


**Frontier Mission Fellowship**  
1469 Bresee Avenue  
Pasadena, CA 91104-2604

Ralph D. Winter, General Director  
Work: 626-296-7501, Fax 626-398-2185  
Home Phone/: 626-794-5544, Cell 626-354-9391  
Email: rdw112233@aol.com

David Hesselgrave  
4345 Terrace View Ln  
Rockford IL 61114-4707



Sunday, July 4, 2004

In reply refer to 4704.756

Dear David,

I append my brief letter to Art Glasser about Cornelius.

Having read your Chapter Two and done some more thinking I can make the following comment.

A small point: I note that in your text you first quote, "a message through which you and all your household will be saved." But later you paraphrase, "*in order to be saved.*" This bends things in the conventional direction all right.

Much more important is the constantly repeated statement in 10:14 as the essence of the angel's message to Peter, in 10:28 as the essence of his visit to Cornelius, and in 11:8 as the essence of his recapitulation, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." The issue is whether or not Cornelius, as is, is acceptable to God. And all this is in the past tense, "God has made clean."

Especially note that this is the sentence Peter quotes immediately upon meeting Cornelius BEFORE Peter says anything at all about Jesus Christ.

On the other hand there is no suggestion here that the blood of Christ or the Name of Jesus was not the basis of Cornelius's salvation. That is the only way anyone has ever been saved, but this is not to say that "a knowledge of Jesus" in the purely intellectual narration Peter gave is the crucial element. No one before or after Christ was ever saved by His blood without something more than Gnostic knowledge. The only route known to the Jews (and to us) is as in 11:18, "repentance unto life."

In Peter's stunned, reflective summary in 10:34, 35, he is saying that Gentiles everywhere in the "God Fearer" category are, as is, acceptable to God as Jews, they are not to be considered unholy. He does not add, "if they can just get the facts about Jesus."

In other words, the overwhelming Biblical evidence negates our contemporary additional stricture about the utter necessity of additional head knowledge beyond OT special revelation. And, it shows that the issue of General vs Special revelation is an issue that is very different from that of Cornelius and the NT "God fearers" in general, all of whom had had extensive contact with Special Revelation. The glorious Fact enabling this startling truth, of course, is the blood of Christ not an animal sacrificial system, which is the "good" news to the Gentiles, upsetting to Jews.



Thus, the whole dichotomy between circumcized and uncircumcized is irrelevant, and the Gentiles who did not follow the law abjectly were as acceptable to God as Jews, both equally able to find “repentance unto life (11:18).”

Now, I have to say that the question of General versus Special Revelation is an associated topic, and whether Paul was talking about General or Special revelation in Romans two is a key question.

My intuition in this case is that we do not apparently possess the necessary knowledge about God’s ways to come down with a dogmatic assertion. Obviously, all people and their fellowship with God, their growth in grace, are eminently better off the more they know of Jesus Christ. We do not need to argue that point.

As you know I believe that we can speed up evangelization and empower our message greatly by including as much knowlege of God’s glory as possible. This means first of all to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It also means ripping back the cloak we have put artificially over all of the glory of God to be seen in the microbiological world, etc. Irwin Moon style.

To do this is urgent, imperative, and of higher priority than 98% of what the average believer and the church is actually doing.

Okay, these are some thoughts.

Cordially in Christ,

Ralph