

TUESDAY 19 July 2022 "Global Jesus" (Acts 10:44-48)

Good morning my 'Walking with Jesus' friends,

Would you consider yourself to be a spontaneous person, or one who likes things well planned in advance and everything happening according to plan? Have you noticed God most often does not do miraculous things in a well-planned, orderly fashion? Have you noticed God's miracles often appear to us to be unexpected?

Let's rejoin Peter who is standing in the middle of a totally unexpected miracle. Remember yesterday I left you with Peter, a Jewish apostle of Jesus, standing in the home of a Gentile, Roman centurion soldier, surrounded by other Gentiles. Peter had just explained to them how far out of his comfort zone he felt and how contrary this was to all he had been taught since he was a young Jewish boy. But then Peter explained about Jesus and how Forgiveness from God for our sins is ONLY found in Jesus. *The people were stunned... was Peter actually saying Jesus died on the cross for God's forgiveness of Gentile sins?*

The record tells us what happened next appeared to be spontaneous and was totally unexpected: ***"While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon all who heard Peter's message. The Jewish followers of Jesus who had come from Joppa with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out [by God] even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues [other languages] and praising God."*** (Acts 10:44-46)

Now wait a minute... *what is happening here?* We are standing in Caesarea, in the home of a Gentile Roman soldier, surrounded by Gentiles and suddenly they appear to be having the same spontaneous experience as the Jewish friends and followers of Jesus did on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came unexpectedly upon them and they spoke in languages they did not know but languages recognized by Pentecost pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem from the far reaches of the Roman Empire. (Acts 2:1-12) And we believe the same thing happened with Philip, Peter and John in a city in Samaria when the Holy Spirit came upon Samaritan believers in Jesus. (Acts 8:14-17)

Peter and his Jewish Jesus follower friends who had come with him from Joppa were stunned... but they could not deny what they were seeing and hearing. How do you explain it, my friends? I presume it means these Gentiles began speaking languages they did not know but were known by Peter his friends from Joppa!? Perhaps it was Aramaic, the dialect language spoken by Jews especially in the Galilee area. Maybe it was Hebrew, the language of Old Testament Jews. Whatever it was, it moved Peter to speak another very powerful statement that has reverberated down through time from this historic day in Caesarea: ***"Surely no one can stand in the way of these Gentiles being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So, Peter ordered that they [Gentiles] be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days."*** (Acts 10:46-48)

These Gentiles were being authentically "born again" by the Holy Spirit, as Jesus had promised Nicodemus, (John 3:3-7) and as had been experienced by Jews in Jerusalem, Samaritans in Samaria, an Ethiopian African official on the road to Gaza, and now among Gentiles in Caesarea!! Did you notice Peter not only acknowledged their salvation experience was as authentic as the Jews in Jerusalem, he also confirmed their Holy Spirit anointing was the same! We presume Peter accepted the invitation of Cornelius and these Gentiles and he actually stayed in Caesarea WITH these Gentiles, for a few days!! I presume Peter even slept in the same house as Gentiles, which for Peter would most likely have been the first time in his entire lifetime of such an experience!

Do you see what has been happening here my friends? **It is a very clear, global, multicultural, multiethnic strategy of God.** God was reshaping the global church of Jesus Christ. Jesus had very clearly cast the vision for this strategy with the last thing recorded for us that He said to His disciples just before ascending to heaven. **"The Holy Spirit will come upon you with power, and you will be MY witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in all Samaria and to the ends of the earth."** (Acts 1:8)

Yes, it is true, Jesus was casting a geographical vision of the systematic, global expansion of His Gospel to every PLACE in the world. But Jesus was building this geographical vision on **the multicultural vision** He had spoken a few days earlier when He had told those same disciples: **All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of ALL nations [ethne - people groups] baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And I will be with you always...** (Matt. 28:18-20) So do you see God's global purpose and strategy my friends? It's clear and simple, isn't it?

Jesus followers are to tell the story and Gospel message of Jesus to EVERY person, in EVERY place... no one is 'untouchable' with the Gospel. No place is out of bounds. Culturally, Ethnically the combination of Jews, Gentiles, Samaritans and Africans represents every person in the world. Socio-economically the combination of the influential and wealthy Ethiopian official, Simon the tanner in Joppa, Cornelius the Roman centurion in Caesarea, Saul Paulus of Tarsus the Sanhedrin Pharisee, Ananias the Jewish Jesus follower in Damascus, Simon the Samaritan sorcerer in Samaria, Peter the Galilean fisherman, the Pentecost pilgrims from all across the Roman empire, and everyone else we have met since Acts 2, *being transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit of God bringing authentic salvation to people, regardless of their education, their family heritage, their vocation, their status...* do you see my friends? It's a picture, a mosaic of the global church of Jesus in the first century but especially now, in the 21st century! Nearly 1 billion of us... Jesus followers of every skin color, every language, every family heritage, every educational level and social status and economic strata... **we are The Church of Jesus, just as Jesus promised we would be.**

I've shown you this before, but I must invite you to look at it one more time, as I close today. The web site is www.witnesstoall.org and it is a summary of 100 websites around the world presenting the Gospel of Jesus to the world in many languages. *As you watch it, you will see... in REAL TIME... a summary of those responding to Jesus and His Gospel, right now, all over the world.* And today let me leave you watching that amazing web site and considering this powerful future event in heaven, around the throne of God... ***"...there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb of God. They were wearing white robes and holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. All the angels were standing around the throne..."*** (Rev. 7:9-11)

Do you understand my friends? That Revelation vision of heaven, and the real time internet global response to the Gospel of Jesus Christ TODAY, is a direct result of what happened that day in Caesarea with Peter and Cornelius and a house full of Gentiles, who are now dripping wet, having been baptized after they have fully trusted in Jesus to be their Savior!

All Glory to God!! Here's a Global song, celebrating what God is doing all around the world for HIS glory today! Oh, worship Him my friends. . .

Today's Scripture is Acts 10:44-48.