

FIVE KEYS TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE / *Acts 10:48*

Peter and Cornelius provide a great lesson for believers who want to make a real difference in the world. See the following acronym for ***world***:

1. **W**alk closely with God. (Acts 10:1-4, 9)

The text carefully reports on the quality of the spiritual life of Cornelius and the explicit time of prayer of both Cornelius and Peter. Both were devout men, apparently with a regular, consistent habit of walking with God, praying to God, and expecting God to work in their lives. The reason they both were involved in the work of God—Cornelius as the first genuine Gentile convert; Peter as the human instrument in opening the door to the Gentiles—was that they were both in the habit of walking with, talking to, and hearing from God on a regular basis.

2. **O**bey God. (Acts 9:39, 43; 10:8, 23-25, 28-29)

A predisposition to obedience that comes from a deep relationship with God marked both these men. Cornelius got “found,” and Peter had the privilege of finding him because they responded positively to God’s command. We will not be involved in real world change if we have a predisposition to disobey. To be habitually disobedient is to be habitually useless for the real work of God.

3. **R**each out to people outside your comfort zone. (Acts 9:32-43; 10:5-6, 20, 25, 48)

It is hard to feel what Peter would have felt about moving into the Gentile world. He was going against that with his move to Lydda, then Joppa, then to the leatherworker’s house, and certainly with Cornelius. The Jewish part of him would balk at every turn, every doorstep, every meal. But Peter understood the great commission and was committed to spreading the Word to whomever God was calling. How readily do you move outside the confines of your safe relationships? That’s where the lost are and where God wants us to be.

4. **L**ook for those God is reaching or softening. (Acts 9:32-43; 10:19, 22-23)

This constant theme of Acts shows that God is working, and we must find out where and with whom, and get in on it.

5. **D**isregard the criticism. (Acts 10:13-14, 20, 28; 11:1-3, 18)

Jewish culture was resistant; Peter himself was resistant; the church was resistant, critical, skeptical. But Peter, Cornelius, Peter’s traveling companions, and ultimately the church itself overcame the resistance to be a part of what God wanted to do. God was moving, spreading his message by softening and wooing hearts, by awakening souls.