

Prejudice

Acts 10:1-23 We sat in the amphitheater under a cloudless sky. We were seated in an amphitheater built by Herod in Caesarea centuries ago. My husband read the account from Acts 10 to the people on our tour of Israel. As he read this story, I realized the great victory Peter had over prejudice in his life. We all need such a victory.

We are not born with prejudice, but our culture, environment, experiences and even parents often teach us prejudice. I never taught prejudice in my home, but I find myself late in life not completely free of this wicked sin. Where did I learn prejudice? It was through the media and the conversations others had with me. My first experience with prejudice happened when I was a little girl riding a bus in Atlanta. I went to sit in the back, and my mother stopped me and said, "You can't sit there." Later I learned the back of the bus was reserved for blacks only. This made no sense to me then and makes even less sense to me now.

Peter had a real problem with prejudice. He was careful not to associate with Gentiles. After all, the Gentiles were considered by many as "dogs." Paul reprimanded him for not eating with Gentiles. Knowing Peter's prejudice, God chose Peter to be the first to go to the Gentiles. It took a vision from God and a visitation by the Holy Spirit for Peter to consent to go with the men Cornelius sent to him. Cornelius was a man who feared God, but he had never heard the entire gospel. He was a Roman centurion, a Gentile. God chose Peter to be the messenger of the gospel to the home of Cornelius. Peter was told by the Lord to go with the three men who were sent to him because God sent them. He told Peter to go with them doubting nothing. Peter obeyed even though I am sure he had quite a struggle.

Is there a prejudice in your life? It may not be a prejudice

against a certain race or culture. You may often prejudge people before you even get to know them. This is prejudice. The only way to pull down the stronghold of prejudice is to renew your mind. The truth of God's Word will shatter strongholds of prejudice. Remember God is no respecter of persons.

Lord, forgive me for the times I have looked on the outer appearance and behavior of people I first meet and quickly have made a judgment of them. You have shown me often that my quick judgments of others are not based on Your view of them. I recognize whenever I look down on someone, I am guilty of pride. Forgive me, Lord.

**READ: 1 Kings 14:1-15:24; Acts 10:1-23; Psalm 133:1-3;
Proverbs 17:7-8**