

"God sent me, and I could not but go."

The spirit of Peter's critics has persisted in the church down to this day, though the old debate is over as to whether Gentiles as well as Jews may become Christians. It is shown, not in an open attack on aggressive mission work or efforts to evangelize the people, but in a spirit of indifference, which as good as says, "God is for us, and not for these others." Those who do not think of the heathen or unconverted and do not pray for them and will not give to send the Gospel to them, are by their life degrading the idea of God by narrowing and confining His love to themselves, when it is a love that loves the world—even the heathen in their darkness.

There are narrow souls that are for engrossing the riches of the church, as there are that would engross the riches of the world.  
—Matthew Henry.

"I tell it thee; do thou repeat  
To the first man thou mayest meet,  
On highway, lane or open street,  
That he, and we, and all men move,  
Under a canopy of love,  
As broad as the blue sky above."

Speaking of Peter's promptness to go with the messengers of Cornelius, and to preach to the assembly awaiting him at Cornelius' house, not so much as resting a moment after his journey, the late Dr. William M. Taylor tells of having preached to an enormous audience at Liverpool and of a person coming to him when completely exhausted, to speak with him of the way of life. "I made an

appointment with him to meet me the next morning. But he never came. And so I have written it down as one of the lost opportunities of my life. Had I spent a few minutes with that man, he might haply have been brought to Christ."

### Light from the East

UNCLEAN—All nations round the home of the race separated animals into two classes, those which might be eaten, and those prohibited. This distinction may have arisen from that instinctive repugnance with which some living creatures are regarded almost everywhere, but in time it came to have a religious significance. Moses was led to incorporate the distinction between clean and unclean in the law, partly for the promotion of health, through prohibiting the animals whose loathsome food and filthy habits made them a menace to human life, or whose bodies contained parasites exceedingly dangerous to men; and partly to separate the Israelites from the surrounding nations in the ordinary details of their life. Under the New Testament, the church was to be extended into every nation, and the law of each individual member's life was to be his own enlightened judgment and conscience, and so all legislation founded on local conditions, or which emphasized national differences, was withdrawn. This vision taught Peter that the Jewish distinction between animals was abolished, and was also intended to prepare him for seeing that the distinction between the Jew and other men was likewise at an end.

### TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

#### For Bible Class Teachers

##### AN ANALYSIS

We are not informed how long Peter remained with Cornelius at Caesarea. The field was open for missionary effort, and new converts needed instruction. The setting aside of circumcision and other changes in their religious cult must have been perplexing to them; and so Peter may have deemed it necessary to continue among them some

time, according to their earnest request, ch. 10: 48. We note on his return to Jerusalem:

1. *The reception given him by Jewish converts to Christianity.* They called in question his extraordinary conduct, on two grounds. (a) He had degraded himself to the social level of the Gentiles by eating with them, in utter violation of the sacred usages of his own people. The charge was undeniable. When at Joppa, he resided with a tanner, a man whose occupation rendered him unclean in the opinion of scrupulous Jews, ch. 9: 43. At Caesarea he was the guest of Cornelius.