

## **Acts Lesson 31 Handout**

**The dietary laws God gave to Moses and the Israelites had served their purpose. The restrictions taught the Hebrews that they are a sanctified race, a priestly nation, designated by God to be his representatives to all the nations.**

**But the time had come for change. A new era had dawned, a new dispensation, the era of the church. Believers, whether Jewish or Gentile, no longer have to come to the temple to meet God; they now have Christ. Believers no longer need to express their face through sacrifices with the aid of a priest; they now have direct access to the ultimate high priest, the son of God. To be saved, all people alike must believe in Christ with all their hearts, and the one who knows every heart will respond.**

### **Romans 3:9–12**

**9 What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? Not at all! We have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under sin.**

**10 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;**

**11 there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God.**

**12 All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."**

**Acts 10: 23 So he invited them in and gave them lodging. And on the next day he got up and went away with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him.**



**24 The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends.**

**25 As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence.**

**26 But Peter made him get up. "Stand up," he said, "I am only a man myself."**

**This disease has infiltrated the church. We have arrogant leaders enamored with their power and influence. Instead of making themselves of no reputation like Jesus, they are spending their time making sure everyone knows of their status.**

**Back at the start of the Reformation, the church had taught that priests were the conduits between man and God. That man had to come to the priests to receive forgiveness of sins and have the grace of God bestowed upon them in the form of blessings. The priests were "men of God."**

**The priests began to think more highly of themselves than they ought. They were enamored by their perceived value. They would sell what was called indulgences where they gave permission to break God's moral law. They would wear expensive clothing and expensive jewelry that indicated their wealth and power in the church.**

**This disease has once again infected the church. It matters not which denomination we belong to. It matters not which doctrine or teaching we adhere to.**

**The world is watching and waiting for men and women of God who are more concerned about how they appear to Jesus than how they look to the crowd. They are yearning to find leaders who are more interested in helping sinners rather than self-interest. They are fed up with tabloid Christianity, hype, and self-promoting Madison Avenue ad campaigns that**

*Promote the great man  
of God rather than  
the great God of man.*

**What can you do to avoid this disease? Here's what Jesus had to say on the subject.**

**The Higher You Rise In Popularity, The More You Must Become A Servant**

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***MARK 9:33 AFTER THEY ARRIVED AT CAPERNAUM AND SETTLED IN A HOUSE, JESUS ASKED HIS DISCIPLES, "WHAT WERE YOU DISCUSSING OUT ON THE ROAD?" 34 BUT THEY DIDN'T ANSWER, BECAUSE THEY HAD BEEN***

**ARGUING ABOUT WHICH OF THEM WAS THE GREATEST. 35 HE SAT DOWN, CALLED THE TWELVE DISCIPLES OVER TO HIM, AND SAID, "WHOEVER WANTS TO BE FIRST MUST TAKE LAST PLACE AND BE THE SERVANT OF EVERYONE ELSE."36 THEN HE PUT A LITTLE CHILD AMONG THEM. TAKING THE CHILD IN HIS ARMS, HE SAID TO THEM, 37 "ANYONE WHO WELCOMES A LITTLE CHILD LIKE THIS ON MY BEHALF[A] WELCOMES ME, AND ANYONE WHO WELCOMES ME WELCOMES NOT ONLY ME BUT ALSO MY FATHER WHO SENT ME."**

**The thing to note in this passage is that Jesus took time to bless one little child. This was after He had already performed great miracles. He had already healed the woman with the issue of blood, fed the 5000 and walked on water, yet He took time to bless one little child.**

**Jesus prescription for this deadly disease is the concept of servant leadership. You can go to any bookstore, Christian or secular, and see all kinds of books about how to rise to the top. How to succeed in 9 easy steps. However, you do not see people teaching that the more you increase in popularity, the more you must become a servant.**

*There are no celebrities  
to bow down to.*

**Promoting Jesus  
- never promoting  
himself.**

**27 Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people.**

**28 He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.**

**29 So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?"**

**30 Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me**

**31 and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor.**

**32 Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.'**

**33 So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us."**

**34 Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism**

**35 but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.**

**36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.**

**37 You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached—**

**38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and**

**healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.**

**39 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree,**

**40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.**

**41 He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.**

**42 He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.**

**43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."**

**Someday we are going to die**

**Jesus is the judge of the living and the dead**

**Jesus healed people – cast out demons**

**Died on a cross**

**God raised Him from the dead**

**And anyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness through His name.**

**Acts 4:12**

**12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."**

**Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.**

**45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.**

**46 For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said,**

**47 “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.”**

**48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.**

Come to  
Christ and  
never be  
baptized.

Come to Christ  
– be baptized  
and then filled  
with the Spirit.

Come to Christ  
– being filled  
with the Spirit  
and then be  
baptized.

**D L Moody**

**“Well,” he said, “I need a continual infilling because I leak!” He pointed to a water tank which had sprung a leak. “I’m like that!” he said. It’s a fact that living in this sinful world we do need to be replenished by the Spirit.**

**A friend of mine, an evangelist, was asked if he believed in the "second blessing". "Of course I do," he replied, "and in the 3rd, 4th, 5th blessing, and so on."**

### **Acts 11**

**1 The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.**

**2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him**

**3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."**

**Oswald Chambers wrote: When God gets us alone through suffering, heartbreak, temptation, disappointment, sickness, or by thwarted desires, a broken friendship, or a new friendship – when He get us absolutely alone, and we are totally speechless, unable to ask even one question, the He begins to teach us."**

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**I don't know how you're stuck right now, or where you're stuck, or what you'd like to get out of but can't, but I want you to know that God taught me more about myself, about true character, about loving people, and relying on Him over the next three years in that church than all of my years in ministry combined.**

**Acts 11:4 Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened:**

**5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.**

**6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air.**

**7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'**

**8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'**

**9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'**

**10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.**

**11 "Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying.**

**12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house.**

**13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter.**

**14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.'**

**15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.**

**16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'**

**17 So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"**

**Who am I to think  
that I could oppose  
God?"**

His way or  
no way.

**Matthew 7:13–27**

**13 “Enter through the narrow gate.**



**For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.**



**14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.**



**Acts 11:17 So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?”**

**18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life.”**