

Peter's Perception of God

Acts 10:34-35

Introduction:

- A. Peter reluctantly goes to Cornelius' house.
- B. Peter's perception of God was drastically changed.
- C. Three things we need to receive from Peter's perception of God.

Discussion:

I. God's Impartiality.

- A. God is an equal opportunity God.
 - 1. Shows no respect of persons (v. 34, Deut. 10:17)
 - 2. Expects the same of us (Deut. 16:19; 1 Tim. 5:21)
- B. God offers salvation in Christ to all people alike. ("in every nation whoever")
 - 1. Regardless of race, gender, or socio-economic status. (Gal. 3:28).
 - 2. Moral or immoral; elite or outcast -- if they are willing to change. (Cf. Matt. 21:32)

II. God's Conditional Acceptance.

- A. Two bad four-letter words of many religious people – Fear and work.
- B. Fearing God is a condition of acceptance. (Matt. 10:28)
 - 1. It is the beginning of wisdom. (cf. Psa. 111:10).
 - 2. It is that reverential fear compatible with love. (Cf. Lk. 10:27; 12:5)
 - 3. It is not that terrifying fear incompatible with love. (Cf. 1 Jn. 4:18).
 - 4. Cornelius already feared God (Acts 10:2, 22), now must work righteousness (Acts 10:47, 48).
- C. Working righteousness (obey) is a condition of acceptance. (Cf. Jas. 2:24; Phil. 2:12; Heb. 5:8, 9).
 - 1. Salvation is offered to all, but only baptized believers accept it (Mk. 16:15, 16).
 - 2. Forgiveness offered to all (Lk. 24:47), only those who repent & baptized receive it. (Acts 2:38)

III. God's Unconditional Love

- A. Love Is Not the Same as Acceptance.
- B. God loves the whole world. (John 3:16).
- C. God accepts only those that fear him and work righteousness.
- D. God expects us to love every one - even our enemies. (Matt. 5:43-48).
- E. God does not expect us to accept every one. (Tit. 3:10,11; 2 John 10).

Conclusion:

- A. Are you accepted of God?
- B. Do you fear Him?
- C. Are you working righteousness?