

Lesson 7 October 19, 2025 Peter Takes a Risk

Bible Basis: Acts 10:24-38

Memory Verse:

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. "(Acts 10:34-35)

Lesson Aim:

- Understand that God shows no Favoritism
- Know that Visions prepare Hearts
- Recognize that God's time is perfect

WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM

The Problem: Cultural and Religious Barriers

- Jewish ONLY: At the time, many Jewish believers still believed the Gospel was primarily for Jews. Gentiles were considered ritually unclean and were excluded from full participation in Jewish religious life.

Background

Acts 10:1–23 sets the stage for one of the most groundbreaking moments in early Christianity—the divine invitation to extend the gospel beyond Jewish boundaries.

Summary of Acts 10:1–23

Verses 1–8: Cornelius' Vision

- Cornelius, a Roman centurion in Caesarea, is described as devout, God-fearing, generous, and prayerful.
- During prayer, he receives a vision of an angel who tells him his prayers and alms (charity) have ascended as a memorial before God.
- He's instructed to send men to Joppa to bring back Simon Peter, who is staying with Simon the tanner.

Verses 9–16: Peter's Vision

- The next day, as Cornelius' men approach, Peter goes up to pray and falls into a trance.
- He sees a sheet descending from heaven filled with various animals, and hears a voice saying, "Kill and eat."
- Peter resists, citing Jewish dietary laws, but the voice responds, "What God has cleansed, do not call common."
- This happens three times—symbolizing divine determination and completeness.

Verses 17–23: A Divine Meeting

- As Peter ponders the vision, Cornelius' men arrive.
- The Spirit tells Peter to go with them "without hesitation," for they were sent by God.
- Peter welcomes the men and prepares to journey with them to Caesarea.

Reflection Questions

For Personal or Group Study

1. How does Cornelius' character challenge our assumptions about who is "ready" to receive God's message?
2. What barriers—cultural, theological, personal—might God be asking you to reconsider?
3. Have you ever received spiritual insight during prayer that changed your direction or perspective?
4. What does Peter's vision teach us about God's authority to redefine what is clean, acceptable, or included?
5. How can you cultivate the kind of spiritual readiness that Cornelius and Peter both demonstrate?

Peter Meets Cornelius (Acts 10:24-26)



²⁴On the following day he [and the others] entered Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends.

²⁵When Peter arrived, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet and ^[h]worshiped *him*.

²⁶But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am only a man."

Verses 24–27: What's happening here?

- Cornelius, a Roman centurion and God-fearing Gentile, gathers his family and close friends in anticipation of Peter's arrival.
- He meets Peter with reverence, even falling at his feet—Peter quickly corrects him, saying, "I myself also am a man."

PETER SPEAKS TO CORNELIUS' GUESTS (VS. 27-29)

²⁷ As Peter talked with him, he entered [the house] and found a large group of people assembled.

²⁸ He said to them, "You know that it is unlawful for a Jewish man to associate with *or* befriend a Gentile, or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I am not to call anyone common or [ceremonially] unclean.

²⁹ Therefore when I was sent for, I came without raising an objection. So I ask for what reason have you sent for me?"

What's happening here?

- Peter enters the home, acknowledging that Jews typically don't associate with Gentiles, but God has shown him not to call anyone "unclean."
- He asks why Cornelius sent for him, opening the door for divine purpose.
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CORNELIUS' STORY (VS. 30-33)

³⁰ Cornelius said, "Four days ago to this hour, I was praying in my house during the ninth hour (3:00-4:00 p.m.); and a man [dressed] in bright, dazzling clothing suddenly stood before me,

³¹ and he said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your acts of charity have been remembered before God [so that He is about to help you].

³² Therefore send *word* to Joppa and invite Simon, who is also called Peter, to come to you. He is staying at the house of Simon the tanner by the sea.'

³³ So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now then, we are all here present before God to listen to everything that you have been instructed by the Lord [to say]."

Verses 30–33: What's happening here?

- Cornelius recounts his vision of an angel instructing him to send for Peter.
- He expresses eagerness to hear whatever God has commanded Peter to say.

PETER DELIVERS THE GOSPEL (VS. 34-38)

Verses 34–38:

- Peter declares that God shows no partiality—anyone who fears Him and does what is right is accepted.
 - He summarizes Jesus’ ministry: preaching peace, healing, and delivering those oppressed by the devil, empowered by the Holy Spirit.
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Reflection Questions

For Personal or Group Study

1. **How does Peter’s willingness to enter Cornelius’ home challenge our own boundaries or biases?**
 2. **What does Cornelius’ preparation teach us about spiritual hunger and hospitality?**
 3. **How do you respond when God asks you to step into unfamiliar or uncomfortable territory for the sake of the gospel?**
 4. **What does Peter’s declaration that “God is no of persons” mean for your ministry or classroom?**
 5. **How can you cultivate a space—like Cornelius did—where people are ready to hear from God?**
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Student’s response – Key take aways

1. God Shows No Favoritism

- Peter declares, “*God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right*” (Acts 10:34–35).
- This is a radical shift: salvation is not limited by race, culture, or tradition.

2. Visions Prepare Hearts

- Both Cornelius and Peter receive visions that guide them toward each other.

- God uses supernatural means to break down prejudice and prepare hearts for divine encounters.

3. God's Timing Is Perfect

- The coordination of visions, messengers, and Peter's arrival shows divine orchestration.
- God aligns events to fulfill His inclusive plan for salvation.