

“When They Heard This They Glorified God”
Having a Successful Gospel Meeting

1. Some have jokingly referred to Peter’s work among the gentiles in Acts 10 as the “first gospel meeting”

- a. After all, Cornelius arranged for an evangelist to come and preach (10:5)
 - i. Cornelius proceeded to invite his family and his closest friends (10:24)
 - ii. Peter preached the Gospel and stayed on to preach for a few more days (10:48)
- b. When Peter reported to the church in Jerusalem about the fruit that God had harvested among the gentiles, they rejoiced and glorified God over the results (11:18)
 - i. What more could we hope for at the conclusion of our own meeting!

2. These results were not an accident!

- a. While God’s hand was at work in these circumstances, there are still some important points we can take away from this story to prepare ourselves
- b. A successful meeting requires work on our end as well: The Responsibility does not rest solely with the one coming to present the message:
- c. Consider these points from the story of Cornelius:

I. They began with the end in mind: Acts 10:29-33

- A. What is our goal in having a meeting in the first place?
 1. Is it something that we do simply out of tradition or custom? “That time of Year”?
Not exactly the sort of diligent, fervent service in **Rom. 12:11**
 2. Is it something that we should do just to appear busy? Well, that wouldn’t exactly line up with **Matt. 6:1**
 3. Are we trying to keep up with “the brethren”?
- B. As silly as these reasons may sound it is too often the case that congregations enter in to a gospel meeting with motivations no higher than these: ***Read Excerpt***
 1. To Paraphrase James Miller, *Its not unscriptural to have a game plan!*
- C. **Cornelius** had clear cut goals:
 1. He wanted to find out the commandments of God that he didn’t know **Acts 10:33**

2. He wanted to create an opportunity for others to hear: 10:24

D. **What are our goals for our meetings?**

1. Well depending on what the men see as the need of the time, there are a number of different reasons to have a concentrated time of study that a meeting can provide: Perhaps we feel the need to be stirred and exhorted over an issue ala 2 *Tim. 4:2*, or the need to equip ourselves like Eph. 6

2. **For our** upcoming effort we have a few simple general goals in place:

a) Alan will be speaking on character traits that are vital to the growth of every Christian:

(1) Each of these virtues add up to make us useful and fruitful in the true knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 1:8)

(2) So first and foremost, we are creating an opportunity for growth among our members:

b) But we've also elected to have a Sunday - Friday meeting to present as many opportunities as possible for those in the community to hear the gospel:

(1) While the lessons of 2 Peter 1 are instructions given to brethren, they will appeal to the world as they see the efforts that we are making to imitate Christ through these qualities

c) Alan is also the Evangelist for one of the congregations that assist in supporting me to preach the Gospel: By spending time with the group here and in the community, he will be able to go back and tell the brethren where he works more about the fellowship they are having with us:

3. So what are *your* goals as an individual?

a) Nobody is going to be upset with you for wanting to reap as much fruit as you can from our time together! (*Acts 10:48*)

(1) *Illus. of Preacher arriving early to ask how members would help*

b) I'd encourage each of us to ask in advance, "What do I intend to take away from this meeting?"

(1) Have you looked over the topics?

(2) Are there areas of scripture outside of those being covered that you might like to arrange time to talk to Alan about while he is here?

(3) Maybe you intend to use it as a time to really renew your zeal and commitment

(a) Make up your mind in advance as to how you use our time together to grow!

II. Arrangements were made for the Gospel's proclamation:

A. This involves more than simply inviting a preacher:

1. Contrary to popular belief, meetings are not about creating an event where the most talented, sought after, big name preachers available in the church can be heard
2. If our desire is to get the message to the people, then our concern should be based on finding men dedicated to God's Word!
3. It is easy to fall into the trap of obsessing over the dynamics or delivery of a speaker: Paul wouldn't have been asked at many places!

B. We should be seeking one whose preaching mirrors that of the scripture:

1. Targets those who are lost and in need of the Gospel Mk 16:16-16
2. Seeks to restore those who've fallen away: James 5:19-20
3. Strengthens the church:
 - a) Makes God's will known 2 Tim 4:2-4
 - b) Helps us put it into action

C. A good speaker will seek to glorify God rather than self: **Acts 10:25-26**

1. Our goal is to impress the community with the LORD, and not ourselves
2. The Focus is not on the accomplishments and merits of the one speaking, the focus is on the message!

D. Don't underestimate the appeal that this holds to those you may come in contact with!

1. the approach of the world around is to impress with the great credentials of the speaker, and all of the perks that will come with attendance:
2. Some people will be intrigued with the notion that there is a special week of study

III. The study in Acts 10 was the product of much prayer: (Acts 10:30-31)

- A. If we want a meeting that is going to be a success, we will be putting in the time to pray to God to give it
 - 1. Pray that there will be nothing that will hinder God's word from being spread
 - 2. Pray that the one doing the speaking will speak boldly and with courage, holding nothing back
 - 3. Pray for the hearts of all the lost that may have the chance to hear God's Word

IV. A Receptive Audience was prepared: Acts 10:24, 27, 33

- A. This was an important enough occasion that Cornelius wanted other to hear it:
 - 1. Notice who he assembled: Relatives and close friends
 - a) It is important for us to make efforts to reach as many people as we can through invitations, fliers, internet, etc.
 - b) But most of the time, that is not where our best prospects will be found: **Read excerpt**
 - c) Family, co-workers, school mates, neighbors: those that we have relationships with:
 - d) Have you been speaking with anyone on a regular basis about the Gospel?
 - e) Do you have influence on anyone that might be a good prospect?
- B. It was important enough for Cornelius to attend himself!
 - 1. maybe that sounds a little silly: Trying to envision Cornelius hosting this gathering for the gospel to be preached, and not showing up! *But is it really so hard to imagine?*
 - 2. A successful meeting requires that those putting it on and doing the inviting are committed to being there: (realize that there are situations)
 - 3. But what is the typical reaction to the announcement of a meeting months in advance? Happiness? Dread? Apathy?
 - a) One of the most discouraging problems is showing up to a meeting that is poorly attended by the members:
- C. If we have worked, prepared, and provided for a successful meeting, it *deserves our attendance*:
 - 1. The message being preached certainly deserves our support

2. The message is one that we need to hear again and again:
3. And there will be a message sent by whether or not we choose to attend:
 - a) *Illus. of Graduates*