

# THE LOWER LIGHTS

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"Brightly beams our Father's mercy  
from the lighthouse evermore;  
But to us He gives the keeping  
of the lights along the shore."

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## GOD-FEARING MAN LOST!!

*YES, IT IS POSSIBLE!*

There is a widespread belief that you just have to be a good moral person to go to heaven. If on the one hand you don't lie, steal, drink, cuss, or run around on your spouse, while on the other hand you are a good worker at the factory or at home, a good husband or wife, a good parent, a good neighbor, and a good citizen, some day you'll walk through the pearly gates. However, notice what the Scriptures say concerning a Roman centurion named Cornelius (Acts 10 and 11).

Cornelius was a devout man- that is, one who had reverence for God and expressed it in his daily life. He led his family in such a way that they, too, had reverence. This centurion gave money to the needy and prayed constantly. His prayers especially caught the attention of God and were a continual reminder to Him of this good man. His servants described this Gentile man as righteous and God-fearing, well spoken of by the whole nation of the Jews (Acts 10:1-2, 4, 22, 33).

However, this good man was warned by an angel of God in a vision to send for Peter to hear words by which he and his family would be *saved* (Acts 10:3-6, 22; 11:14). Yes, *Cornelius was lost!*

### *LOST MAN HEARS THE GOOD NEWS*

Cornelius was lost because he was a sinner, just like all men (Rom 3:23). As good as he was, he was not "good enough" to be saved. The centurion needed forgiveness just as much as Saul, the persecutor of Christians (Acts 9). But, because of

his devotion to God, Cornelius was privileged to be the first Gentile to be offered salvation in Jesus.

Because Peter also had a vision from God, as well as instruction from the Holy Spirit, he went to Cornelius' house. When Cornelius then related his vision, Peter concluded, "God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him". He then began to preach to the eager audience of Cornelius and his family and friends the same "good news" which God sent to the Jews (Acts 10:33-36).

Peter gave eyewitness testimony to Jesus' miracles. He then described how Jesus was crucified by the very Jews who had seen Him work these miracles. However, Peter testified, God raised Jesus from death three days later. The eyewitness recalled how the risen Jesus commanded him and the other apostles to preach that Jesus is the God-appointed Judge of all men. Finally, Peter showed that Jesus had fulfilled the predictions of the O.T. Scriptures about the Christ (King). He said all who believed in Him (in view of the above evidence) would receive the forgiveness of sins (Acts 10:37-43)...(see p. 2)

### *LOST MAN SAVED*

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon the listening Gentiles as He did upon the Jews earlier (Acts 2). This was the ultimate proof to Peter, the other Jews who witnessed it, and to the Jews who heard about it that "to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11:18).

Since God had given the Gentiles the same gift which he had given the Jews (Acts 11:17), Peter asked his fellow Jewish brethren, "No one can forbid the water, can they, that these should not be baptized?" (Acts 10:47). There was no objection and Peter commanded them to be baptized (Acts 10:48). Cornelius and his family were good moral people, but still they, as Saul, had to be immersed in water to wash away their sins (Acts 22:16).

### *WHAT ABOUT YOU?*

Undoubtedly, most of you who are reading this are good people. If you did not have any interest in God or His Word, you would have already filed this bulletin in the trash can. You probably are good to your family, your neighbor, and your country. You have some respect for God and may even pray to Him and attend church services.

However, you must realize that, as good as you may be, you are not perfect. One sin will cause you to fall short of a totally righteous and holy God. Therefore, you stand in need of His grace and mercy.

God's grace and mercy has been extended in the "good news" of Jesus Christ. Have you studied and considered the evidence that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?

If not, take the time to discover and meditate on the salvation of God, prophesied in the O.T., fulfilled and revealed in the N.T., centering around the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

When you come to accept and appreciate the gospel story, as Cornelius, you will see that your goodness is not good enough. Your sin put Jesus on the cross. Your hope is not in your works, but in His forgiveness. Stop trusting in yourself and place your trust in God and His Son. If you have never trusted in Jesus enough to be baptized, you are lost. Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins. Good people will not go to heaven- only those who, as Cornelius, in faith accept God's grace by meeting His conditions of forgiveness- who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:13-17).

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If we can serve as Peter to you and explain the gospel of Christ so that you may believe, be baptized, and be saved just as Cornelius, please get in touch with us:

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or e-mail us at [www.prchurchofchrist.org](http://www.prchurchofchrist.org)

