pride but your identity.
 - **The Gentile JEALOUSY issue** – we later find out that God uses Gentiles (non-Jews) to agitate Jews into revival. How would He do that? When the Jews refused to receive His Son (the Messiah, Jesus), He said, 'fine, I'll go to the non-Jews and they'll receive me'⁵ Once God moves powerfully with non-Jews, they get irritated and start to look deeper into God and

⁴ "Luke, himself a Gentile by birth, had good reason to emphasize the narrative of the bringing in of the Gentiles, by the cumulative repetitions within the narrative and by other means." NICNT

⁵ Jesus told many parables about the Jews rejecting God's plan and so God grabs other people to do His work (to their embarrassment). For example, read Luke 14:15-24

what went wrong and that's when the Lord can bring them to repentance and get them back in the game.

- Ro 11:11–14 – *“So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous. ¹² Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean! ¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴ in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.”*

- **Requirements to be People of God – 1.) Fears Him; 2.) Does what is right.** Why does Peter mention those two things. We are used to hearing that we are saved by GRACE through FAITH and that it's not about good works. Paul tells us that. First of all Paul is going to discern more details based on the further progressive revelation of God AFTER all of this. This is very early on. But, within the words of Peter we have the SAME principles just expressed differently. For example:
 - **What it means to 'fear God'**⁶ – **BELIEVING FAITH** - Technically it means to have reverent awe and respect for God. But what we are interested in here is that there is no way to 'fear God' without knowing about God and believing that He exists. In other words, you cannot 'fear God' and not have believing faith. And that is the key to salvation. We believe in Jesus Christ and believe that He is who He said He is and can do what He said He can do.
 - **What it means to 'do what is right'** – If we truly believe what we say we believe then there is a necessary action that goes along with it. If we have true faith then we will have true righteous action. You cannot say that you truly believe that God is real without reacting to Him as God. You cannot say that Jesus Christ is your personal Lord and Savior, without a change in behavior and doing things that are pleasing to God. Therefore this portion is about **ACTIVE FAITH**, a faith that is real enough to make things happen. That's the type of faith that saves.

- **Preach It Brother!**

- **Peter Tells the Story of Jesus**

- **Ac 10:36–48** – *“As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), ³⁷ you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went*

⁶ “To fear God is to regard God with reverent awe. He alone is holy, awesome, and glorious (Isa. 6:3). He is worthy of our respect. Because God is righteous, we should be concerned about the consequences of displeasing him. Our fear is not one which leaves us cowering and terrified but rather is like the respect a son should have towards his father. The fear of God leads to wise and pure living: ‘By the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil’ (Prov. 16:6b). To fear God is to submit to him, turning from self-assertion and evil: ‘Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil’ (3:7). We are not autonomous beings, free to assert our own will and decide what is right for us. We must acknowledge the LORD’s sovereign moral governance of the universe. We should be open to his training and correction and trust that his way is always best. To fear God is to know God. To know God is to have life (19:23a). When you fear God, you no longer fear men (29:25).” Opening Up Proverbs – Bible Commentary – Jim Newheiser

about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.³⁹ 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,⁴⁰ but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear,⁴¹ 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.”

- **As for the word He sent to Israel** – This is the message of the Messiah. It was Jewish planned, Jewish born, and Jewish enacted.
- **Preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ** – The Jews had a sin problem that couldn’t be solved. They found out that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah that could solve it. Sin created disharmony/disruption and separation. That leads to agitation. So when Jesus said that He came to fix it, it brought peace and that’s good news.
- **The unsolved problem of Atonement**⁷ - The word atonement is used a lot in the Old Testament and it technically means ‘covered over’ and it was a way of saying that when we sin, there is a rift between us and God. If we did the sacrifices then God would cover over our sins and restore the relationship with us. But, to me, that still left the sins under the cover. The way that I see it is that we were being given an IOU (I owe you later), which means that although God looked past it it wasn’t dealt with fully. That is the main problem of the Old Testament sacrificial system, it couldn’t fully get rid of sin. But when Jesus came He was able to clean it all. He paid for it all. He got rid of it once and for all. But what’s misleading is that the NT talks about what Christ did as ‘atoning’ as well. But it seems they mean it in the many other sense of the word such as ‘restoring relationship, making right, etc.’
- **(Jesus Christ) is Lord of all** – what does this mean? There seems to be a parenthesis statement to clarify for everyone. It seemed clear in the passage but

⁷ “The Hebrew word for atone (כַּפַּר, *kaphar*) conveys the idea of covering, both in the sense of covering to hide and also covering for someone (i.e., not charging someone with an offense or penalty). Atonement for sin was made by sacrificing an unblemished animal, although that is not always the case. Exceptions including money (Exod 30:14–16), prayer (Exod 32:30–33), the scapegoat (Lev 16:10), and incense (Num 16:46–47) are said to atone for sin under certain circumstances without requiring death. People are not the only recipients of atonement— inanimate objects like the altar (Exod 29:36–37) and holy place (Lev 16:16) are also said to be atoned... As in the Old Testament, sin remains a problem, alienating humans from God and leaving us in need of redemption (Rom 1:18–32). The New Testament authors often view Christ’s death as a parallel to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah (compare Matt 8:17 and Isa 53:4) who carries the sins of many, lifts their iniquities, and is even referred to as a “guilt offering” (Isa 53:10–12; compare Lev 5:14–19). In keeping with the Old Testament, God is the initiator of atonement who provides a means for people to receive cleansing and enter into a relationship with him (John 3:16–17). Additionally, the cross is understood as an act of self-sacrificial obedience by Christ, enacted as a demonstration of the Father’s love for sinful humanity (Rom 5:8).” Lexham Bible Dictionary

“atonement, the means by which the guilt-punishment chain produced by violation of God’s will is broken, as well as the resulting state of reconciliation (‘at-onement’) with God. For most ancients, violation of the world order led to punishment by divine powers; only atonement could prevent or end such punishment. The character of atonement varied greatly, however, depending on concepts of the deity, human existence, and the order of violation. The English word ‘atonement’ does not occur in the RSV (cf. Rom. 5:11: ‘atonement’ in the KJV, ‘reconciliation’ in the RSV). The Hebrew word with which the concept of atonement is associated in the OT can be translated variously as ‘purge,’ ‘cleanse,’ ‘expiate,’ ‘purify,’ ‘wipe on or off,’ ‘cover,’ etc. The Septuagint (LXX) Greek equivalent was of influence for the language and thought of the NT.” HARPER’S BIBLE DICTIONARY

apparently the author didn't think so. Whether that is a later addition to clarify or original, I don't know. It seems to merely highlight that every has to know that Jesus Christ is the boss over all things and over everyone. He is KING!

- **You know the story of Jesus Christ, right?** – I find it interesting that Peter assumes these Gentiles know the story of Jesus. How would they know that? I can't assume that any of the Gentiles, especially the really Jewish ones, would know anything about this Jewish Messiah that the main leaders of Judaism rejected. So, perhaps Peter is so used to talking about it, he's taking it for granted that everyone knows and is doing a 'recap.' It seems to me that they are hearing it for the first time. But perhaps not. Perhaps I'm missing something.
 - **It all started in Galilee at Jesus' baptism by John (the Baptist)** – do you remember this story? **[recap]**
 - **God anointed Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit and with power** – how did Jesus do the things that He did? It was the same way that we are supposed to operate in the power of God: Holy Spirit & heavenly power.
 - **What the anointing of the Holy Spirit meant to Jesus** – relationship, guidance, revelation. God WITH Him. It was how Jesus was connected the whole time.
 - **What the anointing of power meant to Jesus**⁸ – empowerment for miracles, signs and wonders. This is HOW Jesus did miraculous stuff.
 - **The essence of Jesus' ministry** – big picture, what did Jesus do when He was on earth in ministry?
 - **He went about doing good** – what does this mean? The way I see it is that it would be just as well translated as, 'he went around being a blessing to people'. In other words he made things better for people. He did so in His words and in His actions.
 - **Healing all who were oppressed by the devil** – This could be healing from disease that the devil inspired (in the Garden or directly) or healing from demon possession or oppression. Jesus did both. The new King was fixing broken stuff.
 - **Did He really heal them ALL?** No, but again, it's in context and a figure of speech. It meant of all types.
 - **Wouldn't our job be to do the same today as His Body?** – yes. Those are our marching orders. So, **how much are we doing that day to day as believers?** Not just the organization of the church but the actual Church?
 - **We are witnesses of all of it** – The apostles, the original 12 (including Matthias who replaced Judas Iscariot), saw ALL of it. They were there from the beginning.

⁸ "When Jesus had been thus anointed, he "returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee" (Luke 4:14) and embarked on a ministry which fulfilled the terms of Isa. 61:1-2 and other passages of prophetic scripture—healing the sick and delivering the demon-possessed, proclaiming in word and action the good news of the kingdom of God." NICNT

- **That's why we are witnesses today – we may not know everything or be able to explain everything, but we do know our story.** We need to be witnesses of it.
- **They killed him on a tree?⁹** – why do they call it that? It's crucifixion on a cross. What's with the tree thing? For whatever reason Moses proclaimed a curse on anyone who is hung and killed on a tree. The cross was wood, made from a tree. Whether someone was hung on a cross, or put on a wooden stake, it was all the same. It was a cursed way to die. That was significant because Jesus Christ, who was the sinless lamb of God, took on our sin, and died in a cursed way.
- **BUT, God raised Him on the 3rd day¹⁰** – why was 3 days significant? God is very cohesive in His story telling. When He writes something in the Old Testament there are tons of foreshadowing and connection ties. One of those was the offerings that were done in three days. There was Jonah in the belly of the big fish for 3 days and so again God ties it all in together with Jesus in the 'heart of the earth' for 3 days (Matthew 12:39-40).
 - **How did God raise God?** It's that trinity thing again. One portion of God raised another portion of God (Father raised Son). I know it's weird. The resurrection is the critical issue, not only the death.
- **God made Him to appear to us** – God didn't show Jesus to EVERYONE. That day will come, but not yet. Peter highlights the witness part of it that God showed proof of the resurrection to the witnesses so they could go out and BE witnesses.
 - **Eating and drinking with the risen Lord** – why is this important? Because it highlights two things: **1.) The intimacy of the community they shared with Him; 2.) phantoms don't eat and drink.** Jesus was resurrected not just an imagination, vision or hallucination.
 - **The practical result** – Peter, a key witness, is standing in front of them RIGHT NOW telling them the truth. What are they going to do with that?
- **The Best News**
 - **Peter's Command to Preach & the Good News**

⁹ "put to death by that means on which the law of Moses pronounced a curse, for his enemies killed him "by hanging him on a gibbet." We have already considered the significance of this particular expression as a way to describe death by crucifixion...The phrase κρεμάσαντες ἐπὶ ξύλου occurs again at 10:39; the cross of Jesus is similarly called a gibbet (ξύλον, "wood") in 13:29; 1 Pet. 2:24. This use of ξύλου goes back through LXX to Heb. 'ēš, which denotes both a tree and the stake or pole on which bodies of executed criminals were hung (as in Deut. 21:22–23). For Paul's account of the paradox that the mediator of unique divine blessing should nevertheless have died under the divine curse see Gal. 3:10–14. See M. Wilcox, " 'Upon the Tree'—Deut. 21:22–23 in the New Testament," JBL 96 (1977), pp. 85–99; J. A. Fitzmyer, "Crucifixion in Ancient Palestine, Qumran Literature, and the New Testament," CBQ 40 (1978), pp. 493–513. Another penal form of ξύλον ("stocks") appears in 16:24." NICNT

¹⁰ "The "third day" (v. 40) is mentioned not only for chronological accuracy, but in order to emphasize another fulfillment of prophecy; cf. 1 Cor. 15:4, where Paul quotes the primitive apostolic message as affirming that Christ was "raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures." The OT testimonies quoted in the apostolic preaching sometimes reflect the recognition that the Messiah's experiences exhibit the same pattern as Israel's experiences; hence such a statement as "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up" (Hos. 6:2) could find its fulfillment in the resurrection of Jesus. Paul's reference to the risen Christ as the "firstfruits" in 1 Cor. 15:20, 23 may suggest that he saw in his resurrection a fulfillment of the ordinance of Lev. 23:10–11 that the firstfruits of barley harvest were to be presented to God the day after the paschal sabbath (i.e., on the first day of the week)." NICNT

- **Ac 10:42–43** – “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. ⁴³ To him all the prophets¹¹ bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”
 - **He commanded us to preach** – It wasn’t just something they wanted to talk about, it was the mandate of God. And **that’s where I think that our informal church atmosphere today gets us in trouble. We think about evangelism as something we can do or not, depending on how we FEEL about it, but it’s an actual command**, whether we feel like it or not.
 - **Power of Preaching/Proclamation** – you have to say something. It’s not just living it out. There’s times to say something. Don’t hide back because you are afraid.
 - **Testifying that Jesus is the One appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead** – what does this mean? Why is this important? It’s not just that anyone died on the cross. It’s not just that the Son of God died on the cross. It’s that the King of Creation, the Judge of mankind died on the cross. It’s WHO He is that matters. Jesus Christ will be the one sitting on the throne when the good and bad are sorted out in the afterlife (Great White Throne Judgment). He is the BOSS, the KING.
 - **All the prophets bear witness of Jesus Christ** – how so? Modern or ancient? Both? Peter and many of the NT writers refer to the Old Testament different than we do. We do know that there are a TON of passages in the OT that talk about the Messiah and about Jesus. What’s odd is that it sounded like Peter said, ‘all the prophets told people how to be saved through Jesus’ which is not true. But it’s all semantics.
 - **The Gospel** – and now we center down on the main point that Peter has been building up to this whole time. He gave a ton of foundation but here’s the gist:
 - **Everyone (Recipients)** – **The gospel is not just for a select few**. As much as I respect a lot of the doctrinal positions of other denominations, I don’t have a whole lot of patience for pre-determination viewpoints that say that God just made some people to be saved and some to burn in the Lake of Fire. It’s not biblical.
 - **Who BELIEVES in HIM (Mode)** – Not everyone in the world is saved even though Jesus died for the sin of the whole world. There’s a difference between Him getting it done and **setting up an account for people to draw from, but people still need to draw from it and that separates the saved from the unsaved**.
 - **Receives (Process)** – We don’t take anything from God, we receive from God. This is important because **we are NOT EARNING our salvation. We can ONLY RECEIVE it**.

¹¹ “Peter’s appeal to “all the prophets” would be supported by relevant quotations from their writings, including most probably the portrayal of the Servant of the Lord who was to “make the many righteous” and “bear their iniquities” (Isa. 53:11).” NICNT

- **Forgiveness of sins (Effect)** – What do we receive? Forgiveness for our sins. **They are paid, done, and gone. That is extraordinary.**
- **Through His Name (Process)** – Perhaps one of the weirdest ways that the Bible talks about salvation or power is ‘through the Name of Jesus’. We simply don’t talk in those terms. We don’t say ‘in the name of’, very often. We don’t even say, ‘stop in the name of the law’ as police officers anymore. So, the idea of a Name having any power or authority sounds weird. **It’s simply a poetic way of saying, because of Who HE IS and what HE DID, we are saved.**
- **Gentile Pentecost!**
 - **The Holy Spirit Falls On the Gentiles**
 - **Ac 10:44–46a** – *“While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. ⁴⁵ 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. ⁴⁶ For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God...”*
 - **While Peter was Preaching** – this is so important to me. Most times the Holy Spirit comes with the ‘laying on of hands’. This time it happens independent of Peter and God’s doing something amazing WHILE something else is happening. No one can deny that God was doing it and it wasn’t forced by mankind.
 - **The Holy Spirit Fell** – what does this phrase mean? Why ‘fall’? Just as the Holy Spirit ‘descended’ on Jesus during His water baptism, so too did He ‘come down’ or ‘fall’ upon them. It’s a funny concept because we are on a ball (earth) which doesn’t really have up and down. We have in and out. But we are so used to saying ‘up in the air’ and since we think of **heaven as ‘out there’** (as opposed to dimensional), it makes practical sense.
 - **Power of being filled with the Holy Spirit** – the partnership with the Holy Spirit is critical. He brings the power. We desperately need the power of God because it’s not supposed to be in our strength or might, but in His power says the Lord. It’s power to do heaven-God stuff.
 - **On ALL who heard the Word¹²** – again, there is no partiality. There were likely many ages and differences between who was there.
 - **Did they have to hear it or receive it?** – the point I’m making and question I’m asking is: how much God pushed in and helped them along, in a sense. Did all those people have faith and it hit? Everyone? Or did some of them fully believe but God’s grace followed through on his prophecy that the whole household would be saved regardless? I have a hard time believing that there is ANY salvation without faith present, but then again I believe in babies, the age of accountability and also in the mentally disabled being saved too, so perhaps it doesn’t matter.

¹² “What was involved was later summed up by Paul: “in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks” (1 Cor. 12:13).”
NICNT

- **The 6 Jewish Christians who came along with Peter were amazed** – remember these guys? They were wondering what was going to happen and they probably thought that it was going to be another day of preaching, when this happened. They were Jewish clearly (Circumcised title) so they still had in the back of their mind that it was a Jewish movement primarily. But now it seemed that God was blowing the doors wide open.
- **The GIFT of the Holy Spirit** – we must NEVER forget that HE is a GIFT. Those are all important principles. The Holy Spirit is SOMEONE, a HE, not an IT. He is not a force. He is relational, just like Jesus and the Father. And anything we get from Him, He doesn't owe us, it's a GIFT. A gift by nature is free and handed out by the giver, NOT TAKEN by the receiver, but RECEIVED by the receiver.
- **Was POURED out** – Again we see some interesting imagery of 'being poured out'. Why say it like that? Poured out from what and from where? It means a blessing flowing from God. Poured out from the overabundance of God's power and presence.
- **EVEN on the Gentiles** – as if they were the last ones that people thought it would happen to. Remember not to categorize people in your mind of who 'could NEVER get saved'. God isn't limited by what you think is limiting.
- **They heard them speaking in tongues and extolling (praising) God** – what is speaking in tongues? Were they praising AND speaking in tongues? Or was that all one thing? **[complete]**
 - **The importance of the Gentiles speaking in tongues**¹³ - **[complete]**
 - **Power of speaking in tongues** – Covered a lot about baptism of the Holy Spirit and some about tongues in part 2 of this series (also in the 2017 Supernatural Series on video). **[complete]**
 - **prayer language vs. corporate gift** - **[complete]** - Usually tongues in a group setting is either revelatory (message based) or praise/worship based (lifting up the name of God). Privately it tends to be prayer-based (heart connection) or warfare related (intercession and attack/defend power-based).
- **Dunking Time!**
 - **Peter Has Them All Water Baptized As Well**
 - **Ac 10:46b–48** – "...Then Peter declared,⁴⁷ "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"¹⁴"⁴⁸ And he

¹³ "The descent of the Spirit on those Gentiles was outwardly manifested in much the same way as it had been when the original disciples received the Spirit at Pentecost: they spoke with tongues and proclaimed the mighty works of God. Apart from such external manifestations, none of the Jewish believers present, perhaps not even Peter himself, would have been so ready to accept the reality of the Spirit's coming upon them. The Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter from Joppa were astounded by what they saw and heard: Gentiles, those "lesser breeds without the law," had actually received the same Holy Spirit as they themselves had received on believing the same message." NICNT

¹⁴ "On the day of Pentecost (2:37–41) the sequence of initiation into the new community was conviction of sin, repentance and faith, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and the reception of the Spirit. Here the reception of the Spirit comes first. There is no explicit mention of faith in the immediate context, but it is certainly implied; it is suggested more definitely in 11:17, where Peter's words "when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ" clearly mean that the Gentiles received the Spirit when they believed, while in 15:7–9 Peter expressly links the Gentiles' reception of the Spirit with their believing and having their hearts cleansed by faith. Only after the manifest descent of the Spirit on these believing Gentiles were they baptized in water. As for the imposition of apostolic hands⁷⁴ (whatever inferences may be drawn from the silence on this subject in ch. 2), nothing of the kind took place before the Gentiles received the Spirit, and nothing is said about its taking place subsequently." NICNT

commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.”

- **They received what we received** – that is an equality statement.
- **Who can stop water baptism?** – the answer is assumed, ‘no one’.
- **He COMMANDED them to be water baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** – why?¹⁵ Because they were ‘god-fearers’ or Gentile JEWS. It was time for them to identify with Jesus Christ permanently and lock their identity with His. It’s a public statement to everyone of who they identify with.
 - **The Power of Water Baptism** – why we do it and why you should do it too. Simply put it’s not only powerful for us individually but it’s a community thing. It puts the world on notice of who we are putting our identity in and label on. It’s honoring to our King.

Conclusion

- **Praying for Salvation**
- **Praying for the Holy Spirit’s Filling**

¹⁵ *“Their reception of the Spirit was not regarded as a substitute for baptism in water; rather, their baptism in water was the fitting response to the act of God in bestowing his Spirit.”*