

Book of Acts Series - Part 15 | Everyone Is Welcome

by Jim Cymbala

God wants to replicate the early Christian church through the power of the Spirit and break down cultural and racial barriers to spread the gospel.

Duration: 41:28

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 10:9-12, Acts 10:15, Acts 10:28, Acts 10:38, Acts 10:43

Topics: "Book Of Acts"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being free from cultural bias, racial prejudice, and class prejudice. He highlights the lesson of Peter's journey to Cornelius's house, showing that no one has an inside track with God and that everyone is on the same footing in terms of salvation. The speaker emphasizes that only Jesus can satisfy the soul and bring true peace. The message of the gospel is about peace with God through Jesus Christ, as whoever puts their trust in Him will be forgiven of every sin they've ever committed. The speaker also emphasizes the need for a baptism in God's love to change our perspective and see people the way God sees them.

Transcript

For a number of months now, we've been studying the Book of Acts, written by Luke, the doctor. And it's the history, not of the life of Jesus, but it's the history of the beginning and the life of the early Christian church. And the reason God gave it to us, ladies and gentlemen, if you'd look here at me, is that we should try to replicate, through the power of the Spirit, the church that God intended to represent Him on planet Earth.

One of the saddest things about Christianity is that we have, quote, Christian churches that are misrepresenting the Lord on planet Earth. And thus, people get a bad, bad name, or a bad impression of who Jesus is, and what Christianity is, because what are they going to judge it by? They're not going to read the Bible. They go by what they see, and, oh, those are Christians, that's how they act.

I went to a service, that's what I was told. I felt a certain atmosphere. That's what Jesus is about.

So this is all important, like what the Christian church is and how it carries on. Book of Acts is so important, because people here, behind me and in front of me, we've all grown up in certain church atmospheres, in

Trinidad and Tobago, in Jamaica, in the Bronx, in Africa, in wherever. And many times, instead of pursuing God's best for a Christian church, we just follow what we saw growing up.

That's all. That's church. Well, how do you know? Well, because I grew up in it.

Well, that's rather arrogant to think that what you accidentally grew up in is the best thing God has for us. How many are with me so far? Say amen. So that's why we want to search and have humility to say, God, improve, teach, work in us.

Now, one of the signal moments in the snapshots that are given to us in the Book of Acts, one of the signal moments which involves all of us being here and worshiping today is when the barrier was broken and Christianity was open to all people of all backgrounds. You and I assume that. In fact, you and I rarely find Jewish believers, messianic believers in Yeshua, but in the early church, that's all there was.

In fact, the Roman Empire had it down in their minds that Christianity was some offshoot of Judaism. It was different because they kept talking about a Jesus, but it was Jewish because why? It believed in one God and the Roman Empire had, like the Greek culture before them, had thousands of gods. And Jesus was Jewish, all the preachers were Jewish, all the church in Jerusalem was Jewish, all the people who went out and spread the word was Jewish, and they went to Jewish people to spread the word.

So, the Roman Empire thought, well, I don't, you know, Judaism and then this thing called Christianity, it's all about Jews. Now, you must remember at this time, Gentiles had anti-Semitic feelings, which problem is older than dirt. Anti-Semitism is like from forever, the persecution and hatred of Jewish people.

At the same time, the rabbis taught, the Jewish rabbis had left the spirit of the Old Testament a long time ago, and they taught that Gentiles were not only unclean, but they were dogs. They used that word, Gentile dogs. And it was taught by some of the leading rabbis that should you see a Jewish, a Gentile woman struggling while she's giving birth, you were not to help her because if you helped her, you just brought another Gentile dog into the world.

So, the barrier between black and white in our country or cultural differences in tribes in Africa or the difference between, although the Shiites and the Sunnis, they go at each other pretty good, but this wall was inseparable. This was the end. There were Jews and there were Gentiles.

Jews couldn't eat with Gentiles. Jewish people were taught you couldn't have a Gentile come in your house. If you did come in or mix with them, you gave them special dishes.

You didn't use the same dishes you use. There were all of this nonsense. So, now God was going to do something really huge and here's the way it happened.

It's a very important chapter. I can't tell you, read the whole story, it's too long, but I'm going to give you the important verses and fill in the blanks. At Caesarea, which was the capital of the Roman government in Israel, at Caesarea, there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion, that's a Roman officer, probably over about 60 soldiers.

In what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing. Now, stop there.

He was a Gentile. Obviously, he's Italian. What are Gentiles? Anyone who's not Jewish.

Now, he was a God-fearer and what was happening when Judaism spread was certain, look at me if you can, certain Gentiles were sick at the moral pollution of paganism and they love and they were drawn to this thought of one God who created the heavens and the earth. And instead of the gods that were angry and killed each other and hated each other because that was part of all of those multiple gods. So, they were drawn to Judaism and they were called God-fearers.

And in the temple, there was a part of the outer court that was called the Court of the Gentiles, where you could come and worship. You weren't a Jew. You weren't circumcised.

You couldn't be a priest ever or anything like that. But you revered that God of the Jews. You believed.

So, it seems like Cornelius was one of these God-fearers. He was not a full-blown Jew, but he was drawn to that and he was an interesting man. We'll go back.

Because he gave generously to those in need and he prayed to God regularly. To what God? To the God that he knew about who was the creator, the God of Israel. That's who he prayed to.

And he gave to those in need. And one day at about 3 in the afternoon, he had a vision and he directly saw, distinctly saw, an angel of God who came to him and said, Cornelius, Cornelius stared at him in fear. What is it, Lord? He asked.

The angel answered, Oh my goodness, just think what we do on Tuesday. Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. Can I just say something about that? How important is prayer to God that an unbeliever, a non-Christian, he just is faithful to pray and God says, no, that mounts up.

Notice the accumulative power of prayer. One prayer didn't reach God. Cornelius kept at it and it gained some blessing from God.

Isn't this amazing? He's not a Christian. He's a Roman soldier. He's trying to follow what he knows of the Jewish religion and he just gives to people and he prays regularly and God sends a messenger to say, no, it's been noticed in heaven what you've been doing.

Notice nobody was watching when he was doing it, but God was watching him. CNN and the New York Times are not going to be here at 12 to 1 on Tuesday, but God is watching. On Tuesday night when you gather, you don't think God is going to watch that? When you fight through on the subway and you push your body and say, no, I want to call on the Lord, I want to worship him, I want to bring my request, you don't think God's going to see that? Well, of course he's going to see it.

Prayers are kept in bowls up in heaven, the Bible says, in some mystical way. So now Cornelius is going to be blessed and receive a gift from God and when he's gained access for this, it's just the way he's pursuing God. So now send men, the angel tells him, to Joppa, which was the town south of where he was, to bring back a man named Simon who's called Peter.

That's the apostle. He's staying with Simon the Tanner, someone who works with skins of animals, whose house is by the sea. When the angel who spoke to him had gone, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier who was one of his attendants.

He told them everything that had happened and sent them to Joppa. About noon the following day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter, who's in Joppa, went up on the roof to pray. Look at that, he's praying.

There's a whole lot of prayer going on. You know, I just thought of it last night because I was reading in Matthew. I wonder why Peter, see it's lunch hour, they had flat roofs in those days.

And we're going to find out he gets hungry, but he's up there praying. And I was reading that part of the Bible where Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane and he said to the disciples, now stay and wait with me. He told them to pray.

He brought Peter, James, and John with him and he said, stay with me and pray and wait with me. And he went to pray and then he came back and what were they doing when he came back? Sleeping. And he said, no, couldn't you stay with me an hour? Now watch and pray so that you'll be strong when temptation comes.

There's something about spending time with God that strengthens you spiritually for when the tempter comes. And I bet that was still in, because what did Peter do that night? He denied that he knew the Lord three times. Because they didn't pray, they slept.

The devil will battle you on a lot of things, but he battles us most about praying. Do I get a witness here? He'll battle you to read the Bible. He doesn't want you to come to church.

There's a lot of things he doesn't want us to do. But when it comes to prayer, oh my goodness, because he knows now we're really entering in to good spiritual warfare. So Peter goes up to pray.

Put it back up there. He became hungry and he wanted something to eat. Isn't that so natural? He's praying, it's lunchtime and he's hungry.

And while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance and he saw heaven open and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. And then a voice told him, get up, Peter, kill and eat.

Surely not, Lord, Peter replied. I've never eaten anything impure, unclean. Stop there.

Because the animals that were in that sheet were animals that were forbidden for the Jews to eat from the Old Testament. And yet the voice is telling him, kill and eat. And he goes, no, I'm not going to eat.

I've never done anything like that. We go on. The voice spoke to him a second time.

Do not call anything impure that God has made clean. This happened three times and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. Put up the next passage that we have there so I know where it is.

Okay. Take it off for a second. So what happens is this happens three times and the sheet disappears.

And then just as it happens, someone's knocking on the front door of Simon the Tanner's house and saying, we're here for Simon who's called Peter. And the Bible says the spirit tells Peter, go with them and don't be afraid. Go with them.

How did the spirit speak to him? We don't know. But there was some prompting in his heart that said, don't be afraid. You go.

I've arranged this whole thing. So he goes with them. Or he talks to them and says, who are you? And they say, look, we work for a guy named Cornelius.

And here's what happened. An angel visited him and said to send for you. That's how we found you.

That you would be near the sea. You'd be staying with Simon the Tanner. And now would you come with us? He keeps them overnight.

And the next day they make their journey to Cornelius' house. Now he's a Jew coming to a Gentile's house. This is not a good thing.

But when he comes, he knows, oh, something very cosmic is happening here spiritually. So he gets there and Cornelius greets him outside. And he says, why have you sent for me? And Cornelius says, here's what happened.

He tells them the whole story. And then Peter comes in. Let's pick it up.

Talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. He said to them, you are well aware that it's 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.

Then later on, then Peter began to speak. I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling them the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached? Now, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. Notice that Jesus himself didn't do miracles because of who he was. He needed the Holy Spirit's power to do it.

He didn't do it as the power of the Son of God because he had emptied himself of that glory and took on a human form and became like us. So the Spirit came upon him. The Spirit empowered him.

If the Spirit empowered Jesus to do that, how in the world can we do anything without the power of the Holy Spirit? As the girls must have said last night on a national program, the only way we could get through the prison experience was through the Holy Spirit helping us. He went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil because God was with them. We are witnesses of everything that he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised them from the dead on the third day, praise God, and caused him to be seen. 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. 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.

Jesus is the judge in the end. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. He's not just the judge, he's the savior.

He's not just the savior, he's the judge. I don't want to know him as judge, I want to know him as savior. How many say amen? He will judge the living and the dead.

People who curse him, deny he exists, that won't change anything. It is what it is. So Jesus is the message to the Gentiles.

And by the way, the next verse is very interesting. Maybe we'll do this next week again because there's so much in Cornelius' story. While he was yet speaking those words, the Holy Spirit came on the people that were in that house, and it was a lot more than just Cornelius.

He invited his family, his soldiers, his servants, and everyone who heard the word, the Bible says the Holy Spirit came upon them. And the way Peter knew it is they began to speak in this ecstasy and other languages, just the way Peter and the others had done in Acts chapter 2. And then Peter went and said, who can forbid these people to be baptized? Even though they're Gentiles, we've never done this before. But who can forbid them to be baptized? They received the same gift of the Holy Spirit that we received.

Obviously, God is doing something. Okay, so what are the simple lessons that we can take with us before we leave? I just want to give you two or two and a half. Number one, let's talk about the main one.

God was showing to Peter and to all of us that there are no people that are different than you and I. Nobody has an inside track with God, not Jews, not Gentiles, not Puerto Ricans, not Trinidadians, not white, not black, not Asian. Everyone's on the same footing with God in terms of offering the gift of salvation and him sending his son to die for them, for God so loved the whole world. Peter had to be cured of his prejudice.

How about you? How about me? Peter was raised feeling superior because he was a Jew. How about you? What feelings of superiority have been ingrained in you that you and I think we're all that? Peter had to be cured. He had to be wholly cured.

He was staying, notice, since he now is a Christian and filled with the spirit, notice how God works progressively in us. He was staying with Simon the Tanner. What do tanners work with? They work with dead animal carcasses.

Jews are not allowed to be around that. But he was staying at Simon the Tanner's house. So he had come halfway.

He was realizing, wait a minute, I shouldn't look down on this Jew who's a tanner. God's bigger than this Old Testament restrictions. But he had to come all the way.

So God said, go to a Gentile's house because to God, nobody's got an inside track. This, ladies and gentlemen, for sure, is one of the reasons why many people in our society wonder about Christians because cultural and racial differences trump the Bible. Oh, yeah.

Oh, yeah. Yeah. During, prior to the Civil War, those white plantation owners were pounding the to preach from the Bible justification of slavery as they mistreated and harmed black people and then lifted their hands and sang, holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

And there's black hate and prejudice and anger. I'm so tired of anger. You ever get tired of anger? I'm so tired of white angry people and black angry people and Hispanic angry people.

I'm so tired of anger. We should be, as Pastor Burgos prayed, we should just be thanking God. Come on, how many, lift your hand if you're just thankful you're alive.

Be mad at somebody, be full of anger and always fed justification for our anger, whatever culture you grew up in. So this is a major point because now this wall had to come down for the gospel. Jesus came for everyone.

He didn't come for any chosen. There is no chosen race. There are no special people.

Black is not beautiful. White is not beautiful. All we like sheep have gone astray.

There's beautiful white people and there's some ugly, hating white people, aren't there? And black people too. I've met losers in all races. How many say amen? Some folks that'll just be up in your grill quick.

And now the message comes for all people. But, and God doesn't favor America and God doesn't favor anybody. So don't bring that nonsense to the Bible.

God loves everybody. Are there countries that God has blessed? Are there countries that have more of a Christian influence than others? Yes. That's true.

But God doesn't look down and judge us by what color we are. I'm so happy for that because as I've said before, but it bears repeating, why are you so excited by your color when you didn't choose it? You just woke up. You woke up one day.

You woke up one day and that's where you were. I woke up one day in a hospital not 10, 15 blocks from here. My mother who's here gave birth to me in a hospital, yeah, about 15 blocks from here.

And I was half Ukrainian, half Polish. I didn't ask for that. That's me.

If I make a big thing about being Polish or Ukrainian, that's pretty stupid, isn't it? If I try to tell you that Poland is a special country, why would I be doing that? Because it's my arrogance and my pride because I'm Polish. If I try to sell you America, it's because I was born in America. Don't you get it? People from Liberia are taught something else.

And we all have that in us. Mariana Rivera, the great pitcher for the Yankees, the first time I met him up in my office on the fifth floor, turned to me out of nowhere. He really loves Jesus.

He's from Panama. And he said to me, Pastor Cimbala, how come the Yankees are more integrated than most Christians? I said, what do you mean? He said, nobody cares in the Yankees what color Jeter is, or me, or anyone else he named other players on the team. He said, nobody cares.

The only question is, can you play? Then you're teammates, and you're like this with people. He said, but I noticed that Christians in America, it's mostly divided, especially if you go down south. But other places, it's divided, whites, blacks, and all of that.

Why is that? I went, ¿Quiere más café? You want some more coffee? It's a good question, right? And Asians are just as bad. I once was brought to a corporation to get help from someone set it up, Asian-owned corporation from a certain country. And the guy just looked at me at the end of the whole thing.

He says, oh, no, no, we can't help you because we only give money to our own kind. Well, how about humankind? So I want to just ask all of you, because if we're going to represent Jesus effectively, what are you into? The human race, or your little minuscule world? And how you grew up, and what you heard, and what your mama said, and your grandpa said. Is that the way it's going to be with us? That's sad.

How are we going to represent Jesus talking that foolishness? So Peter learned, you don't call anything unclean or impure that God has called clean. God loves everyone. He has no specials, no country.

You hear that said by anyone, that's wrong. Right-wing conservatives, left-wing liberals, it's all just silly. It's wrong.

There are no special people. There's no black Jesus, white Jesus, or any kind of Jesus. There's Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

Can we put our hands together, say amen to that? But let's go further before we close. Let's go further. Today, we're faced with another battle.

Are there certain sins in people that we're to look down on? Are there certain other religions that we're to look down on? I hear a lot of Christians talk about Muslims. I don't hear a lot of love. I hear Old Testament battle cry.

I hear, let's get at this thing. Or did Christ die for Muslims too? I didn't hear you. Did Christ die for Muslims too? And he loves them? And Jesus shed his blood? You see, in India, you could talk to Ravi Zacharias about this, and the caste system of India on the bottom are the what? The untouchables.

That, forget marrying, you can't even marry someone from another caste. You could be threatened with violence if you try to marry in a caste below your caste. But on the bottom are the untouchables who don't do anything but clean the human refuse and some other things.

There are no untouchables with God. Our God loves everyone. Doesn't matter what you've done.

All we like sheep have gone astray. How do we need God to help us with that? Because although we look and read this and say, listen as I close, we read this and we say, well, yeah, well, we're past that day. We know Jews and Gentiles are all together.

We don't have that kind of prejudice. I'm not so sure we're not bound by other prejudices. Or there are certain sins.

You know, an adulterer is okay. A gay, that's different. A thief is okay.

Somebody shooting heroin, that's okay. But someone else does something. Now he's beyond the pale.

He's beyond, that one God can save, that one God can save, that one is just, that's a low life. Don't we have that instinct in us? Well, listen, of course we do. I hear that all the time.

I went to ministers and I hear it. I hear warlike talk about other religions. I hear people say, you know, a minister 20 years ago said to me, well, you know, he preaches against sin.

Listen, the Bible calls certain things sin. Certain things are wrong. But Jesus came so those things can be forgiven and the power of them can be broken in our lives.

And it doesn't differentiate that it's only some sins that he forgives, only some sins he can deliver from. So I hear the most outlandish statements of ministers saying, no, no, if that God, you tell me, I hear, you read in your book in your wife's choir there are people who led this kind of lifestyle, that kind of lifestyle. I just want to tell you something real plain there, Pastor Jim, I'm not having that in my church.

I keep one eye on that guy. That's just lovely, isn't it? No, God loves everybody. So here's the two dangers.

To make believe there's no sin, that nothing's wrong. That's one side. To justify things that the Bible calls wrong.

That's very strong now. Maybe some of you are here visiting today and we've had to dialogue with some of you. The Bible says certain things are wrong.

We're not discriminatory. The Bible says it's wrong. You know, we didn't make up this religion.

We're going by what Jesus taught, what the Bible says. So one tendency is to justify sin and say it's not wrong. That's wrong.

The other thing is to say it's sin, but then not love the sinner. See, there's the two sides of the coin. One side is saying, no, everything's okay.

God understands. I was wired this way. I was made this way.

You know, I was born to be an alcoholic. I was born to be this and all of that. So if I start drinking now and waste my life, I can just say my dad was an alcoholic.

It's in the DNA. It's genetic. It goes back.

I have a generational curse and that justifies me. The Bible doesn't have any stuff about that. Call something wrong.

Something's wrong. It's wrong. If you steal, you hate.

That's wrong. If you have prejudice in your heart, that's wrong. Don't say you grew up that way.

It's wrong. Now you have light. It's wrong.

The other side is to believe in the wrongness of sin, but then be so filled with anger that we stop loving the sinner. I want to love and weep over people. I don't want to condemn them and judge them.

There's no shortage of judges in America, especially in the churches. How many say amen to that? A lot of people think that's spiritual. I grew up in a church and around people like that and relatives and others.

To see people's faults and try to see what they were really like, that was like barely being spiritual. I almost got seduced by that. But seeing people's faults and like seeing through them and I discern something, you know, what really spiritual is to weep over someone.

Isn't that what Jesus did on over Jerusalem? Isn't that what he said on the cross? Father get them for what they've done to me. Wait a minute. Is that what it said there? Maybe my do I have a different version than yours? What did he say? Forgive them for what killing the son of God.

Wait a minute. Forgive them for killing the son of God and we're ready to judge everyone and condemn them to hell and he's the son of God and he's telling people he's asking God to forgive him. I need a baptism in God's love.

How about you? Because I know my I know who I am. I have certain human reactions. You don't want to know about them.

If you know what I'm really like none of you would like me. That's the truth. I might not like you if I found out what you were really like.

But when God's love changes us. Then we can see people the way God sees them. We can feel what God feels.

We can be free from cultural bias racial prejudice class prejudice. Look down on poorer people because that's the lesson Timothy Epstein and you got to come all the way not just Simon the tanner. You got all the way to Cornelius's house.

In closing, did you notice the little message that he gave him? We have a summary of the message that he gave to the Cornelius. That's the gospel message share that with you on your job share that on your job. You don't need to know all the books of the Bible yet study learn them, but you don't need to know all of that.

What did he tell him said come on you all know about Jesus. He went about doing good and healing those that were oppressed by the devil because God was with them. This is the one that God sent his own son.

And if you believe in him, I have good news for you. You can have peace. Don't you know about the good news of peace through Jesus? Some of you here are so afraid to die because you know, you're going to face God something tells you even though others laugh at that thought but you know, there's an instinct in you, you know, there's going to be an answer an answer time and now you're afraid to die because you don't have peace.

You don't have peace at night. You don't have peace in your sleep. You know, you're making money.

You don't have peace. How about this is this beautiful movie star that just took her life right and someone did one the week before that if money and and and and the right sexual partners and Fame were the answer. Why are these people taking drugs and killing themselves? Would you explain that to me because only Jesus can satisfy your soul only Jesus can give you peace.

Only Jesus can give you peace. The message we have is a message of peace. Not only are we peaceful toward the people but we want to tell them the message of peace with God through Jesus Christ.

God won't be your judge. He'll be your father. If you receive Jesus Christ.

Peace, why is there peace because whoever puts their trust in him, he will forgive every sin they've ever committed. So let's end on that note. This is what the gospel is about.

It's not joined the Brooklyn Tabernacle. It's not five-point Calvinism. It's not charismatic teaching.

It's not what Revival is all about. Those are things some of them that have their place in Bible teaching, but it's not the gospel. The gospel is if you receive Jesus, you will have peace because every wrong thing

you've ever done will be forgiven things.

Some people know about things. Nobody knows about things that you're involved in now. Jesus will forgive you and you can have peace.

You can be clean. Anybody here like me? You love to get clean? I'm talking physically clean. How many do not like the idea of being sweaty and dirty? Lift your hand, please.

The water went out in the building I live in, but it went out longer than they said. So when I got up in the morning, nobody in the whole building could shower. No running water.

Boy, what we assume, just put the water on. No agua. No water.

Well, you can get bottled water to drink. You can make it through. But, oh, I went down in the elevator to find out, like, what's going on, and there were some people, not happy campers in that elevator going to work when the water went back on and you take that shower, put on your clothes, clean.

But the best feeling is to be clean in here, is to know that, look, everything you've ever done wrong. That's why he came. He loves you so much.

He knows that's the blockage. He knows that's the problem. He came to forgive you.

Now, what do you have to do to get that forgiveness? Admit that you're wrong and say, I believe in Jesus. Jesus, I receive you. Cornelius did it while he was preaching, and the Spirit came on them.

There was no altar call. It just happened while he was talking. You can't put God in a box.

That's the message I have for you today, that God is no respecter of persons, and there's no sinner, there's no sin, there's no degenerate beyond the reach of God's love. I don't care what anyone's done. Anyone, you know what they've done.

Christ's blood is stronger than any kind of thing any of us could ever do. His love reaches further than that, and he wants to give you peace. If you're here today, and you need God's peace to hold you, maybe you're not a Christian, or maybe you've been walking in disobedience.

You want to just turn away, confess, believe, so that he can cleanse and give you peace. Why would you want to walk out the building like the same way you walked in? Why don't you come and make a transaction with God? Or maybe you're here today, and you're a Christian, but whatever the reason is, you're lacking peace. There's turmoil, agitation, all kinds of discombobulation inside of you, mentally, emotionally.

You think that's God's will for you? You think Pastor Petri wants his daughter Claire to be walking around with that kind of anxiety? No. We're going to sing the message in song, peace, peace. Anybody up in the balcony or downstairs? And I'm going to dismiss everyone.

Do not move. Do not move until I dismiss you. But anybody want to come here? Just one person, two people? Anybody want to come and just say, Pastor, I need God's peace in my life.

I have more than I need. I have food, but I can't get peace. Something's missing.

I'm lacking peace. Just come out of your seat and come here and stand. Jesus, I thank you for dying for us so that we could have peace.

I thank you for suffering turmoil and pain and being massacred on that tree so that our sins could be forgiven and we could have peace. We confess our sins. We've been wrong.

You're right. We're wrong. Your word is right.

We're wrong. No justifying, no story. We humble ourselves.

Forgive us. Señor, have mercy. We don't ask for justice.

We ask for mercy. Would you blanket the hearts of my friends in the front, Lord, with your peace? If they've never received Jesus as their Savior, let it happen right now as they confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord of all. Risen from the dead, died for our sins.

In heaven, going to come back one day. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. For those of us who are believers here, make those adjustments that need to be made, but God, blanket us with peace.

Your will is that we would live lives of peace. You're called the Prince of Peace. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.

Let your spirit work in us and grant all your people peace. Finally, Lord, break down every barrier, every prejudice, every self-righteous attitude that we are better than anyone in the universe. Break it all down.

Everybody join hands with the person next to you across every aisle. I hope it's someone you don't know. I hope it's somebody that's different than you.

Come on, up in the balcony, too. Choir, too. Take away West Indian pride, black pride, white pride, Asian pride, Latino pride, Indian pride.

Take away every kind of pride, feeling of superiority. Help us to walk in humility and love to one another. Help us to cry over people and want to help them and not judge them.

To see their faults is nothing, God. Who's going to help them? Who's going to take the time and show mercy and help them? With our hands together, let's lift them up together and sing it.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25121.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-cymbala/book-of-acts-series-part-15-everyone-is-welcome/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net