

Why Send For Peter?

John Isaac Edwards

Acts chapters 10 and 11 report where Cornelius was told, “Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 10:5-6; 11:13-14). If some things thought and taught today be true, then there would have been no need for this military man to send for a gospel preacher. Thus our question, ***Why Send For Peter...***

1) If Goodness Alone Saves? Some think that all one must do to be saved is just be good morally. I don’t expect you could have met a better man in all of Caesarea than this man. Cornelius is described as, “A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway” (Acts 10:2). Acts 10:22 further says, “...Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews...” We are not discounting or downplaying the importance of moral goodness, but, friend, not a one of us is going to heaven on good behavior alone!

2) If One Can Pay Or Pray His Way Into Heaven?

Cornelius was a paying and praying man. He “...gave much alms...” and “...prayed to God alway” (Acts 10:2). He was told, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” Yet, he was not saved for he had to send for Peter! I wonder then why it is thought by many today that if they give enough money to charity that will somehow buy them a home in heaven? And why is it taught that to be saved one must simply pray ‘the sinner’s prayer’? Where, in all the book of God, was one who was not a child of God, told to pray so as to be saved? No need to send for Peter if such be true!

3) If Saved By Seeing A Vision? Someone says, “I know I’m saved; I saw a vision!” Cornelius “...saw in a vision...” about 3:00 in the afternoon! (Acts 10:3). The purpose of the vision was not to save Cornelius or to give him assurance that he had been saved; it was rather to inform him of his need to be saved — he had to hear words whereby he could be saved (Acts 11:14)! Why would you see a vision to assure you that you have been saved, and this man see a vision to assure him that he needed to be saved? Find me an example where anyone in all the Bible was

saved by seeing a vision. It will have to be someone other than Cornelius, for it certainly wasn’t this man.

4) If Saved By An Angel Coming? One might say, “I saw an angel or an angel came to me.” What did that angel say to you? If he said anything other than what the gospel says, the Bible says let him be accursed! Paul said, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8). Also, are you aware that “...Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14)? Paul warned about, “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Th. 2:9-12). Did you notice what the angel told Cornelius? “...send...for...Peter...he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to

do” (Acts 10:3-6). If saved by an angel coming, no need to send for Peter!

5) If Salvation Is Wholly By Grace, Without Doing

Anything? Many are made to believe that salvation of sinners is wholly by grace. In fact, the Standard Manual for Baptist Churches asserts, “We believe the scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly by grace” (ch. 9, art. 4). If this be true, then all men will be saved and none will be lost! “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men” (Titus 2:11). The Bible teaches salvation by grace, but not by grace wholly! Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace are ye saved through faith...” If salvation is by grace through faith, then it is not wholly by grace, nor is it solely by faith! And if saved by grace alone, without doing anything, why was Cornelius told to send for Peter to tell him what he ought to do? (Acts 10:5-6).

6) If Saved By The Holy Ghost Falling On Him? It’s been said, “I’ve been saved; I received the Holy Ghost!” Did you know the Holy Ghost fell

on Cornelius? He did! (Acts 10:44). But do you know when the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius, and why? Acts 11, where the events are “expounded by order” (v. 4), finds Peter saying, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them...” (v. 15). Peter had scarcely uttered a word, when the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius! Yet, Cornelius was to hear “... words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:14)! Now, when the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius, what purpose did it serve? It wasn’t to save him, otherwise no need to send for Peter, no need for Peter to go, and no need for Peter to tell him words whereby he would be saved! The Spirit falling on the Gentiles was to convince the Jews, “...Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (Acts 11:18; 15:8-11). If the Holy Spirit works directly, apart from the word, why are there no Christians where preachers have not gone and Bibles have not been sent? Why did Paul charge Timothy, “Preach the word...” (2 Tim. 4:2)? Why are you preaching; why not let the Spirit work independent of your word?

The fact that Cornelius was to send for Peter makes some things stand out. Why send for Peter? “Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved” (Acts 11:14). The Bible teaches, “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:13-17).

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