

“Serendipity” Sermon for May 6, 2018
Acts 10:44-48 New International Version (NIV)

Serendipity is a phenomenon of discovering unanticipated valuable or agreeable things not sought for. Serendipitous events shock and surprise us but ultimately the outcome benefits us. Through it value and delight are added to our lives.

Luke tells us simply about Cornelius:

He and all his family were God-fearing, giving generously to the needy and praying regularly.

Cornelius, an unclean Gentile, received God’s favor because of devotion to God and to other human beings in need. He revered life: God & People. He was praying to God when he saw an Angel who told him, “Find Peter and he will instruct your family concerning God.

At the same time Peter, had dozed off for a little snooze just before Lunch time. (And you know how it is when you go to bed with an empty stomach - you dream about food). He fell into a trance and dreamed about all kinds of food, but the foods came from unclean animals according to the Laws of Moses (bad dream). He heard a voice saying to him, "Get up, kill and eat". Being the good Jew, Peter said "No." He would not eat what his religion considered unclean, even if the Spirit commanded it. God said to him: 15 "Do not call anything unclean that God has presented-making it clean."

When Peter woke up, messengers from Cornelius were at the door asking for Peter. If we wake up to God, then we won't miss the message. They asked that he go with them to the house of Cornelius. God is the God of serendipity. God is serendipitous.

When Peter met Cornelius he said, 28

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

Surprise, surprise, even as Peter spoke the Holy Spirit was poured out on the household. Peter has just begun to share Good News of with Cornelius, his family and friends. It was a demonstration of God's fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, that deliverance, discovery and recovery of the glory of human life for all would be fulfilled in Christ's resurrected life.

It is a reminder to us also, that when God's Spirit is at work, calling us to new people, people who are different, people we have not considered, we would do well to open our minds and our hearts to God's serendipity. God is saying to us, "Don't miss the new things, the surprises, the serendipities, because

they are what makes us strong and mature in Christ.
Amen.