

Why Change?
September 3, 2006
Acts 10:1-11:18
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Synopsis:

We often read the conversion of the Roman Centurion Cornelius as the conversion of the pagans. While this story is a story of pagans responding to the Spirit of Jesus, it is more a story of Peter and the church responding to the Spirit of Jesus. The story is the dramatic conversion of the church from maintenance to mission. It is our story when we follow Jesus Christ.

I.

Day 1: Out There

Acts 10:2 “Cornelius was a devout man who feared God”

Cornelius:

- NCO in Caesarea (Herod the Great town)
- A God-fearer (not circumcised)
- Seeking someone to help him and his family find God

Who is Cornelius for you?

E.g. Barb’s family in Evergreen

Something is happening with people out there

They are looking for God

G.K. Chesterton: quit believing in God . . . believe in everything

II.

Day 2: In Here

Acts 10:14 “I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean”

Peter:

Locked into cultural world of Israel
Profane, unclean, circumcision, Sabbath, foods
Don't touch those out there, can't eat with them

Takes some prodding to get him moving (3x)

Jeff: Takes prodding, 2 times preach wrong sermon
My trip from Tennessee to California
Pain, fear, different, backward looking, unequipped

Something is happening with people in here
We are disturbed that God would have us go out there.

III.

Why Change?

Acts 10:4 "Your prayers and alms have ascended to God"

Acts 10:15 "What God has made clean, you must not call profane"

Cornelius wants to find God but doesn't know where to go
Peter wants to find God but has locked him in the church

Two conversions to Jesus Christ

IV.

Day 3: Conversion #1 = In Here Goes Out There

Acts 10:23b "The next day he got up and went with them"

Missional = going where the Spirit is going; get up and go
"As the Father sent me, so I send you"

Everything we do is mission (in here is *now* out there)
Church is stuck in maintenance (in here *but not* out there)

Where is the Holy Spirit?
Where can we get up and go?
How is all we do, not just part, related to going?

V.

Day 4: Conversion #2 = Out There/In Here Encounters the Spirit
Acts 10:44 “While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell”
Acts 11:18 “Then God has given even to the Gentiles”

When the Spirit comes:
Cornelius converts
The church converts

What does this mean for Geneva?

People out there want to know God
You and I are stuck in an old paradigm
Holy Spirit will throw us out of here
Expect fear and pain

Get ready for the Holy Spirit? How

Two goals for Geneva:

Biblically Literate:
Bible reading/Discipleship Essentials

Missionally Focused:
Refocus (individual and corporate)

This is my vision for us this year.