

Cornelius
Acts 10:2

We often speak of connecting links. The link may be inanimate or have life. It may be a canal connecting two oceans, a tunnel connecting two valleys, a bridge connecting two states, a cable connecting two continents. In our lesson to-night we have a man connecting two worlds - the Jewish and the Gentile. He also connects two religious systems - heathen and Christian.

Cornelius was an officer of high moral order being also a Centurion in the Italian band or cohort. He was so free from heathen religion that the Jews thought well of him in that he honored their religion yet he was not circumcised so that Gentiles felt that he was of their type. So he became known as "a proselyte of the gate." Jesus chose such a man to be the door through which the Gentiles might receive the Christian faith. He was indeed the first Gentile convert.

When I read the second verse of the tenth chapter of Acts I found myself underscoring the whole thing. That verse is a great compliment to any person.

1. It does not say "He is a good moral man - he pays his taxes and debts, his budget does but does not go to church."
2. It does not say, "He is not a church member but is a fine neighbor."
3. It does not say, "He is his own worst enemy. He drinks but honors no one. Many men are so in love with sin that they are willing to be alone in a gutter."

1. It does say that he was a devout man, devoted to religion. Holy, pure sincere.
2. It does say that he feared God with all his house. That is the acid test when like Abraham a man commends his household after him.
3. It says too that he gave alms to the people. He had a heart to help the people when in need.
4. He also prayed to God, not once but always. In an attitude of prayer all the time.
5. He was a just man.
6. A man of good report.

Cornelius

He had a place of prayer in his house. One day he was fasting and praying up to the 9th hour 3 P.M. and a man stood by him. It was a messenger from heaven come to earth to visit a good man. This messenger told him that his alms were held in remembrance in the sight of God.

The angel told him to send to Joppa for Peter who would come as a Jew-Converted Jew and talk over these important things. Cornelius had asked all his friends in to hear Peter. Just a good old fashioned cottage prayer meeting.

God prepared Peter to come in contact with a gentile, by means of the sheet let down from heaven. Peter preached Christ crucified and resurrected and right there the Holy Ghost fell upon Circumcised and uncircumcised alike. So Cornelius was the door - the channel - the connecting link by which faith entered the gentiles.

Now some channels carry off the filth of the city we may be like that.

☞ Other channels may carry the fresh pure water to its great mission of health and beauty and life giving - it may be that.