

Gentiles are Welcome

Peter and Cornelius

- A. Acts 10.1-7: angel visitation to Cornelius, “send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea”
- B. Acts 10.7-8: Cornelius immediately sent three men to Joppa to get Peter [23 miles]
- C. Acts 10.9-17: Peter’s Vision
- D. Acts 10.17-23: The men arrive from Cornelius
- E. Acts 10.23-27: the next day, Peter accompanies them to Caesarea and discovers that Cornelius had invited many people to hear Peter speak
- F. Acts 10.28-29: Peter comes to understand the meaning of the vision
- G. Acts 10.30-33: Cornelius tells the story of his angel visitation
- H. Acts 10.34-43: Peter’s sermon
- I. Acts 10.44-46: Holy Spirit falls upon those listening (God accepts them)
- J. Acts 10.47-48: Peter commands them to be baptized (Peter accepts them)
- K. Acts 11.1-3: Peter returned to Jerusalem and was called on the carpet for entering the house of Gentiles and eating with them
- L. Acts 11.4-10: Peter retells about his vision of the unclean food
- M. Acts 11.11-12: Peter retells how the Spirit told him to go with the three men
- N. Acts 11.13-14: Peter retells how Cornelius was visited by an angel
- O. Acts 11.15-17: Peter retells how the Holy Spirit fell upon them (just like Pentecost)
- P. Acts 11.18: The Jerusalem community concluded, “Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.”

The Antiochene Church

- A. Acts 11.19-20: Men of Cyprus begin preaching in Antioch to the Hellenists (non-Jewish Greek speaking people). This city had been the capital of the Seleucid Empire which attempted to Hellenize the Jews. Now the Jews were Christianizing the Hellenists.
- B. Acts 11.21: A great number of them believe
- C. Acts 11.22: Jerusalem hears about it and dispatches Barnabas to investigate the situation
- D. Acts 11.23-24: Barnabas rejoiced when he witnessed what was happening
- E. Acts 11.25-26: Barnabas goes to Tarsus to get Paul and the two of them minister to the Antiochene people for an entire year
- F. Acts 11.26: The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch
- G. Acts 11.27-30: Agabus prophesies that a famine is coming so the Antiochene saints take up a collection and send it to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Paul
- H. Acts 12.25: In Jerusalem Barnabas and Paul pick up John Mark who accompanies them to Antioch
- I. Acts 13.1-3: While praying and fasting God told them to send out Barnabas & Paul

- J. Acts 13.4-14.25: First Missionary Journey (Barnabas and Paul)
- K. Acts 14.26-28: Paul and Barnabas return and report of all that God had done with them and how God opened a door of faith to the Gentiles
- L. Acts 15.1-2: Judaizers from Judea came to Antioch and began teaching, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” This caused a major controversy which they decided to bring to the apostles in Jerusalem to have settled
- M. Acts 15.3: On the way Paul and Barnabas tell about the conversion of the Gentiles
- N. Acts 15.4-5: The controversy continues in Jerusalem

The Jerusalem Council

- A. Acts 15.6-11: Peter addresses the council
- B. Acts 15.12: Barnabas and Paul share about what God did among the Gentiles
- C. Acts 15.13-21: James addresses the council
- D. Acts 15.22-29: The council decides to write a letter to clear things up and send it with Judas, Silas, Paul, and Barnabas to the brethren in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia
- E. Acts 15.30-35: Rejoicing in Antioch over the freedom in Christ to not require observance of the Law of Moses for Gentiles

The Theology behind Welcoming the Gentiles

- A. Galatians 3.1-5: The Judaizers had gone through Galatia and convinced the people they needed to keep the Law. Paul’s question is, “Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?” Since they had received the Spirit, which means that God has accepted them as part of his people, then why should they now think they need to keep the Law?
- B. Galatians 3.6-9: Abraham is the perfect role model because he was chosen by God, yet he never kept the Law (the Law would not be given for another 430 years). Even so, Abraham responded with faith, which God credited to Abraham as righteousness/justification. Furthermore, God promised that in Abraham all the nations (Gentiles) would be blessed.
- C. Galatians 3.10-14: If one does not keep the entire law then he is under a curse. Besides, no one can be justified by the Law anyhow, “The just shall live by faith.” Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming cursed himself through the cross. Thus, through the Messiah, Jesus, the blessing of Abraham is able to come onto the Gentiles who have faith and receive the promise of the Spirit.
- D. Galatians 3.15-22: Since the promises were made to Abraham and his seed (Christ) 430 years prior to the Law, the Law has not invalidated the Abrahamic covenant. The Law was added because of transgressions and was intended to be in force until the seed would come to whom the promise was made. The Law is not contrary to the promises of God; but it exposed sin, which demonstrated to everyone our need for the justification that could only come when the seed of Abraham came to deal with the root of the problem—sin.

- E. Galatians 3.23-29: The Law was like a guardian that watched over the people of God until the Messiah came when we could be made right with God by faith. If you were baptized into Christ then you have clothed yourself with Christ which erases all previous distinctions between race, status, and gender. Furthermore, if you belong to the Messiah then you are Abraham's descendants and heirs according to the promises that God made to Abraham.
- F. Galatians 4.21-31: Allegory--Abraham's first son, Ishmael, is the child of the slave woman, Hagar, and represents the bondage of the Law, and present day Jerusalem. Abraham's second son, Isaac, is the child of the free woman, Sarah, and represents the freedom of Christ, and the Jerusalem above. The Allegory concludes with, "So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman."
- G. Ephesians 2.11-22: The Gentiles (the uncircumcised) were excluded from the covenants of promise (not part of Israel) have been brought near by the blood of Messiah who broke down the Law which was like a dividing wall keeping the Gentiles out from the people of God. The Gentiles who believe the gospel are no longer to be considered strangers and aliens but fellow citizens with God's people.
- H. Ephesians 3.1-12: The mystery of Christ was made known to Paul, to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs of the promise in Christ Jesus (through the gospel)
- I. Ephesians 4.1-6: There is one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father (for both Gentiles and Jews)
- J. Romans 11.17-25: The people of God is like a cultivated olive tree from which some branches have been broken off (the Jews who reject Jesus as Messiah) however God has taken from a wild olive tree some branches (i.e. Gentiles) and grafted them into the olive tree of faith. Even so, Gentiles should not think they are guaranteed a permanent residence in the olive tree of faith, rather, Gentiles stand or fall by faith. Furthermore, if the Jews repent and believe in Jesus as Messiah, God is more than willing to graft them back in as well.