

If He Has a Soul

By: Bill Hall

A wonderful prospect for conversion is described in the 10th chapter of Acts: "a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." If this man could just learn the truth, he would obey it.

Tremendous pressure, however, was against Peter's preaching to him. He was a Gentile, and the Jews hated the Gentiles. Could Peter preach to one of this hated class of people? What would his brethren say? Would preaching to the Gentiles hurt his influence among the Jews? Maybe Peter shouldn't go. Maybe Cornelius should somehow learn the gospel on his own.

Peter might have followed this very line of reasoning had the Lord allowed it. But through a vision -a vision familiar to our readers -the Lord taught Peter that he "should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10:28). Because Peter learned this lesson and courageously preached to Cornelius and his household, the great work among the Gentiles, which has resulted in the salvation of thousands through the ages, was begun.

Are there not hated classes of people in our society? Is it possible that in our search for "prospects" we have limited ourselves to those who are of the same economic, racial, and educational position which we occupy? And is it possible that in so limiting ourselves, we may be overlooking some of the greatest prospects that we have? Do we need to be taught that we are not to call any man common or unclean?

A quote from Henry Ficklin, an aged brother in Eastern Kentucky, now deceased, impressed me recently. Brother Ficklin and another brother were making house calls. Brother Ficklin was a bit uncertain as to the location of one house where they were going, so the other brother, seeing a man in a barn lot, pulled over and asked, "Do you suppose this is the man we are looking for?" "I suppose so," brother Ficklin replied; "if he has a soul, he's the man we are looking for."

If he has a soul ... The Hebrew writer said that Jesus "tasted death for every man"(Hebrews 2:9). Let us not be guilty because of our prejudices of withholding the gospel from the "Cornelius's" of our society.