

We are living at a time when matters of faith have been greatly personalised. The “religion of tolerance” is creating a world where absolutes in faith are being questioned all the time. In the world's quest for peace, the issue whether there are truths that apply to all, is being challenged by many.

I call the desire for tolerance a religion because, this desire for tolerance has become the “god” that people worship. The minute someone condemns an action that is against the truth revealed in the Bible, that person is accused of being judgemental. And the person upholding the truth becomes the person who is at fault, and not the person who is going against the truth of Scripture.

A few years ago, I quoted this statement made famous by the great Missionary Hudson Taylor:

“Christ is either Lord of all, or is not Lord at all”

Over the next few weeks I want to look at this statement, and in my final sermon in this series ask the question: SO WHAT?? If I have managed to convince you of the significance of the quote of Hudson Taylor, WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS.

Today I want to try get us to think about:

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO REALISE THAT JESUS IS LORD OF ALL

Acts 10:1-48

v1 At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. v2 He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. v3 One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" v4 Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. v5 Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. v6 He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea." v7 When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. v8 He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

v9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. v10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. v11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. v12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. v13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." v14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." v15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." v16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. v17 While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. v18 They called out, asking if Simon

who was known as Peter was staying there. v19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. v20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them." v21 Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?" v22 The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." v23 Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

The next day Peter started out with them, and some of the brothers from Joppa went along. v24 The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. v25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. v26 But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself." v27 Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. v28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. v29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?" v30 Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me v31 and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. v32 Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' v33 So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us." v34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritisms v35 but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. v36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

v37 You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached-- v38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. v39 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, v40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. v41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. v42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. v43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." v44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. v45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. v46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, v47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." v48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

THREE GREAT TRUTHS RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS

1) THE DESIRE FOR LORDSHIP IS UNIVERSAL.

1. GOD SPOKE TO BOTH CORNELIUS AND PETER.

An angel appears to both men to communicate a message to them.

One of the questions often directed against Christians, is against our claims of exclusivity. Because we say, "Jesus is the only way to heaven", we are directly condemning millions of people to hell, some that have never even heard of Jesus.

(Patricia while riding on Tuk-Tuk in India, asked the driver if he knew Jesus, to which he replied, "is that something you eat.")

Every honest thinking believer should have grappled with the issue at some time. For me it was in my 3rd year of Seminary. The Principal of the College directed me to ***John 1:9 The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was going to come into the world.***

I can hold those two truths in tension. JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY and SOME WHO MAY NEVER HAVE HEARD HIS NAME WILL BE SAVED, because in some way Jesus has revealed HIS light to them.

2. BOTH CORNELIUS AND PETER RECOGNISED THE VOICE OF THE LORD.

v3 One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" v4 Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?"

v13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." v14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied.

Cornelius responded out of fear. Cornelius had no point of reference other than superstition. He was a Pagan, and had no revelation other than the General Revelation available to all men which is seen in nature as described in Romans.

Romans 1:19-21 For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts. v20 From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. v21 Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused.

Peter responded out of revelation. Peter knew that what he was being asked to do was against the Law,

v9 About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. v10 He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. v11 He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. v12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. v13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." v14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

3. **BOTH CORNELIUS AND PETER RESPOND IN OBEDIENCE.**

v7 When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants. v8 He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa.

v19 While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. v20 So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them." v21 Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?" v22 The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to have you come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say." v23 Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

I want to say just one vital thing at this point:

OBEDIENCE IS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LORDSHIP!!!

JESUS TOLD THIS PARABLE IN

Matthew 21:28-32 "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' v29 "I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. v30 Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go. v31 "Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. v32 For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

THE FIRST GREAT TRUTHS RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS

THE DESIRE FOR LORDSHIP IS UNIVERSAL.

THE SECOND GREAT TRUTHS RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS

2) THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS ULTIMATE.

1. JESUS IS LORD OVER PEOPLE.

CORNELIUS was a man who understood the chain of command. Yet when the Lord said SEND, he sent.

PETER was a man who had been Jewish all his life. Yet when the LORD said, Kill and Eat, he was willing to GO BEYOND THE LAW.

2. JESUS IS LORD OVER NATURE.

In the vision given to Peter, he was told to Kill and Eat that which was unclean.

v11 He(Peter) saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. v12 It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. v13 Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." v14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." v15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." v16 This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

Peter must have been reminded of a time when he was with Jesus eating grain on a Sabbath, when Jesus said in *Mark 2:28 So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.*"

3. JESUS IS LORD OVER LAWS.

v28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.

Up until this point, Peter thought that what he was doing was totally against the revealed Word of God.

THE FIRST GREAT TRUTH RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS THE DESIRE FOR LORDSHIP IS UNIVERSAL.

THE SECOND GREAT TRUTH RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS ULTIMATE.

THE THIRD GREAT TRUTH RELATING TO THE UNIVERSAL LORDSHIP OF JESUS IS

3) THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

1. JESUS WILL NOT SHARE HIS LORDSHIP.

We see this truth in the following verses.

v25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. v26 But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."

2. **JESUS IS LORD OVER ALL.**

We read this in v34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritisms v35 but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

Peter had to get to the point that where he could look past his prejudice and trust God's plans.

3. **"JESUS IS LORD" IS THE GOSPEL.**

v36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

If Jesus was only Lord of a few, He could not die for all.

4. **"JESUS IS LORD" IS AFFIRMED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

v44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. v45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. v46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, v47 "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." v48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit always points us to Jesus.

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO REALISE THAT JESUS IS LORD OF ALL

While the world thinks they are in control, God allows a little virus to enter the world to remind all that we are wholly dependent on HIM.

JESUS IS LORD OF ALL