

## Sermon Summary | Sunday 26th April 2026 | Acts 10.34-48

Acts 10.34–48 is one of the great ‘outward-moving’ moments in the book of Acts. Peter is standing in the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, preaching Christ to those who had previously been outside the covenant people of Israel. As he begins, Peter declares, “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality.” This is a breakthrough moment. Peter is seeing that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not the private possession of one people, culture, class, or background. God is announcing “good news of peace through Jesus Christ,” and that peace is for all kinds of people.

First, the peace God announces is for all kinds of people. God’s work through Israel had always been heading towards Christ, and now, in Christ, the blessing promised through Abraham is moving out to the nations. God is not impressed by the markers human beings often value: class, accent, education, family history, social ease, respectability, or familiarity with church life. This humbles those who assume they have an advantage with God, and it gives hope to those who feel on the edge. Questions, distance, background, and unfamiliarity with Christian things do not disqualify someone from hearing and responding to the gospel.

Yet the wideness of the gospel does not mean vagueness. Peter says that Jesus is “Lord of all.” No one is beyond his reach, and no one is beyond his authority. The door is opened wide, but Jesus stands at the centre of the doorway.

Second, the peace God gives comes only through Jesus. Peter does not offer Cornelius general spiritual encouragement; he preaches the historical Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth was publicly known, anointed by God, and went about doing good. Where sin had brought misery, Jesus brought mercy. Where there was oppression, uncleanness, darkness, and bondage, he moved towards it, not away from it. This shows the heart of the one through whom peace comes: Jesus is not reluctant to save or cold towards the needy.

But Peter also proclaims Jesus’ death. The one who went about doing good was put to death, “hanging on a tree.” Jesus was not merely a tragic victim of injustice; he died bearing judgment. This matters because peace with God requires sin to be dealt with. Our deepest problem is not simply stress, confusion, wounds, or lack of self-understanding, but guilt before a holy God. There can be no true peace without forgiveness.

Then comes the hope of Easter: “but God raised him on the third day.” The resurrection means Jesus is alive, vindicated, and appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. This is sobering, because no one can finally remain neutral before him. Yet astonishingly, the one appointed as judge is also the one who now offers peace. Peter’s central promise is that “everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” The offer is wonderfully wide — everyone *may* come — and gloriously specific — all *must* come through Christ.

Third, the peace God gives must be received, not merely admired. While Peter is still preaching, the Holy Spirit falls on those who hear the word. God makes his welcome unmistakable: these Gentile believers are not second-rank Christians or halfway in. They receive the same Spirit, the same grace, and the same standing. Their baptism marks publicly that they now belong to Jesus and to his people.

This passage presses for response. It is possible to admire Jesus, enjoy church, appreciate sermons, and remain near Christian things without actually coming to Christ. But peace with God is not found by respecting Jesus. It is found by trusting him for the forgiveness of sins. For the explorer, Acts 10 gives a direct invitation. For the discouraged believer, it gives assurance: our peace rests not on the strength of our spiritual life, but on Christ’s finished work. And for the church, it gives a clear calling: we must reflect the wideness of the gospel and never erect barriers that Christ has torn down.

Acts 10 announces good news of peace through Jesus Christ. That peace is real, costly, offered, and found in him.

#### Questions for personal reflection

1. Where am I tempted to think, either about myself or someone else, that the gospel is only really for certain kinds of people?
2. Am I merely *near* Christian things, or am I actively resting my peace with God on Jesus Christ, crucified and risen for the forgiveness of sins?