

**SERMON: The Memorial Prayer (Pursuing God's Kingdom through Prayer)  
Speaker: Bishop Brian C. Greene**

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SCRIPTURE: Acts 10:<sup>1</sup>At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.<sup>2</sup> He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. <sup>3</sup> One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" <sup>4</sup> Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God." (TNIV)

Matthew 6:<sup>9</sup> "This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (TNIV)

Introduction: Last Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, our nation just celebrated a national holiday called "Memorial Day". And just as we use this holiday to remember veterans of our armed forces, there are some prayers we have prayed in the past which need to be remembered, that is, prayed again.

Background: In our text Cornelius was a centurion, a soldier in charge of approximately 100 (See the word "century" in centurion) soldiers. This was the equivalent of being a sergeant in the U.S. Army. As a "God-fearing" man, it simply meant that as a Gentile (Non-Jew) he worshipped God (Yahweh), and worshipped at the Jewish Synagogue. However, he was not circumcised which would have made him a proselyte.

At 3:00 p.m., an angel (messenger) appears and informs Cornelius that his prayers and his giving to the poor have come up as a "memorial offering" to God.

This story was history in the making! Through prayer "the Kingdom" is now expanded! Up to this point in time, the church was made up of only those who were Jewish. Therefore, Acts chapter 10 becomes a turning point in the history of the church!

Kingdom: The word "kingdom" can be defined as the king's domain. The word "domain" which is derived from the Latin word "domus" means "household". Thus the word kingdom can be defined as "what the king's house holds". But seek

ye first what the King's (God) households, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6: 33 KJV)

Cornelius is the first Non-Jewish person to be admitted into the church. The Kingdom of God has now been expanded to include Non-Jews. And the expansion of God's Kingdom occurs not through the prayers of the church, but through prayers of Cornelius the Gentile. In addition it was not accomplished through just any kind of prayer. It was accomplished through The Memorial Prayer!

### **The Memorial Prayer Defined:**

MEMORIAL (Greek):

1. Reminder (bring back to one's mind). The prayer God brings back to our thoughts.
2. Recorded (bring back to one's "cord" which means heart in Latin). As a man thinketh in his heart (Proverbs 23:7). The best remembered "records" are usually Love Songs such as the song "I Want You Back" sung by The Jackson 5. This song is still popular though written in 1969, 40 years ago. Thus, the memorial prayer is the prayer that God, the Holy Spirit, keeps bringing back to our heart.
3. Memorandum = (Latin meaning: a thing to be remembered). We use memorandums (short notes) to help us to remember.

A Memorial Prayer is not us reminding God of our prayer. A Memorial Prayer is us reminding God that we still believe!!! (Luke 18:1 & 8). Our prayers are like POST- IT NOTES all over heaven, reminding God that we understand that there are kingdom consequences with regards to our prayers being answered!

EXAMPLES of Memorial Prayers:

1. Zachariah's prayers produced John the Baptist (Luke 1:13).
2. The prophetess Anna's prayers produced the arrival of Jesus, the Messiah (Luke 2:37).
3. Daniel kept praying for 21 days and the angel's response? "Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray... and to humble yourself

before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer." (Daniel 10:12 NLT). The Amplified Bible states, "I have come in response to your words."

4. My mother-in-law's memorial prayer of 17 years brought my father-in-law back to the Lord.

Let's go back into the resources of our minds and hearts, dust off those old unanswered prayers that we no longer pray, and remind God that we still believe. Why? Because these prayers have kingdom consequences.