

acts

OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 6 • August 11

Acts 10-11

“God Shows No Partiality”

Journey of Peter

Acts 8:14-25; 9:31-43; 10

1. Peter and John travel from Jerusalem to Samaria (8:14).
2. Peter returns to Jerusalem and becomes acquainted with Saul (9:26-27).
3. Peter travels to Lydda where many turn to the Lord (9:32-35).
4. Peter goes to Joppa where he has a vision of a great, white sheet full of unclean animals (10:9-17).
5. Peter goes to Caesarea where Cornelius and his household become Christians (10:24-48).
6. Peter returns to Jerusalem (11:1-2).



At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, “Cornelius.” And he stared at him in terror and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter.

(Acts 10:1-5)

The next day, Peter had a vision of a great sheet coming down from heaven. In it were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds—animals that Peter would have been raised to call “unclean”—not the sort that he had ever eaten. But a voice from heaven shared a message Peter needed to hear: “What God has made clean, do not call common” (10:15). Just then, the messengers from Cornelius arrived.

Two days later, when Peter arrived at Cornelius’ house, Cornelius fell down and worshiped Peter, but Peter lifted him up, saying, “Stand up; I too am a man.” Listen to what Peter shared from the beginning:

“You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit anyone of another nation, but God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean.” (10:28)

As he has the opportunity to share “the good news of peace through Jesus Christ,” pay special attention to the message Peter knew needed to be shared with everyone:

“Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” (10:34-35)

Was Peter telling the truth? Could Gentiles *really* be saved just like the Jews? God provided the proof.

While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. (10:44-45)

Cornelius, his relatives, and close friends were commanded to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ just like the descendants of Abraham (10:47-48). When some in Jerusalem criticized Peter (11:1-3), Peter reminded them of Jesus’ promise in Acts 1:5 and asked, “Who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” The proof had been provided: “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

For Class & Family Discussion:

- What was the big lesson that Peter, the Jewish disciples of Jesus, and everyone else needed to learn in [Acts 10-11](#)? Remember the mission statement Jesus had given in [Acts 1:8](#)...
- Why do we sometimes struggle to relate to or accept people who are different from us? But notice how Jesus' sacrifice is described in heaven in [Revelation 5:9](#). Who does God want in his kingdom?
- Luke tells us in [Acts 10:2](#) that Cornelius was “a devout man, who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.” So why did Cornelius even need someone like Peter? Is there anything we can learn from that?
- In your own words, what did the vision of the unclean animals help Peter begin to understand in [Acts 10:28](#) and [10:34-35](#)?
- “While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word” ([10:44](#)). What did this prove? Why would Peter ask what he did in [10:47](#) and command them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ?
- Why did “the circumcision party” criticize Peter in [11:1-3](#)? What made Peter absolutely sure that he had done the right thing in sharing the gospel with Gentiles and baptizing them in the name of Jesus Christ?
- [Acts 11:19-26](#) describes the growth of the church in Antioch, where “the disciples were first called Christians.” What did that name mean?
- Let's read [Acts 11:27-30](#) together. What were these Christians in Antioch willing to do for their brothers and sisters living in Judea? How was this a powerful example of what the kingdom of Christ ought to be?