

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

This Is Amazing Grace, Great Things, Man of Sorrows, O Praise the Name (Anastasis), Because He Lives

WELCOME

Describe your family's Easter or Resurrection Sunday tradition, if any. What is the significance of this event for you, personally?

WORD

ACTS 10:38-43

³⁸You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. ³⁹We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. ⁴⁰God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, ⁴¹not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. ⁴²And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

The resurrection is so important to our salvation story; without it, we are all just "wasting our time" following Christ if he did not rise from the grave. We may consider many different facts about life as important but the standard of the importance of truth is its relevance and its impact in people's lives. **What do you think is the most important truth that you and I need to know? THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS is the most important TRUTH! He made sure the world had no excuse if we ignore this truth— after all the resurrection is celebrated worldwide!**

Among the 1st century believers, there's one primary message: JESUS DIED and ROSE AGAIN. The first message preached (Acts 2:23, and in succession, 3:15, 3:26, 4:10, 4:33, 5:30) is on the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the same message that the apostles have carried with them as they began working on the foundations of the church, preaching the good news of the finished work of Jesus Christ.

In this chapter in Acts, we will discover the answer to the question: Can a GOOD PERSON enter heaven without CHRIST? Let's study the life of Cornelius and the great mission God had given to Peter, and discover how the truth that matters most changed the lives of those who heard the gospel.

1. THE PREPARATION OF CORNELIUS (ACTS 10:1-8)

Cornelius was a centurion, a commander of 100 soldiers of the most elite army during that time. He

must have been a level-headed fellow, a peacekeeper. He was also a devout man who sincerely feared God and was generous even to the Jews. He was a good man, and logically many of us will say "a good man deserves to go to heaven". However, we see from Scripture that being good or doing good is not enough. We can't enter heaven without our sins being forgiven by God and only Christ's death on the cross can pay for the sins of the world (**1 Peter 3:18**).

GOD notices, hears, and knows (**v3-4**) the prayers of our hearts. As Cornelius was praying, a vision was given to him to send for Peter (**v5-6**) who was in Joppa at that time. Here we learn about God's own heart; how He takes the initiative to reach out to people who have yet to know Him fully. Cornelius was a good man, but being good doesn't solve the problem of sin. He needed to learn about what Jesus Christ did on the cross. He needed someone to tell him about the TRUTH THAT MATTERS MOST.

2. THE MESSAGE TO PETER (ACTS 10:9-23)

While all of these were happening, God was simultaneously working in the heart and mind of Peter. His message to Peter through a vision was perplexing, but Peter eventually figured out what it meant. God wanted him to reach out to a gentile, a Roman centurion, his family and friends.

This mission given to Peter will sound familiar to us if we take the central command of the book of Acts to heart (**Acts 1:8 – be WITNESSES**). You have family members or friends who don't know the Lord yet...like

WORD (cont'd)

Peter, you are given the responsibility to share the truth that matters most!

3. PETER AND CORNELIUS (ACTS 10:23-48)

The pinnacle of the story was when Peter met Cornelius and was welcomed to his house, where an audience and Cornelius were waiting for Peter's message from God. Cornelius even "fell at (Peter's) feet" to worship him but to which Peter responded with all humility, "Stand up; I too am just a man." (Acts 10:25-26)

Peter took the opportunity to speak to Cornelius' household. He first explained the prejudice of Jews against Gentiles, and how God has corrected this attitude by showing him that he is not in a position to call any man unholy or unclean.

Peter then preached the gospel to his Gentile audience (10:34-43). Peter emphasized that **through Jesus, everyone who believes in Him receives FORGIVENESS OF SINS** – the greatest need of all mankind.

Because of Jesus, you can face the many disappointments of life, and because He is RISEN, you can look forward to an amazing eternal life with HIM!

Do you know the truth that matters most? Do you know that if you have Jesus, you have everything, but if you don't have Jesus, you have nothing?

As we end the commemoration of Holy Week, may we all be reminded of the great future we have, made possible because of Him who died and rose again. Because Jesus is alive, we can face our problems and we have a greater story to tell!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Who can you relate to most? Are you like the Roman centurion, doing good and devout, yet in great need of a personal encounter with Jesus? Or are you like Peter, who knows the truth, and is given a mission to share the truth that matters most to others?
2. Now that you know that God works behind the scenes, is there anything that stops you from sharing the truth that matters most to others? Surrender these to God and ask Him to empower you like He did Peter.
3. Think of people closest to you who need to hear the most important truth. Use the previous reflections from the Holy Week to approach fertile hearts and share the good news to them!

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for good and devout people in your life who are sincere seekers of God yet still need to know Jesus in a personal way. Look for opportunities to share the gospel to them, trusting that God has been working behind the scenes to prepare them to receive the truth that matters most.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends