

**Acts 10:9-16; 34-45**

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## **Introduction**

We are more informed, more aware and more equipped than ever before. But, knowledge without action leaves the world unchanged. We need more than good intentions, we need to put love in action, we call this “mission”.

Imagine if you held the life-saving the antidote needed by the guy across the street for an awful disease. Wouldn't it be crazy to think that you wouldn't cross the street to offer him this gift??

Imagine if God said... “I love the world so much! But, I'm just going to think about them.” That's not what He said. He placed action with His love and did what? He SENT His One and only Son to this world for you and for me. That changes you and me. That changes everything. James in the Bible says, “Faith without action is meaningless.” That is a very huge statement. He isn't saying that our salvation is earned by what we do. Rather, we are instructed that our salvation has a huge effect on our actions.

Do you see your salvation changing the way you think? How has your salvation changed the way you see the world around you?

Acts 10:9-16; 34-45

**9** The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. **10** And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance **11** and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. **12** In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. **13** And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” **14** But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” **15** And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” **16** This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

**34** So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, **35** but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. **36** 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 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. **42** 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 prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**44** 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.

Pastor Jon described Peter as being a “good Jewish boy” and Peter’s statement of “by no means Lord” articulated that not only would he not eat certain foods but this also spoke to the greater issue of how he saw people outside of his Jewish ethnicity. Did the explanation Pastor Jon provided for the old covenant law and mark of Jewish people help you understand the laws role in showing how mankind falls short? Does this help you see all humanity on the same level? How does this help you to not judge people?

“For he **himself is our peace**, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might **create in himself one new man in place of the two**, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.” (Ephesians 2:14–16, ESV)

“For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God.” (Romans 2:28–29, ESV)

This is great news!! The law shows how far we all fall short BUT now we can be in relationship with God through Christ ALONE.

Pastor Jon described some statements that keep us from living on the mission that God has planned for us. Things like, “I just don't get them” or “someone else will help” are mindsets that create walls rather than bridges. Those mindsets can hinder the work of God. Remember that He wants to use us as messengers of reconciliation.

*If you will let me be a preacher just a little bit—One night, a juror came to Jesus and he wanted to know what he could do to be saved. Jesus didn't get bogged down in the kind of isolated approach of what he shouldn't do. Jesus didn't say, 'Now Nicodemus, you must stop lying.' He didn't say, 'Nicodemus, you must stop cheating if you are doing that.' He didn't say, 'Nicodemus, you must not commit adultery.' He didn't say, 'Nicodemus, now you must stop drinking liquor if you are doing that excessively.' He said something altogether different, because Jesus realized something basic—that if a man will lie, he will steal. And if a man will steal, he will kill. So instead of just getting bogged down in one thing, Jesus looked at him and said, 'Nicodemus, you must be born again.'*

*He said, in other words, 'Your whole structure must be changed.' A nation that will keep people in slavery for 244 years will 'thingify' them—make them things. Therefore they will exploit them, and poor people generally, economically. And a nation that will exploit economically will have to have foreign investments and everything else, and will have to use its military might to protect them. All of these problems are tied together. What I am saying today is that we must go from this convention and say, "America, you must be born again!" —Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Where Do We Go From Here?," 1967*

We are ambassadors of love called to impact the places we live without prejudice thoughts but to see people the way that Jesus sees people. We need to let the Holy Spirit reveal places where these sinful mindsets have taken hold in our hearts. Where are they for you? Recall Pastor Jon talking about people of different color, homeless people, old people, young people, etc.

“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. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” (Acts 10:42–43, ESV)

God sent Peter to reach people. God propelled the 1st century church into action by sending them. God modeled this first by sending His only Son to humanity to take on our sin and in fact take our place of judgment.

Are you embracing the idea that you are “sent?” Who has He sent you to? If everyone loved, forgave, served like you, would the church look good? We are all saved by His grace and for that we are eternally grateful. That loving grace He gives us moves us to action.

***Closing Discussion:***

Discuss some open doors God has already given you to share the goodness of God with people that may be far from Him.