

# Following a God Authored Trail - Part 2

by Danny Bond

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*In this sermon, Danny Bond emphasizes the importance of following the Holy Spirit's leading in our lives, exemplified through Peter's journey in Acts 10.*

**Duration:** 44:10

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Acts 2:47, Acts 10:23, Acts 13:2, Romans 8:17, 1 Corinthians 6:10, Revelation 21:8

**Topics:** "Purpose Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of Cornelius and Peter from the Bible. Cornelius, a devout man, prayed to God and an angel appeared to him, instructing him to send for Peter. Peter, known in heaven as a man ready with the gospel, was called to go to Cornelius, who was a Gentile. The speaker emphasizes the importance of character and how it is measured by one's reaction to life's inequities. He also highlights the value of reputation and character in the sight of God. The sermon encourages listeners to reflect on their own character and how they are known in heaven.

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## Transcript

Lord God in heaven, how we thank you that you love to pour your kingdom into our hearts here on earth. We pray your kingdom would come today and that your will would be done in our lives. Take the Bible, the message that is here before us, Lord, and cause it to strengthen us, to invigorate us, and to inflame our hearts.

I pray, Father, for those that are lukewarm, that you would light a fire in their soul that will never go out, that will never stop burning. For those that are longing to be used of you, that are still wondering what their gift is and how you would use them, I pray you would awaken the gifts that are slumbering within their bosom even now, and bring those gifts to full bloom. And that you would use all of us here, Lord, to show the world and to show others around us that Jesus Christ is alive and he loves every human being with an everlasting love.

And each person on this planet can have a personal relationship with Christ. And I pray you'd so work in our lives that anybody that knows us or meets us would see that living relationship in us. And we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Last time we began studying in Acts chapter 10 what I called following a God-authored trail. We're looking at the life of Peter here, and God is moving him around doing new things in his life.

And he's following the leading of the Holy Spirit as he's been praying. And I just want to encourage you again, open your heart to what the Spirit would say to you today. What we see in Peter's life here is as he steps out to do new things, there's a lot at stake.

One thing at stake is his reputation. Peter is a Jew. He's from Jerusalem.

He's down now in Gentile territory. Caesarea, where he's going to have to go in this passage, was one of the places King Herod loved to hang out at the beach. He built a palace there.

He built a wonderful harbor there. And thus it became a place where the Romans would come in and the ships. And it was literally a saturated Gentile community.

So for him to even think about going to Caesarea is so far from where he grew up on the Sea of Galilee. A country man going into this great thriving area and a Jew going into an area that is solid Gentile. That is so hard for him, but he does it.

And it's going to cost him his reputation with his brothers back in Jerusalem to do it. There's so much at stake here for him to obey the Lord. John Blanchard once said that circumstances never create character.

They merely reveal it. Everything in life is a test of character. Those are good words.

Peter's character is revealed here as God calls him to do something that's very difficult for him. Someone else has said a man's character is accurately measured by his reaction to life's inequities. A man's character is measured by his reaction to life's inequities.

This doesn't seem right and how you respond to that. God calls him to go to Gentile headquarters. It doesn't seem right, but his character gets him through it.

Character is at the heart of this passage. Someone else has said reputation is precious, but character is priceless. How much do you think about your character these days? I think we all want a good reputation, but something more valuable than that is character.

Thomas Kempis said what you are in the sight of God is what you truly are. Man can see you as one thing, but what God sees you as, that's what you truly are. And that's what counts.

I'll give you one more quote. It has to do with criticism by others. If men speak ill of you, live so that no one will believe them.

That's good, isn't it? If men speak ill of you, live so that no one will believe them. Believe them. All of these things are found in the passage.

You'll see it unfold as we go. And I wanted to give you those quotes as just a way to warm up your thoughts. The secret to the book of Acts is basically the centrality of Jesus Christ.

It is a Christ who is known intimately by the individuals that we find on these pages. They walked with him. And as they walked with him, he worked through them.

They walked with him. He worked through them. In Acts 24:7, the Bible says, and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

The Lord did it as they walked with him. It is clearly the Lord in the book of Acts who adds to the church, and thus the church grows. And it is the centrality of Christ and the devotion of the brethren that makes it happen.

I want to take you to Acts 13 for a moment. Verse 2, then we're going to get into our text. Just to kind of get you further into the mindset and the heart set of these individuals we're studying.

And how much they loved Christ and kept him central so he could build his church. Acts 13, 2. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, we read. Isn't that an odd statement? As they ministered to the Lord.

As I read that initially, my initial reaction is, well, wait. I thought the Lord is supposed to minister to me. Why does it say as they ministered to the Lord? Because they were before the Lord, it says, as they ministered to the Lord and fasted.

In other words, they were attending upon the Lord without distraction. They were before the Lord just seeking his face, waiting on him. Ministering to the Lord in the sense of, Lord, here's my life.

Do with it whatever you want to do. I'm attending to you. I'm waiting upon you.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted. What is so great is that the Lord ministers to them. And the Holy Spirit said.

Isn't that interesting? The Holy Spirit said. Now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work which I have called them. God always has things worked out in advance that he wants you to do.

And he's able to communicate it to you by the Holy Spirit. Verse 3. Then having fasted and prayed. So they sought the Lord some more.

They laid hands on them and they sent them away. Then verse 4. So being sent out was to say by the Holy Spirit. Wait.

The verse before says they sent them the way. Then it says they were sent out by the Holy Spirit. Well, who sent them out? God sent them out through the brethren who were walking with him, who were in tune with him.

So they could hear his voice minister to their hearts. So they are sent out in the end by God. But he uses men to do it.

The brethren. That's how Jesus builds his church. You seek to know him personally.

He will work in you. Then he will work through you. It is a Christ known intimately that is the secret of the book of Acts.

A.W. Tozer once said so many churches are so organized and centered on man's programs and committees. In other words, so man centered that God could leave and no one would find out. It's a good statement.

So many churches are so organized and centered on man's programs and committees. In other words, so man centered God could leave and no one would find out. How sad.

How often that is the case. But that was not the case in the book of Acts. Let's go to Acts chapter 10, verse 23, and we'll read down a few verses and then we'll launch into it.

Acts chapter 10, verse 23. These men come from Caesarea to Peter. He invited them in and lodged them.

On the next day, Peter went away with them and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the following day they entered this great Gentile community at the sea of Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them and had called together his relatives and close friends.

As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter lifted him up saying, Stand up. I myself am also a man.

And as he talked with them, he went in and found many who had come together. Then he said to them, You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

In other words, I've never done this before. I'm a little bit nervous about it, but the Lord has shown me to do it. So there he is in the midst of all these Gentiles.

Therefore, I came, without objection, as soon as I was sent for. I asked then, For what reason have you sent for me? So Cornelius said, Well, four days ago I was fasting until this hour. And at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing.

It was an angel. He said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon there, whose surname is Peter.

He is lodging in the house of Simon of Tanner by the sea, and when he comes, he will speak to you. So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Therefore, we are all present before God.

Do you feel the reverence packed into that statement? We are all present before God. He doesn't just say, We're here. Talk to us.

He says, We are all present before God. We're standing here in front of God, and we believe he sent you here. Can you now speak to us from God? We are all present here before God to hear all the things commanded you by God.

Do you notice that? Commanded you by God. The Bible is a book about what God has done for you. First and foremost, the Bible is a book about what God has done for you.

He wrote it for you. But you don't want to leave out the reality that the Bible is also a book of commands. It asks something of you.

Too often we just stop at the reality that the Bible is a book written for us from God, a love letter, if you will, from God about all that he's done for us. We need to know that first. But then we need to grow and go on to realize it's also a book of commands.

It's not a book of suggestions. It's a book of commands. So we are all here before God to hear from you all that God has commanded you.

Even a centurion who didn't yet know Jesus personally understood that much. So we are in the midst of then traveling with Peter on this God-authored trail. So this is part two of following a God-authored trail.

We've seen the sending of Peter. And last time we got into all this. Today we're going to finish that off.

Then we'll see the supplicant's testimony, the way these two men were known, Peter and Cornelius. And then we're going to see the sermon he preached. Now, in our message last time on setting this God-authored trail, we saw that Peter was led by a holy desire.

Do you remember that? We looked at that in detail. He was led by a holy faith. He stepped out in faith.

He was led by a holy humility. When Cornelius fell down to worship him, he immediately told him to get up. One last thing I want to say here, and we already touched on it, is that what is happening in Peter's life is what I would call a holy first.

A holy first. He told them that. He said, I'm a Jew, and everybody knows that a Jew doesn't do this.

But here I am. God has led me to do this. It's the first time I've done this.

Holy first. As you walk with the Lord, and he is the Lord of your life, when you walk in the Spirit and you're led by the Spirit, one of the great things about growing in the Lord is that he will lead you into one holy first after another. And what is so tremendous is that he does it.

They're his ideas. They're not your ideas. Holy first.

Things you have not done before, but things you're going to do. And he will enable you to do them. That's why Peter had that whole vision on the rooftop, to enable him to do what he was about to do, which he could have never done otherwise.

And even with all the vision and the word from God and the angel to Cornelius, it was still hard for him, but he did it. Holy first. When you're growing in the Lord, watch for the holy first, plural, because there's going to be more than one.

Robert Murray McShane was one of the great saints of God in the past. He only lived to be 30 years old. But in that 30 years, he packed a lot of Christ.

All of Scotland wept when he died at 30. He used to say, I am persuaded that nothing is thriving in my soul unless it is growing. That is good.

When you give your heart to the Lord, when you will follow the Lord, you will be growing inside. And as you're growing, God is going to do one holy first after the next. And he's going to eliminate along the way a lot of, get this, unholy habits.

Unholy habits. Unholy habits, often holy firsts, are the beginning of God eliminating long-term unholy habits. So the sending of Peter involves all of this.

It's so tremendous to see it. The spirit-led Christian has the endless joy of a holy first. I would challenge you today to step out and do something that you've never done before.

Let the Lord lead you, but as he does, go ahead and do it. A venture in faith is a great thing, and there's no shame in stepping out to do something and finding out it wasn't the Lord. Hey, at least you stepped out.

And there's no shame in saying, you know what? We stepped out in faith. The Lord isn't in this, and if God's not in it, we don't want to be in it either. So then you get out.

Now you just go back to seeking the Lord. Because what will happen over the long haul is a few times you'll make a mistake, and it won't be God, and you'll come back and say, well, let's go back to the drawing board. But over the long haul, many of those times, God is so big he's able to communicate to you.

Many of those times you will see him respond and work in that venture in faith, and you'll see him do things he's never done before. I challenge you to step out and do things you've never done before. Don't be same place, same thing, every time kind of people.

Let the Lord lead you, and you won't be. You can't be. Someone said once, I wish that saints would cling to Christ half as earnestly as sinners cling to the devil.

If we were as willing to suffer for God as some artists suffer for their lust, what perseverance and zeal would be seen on all sides? Those are great words. Before I was converted, I was a real sinner. I had a real conversion.

I was a real sinner. And I can tell you, I was willing to suffer for the sins I committed because I wanted to sin. Were you ever like that? Don't look at me like that.

No liar shall enter the kingdom of heaven. You know, you get drunk, and you wake up hungover. I was in a health food store the other day.

Right on the front window, this whole new high-tech thing you mix up, so if you're hungover the next morning, you just drink it, and you feel better. I thought, well, why don't you just eliminate the problem instead of inventing a little, you know, tonic for the day after you tied one on. You know, you suffer, and then you go back and do it again.

The Bible even says that. If we would only be as committed to the Lord and to going through things that aren't easy as we have been committed to the devil in the past, what great zeal would be seen in our lives. I like what Francois Fenlon said a long time ago.

He said, In the light of eternity, we shall see that what we desired ourselves would have been fatal to us and that what we would have avoided was essential to our well-being. That's what we're going to find out in heaven. The things we were really badgering God about down here, and He never did, we're going to find out that they would have been fatal to us.

And the things that down here we've been trying to avoid and trying to avoid and trying to avoid, we're going to find out in heaven they were essential to our well-being and to the great plan that God had for our lives. A spirit-led Christian has the endless joy of a holy first over and over. Step out and do something you've never done before.

Many holy firsts, also just to make note of it, will come out of an initial disappointment in your life. Initial disappointment. Peter wasn't exactly thrilled when God said on the rooftop, Arise, Peter, kill and eat.

Change your whole way of living. Change your entire diet. And now go down to a Gentile community.

That was kind of disappointing to Peter. I've never lived like this before, Lord. Yes, I know, but we're changing things.

Initially very disappointed, but out of it came one of the greatest things he ever did. Many times disappointments come your way, and they're followed by God doing something brand new. Watch for that.

They're almost a signpost of the Lord about to work in a wonderful way. And one last thing I want to say on this. I'm going to move on to their testimony.

A holy first, when it's truly spirit-led, can often bring persecution your way from your own brothers and sisters in Christ. I'm not talking about wacky behavior either. When the Holy Spirit leads you to do something new, as he did with Peter here to go to the Gentiles, he knew that when he got back to Jerusalem, the hard-line traditional Jews who had now become Christians, he knew they would persecute him.

He knew that before he ever went to Caesarea. But he also knew it was God leading him. That's why we have to have our own close personal relationship with God so that we stand before him, we walk before him and not before men.

We live out the Word of God. We walk carefully before God. We seek to please God, not man.

And then when people don't understand us because we're being led by the Spirit and they persecute us for it, we know that God is with us. And eventually he will get through to their hearts and they will understand. And guess what? Then they will begin to do some holy firsts in their life.

They'll start doing things they've never done before. They'll become more open, in other words, to let God lead them than they were before because they saw you do it. And they would have never believed you could do that because they always knew what you were like.

God is in the business of doing that. He loves to turn his people into trophies of grace. So, moving along then.

When Peter goes back to Jerusalem, he's going to get persecuted. And we'll see that when we get to chapter 11. And that is why he had those six brethren with him.

So, the sending of Peter along the God-authored trail. Let's go to the second main thing here. And that is what I would call the supplicant's testimony.

Peter is seeking the Lord on the rooftop. Cornelius is seeking the Lord over at his house. They're both supplicants before the Lord.

They both have a testimony. Acts 10.30. So, Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour. And at the ninth hour, I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing and said, Cornelius... This is what the angel said to him.

Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He's lodging in the house of Simon the Tanner by the sea.

When he comes, he will speak to you. So I sent to you immediately, Cornelius says to Peter, and you have done well to come. Now, therefore, here we are.

We are all present before God to hear the things commanded to you by God. One of the first things we see here is that Peter was known in heaven. An angel comes from God in heaven to Cornelius.

Peter was known in heaven as a man ready with the gospel. So here's this guy. He's saying, God, I want to know you.

I want to walk with you, but I don't know how. And I'm living up to the light that I have, but I know there's a whole lot more. Can you help me, God? God then sends an angel to the guy's house, and the angel says, listen, I know a man named Peter.

There's this guy. I know his name is Peter. And I know that if I send him here, he'll give you the full gospel.

He'll tell you everything you need to know. Peter was known in heaven by the angels as a man who was always ready with the gospel. I wonder what you are known in heaven as today.

I wonder what I am known in heaven as today. I know one thing. I want to be known in heaven as Peter was known.

Where if an angel showed up to somebody, they could say, hey, there's a guy over here I could send. And I know when he comes. I know exactly what he'll tell you.

What a great testimony. The testimony of Peter. And then there is the testimony of Cornelius.

Cornelius, Peter was known in heaven as a man ready with the full gospel. Cornelius was known on earth as a man seeking God continually. Acts 10.22, when they arrived to talk to Peter, and they were trying to get him to come over to Caesarea, they said, Cornelius the centurion, Acts 10.22, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house and to hear words from you.

So, he's known by everybody as a man who seeks God continually on earth. But Cornelius was also known in heaven. There isn't any heart on earth that's sincerely desiring to know God that isn't known in heaven.

God knows about that heart. And he will swoop in, sweep in, and bring more light to that heart. Cornelius was known in heaven, verse 30.

He said, four days ago I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and a man stood before me in bright clothing and said, Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and all the giving that you've done is remembered in the sight of God. There's nothing showy about this man's life, Cornelius. Nothing hypocritical about his life.

He's just genuine. With what he knows, he gives as much as he can of his life to God. And with what he has, he gives as much as he can away to help people that have less than him.

And all of that is known in heaven. All of heaven knows. A man with a testimony then... Get this.

Here's this man, Cornelius. He's a man of prayer, even though he has very limited light. A man of prayer in the book of Acts is used to swing wide the door to the Gentiles with the gospel.

It's a man of prayer. It's used to open the door of the gospel to the entire Gentile world. You could say it's two men of prayer.

Peter on the one hand. Cornelius on the other. When you read the book of Acts, when you study the book of Acts, the power is given and the power works through the people who pray.

The power is given and the power works through the people who pray in the book of Acts. Have you ever wondered why there's so much attack on your prayer life? You make your vows to spend time with God and pray. It's almost like a vow to work out.

I'm going to get in shape. I'm in training, man. Keep that stuff away from me.

I'm training. Hold back on the Sunday. But next week you're offered a Sunday.

Pass it over. Can I finish yours too? You know, often our prayer life is like that. I'm going to start praying at this time every day and we just charge off and we're getting blessed and then it's almost like, you know, working out.

All it takes is one little trip out of town or something and you're derailed for who knows how long. Prayer is like that. It just takes a little bit and you're derailed.

Plus, aside from working out in the area of prayer, you have the devil to contend with. So he will seek to derail you with all kinds of techniques. The bottom line is we have the Holy Spirit in us ever drawing us back to the Father.

He is in our hearts interceding for us. We are told in the book of Romans, even when we don't know what to pray for, Romans tells us He's interceding in our hearts to kind of articulate what we can't put into words with groanings that cannot be uttered. Often that is a scripture used to point to the gift of tongues.

I just wish people would read it again and read the part that says cannot be uttered. There's no sound. So, it's not a bad place to bring it up.

I mean, we're going to encounter tongues in just a minute anyway. But that is very often used. With groanings that cannot be uttered.

We're talking about silence here. Don't tell me that we're talking about tongues then. I don't know how many times I've heard people use that for the gift of tongues.

So, when you give your life to prayer, God gives His power to you and He will use you. That power will flow in you and through you. That's the story of the book of Acts.

It's the acts of God through the Holy Spirit through people who are men and women of prayer. Why? Because prayer to an infinite God brings limitless possibilities. Prayer to an infinite God brings limitless possibilities.

Charles Spurgeon was praying over his sermon one week. Then each week he would publish a sermon. After we have CDs, he had the printed word then.

Here he is praying over his message. It gets printed. He's praying over it.

It gets printed. Then he's praying. He always prayed.

He said, always pray after your message in some ways even more than you did before. Because after the message is when the devil is going to come along to take the seed of the Word of God out of people's hearts. So, after the message, pray sometimes even more than you did before that the Word will go deep and take root and bring forth fruit there.

So, he's praying over his message before and after. The message gets printed. It travels around the world all the way to Africa.

It ends up in the hands of one David Livingston. You ever heard of David Livingston? One of the greatest explorers the world has ever known besides one of the greatest Christians. David Livingston gets that sermon from Spurgeon in his hands and he reads it.

And he starts to pray over it. You say, well, how do you know he did that? How do you know David Livingston was praying over Spurgeon's sermon? Because after a long God-saturated life and career in Africa as a missionary and an explorer, one morning they went into David Livingston's tent and he was on his knees. And he had gone to be with Jesus.

He had died in the night while he was praying on his knees. You know what they found in his back pocket? Charles Spurgeon's sermon in Africa. He had been reading it the night he died.

Praying over it. You see, prayer to an infinite God brings limitless possibilities. So these supplicants before the Lord of great testimony.

We come to the third thing, the final thing here. We've seen the sending of Peter. The supplicant's testimony.

We come to the sermon Peter preached. Verse 34. Peter preaches to the kind of crowd every Bible-loving preacher loves to preach to.

They are earnest, hungry hearers. Earnest, hungry hearers. So, they had been prepared by God and they are full of spiritual hunger.

I point that out for this reason. It is very easy to mistake curiosity for spiritual hunger. You can come to church and be very curious about the Bible.

Oh, I wonder what this fellow will say now. You know? That's curiosity. Hunger is a different thing.

These people are earnest. We are all here before God. We're hungry.

Talk to us about God. So, he has this earnest group of prepared listeners. And he begins to preach to them.

His sermon is simple. It is full. It is straightforward.

And it is powerful. He has open hearts in front of him. When you have an open heart in front of you, you get to the point.

Because you're going to encounter a lot of hearts in your lifetime as a Christian that are rock hard. So, when you get open hearts in front of you, go for it. And believe in the power of the Word of God to penetrate.

That's what he does. Verse 34, Peter opened his mouth and said, In truth, I perceive that God shows no partiality. Let me stop there for just a few seconds.

That says a lot about a lot of things. A lot about a lot of things. About how God loves the human race.

How God saves people. But in every nation, whoever fears Him, He's aware of it. Whoever works righteousness is accepted by Him.

So, He's aware that they're seeking Him and He moves in to reach them with Christ. Verse 36, The Word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ, That's peace with God. Having the sin issue resolved and forgiven.

So, you're at peace with God. Preaching peace through Jesus Christ, He is Lord of all. That Word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached.

Now, you heard about these things, at least in a loose sense. Verse 38, How God anointed Jesus Christ of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. You have the Trinity right there.

People ever ask you, Where's the Trinity in the Bible? I don't see it. God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit. There's the Trinity right there.

Who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all the things He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree or a cross. Verse 40, Him God raised up on the third day and showed Him openly.

It wasn't done in a corner. But not to all people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us. Look at this.

Peter says, Who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. Isn't that amazing? They ate and drank with Jesus after He arose from the dead. And Jesus appeared and disappeared and appeared and disappeared for 40 days after He arose from the dead.

The Bible says, Teaching them concerning the things of the kingdom of God. And Jesus loved to get them all together and have a good meal and talk about the things of the kingdom. I like Jesus.

So here He is. He's just preaching away here. Verse 40, Him God raised up on the third day and showed Him openly, not to all people, but to witnesses chosen, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

Verse 42, And He commanded us to preach. Why is Peter there preaching? Because he took the command seriously. The Bible's not just a book of suggestion.

It's full of commands from God. And those commands matter. They always lead you to blessing.

They always immerse you deeper into God than you were before. Always. Always.

Jesus said, If you love Me, you'll keep My commandments. And they're not grievous. They're a blessing.

They're the paths to power, purity, peace, everything you want. So here He is. He's preaching because He took the command seriously.

He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be the judge of the living and the dead. To Him, all the prophets in the Old Testament witnessed that through His name whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins. So here He is.

He preaches a clear, simple message, but it has all of the gospel in it. The message really is He's either going to be your Lord and Savior or He will be your judge in the end. That's His message.

That is His message. It's in verse 42. Ordained by God to be the judge of the living and the dead.

When you have open hearts, get right to the point. And then when you're done, ask them if they want to know Jesus. Have you ever asked anybody before if they want to know Jesus? Talk to them about the Lord and then say, Hey, would you like to pray and receive Him now as your Lord and Savior? We can pray here right now.

Oh, you mean I don't have to go to a church? We don't have to be in a chapel? We don't need incense? No. We can pray right here. What is so tremendous, and Peter knows that, and that's usually what he does, he has these earnest listeners.

He has this simple, straightforward, and powerful message. God is working in a new way. He has his six friends as witnesses because this is going to be big.

And here God works in a way Peter has not seen before. In verse 44, While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. You'll find that sometimes as you're sharing Christ with others, you'll be getting all squared away.

Here I go. I'm 30 seconds away from saying, Do you want to pray with me? And I see the look on their face. I think they're going to do it.

Oh, Lord, let's do it. And before you even get to say, Would you like to pray to receive Christ? Suddenly you'll see they're counting. It's just absolutely changed.

And their eyes begin to shine. There's this smile that comes on their face. And the Lord has already done it.

And that's what happened here. One time I was working in the Minneapolis airport, cleaning toilets. I had a job as a janitor there at night, custodian, and I cleaned one whole concourse.

That was my job. I cleaned every toilet, every night, toilets. So I'm in this bathroom and I'm cleaning toilets.

And, you know, I hate public restrooms to this day, I do, by the way. Anyway, I'm in there and I had a real attitude. And I'm swirling the thing around.

Why can't people hit the target, you know? And so I'm in there. I had a terrible attitude. And I said, Lord, help me.

I just, you know, can't face this all the time like this. It's affecting my attitude. And I said, please, God, I've found in the past if you'll put a song in my heart, I can do just about anything.

And this certainly qualifies for just about anything. So, Lord, could you just put some joy in my heart and I'll clean all this stuff to the glory of your name. And I started singing.

I don't even know what the song was. It's been a while. I'm singing away.

Happy, happy, happy. Happy in the Lord. Hey, this is like a bass drum.

Praise God, I'm born again. And I'm trusting in his word. But seriously, I was in there and I'm just cleaning this stuff up.

And I walked out. Thank you, Lord. That was great.

This guy standing outside the door. And he said, can I ask you a question? I said, yeah. He said, what in the world have you got to sing about with your face in a toilet covered with you know what? All this stuff.

And I said, oh, well, frankly, I went in there with a really bad attitude. And I asked the Lord to help me and he put a song in my heart. So I was just singing to Jesus in there.

He said, really? And I said, yeah. He said, you can be happy in Jesus cleaning toilets. And I said, yeah, yeah.

And I said, you want to talk about it more break? He said, yes, I would love to. So I break, which is about two or three in the morning. We come around and I'm all fired up.

Gospel guns loaded, man. Scriptures across my chest. You know, I'm ready to go.

And he's sitting there and I started to talk to him. I wanted to work around to praying with him. And I said, how would you like to pray with me to receive Christ? But right as I got to that point, he was beaming.

He said, you're too late. He's already come into my life. And nothing like this has ever happened to me ever.

I know it's Him. I know it's Him. I'm already born again.

It was that song in the toilets that did it, man. And he went on to walk with the Lord. Here Peter is, while he's still speaking the words of verse 44, the Holy Spirit fell upon those who heard the word and those of the circumcision who believed were astonished.

Like, we can't believe God even did this. And as many as came with Peter, the six guys, the witness, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, Can anyone forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit? Look what he says.

He's talking about Pentecost. Just as we have. Nobody touched them.

Just like on Pentecost. Nobody touched us. God did it.

And we spoke in tongues. God has done a similar thing right here with these Gentiles as He did on Pentecost. Can anyone forbid water to baptize them because God has surely saved them? And in verse 48, He commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord and they asked Him to stay there a few days.

Whew! I love the Bible. I love it because it's so practical and so helpful for my life and so testifies of how much God loves me and how much He loves you. Let's pray, shall we? Lord, thank You for this time in Your Word.

It's been a rich time, Father. Thank You for lavishing the richness of Your grace upon us and Your love. And we pray You would fill us with Your Holy Spirit.

Send us out. Give us that thrill of being used by You, God, guided by You, and we'll give You all the glory for You are so very worthy. You are so good to us.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

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