

# Week of Meetings 1970-06 Cornelius

by Stan Ford

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*The sermon tells the story of Cornelius, a respected citizen who was a devout man, and Peter, a reluctant servant who preached to him, highlighting the importance of preaching the truth and the result of Peter's preaching, a converted country.*

**Duration:** 59:00

**Scripture:** Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Acts 5:30, Acts 10:34-36, Acts 10:38, Romans 10:15

**Topics:** "Gods Judgment", "Fear Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the story of a respected citizen who becomes a reluctant servant. The speaker highlights how God had to intervene and open the heavens to show Peter a vision of unclean animals, urging him to kill and eat. Despite Peter's initial reluctance, he realizes that God is calling him to serve. The speaker emphasizes that this sermon is unique because it is the only recorded sermon of Peter's, and it addresses the fundamental truth that one day, God will judge everyone based on their actions. The sermon concludes by emphasizing that God takes note of those who live with a fear of God and promises to provide the way of salvation to them.

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## Transcript

Those of you that have been with us during the past evenings will remember that I've been considering with you something of the statement of the Lord Jesus when, giving the last commission to the Church, he said, make disciples of all nations. We were considering that the nations of the world have originated from the three sons of Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth, and we've been noticing how very early in the history of the Christian Church this command was completely overt. The first evening, we gave some thought to the son of Ham, and we thought of that great eighth chapter of Acts that told us of the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch.

Last evening, we went a step further and we thought of the ninth chapter of the Acts, and gave some consideration to the story of Saul of Tarthas. This evening, with your permission, I would like to read the story in the tenth chapter of Acts, and we will consider the story of the son not of Ham or Shem, but the son of Japheth. The tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, please.

I would like to commence reading in verse thirty-eight, or maybe we should commence reading just a little before then. Maybe we should commence reading in verse thirty-four. Then Peter opened his mouth and said, On the truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him

and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.

The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, he is Lord of all. That word I say ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached, how that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they slew and hanged on a tree.

Then God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, to testify that it was he which should, or which was, ordained of God to be judge of quickened death. To him give God, or give all the people witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sin.

While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word, and they of the circumcision which believed were astonished as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Now may the Lord just add his blessing to the reading of his own precious word. Could I ask you to join me, please, in prayer for just a moment, as we ask his help as we consider these majestic, mighty, holy gods.

We come to thee this evening in the precious name of the Lord Jesus, and from our hearts we pray to thee that we could call thee our Father. We come as children to a Father, craving the blessing of a Father, asking that thou wilt by thy Spirit make clear and plain to each one of us the truth of my word. As thou didst to thy servant long ago, speak to Cornelius, and bring such blessing to him in his home.

Will thou speak to us, and bring a like blessing to every one of us here in this place tonight, for we ask it in the favoured name of it. I wonder, without any preamble, if I may get right as it were into the subject which is on my heart. I will draw your attention to three very definite truths that are found here in this portion.

First of all, the whole chapter seems to me to be the story of one that I have dared called a respected citizen. May I repeat that? It's the story of a person I have dared to call a respected citizen. Now, I think you will agree with me that, as we consider this chapter of Acts, it is not only the story of a respected citizen, but it is the story of a reluctant servant.

Is not that so? Did not God have to open the heavens? Did not God have a vision to come down to Peter and show him a great sheep in which had been placed all manner of unclean beasts? Did not God have to say, kill and eat? And did he not have to rebuke him when Peter said, no, Lord, I've never eaten anything that's unclean? The four of his servants would even walk down the road, go into the home of a Gentile, and tell him about Jesus. Or, whatever you may say of this chapter, you will be in agreement with me when I say it is not only the story of a respected citizen, but it is the story of a reluctant servant. And then, before we finish, I've got a feeling that every one of you are going to say amen when I draw your attention to the fact that it is also the story of a remarkable servant.

Oh, what a servant! It almost seems to be out of place that Peter would stand before such a man as Cornelius and say these things. Why, he's cutting across that which every man who's studied for the service of God has ever been taught concerning homiletics and sermon preparation. You would never have guessed that such a person as this would leave such a message as this.

Yet, the more we look at it, the more we realize that it was just suitable for him, and I believe it's just suitable for every one of us in this service tonight. Firstly, then, a respected citizen. What a remarkable man was this man Cornelius.

Not the son of Ham, for he was not a colored man. Not the son of Shem, for he was not a Jew, but the son of Jacob, a Gentile. Laced with disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded thee, here the Church of God is going to do that very thing.

I wonder if I may draw your attention to some of the things that we are told about him. Would you not agree with me that he was a man who was a devout man? Well, that's what the scripture says of him, that he was a devout man. He was not a man who had gone down into the very depths of iniquity.

He was a man who had not sunk so low that men and women would tell it was almost impossible for him to be lifted. He was a man who was a devout man. And the scripture says more of him.

He was a man who feared God. Now, my Bible tells me that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. And here was a man who feared God.

Now, it is a remarkable fact, but fact indeed, that the Word of God speaks of the fear of God in ten ways. There is a word which is used that dares to suggest to us that a man is one who should dread, should be afraid of God. And I don't want to water that down.

I would not have any one of you accuse me of watering down the scripture. That is the word which again and again and again is used. I want to ask you a very simple question, sir.

I am not going to try and suggest the answer. I want to ask you a very simple question. Is it not true that the Bible says that God laid on his own son the iniquity of us all? And is it not recorded, he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquity.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Has not the head writer expressed it truthfully when he said, Jehovah lifted up his watch? Oh Christ, it fell on me. The question I want to ask is this, sir, if God, because of sin, would deal with his own son the way he dealt with Jesus upon a cross, how would he deal with you and me if we neglect so great salvation? I suggest to you that when we speak of the fear of God, there is a sense in which men and women that have never bound their knee at the foot of the cross, and have never said, Christ for me, they need to fear God.

But, please, there is another way of fearing God, and this is the way I suggest that Cornelius feared God. I have two children. I have one of every sort you can have.

Of course, there are some very, very happy families of their own, but when my children were little, I trust they feared me. Now, I never once can remember them ever showing any sign of being afraid of me, but I trust they feared me. I trust they feared their mother.

I trust they feared the night, not do anything that would bring disgrace to our name. The fear that does not spring from dread, but from love. The fear that does not spring because one is frightened, but a fear that springs because one appreciates, one respects, one honors, but from love.

This is the fear that God calls every man that knows his Father to have of him. God has got some great passion with a stick in his hand, moving up and down, waiting for men and women to do that which is wrong, to show that they're out of step, that he might bring his stick on them. No, no, no! I remind those of us that love his name that we are called to fear him, the fear of doing anything that would make men turn away from him, that would make his name to be laughed at, the fear of God.

And here was a man Cornelius, who didn't know Christ, who was not a Christian, who never bowed his knee at the foot of the cross. But here was a man, I said he was a respected citizen, here was a man who was a devout man, and he feared God. We are told that he taught his household, he gathered around him the members of his household and taught them that which he knew of God, read with them though he were a Gentile, put the Old Testament Scripture, and yet he wasn't a Christian, he wasn't on the road that leads to glory, he wasn't saved.

For if this story tells me anything, it tells me that he was devout, he feared God, he taught his household, he gave alms to the poor, and he prayed, and it also tells me that God took note of it. God took note of it. You will notice to me what God did not say.

God did not say, because you fear me, because you pray, because you are one who gives alms to the poor, because you are a devout man, I will save you. But what God did do was this. He said, because you've done this, I will see that you hear the way of salvation.

I will send a sermon to you to make sure that you know what you must do to pass from death unto life, and I believe that wherever there are men and women who seek to live with a fear of God before their eyes, God respects and answers that fear of seeing that the message of the gospel is brought to you. And here, this man with all the good things you could say of him, and yet he was not a Christian. Sir, would you not agree with me a bit? Would you not agree with me that it is tragically possible to bear almost all the marks of being a Christian, and yet nothing? Would you not agree that it is possible to be benevolent? Now, that's a lie.

He gave alms to the poor. My Bible tells me this. It dares to tell me that I must consider those in need.

My Bible dares to tell me that to communicate and do good, forget not. For with such sacrifice, God is well pleased. That's one of the marks of being a Christian, to be benevolent.

Yet, is it possible to be benevolent to love a family, and it have nothing whatsoever to do with God? You see, I love my children. I love my grandchildren. And because I love my children, and because I love my grandchildren, there is a sense in which to then I can be commendably benevolent.

I'm not much of a fan of the shopping. I like doing shopping when the shops are shut, and you don't spend anything. But I must confess that I'm beginning to find myself now, as we're gradually, I'm beginning to find myself that when I look in the store, and I'm saying, oh, that would just, you know, Sharon would look nice in that.

What? And it has nothing to do with Jesus Christ. The mark of being a Christian, benevolence. Yet, nothing to do with that.

Wouldn't you agree with me, sir, that it is also possible to be humble to love a family, a grand-dear who have laboured so long, over so many years, amongst the presence of your eyes? You have a word with me. I have been convinced that many a time when he's gone into prison, when he's seen men shut up

behind bars, he said, God give me the grace never to do the same that would put me in such a position as that. There are very few prisons in Great Britain that at some time or another I have not had to preach in.

I never planned on looking to the faces of men in our prisons, and our prisons are so different to yours. I didn't look in their faces without saying, oh God, keep me from doing the same that would separate me from society, and with me. And does it have nothing to do with Jesus Christ? You've been involved through love affairs.

Have you ever been into a hospital that specialises in social disease? Have you ever been into a hospital where you see men and women and so many of them are so young, bearing in their body the mark of social disease? Don't you come away saying, oh God, keep me pure. Not because you just want to please God, but because you don't want to finish up like that. You can be moral through love of self.

And it has nothing to do with Jesus Christ. I say, you can be tremendously orthodox, tremendously orthodox, just through love of knowledge. So I go somewhere.

I know how thrilled I am when I take my Bible. And as I turn its page, I come across a verse, and I say, well, that's interesting. You know that truth is coming somewhere else over here.

And all along I can get time, and I can get almost where I am. So I just take my Bible and turn its page. I get thrilled with the wonder of the Bible.

And it has nothing to do with Jesus Christ. I spend a good part of my time, and I'm a theological student at the same time. I know that I'll have a group of men that labour amongst anywhere in the world.

Men that spend some years of their life with their Greek Testament and their Hebrew Old Testament men who spend their time with a Bible in their hand, reading it, making its message known to their hearts, at least known to their minds. And I won't say this, but many of them are heavy readers. Some of them are conspirators.

Some of them would tell you they don't even believe they exist. You can put men of knowledge of the future to be religious through love of knowledge. And it has nothing to do with Jesus.

All right, I dare. Cornelius, I'm glad you grew up from the place you grew up. I believe you were a good influence to the neighbourhood.

I believe there wasn't a mother in the district who would ever kill, but she should never allow her children to come near your home. I don't believe there's a father in the district who would have said to his son, don't you listen to that man. I believe you're a respected citizen.

He wasn't converting. I look around at groups like this, I don't know you. I don't know you.

But as I stand and look at you, would you permit me to say you do look, you know, quite a group of respected citizens. Really you do. I think that anyone who would give up a bank holiday, of course you look for a bank holiday, don't you, but if you would give up a, what do you call it, national holiday, thank you, would give up a national holiday to come to a church building on an evening like this, I think there goes something.

He was a man, a respected citizen. Yet he wasn't converted. But if there's a respected citizen in our story, there is also a reluctant servant.

I say how opposite to Cornelius was this man. Great, tough, rugged Peter. Oh the man that had dared to tell the Lord he wasn't quite the very last to die, Christ he'd never deny him, and it wasn't very long before he denied him.

And yet isn't it wonderful? He didn't stay down, he picked himself up and got going again. I'm glad of that. I'm so glad.

There was a Christ that was willing to forgive him and bless him. Later that blessed Christ would say to him, Peter, feed my lambs, Peter, feed my sheep. Later that Christ was the sacred, Peter, love us thou me, and I've seen so many times that in desperation Peter would say, oh Lord thou knowest all things.

Thou knowest that I love thee. Yet that man who would speak so openly about his appreciation of Christ, when it came to going into the home of a Gentile, he wouldn't even cross the street to do it. And God had to give him the vision, and he saw this great sheep with all manner of unclean beasts, and he heard the voice, wise Peter, kill and eat.

And he cried, Lord, I've never, never eaten anything that's unclean. Oh, I say, you could almost see the bristles on his collar. And he asked him, dear, you, to eat that.

God, you who pour in the tent of Nebuchadnezzar, you say that none of these things I know, or anyone of my people, and now you tell me to eat them. And it's wonderful that we've got a God who said, Peter, don't you forget me, or anyone of my people. And he crawled to his bed, and he would eat.

Suddenly, Peter realized that God had something for him to do, for a knock came at the door, and the servant said, would you come to my monster and I'll eat it up. This reluctant servant, and then we come to the part that I want to share with you most of all tonight, that a respected citizen, that a reluctant servant comes together, and that reluctant servant preaches the most remarkable sermon that he'd ever preached in his life, or ever preached again. Now, those of you who are interested a little in sermon formation, I wonder if I can give you the six points, six please, not seven, six points of his address.

And I want to ask you, sir, would you have ever preached a sermon like this to this man? We're always being taught that what we've got to do in our modern day, you see, is that we must suit our message to our audience. And whatever else we do, we must suit our message to our audience. My Bible knows nothing about that.

The only thing my Bible knows about is preaching the truth. It does not say to you and me to make that truth palatable to men and women. My Bible does not tell you to go forth and suit your message to your audience.

My Bible says preach the word. These are students. Remember his address.

And the first thing he does is that he preached to this man a consecrated life. For speaking of Christ, he said, God anointed Jesus, who went about doing good. You've done good.

You've given alms to the poor. I want to tell you of someone who was greater than you. God anointed Jesus, who went about doing good.

He preached first a consecrated life. And then to such a man as this, he preached a criminal death, a criminal death. For he goes on and in verse 39 he said, whom they slew and hanged on a tree.

A criminal death. And then will you notice that having preached a consecrated life and a criminal death, he preached a confirmed resurrection. By that thrill of my heart.

As looking into the face of Cornelius he said in verse 40, God raised him from the dead and showed him openly. Not just resurrection, but a confirmed resurrection. He showed him openly.

And then to Cornelius, this respected citizen, he not only preached a consecrated life, he not only preached a criminal death, he not only preached a confirmed resurrection, but he preached a coming judgment. Oh, we don't hear very much of that, do we? But isn't that what he preached? Please sir, please. I didn't write the Bible, you know.

Nothing to do with me. This is what the word of God says, verse 42, that he would be the judge of the quick of the dead. And then would you notice that having preached a consecrated life and a criminal death and a confirmed resurrection and a coming judgment, he then preached a complete salvation.

Verse 43, Whosoever believeth in him shall receive the forgiveness of sins. What then? Then would you notice something else? That as the result of his preaching, there was a converted country. For the Holy Ghost fell upon all those that believed.

A converted country. Trust me then, let's just look at it. Let's tear it apart.

Let's consider this message. He first spoke of Christ, and speaking of him, spoke of a consecrated life. God anointed Jesus.

Dare I go back to the first address I gave you on the first chapter of Revelation? You remember I reminded you, and I do not apologize for repeating myself. You remember I reminded you that the one that was brought before us in the first of Revelation was the Christ, and I said that Christ is the Greek word, for it is not a name, it is a title. You remember I reminded you that if I was to say it in the Hebrew tongue, I would not say Christ, I would say Messiah.

Exactly the same, not a name, a title. But if I was to say it in the English tongue, exactly the same, for Christ is Greek, Messiah is Hebrew, but if I was to say it in the English tongue, I would say God anointed Jesus. I reminded you that there were three people that had to be anointed.

Prophets had to be anointed, priests had to be anointed, kings had to be anointed, I reminded you that the work of a prophet was to reveal, the work of a prince was to reconcile, the work of a king was to reign, and when we pray that Jesus is the Christ, we pray that he is the revealing, reconciling, reigning Son of God. He anointed Jesus, and that was all the one night. I say, Mr. Cornelius, you are a respected citizen, but let me tell you of the citizen of another land, let me tell you of the citizen of heaven, let me tell you of one who is the respected citizen of heaven, the anointed one who went about doing good, is that one of them? Do you know whatever you may say of Jesus Christ, whatever you may think of him, every one of you will acknowledge this, that he went about doing good, a consecrated life, the only one that utterly, in every word and deed, satisfied his Father God.

Right from the beginning when God made a man, God looked down to see if there were any that did not understand, and then seek out for him, and God looked for a man that would stand up and pray for him, God looked for him. You know, God thinks so much of himself, the Lord Jesus, that one day, he's going to people with folks just like him. You know, I love my wife, but I don't think I would really like heaven filled with folks just like her.

Don't you understand? Do you know what I mean? God thinks so much of Christ, and there is so much in Christ to completely and absolutely satisfy our hearts, that one day, everyone that's going to be in glory is going to be like him, for when we shall see him, we shall delight in what he did, we shall see him in the end. That's how it is in Christ. He went about doing good, a consecrated life.

And the tragedy of this, a criminal death, whom they slew and hanged on a tree. My Bible says, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree. The praise God, my Bible goes further, it says this, that he was made cursed for us, as it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.

Oh, bless God, he, this one who was absolutely, absolutely given to the will of his Father God, this one who lived a consecrated life, was willing to die a criminal death, to take my sin and my sorrow and make it his very own, to bear my burden to Calvary. To suffer and die alone. Or may I use the words of the little old Welsh boy, do you wonder, do you wonder why it is I love him, sir? When I think of all he's done for me, the guilty one, do you wonder that I love him, sir? Oh, Cornelius, respected citizen, though you may remember it.

But you still needed a savior, and there still needed one to die on Calvary's cross for you. For with all your good, you were not good enough for him. You were so near, and yet you were so far.

In some things you were so rich, and yet you were so poor. You were so good, and yet you were so bad. You needed a savior.

And I come to tell you of one who died on a cross for your sin. Friend, there's no message of the Christian faith that does not have at its center this, that we preach Christ and him crucified. But would you notice something more? He not only preached a consecrated life, he not only preached a criminal death, but glory to God, he preached a confirmed resurrection.

Let me read it to you again. Oh, Harkon, God raised him from the dead and showed him over. There is not a truth of the Christian faith more provable than the truth of the resurrection.

Academically, the resurrection can be proved better than any other truth of the Christian faith. Oh, I think of the fact that they took him down from a cross, and they placed him in a tomb, and they rolled a stone over it, and they sealed it with a wooden seal, and they sent two soldiers to watch it. And yet the seal was broken, and the stone rolled back, and Christ arose.

Oh, thank God for the resurrection. I'm glad that my Christ is not dead, but living. And you may come to me with all the arguments that may have laid against the resurrection, and I say this to you, but he showed him openly.

He showed him openly. People saw him. People touched him.

People heard him. People were transformed by him. He showed him openly.

Why have men and women of troth cast aside the resurrection? They did it in that manner. And what effect can nature try to prove that Christ has risen? Oh, dear, dear, dear. You know, I really don't think we're in the midst of it.

We're in the midst of it. You see, they went to those soldiers, and they sent the soldiers to their soldiers. We'll give you money.

We'll pay you. You tell people the holy fact that his disciples came so far. Oh, dear, dear, dear.

How foolishly thick we are. Why? Why are we flat if his disciples came and stole the body? Do you know what goes on while you're sleeping? Quite often when I get up in the morning, someone said to me, now, did you sleep well up there? And I said, well, I don't. I never know what goes on when I'm asleep.

Do you? And here are men who expected us to believe that the soldiers came and stole the body, and his disciples came and stole the body, and they said, well, you see, they did it while we were asleep. It's a lie. Lie, then.

Look, a confirmed resurrection. He showed the others, and saw him, and handled him, and spoke with him, and walked with him, and ate with him, and was transformed by him. I'm glad I've got a Christ in here, because he's done it right through the ages, you see.

There's room for more. Right through the ages. And then will you notice he not only preached a confirmed resurrection, but will you notice he went further, and he preached a cunning judgment? Verse 42, to be judged of the quick and the dead.

Oh, Cornelius, you need salvation. But even you can't slip into salvation. You must remember that salvation is based upon a righteous nature, that step by step you must consider the truth of God.

You must remember that Jesus went about doing good. You must remember that he died on a cross for you. You must remember that God raised him from the dead, for there's salvation no other way.

You must remember that this one will be the judge of the quick and the dead. We're apt to forget sometimes this side of the Christian faith, aren't we? We're told it's old-fashioned to tell folk that one day God's going to open the books, and he's going to judge men and women out of the things that are written there. But don't a thing being old-fashioned make it wrong? Were the great fundamental things that you and I draw breath and life from old-fashioned? Blessed be God, they're still true.

And as I look at this, I remember that my Bible says that one day the books will be opened, and we would be judged out of the things that are written in the books. Friend, what will happen when the book of your life's done? When it's revealed. When the clasp is broken, what will happen then? Was it not Esther who bore him and said, that the tragedy is not that God writes books, the tragedy is that you and I can't read? Isn't that true? Look, I touched that desk, and you don't know I touched it.

But let me send for a police officer, and out of his pocket he will take a little tin, and he will sprinkle it upon that desk, and there, of the millions of people that are living, that have lived, and that will yet live, it's written down that I'm the only one that touched that desk. There it is, my finger. Let me walk out of this chapel this evening, and you don't know I've walked out of it.

You've come up at the same time. There it is, tied firmly into boots. I walked out of the chapel.

It's been written down. You come to me, it's a way they give a well. And as the earth is torn up, shovel by shovel, you and I look at it, and we say, by there's some dirty dirt.

Would you take with you a geologist? And drop that geologist down that hole. Do you know what he would do here? Do you know what he would do here? Do you know? About, uh, about, uh, 10,000 years ago. I wonder why it's always in the round-up, it's always in the limit.

But about 10,000 years ago. Why? There was a minor eruption in this part of Florida. Well, how do you know? Well, you see that spot, and that should be there.

That should be there. It's been written down. I said, let's draw a way to one of your parts.

This paper acts as our tool. And we come to bring it straight back to you, brother. Would you take with you a bobber? And before you cut the tree down here, look at it, and you say, by that is a thing.

Do you know about 30 years ago, there was a tremendous gale in this part of the forest? And from that last day, there was an electric storm as well. Well, how do you know? Well, do you see that branch? It's charred away at the end there. Do you see that one? It's starting to grow out that way, but it's not... It's been written down! He looks for the tree that's been felled, and he said, by that's a thing.

Do you know that tree is 73 years old? How old? 73 years! Well, how do you know? Look! It's been written down. Sir! It's not that God doesn't keep books, it's that we can't read them. And one day, the book's going to be unlocked, and he is judged the prick in the neck.

Who? This one, who lived a consecrated life, and died a criminal death, who was raised with a confirmed resurrection. This is the one who will judge the prick in the neck. Some years ago, I found myself away in Vandebrook.

I was waiting around a chapel at the time he made up. I well remember, I think that evening, on the story of Abner, dying Abner as a fool died. And I did, so the chapel was full, there was a great congregation there, the end of the service, I did what I don't like to do, but I asked if anyone was coming to save me when they come to the place, and there rose to his feet an elderly young man.

I noticed the moment he stood to his feet, that a large number of folk turned and looked, some of them bowed their head in prayer. And I noticed one particular man who burst into tears. Afterwards, when I went into the inquiry room to speak to others that had come forward, I saw this good gentleman, and the man who burst into tears with his arms around his neck, and there they were together with their Bible opens.

And I realized who it was. So the man that had burst into tears was our good friend Mr. Shepherd, who some of you know. The man whose arm he had around his neck was his brother, Judge Shepherd of the Supreme Court of British Columbia.

I came to know Judge Shepherd quite well, and he told me this story and gave me permission to use it, and I do as such. You may have heard the story of many ways, I don't know. This is the story that Judge Shepherd told me and gave me permission to use it.

I'm a young man. He practiced law in my home. There came to him one day a lady, a Polish expat, who at the end of the war had come to Canada.

And she had indeed started a little restaurant. It had succeeded. She went from that one to another.

It had succeeded. She went from that one to another. It had succeeded.

And then she'd opened up her poor restaurant, went through the letterbox, and told there came a buffalo. Income tax demands. So she filled no forms in, she paid no income tax, and at last they caught up with her.

Well, she looked at it. Something demanded a great sum of money. Well, she did the best thing anyone could do.

She put it on the line. But you know, they don't let you do that. Please be careful.

And it wasn't long before she had a double, and in stronger terms. And she was advised to go and solicit her own. So then she went to see my friend, who is now a judge.

She placed, indeed, the paper on his desk. She showed it to him. But she was old.

She had to work too hard for her cents and dollars. Before she wanted to know anything, she wanted to know how much it was going to cost her. And have you ever been to a lawyer and asked him how much it's going to cost? Oh, there's not a people in the world who can tell you so much and tell you just that.

Like a lawyer. Well, he said a lot and didn't say a word. And she picked up her papers and out she went.

But eventually, a court summons came. And in Taylor's hands, she went to see Judge Shackles, who is now Judge Shackles, then a lawyer. She said, Mr. Shackles, would you please help me? Your Honor, at that time, have you not been reading the papers? No, I can't read English.

I'm sorry, because if you had, you would have noticed. So I've been appointed the judge of the Supreme Court. Last month, I would have been the one to defend you.

She said, no. I don't suppose it will ever happen. But there's a chance that this month, I could be the one who would judge you.

Ordained to be judge? But Lord, I thought you are a savior. I thought you died on the cross for our sins. Yes, I did.

But if you refuse me, I've been appointed to be the judge. May I remind you? First, he preached a consecrated life, a criminal death, a confirmed resurrection, a coming judgment, but then, bless God, he preached a complete salvation, for he said, but listen, Cornelius, whosoever believeth in him shall receive the forgiveness of sin. No one more.

Oh, bless God. Whosoever. Oh, isn't that lovely? Let me say what I said the other night, that I've got a savior who places one arm on the shoulder of a fair, lovely girl with a very luster of purity in her eyes.

He places another hand on the shoulder of a merry bachelor, and he says, Whosoever. Places one hand on the shoulder of a young man who rather than do that which is vile would have his arms torn out of his body. And listen, thank God there are still some young men in America like that.

He'll place another arm on the shoulder of a libertine, he'll say, Whosoever. The rich and the ragged, the saber and the forgotten, the humble and the haughty, whoever they may be. Whosoever.

Believeth in him. Believeth in who? Believeth in the one who lived a consecrated life, who died a criminal death, who was raised with a confirmed resurrection, who is going to judge the quick and the dead. Whosoever believeth in him.

I like that, don't you? Whosoever believeth. In. Not of.

In. Winston Churchill. Churchill called it the longest menace of all.

And the way in Britain it was packed. It was poor officially, with all your hostage incapable. We were losing more ships than we could produce.

Every shipyard in Britain, from Scotland to Wales, right round the coast of England and the north of Ireland, every shipyard was working 24 hours a day to produce ships. They couldn't produce enough. So the boats would leave Liverpool and Glasgow and London and come across the mighty Atlantic Ocean, making their way for a convoy point away in Bermuda and on to different ports in your land that they would bring back to us the food and the things that were necessary that we might raise for war.

They would send out some planes over the convoy. But air was but limited then. And there was in the centre of the Atlantic Ocean that which became known as the graveyard of British sailors.

Where hundreds upon hundreds of ships were sunk by the German U-boats. Thousands of lives were lost. One day there walked in to the White House and your President President Roosevelt said, we made ships.

You know that the man had never once in his life made ships. He said that he'd never made the toy ship of a boy. But President Roosevelt said, well you made the ships.

And the man said, I'll make ships on one condition. That I have priority, I've never made a ship. And with now what I've had, every bit of material I need I must get.

You give me priority of better material and I'll make it. Churchill's had his longest minute of the war. When President Roosevelt looked into the face of a man, he didn't believe about him he'd never made a ship in his life.

He believed in him. He said you could have priority of better material. The Liberty Boat, a boat that every shipwright in Britain said would never sail the ocean.

It would race back before it crossed the Atlantic. The first boat that was ever made was like a rivet that was completely welded. The Liberty Boat was born and listen, you take that on.

You take this to a man who's never made a boat in his life. When President Roosevelt looked into the face of Henry J. Kiger, your master of mass production, said he was a mispronounced. He was willing to touch his life.

He was willing to believe in it. You can believe all of it. You can believe that he lived 19,000 years ago, that he went about doing good, that he died on a cross, that he rose from the dead, that he lived in glory, that one day he'll be the judge.

You can believe that and I'll tell you something, you'll do no more than the devil believes because he believes every bit of that. But if you'll believe on him, if you'll trust your life to him, if you'll believe in him rather, trust your life to him, whosoever believeth in him shall receive what was it? Look, I didn't write it. Please, please.

I didn't write it. Shall receive the forgiveness of sins. Oh, but Cornelius, you are such a good man.

Oh, but you must have sin to be forgiven. Oh, but Cornelius, you were a divine man. If you're going to receive the forgiveness of sin, you must be a sinner.

Oh, Cornelius, God knows something about you that you've never told anyone else. I've nothing to say. He's a grander than God, but he doesn't go around telling everyone how bad he's been.

Cornelius, you need to forgive him. Hallelujah, that day he believed. Oh, listen, oh, listen, friend, not only a complete salvation that whosoever believeth in him should have remission of sins or forgiveness of sins, but verse 44, and the Holy Ghost hath imposed his belief to be brought into the body of Christ.

If he had not the spirit of Christ, you're none of his, the Bible says. That day the spirit of God came upon me, Gentiles, and Cornelius, and those that believe with him, received this glorious salvation, and became a converted country, a respected citizen, like you, madam, like you, sir, but not converted, a reluctant sermon, like Peter, but a remarkable sermon. Tonight I want to ask, what will you do with that sermon? I don't want to ask you what will you do with my sermon, because while I know I've added a little to it in illustration and in words, it is the word of God I want to ask you what you will do with it.

What will be your verdict? To Peter, sir, will you, like Cornelius, be willing to say, that whosoever believeth in him, will receive the forgiveness of sin? Then I'll believe in him tonight. I'll trust my life to him, tonight. Please, God, you may.

Please, God, you may. Please, God, you'll do it? Sure, he'll do it. Well, God and Father, all thy hands are stronger than ours.

We've no confidence in what we've said, or what we can do, but our confidence is in thee. And in thy word, for the Lord Jesus said, heaven and earth will pass away, but thy word will not pass away. We pray that you'll be confident in thy word.

We ask that the believers, each one, may stand apart to see, not if we're respected citizens, but whether we are recipients of the cross. Should there be sons that have never opened their lives to the Savior, please, God, open their lives again tonight. We ask it in that.

Amen.

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