Acts 10 God Pursues Cornelius

Introduction/Review

SLIDE 1

\* Why Study Acts?

 1. Importance of Origins (Origins Determine Conclusions)

 ` A. We worked through Genesis (The origin of everything)

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.” Genesis 1:1

 B. Working through Acts (The Origin of the Church)

“And the Lord added to the Church daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47

 2. A Book of Transition

 A. Human Development Analogy

Acts 10 is our third geographic transition in the Book of Acts. Never forget that the Book of Acts is a transitional book and therefore by nature it’s very dangerous to build doctrine from the Book of Acts. Acts tells us what happened not how things must happen. A good way to understand the Book of Acts if you’re struggling with this is to think of human development. You start off as a little baby and grow to adulthood. And we say the normal part period of a person’s life is adulthood, when they have reached maturity in the physical and emotional aspects of their being. Obviously God doesn’t bring people into the world to remain babies. He brings them into the world to mature into adults. Now the Book of Acts is like the little baby stage as the church grows to adulthood and of course in the physical analogy, during the baby phase of life, life isn’t normal, things start to level out about 20 years old. Well that’s an analogy between the Acts and the Epistles. The Acts tells us what happened in that early life of the Church but the Epistles tell us the norm and standard for all time. So the Book of Acts isn’t doctrine, it’s simply what happened, like the storybook of what happened as you grew from a little infant to a boy or girl to a teenager, now that’s not the period of normality, though we have a lot of adults today who have made that the norm, life is just one big party, but that period is a growth transition from immaturity to maturity and during that time there’s a lot of change, it can happen very rapidly, so obviously it is not the norm, yet large segments of the church, following the world, want to make Acts the norm for all time, but that’s not what we’re designed for, we’re supposed to grow up. So one reason we’re studying the Book of Acts is precisely for that reason, we want to find out where we came from. How did the church get started? What’s the origin of the Church because to get ultimate meaning you always have to get back to origins. It could be the origins of the universe, the origin of Israel, the origin of the Church, but in any case origins gives meaning. And so Acts gives the background of the NT epistles; Colossians, Thessalonians, Hebrews and so forth, those churches originate in Acts.

B. Acts as a bridge between Jesus’ life on earth and the life He lives through us. (Gospels ---- Epistles)

SLIDE 2

 C. Acts Transitions

1. Doctrinal Transition: From an immature view of the cross to a fuller understanding of what Jesus has done for us.

2. Communal Transition: From a Jewish sect to a worldwide Christian community.

3. Focal Transition: From an earthly kingdom focus to a spiritual kingdom focus.

4. Geographical Transition: From Jerusalem to Rome.

5. Theological Transition: From Christ present to Spirit present.

6. Identity Transition: Individually, from Jew to Christian.

7. National Transition: From scattered nations (Babel) to one people.

Recap of Acts So Far:

1. Jesus gives the plan – Acts 1:8

2. The Apostles wait for the promised Spirit – Acts 1:14

3. Mathias added to the twelve – Acts 1:26

4. Pentecost comes (The outpouring of the Holy Spirit) – Acts 2:2-4

5. Peter’s first Sermon – Acts 2:14-36 (Jesus is risen!)

6. Many believe, repent, and are baptized – Acts 2:37-38

7. The church begins – Acts 2:46

8. The first apostolic miracle (lame man at the gate) – Acts 3:6-9

9. Peter’s second sermon – Acts 3 :12-26

10. 1st Persecution (Peter before the Sanhedrin) – Acts 4:1-12

11. Sanhedrin forbids the name of Jesus – Acts 4:18

12. Peter and John refuse to comply – Acts 4:19-20

13. People pray for boldness/filled with the Spirit – Acts 4:23-31-3

14. Jerusalem church is communal – Acts 4:32-37

15. Ananias and Saphira – Acts 5:1-11

16. Miracles in Jerusalem/2nd Persecution/Apostolic defiance

– Acts 5:12-32

17. Gamaliel’s Counsel – Acts 5:33-42

18. Installation of Deacons – Acts 6:1-8

19. 3rd Persecution/Stephen preaches – Acts 6:9-7:53

20. Stephen becomes first Christian martyr – Acts 7:54-60

21. Saul introduced/4th Persecution/Gospel goes out – Acts 8:1-4

22. Philip and Simon the Sorcerer – Acts 8:1-25

23. Philip and the Ethiopian Treasurer – Acts 8:26-40

24. Saul’s Justification and Sanctification – Acts 9:1-31

25. Peter and Aeneas – Acts 9:23-35

26. Peter and Dorcas – Acts 9:36-43

SLIDE 3

Acts 10:1-8 God Pursues Cornelius (Phase 3 of Jesus’ Outline/Plan)

**“Now there was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian cohort, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, and made many charitable contributions to the Jewish people and prayed to God continually. About the ninth hour of the day he clearly saw in a vision an angel of God who had just come in and said to him, “Cornelius!” And he looked at him intently and became terrified, and said, “What is it, lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and charitable gifts have ascended as a memorial offering before God. Now dispatch some men to Joppa and send for a man named Simon, who is also called Peter; he is staying with a tanner named Simon, whose house is by the sea.” When the angel who \*spoke to him left, he summoned two of his servants and a devout soldier from his personal attendants, and after he had explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.”**

**Notes:**

**Notice Cornelius’...**

Location:

Military status:

Mindset:

Devotion to God:

Overall strategic position:

Need for Jesus:

**Notice God’s...**

Approach to Cornelius (time of day, method of contact, message to Cornelius):

**Now Notice Cornelius’ Response...**

**Do we notice a theme in Acts? Is God impassive, just letting things happen? Or is He active, intervening in “human affairs?” Is He addressing the needs of people and using these circumstances to achieve His overall plan? How does He get our attention?**

There is a large, macro plan in place, and there is an individual, micro plan in place. God seamlessly weaves them together, using extraordinary circumstances, miraculous events, and what on its face may simply seem like intricate coincidence.

Practical Application:

1. Recognize that God is pursuing you.

“God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

1. Make yourself available.

“And He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Matthew 4:19

1. Hear the Lord.

“My sheep listen to My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” John 10:27

1. Do what God tells you to do.

“ Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will follow My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him.” John 14:23

God is coming after you, loving you and giving you exactly what you need. He is then using you to accomplish His overall purpose, which is to draw all people to Himself. It’s incredible to think about.