GREAT TRUTHS FROM A GENTILE
(Acts 10:33)

I. Cornelius understood there is one God.
   a. Notice that Cornelius said that they were in the sight of God and not “gods”.
   b. Cornelius was a Gentile and the Gentile world was ridden with idolatry.
      ii. Paul addressed this idea with the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 8:5-6).
   c. So, before ever meeting with Peter, Cornelius had come to realize that there is only one God, and that polytheism was not true.
      d. In this regard, he was like the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 1:9).

II. Cornelius believed that God watched man.
   a. He said that we are in the sight of God, the idea being that God was watching.
   b. Cornelius believed that God was aware of what was going on, but also that God approved of it.
   c. At times, this was a concept that the Jews had a difficult time comprehending.
      i. When Jacob fled to escape Esau’s anger, he came to Bethel.
      ii. It was there that God spoke to Jacob in a dream, extending to Jacob the promise that had been made to his father and grandfather.
      iii. When Jacob woke up from the dream, notice what he said… (Genesis 28:16).
   d. Jonah was instructed by God to go to Nineveh.
      i. Instead, Jonah went west instead of east, and got on a ship to Spain.
      ii. His reason is found in Jonah 1:3.
   e. Cornelius, a Gentile, had a clear understanding that God was aware of what was going in that very room.

III. Cornelius understood that truth existed that could save him.
   a. The group had been brought together to hear something.
   b. In chapter 11, we read Peter’s retelling of the incident and he said that they were to hear words (Acts 11:14).
   c. Cornelius knew that the angel had not told him what to do to be saved.
      i. He didn’t believe that he would have some special feeling.
      ii. He didn’t believe that he could follow his conscience and be okay.
   d. People today are searching in all the wrong places for truth.
      i. They are looking to men, to feelings, to the sky, or some other places.
      ii. They must look in the Bible, the truth of God’s word, to be saved.

IV. Cornelius understood that God was in charge.
   a. He stated that he was to hear all things that are “commanded thee of God”.
   b. He understood that God commanded some things of men and he wanted to submit to those things.
   c. Commanded is translated from a Greek word that means “to arrange toward”.
i. It carries the idea of prescribe, order, or command something.

ii. In many of the secular writings in which this word was found, it had to do with a decree issued by a sovereign ruler.

d. Not only that, it is a verb in the passive voice form.
   i. This suggests that God is the giver of commands and we humans are the receivers of those commands.
   ii. There is room from only one to give commands with this word and it is not us.

e. This word is also in the perfect tense, which means it’s an action that has occurred in the past with continuing results.
   i. God had commanded and that command would always stand.
   ii. There is no disputing the command of God.

f. Here is a Gentile that understood the fact that God is sovereign and His will is ironclad.

g. Earlier, Peter had even argued with God (Acts 10:14), but Cornelius understood that was not to be done.

V. Cornelius believed that he could not selectively obey God.

a. Cornelius wanted to hear all things commanded of God.

b. All was the goal.

c. Think of people today who simply want to pick and choose what they will obey from God.
   i. How many times have we been filling out a form and a list is given with boxes to check beside each one?
   ii. The heading will be “select all that apply to you”.

d. This is the way some want to treat the commands of God.
   i. Here are God’s commands.
   ii. Pick they one’s you want to apply to you.

e. Cornelius understood it didn’t work that way.
   i. Naaman the Syrian didn’t mind dipping in a river to be clean did he?
   ii. He just wanted to be able to choose which river.
   iii. That wasn’t going to work then and it won’t work now.

def. Deliberate but partial obedience is no obedience.

VI. Cornelius understood Peter’s authority as a spokesman for God.

a. He said that he and his family were gathered to hear God’s commands from Peter.

b. To him, Peter’s words carried as much weight as if God had spoken them to him directly.

c. The words in red in our New Testaments are of no greater significance than the black words of Peter, Paul, or some other inspired writer.
   i. There are Christians who will say that they don’t agree with Paul on certain issues, or some other writer.
ii. This is terrible expression of disrespect.

d. Jesus Himself said that one authorized by Him carried His authority.
   ii. Paul said that the things he wrote were the commands of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37).

From an article by Wayne Jackson