

## GOD USES A MIRACLE TO MAKE MORE CHRISTIANS

Presented by

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Every time that God performed a miracle, it always got people's attention. In the book of Exodus we see how God got pharaoh's attention by sending ten plagues on the people of Egypt. In Numbers 21, God got the attention of the people of Israel by sending snakes into their camp to bite them and kill them because they had disobeyed Him. In 2 Kings 19, we learn how God got the attention of the king of Assyria by killing 145,000 of the king's soldiers in a single night. In Acts 5, God got the attention of Christians when He killed a husband and wife who had lied to Him. Yes, every time God performed a miracle, He got people's attention.

But not all of the miracles that God used to get people's attention had such bad results. There is one miracle in the New Testament that God used to get people's attention that had a very good ending. In fact, as a result of this miracle, more people were able to become Christians. The story is found in Acts 10. A man by the name of Cornelius was a righteous person, but he was not a Jew. He was a Gentile. God had told the apostles to take the Gospel to the Jews first, and the apostles had obeyed. But now God wanted the apostles to take the Gospel to people like the Gentiles who were not Jews.

God told the apostle Peter to go see Cornelius so he could tell him what he needed to do to become a Christian. At first, Peter did not want to go. Peter was a Jew. And he did not really like the Gentiles very much. But Peter finally obeyed God and went to tell Cornelius about how Jesus had died and been raised from the dead to save sinners. Cornelius and his family believed what Peter said, and they decided to become Christians. It was at this point in the story that God performed a miracle. In Acts 10:45-46, the Bible tells us that God poured out the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his family so that they could speak in languages they had not studied. This is exactly what happened to the apostles in Acts 2 when the church began in Jerusalem. But the apostles were Jews. The Holy Spirit had never been given to Gentiles before.

When Peter and the other Jewish Christians saw that God had given the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles too, they finally understood what God was doing. They knew that now God wanted the Gentiles to become Christians too, just like the Jews had been able to become Christians. But in order to get Peter and the other Jewish Christians to understand this fact, God had to use a miracle to get their attention.

When Cornelius began speaking languages that he had never studied, Peter knew that God was behind it. So he took Cornelius and his family to some nearby water and baptized them so they could be Christians just like Peter and his friends. God worked this miracle because He does not want anyone to be lost. He wants **all** people to become Christians. The miracle that He performed on Cornelius proves it. That miracle ought to get **our** attention, too! God is serious about wanting us to take the Gospel to the whole world. The question is: Are we serious about obeying God and helping others become Christians?