



Series: The Spirit Moves

Week 2: Peter's Call

Overview of the Lesson

Video: Be sure to check out the video above for a brief introduction to the study and some brief reflections on the passage.

Scripture: *Primary text:* Acts 10:1-48

Age Specific Breakdown:

- **Preschool – Page 2**
- **Children – Page 3-4**
- **Avenue 56 – Page 4**
- **Youth – Page 5**
- **College – Pages 6-8**
- **Activity Pages – 9-13**

Family Activity/Prayer: Today we invite your family to recite out loud Dr. Barnette's weekly benediction. As you know, the end is always tailored to the message from the sermon. So, we've added a little piece at the end related to Jesus's triumphal entry.

Depart now in the fellowship of God the Father.

And as you go remember:

That by the goodness of God you were born into this world,
And by the grace of God you have been kept all the day long,
Even until this very hour.

And by the love of God fully revealed in the face of Jesus Christ,
You have been redeemed and you are being redeemed

And so go,

Proclaiming that the Gospel knows no boundaries. Amen.

Preschool

Peter's Call

Lesson:

Please read the scripture from the Bible or a Bible Storybook, Acts 10, Peter and Cornelius/Peter's Call and Acts 12:3-17, Peter Escapes. The (# attachments) are at the very end of all of the Weekly Word. (see attachment #1 Lesson/ Peter's Call to preach to all people no matter where they live) (see attachment #2 teaching picture Peter/Cornelius) (see attachment #3 Lesson / Peter Escapes) (see attachment #4 teaching picture Peter Escapes)

Follow Up Questions: In Acts 10, God sends Peter a vision to let him know that he is to tell the good news of Jesus to all people not just to his fellow Jews. Peter obeyed and preached to Cornelius' family in Caesarea. He continued to share about Jesus to all people. In Acts 12:3-17, the jealous people that had hurt Jesus wanted to stop Peter from preaching, so Herod the king put him in jail, and God's angel set him free.

Peter's Call:

1. What does Peter see in his dream?
2. What does God want Peter to know?
3. Who should we tell about Jesus?

Peter Escapes:

4. Why was Peter in jail?
5. Who did God send to set Peter free?
6. Why did Peter's friends gather together?
7. What were Peter's friends praying?

Reinforcing Activities:

Encourage your child to color (see attachment #5 coloring page). Let your child make chains like Peter's, but they can make theirs into prayer chains. Cut 2- inch-wide strips of paper, and ask your child to draw on each strip something that they are going to pray about. Then tape, glue or staple them to make a paper chain. Let your child keep their chain near where they pray as a reminder of their prayers. Explain that God always answers our prayers. Sometimes God says YES like in the Bible story, and sometimes God says NO because He has something better in mind. And sometimes God says NOT YET. God made us, loves us, and knows what is BEST for us.

Family Activities:

God was with Peter even when he was in jail. So, enjoy family charades by asking each family member to think of someplace that they go and then pantomime an action that takes place there. The rest of the family may guess the action and where it takes place. Some examples are the following: swim arms for the beach, a big yawn for sleeping at grandparents' house, a big kick for the soccer field, or a brush stroke for art class. Then remind your family that Jesus is with us at all those places. He promised his friends just before He went up into heaven, "Jesus said, I am with you ALWAYS". Matthew 28:20

Prayer: Dear God, PLEASE help me to be brave about telling my friends the good news about Jesus. THANK YOU that you have promised to be with me all the time. And THANK YOU that you always keep your promises.

Children

Peter's Call (Acts 10). Before reading the scripture, invite your family to decide together the top five best and worst foods. Invite suggestions and friendly discussion. List all ideas. Then guide everyone to number the foods to indicate the best five and the worst five. Prompt choices by asking, "If you could only eat five foods the rest of your life, what would you choose?" and "Name five foods you never want to eat again." Work together to develop a final "Best Five" and "Worst Five" list. In today's Bible story, God told Peter (in a vision to eat some foods but Peter did not want to do that. We will find out what happened when we read the Bible story. Read the scripture together now.)

Bible skills development:

- Ask your child if they remember the two main divisions of the Bible (Old and New Testament). Remind them that the book of Acts, where the Bible story is found today, tells about the early days of the church shortly after the resurrection. See how many of the New Testament books your child can name. Practice finding the book of Acts (it is the ONLY book of 'history' in the New Testament) and make sure your child knows how to find the chapter and verse of today's story.

Bible story review: Do the following activities to review the Bible story.

- Review Questions: For this week's review questions, consider writing them out on strips of paper listing the reference but NOT the answer. Encourage your child to select a question strip and look up the answer with the reference provided.

1. Who was Cornelius? (*a centurion, or officer, in the Roman army; Acts 10:1*)
2. What did Cornelius see in a vision? (*an angel, Acts 10:3*)
3. The angel told Cornelius to call for whom? (*Simon Peter, Acts 10:5*)
4. Why was Peter on the roof? (*to pray, Acts 10:9*)
5. What did Peter see in a vision? (*a large sheet with animals in it, Acts 10:11-12*)
6. What did God tell Peter to do? (*kill and eat, Acts 10:13*)
7. Whom did the Holy Spirit fill? (*those who heard the message, both Jews and Gentiles; Acts 10:44-45*)

Help children understand that this story isn't really about what animals you should eat and what animals you should not eat. The meaning of the vision was greater. God wanted Peter to understand that He accepts all people who trust in Jesus—not just Jews. The Jews were God's chosen people, descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. God wanted Peter to understand that He loves all people and wants everyone to be saved.

- Make stick people. Encourage your child to go outside and gather several small branches with forked twigs for each family member to make "stick people"; (you may want extras for legs and arms, etc.). Provide assorted things you have in your house for

decorations: different colors of yarn for wrapping around the people for clothes; ribbon, acorns, buttons, pebbles, wiggle eyes, etc.

When you are done, compare the finished products and explain how different each one is from the others. Just like the stick people, each of us is different and unique, too, and loved by God the same. In our Bible story today, the Holy Spirit told Peter, who was a Jew, to preach to Cornelius, a Gentile. When Peter spoke to Cornelius and the people at his house, the Holy Spirit came down on ALL those who heard the message—both Jews and Gentiles. God showed Peter that just as there is no “clean” and “unclean” food, there are no “clean” and “unclean” people. God calls believers to tell everyone the good news about Jesus, no matter who they are or where they come from. Jesus is the Lord of all.

Pray: Close with prayer, asking God to help us all to love everyone just as God does.

Avenue 56

Peter’s Call: Read Acts 10:1-48. Encourage your student to read portions of the scripture out loud and help with words or phrases about which they might be confused.

2 W and an H Question:

Review with your student WHAT was in the story. Ask general questions for a recap of the scripture you just read. Some examples would be:

Who are the people that are present in the story?

Why did Cornelius send for Peter? What did Peter see in his vision? Why would God use food to show Peter what he wanted him to do?

Why is it significant that Peter preaches to Cornelius in his house?

Ask your students Why this story is important for the church today? The work of the church did not end when Jesus went back to heaven, He simply trusted people like Peter, and us, to continue the ministry that Jesus started. Now that story is moving across the whole world. The gentiles are being welcomed into the family.

Finally, ask your students HOW this story applies to their life today? Cornelius and Peter both received messages from God. Cornelius prayed often and God used that as a way to lead him to know Jesus. Peter was courageous enough to follow the Holy Spirit, even when it might have felt scary.

Pray with your student thanking God for allowing us to participate in his mission. Ask God for opportunities to serve others and show them God’s love.

Youth

Acts 10 is one of the most significant passages in the NT. Here, in the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit begins to move God's people outward to include the gentile (non-Jewish) people. In this story Cornelius, a gentile, has been giving to the poor and praying to God. God hears him and gives him a command. Go find this guy Peter. Meanwhile, the Spirit is also working in Peter. Peter is given a vision 3 times. Each time, God uses the image of food to tell Peter that no one is "profane" to God—all are his people. SO, when men arrive from Cornelius's house to talk to Peter, the Spirit tells Peter to go with them. What happens next is amazing. Peter preaches the Gospel to Cornelius and the Holy Spirit falls upon them—they believe!

Introductory Questions:

1. Have you ever had an idea or been thinking of something, then you talk with someone else only to realize they've been having the same thoughts? What was that like?
2. Take a moment and think about your life. Have there been moments that may have seemed unrelated, but have ended up leading you somewhere you didn't expect?
3. Have you ever felt like the Holy Spirit has called you to something out of the ordinary?

Digging Deep: Read Acts 10:1-48. I know it's a lot of verses, but it is worth your effort!

Ask:

1. Cornelius is visited by an angel (v. 3). What other stories in the Bible can you think of where people have been visited by angels?
2. Why do you think Cornelius is so eager to listen to the angel? What do you think Cornelius thinks of this God he has been praying to? What's he searching for?
3. Why do you think God uses a vision about food to communicate with Peter? What eating practices did Jewish people have?
4. In v. 25, Cornelius falls down at Peter's feet to worship him. Why do you think he does that? Why might he have mistaken Peter as someone to be worshipped? How does Peter respond?
5. In vv. 34-43 Peter preaches the Gospel to Cornelius and the others in the house. What stands out to you in Peter's speech?

Reflect: Take some time now and meditate on the words of v. 47: "can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" Repeat these words several times. Take a moment and think about your life today, the world today. Who might we be called to preach the Gospel to? What people might the Spirit be calling us to preach to? Where might the Spirit already be being poured out?

Close by spending time as a family praying. Pray for those around the world, around the country, around your city who need strengthened by the Holy Spirit. Take time and list what you are thankful for this past week. Offer God a prayer of thanksgiving.

College

The Spirit Moves: Peter's Call

Read Acts 10:1-48

- So this is definitely a longer passage to read, but take your time and work through it slowly!
 1. Who is Cornelius? What do we know about him?
 2. What similarities does this story share with a very popular story from the Old Testament? What are the similarities?
 3. Why was Peter praying on the roof? (v. 9) What role do you think prayer had as the vision came to Peter?
 4. Why is the "large sheet" significant? What does it symbolize?
 5. What sticks out to you about the way Peter delivers the Gospel message to Cornelius' household? In what ways does it encourage you to be ready to deliver the message the way Peter did?
 6. What are the elements of Peter's talk to Cornelius' household? Take note, highlight, or mark them. Based on what you highlight and write down, build a "mini testimony" that you have ready to share with others when the time comes!

Notes:

- A tanner is a leathemaker. Think about Peter's vision: he kills and eats animals that God had said were unclean, and he stays at Simon the tanner's house. A tanner would kill animals and drain their blood in order to make leather. There's definitely something cool about how "unclean" Peter's circumstances were before he met an "unclean" Gentile like Cornelius!
- In verses 3 and 9, Luke (author of Acts) gives the time of day of Cornelius' vision and Peter's vision. These were times in the Jewish faith where believers were expected to worship. What does it say about Cornelius that he prays at this time even though he wasn't a Jew?
- Even though the Holy Spirit gave Peter his vision, Peter needed help interpreting it. Peter needed *time* to make sure he understood correctly (v. 16). Peter also needed *confirmation* through the three men Cornelius sent to him (vv. 22-23). He also needed to *process* and *reflect* on what he had seen and been told. In order for us to discern God's will, the Lord graciously provides us *steps* to make this happen.
- It's interesting that Peter relays his message in the context of the household. I firmly believe our faith formation derives from what we see, learn, and experience from the household. Our houses are important places for many reasons, and I think we see here how the home can shape us to be faithful followers of Christ.

- Peter definitely has specific elements he wants to include in his message to Cornelius and his friends and family. I don't want to spoil those for you since I asked a question about them, but I think they're so important. One element that strikes me is how Peter has a "bottom line." The "bottom line" for Peter is that he is not to think of anyone as unclean, impure, or better than anyone else (vv. 28, 34). Our challenge is how to convey these types of "bottom lines" and frame them in God's plan for redemption, just like Peter.

Reflection:

The first nine chapters of Acts deal primarily with how the Christian faith spread among Jews. Here, in Acts 10, we see how God intended his plan for salvation not only to be for the Jews but also for the Gentiles. Cornelius' story is fascinating. He's a devout God-fearer, meaning that he prays, worships, and helps the poor as much as he is able as a non-Jew. It's also fascinating to see how he and Peter had the same vision for what God's plan of salvation ought to look like. Peter recognized such good news in Jesus couldn't just be for a select few. Cornelius was prepared to receive such good news and follow faithfully. While Peter did his part and helped Cornelius and his household lay hold of their faith, it wasn't Peter's faith that he had to give to Cornelius. Rather, it was the Holy Spirit's working on both of their minds and hearts that enabled the eyes of their hearts to be enlightened together by each of their presences.

When I think about this story, I'm amazed at the way Peter and Cornelius were "on the same page" or "on the same team." We know none of what happened was just coincidence, but to see each of them not only understand but also live the message of what God's plan of salvation and redemption really means is so cool to see. I hope you can, through this story, see the ways in which we as Christians are called to "get on the same page" with one another.

This is also a good reminder for us that just because someone has been around the faith, it does not necessarily ensure he or she is living into the way the Lord has called him or her. I think as millennials, Gen Z, etc. and by the fact that we are in college, we're uniquely positioned to see and to know this. There are a lot of forces that vie for our attention and simply checking off the "Christian" box on our resume isn't good enough. Like Cornelius, we need to hunger and thirst for more. And like Peter, we need to be ready to witness to the good news and how it shapes our lives. 2 Timothy 4:2 says, "preach the word, be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction." As we witness, the Spirit ensures we've done our part well, which means we don't have to worry about results.

So I ask you: where do you find yourself right now? Are you Cornelius who seeks but who also needs clarify? Are you Peter who needs "to be ready in and out of season?"

And who do you know that's like Peter or Cornelius? Where can you go or where can you be to live as you're called?

Reflection Questions:

1. How do you serve and minister to people who have the right instincts and intentions but are clearly missing out on the full gospel message?
2. Do you feel afraid, hesitant, embarrassed, or unprepared with the way you try to reach out and connect to these types of people? Why or why not?
3. What does this story say about the way Christians should do missions?
4. How has your home life shaped your life of faith?
5. In what ways do we limit the good news of Jesus? Peter had to "reach across the aisle" to bring the good news to Cornelius. What would it look like for us to "reach across the aisle" like Peter?

Acts 10: Peter's Call/ Peter teaches Cornelius' family

Cornelius was a Roman soldier who was in charge of 100 soldiers. He and his family worshiped, shared their money and prayed to God. They lived in Caesarea. One day Cornelius saw a vision of an angel of God. The angel said to Cornelius, "God enjoys your worship and says for you to send several men to the town of Joppa to bring back to Caesarea the man called Peter".

Now Peter was in the town of Joppa praying while sitting on his rooftop when something like a great sheet came from the heavens and was set down before him. In the sheet were all kinds of food, and God told Peter he could eat any of this food. As a Jew, Peter had been taught that there were certain foods that God said were not clean to eat. But a voice from heaven declared all of the food clean to eat. Peter then knew that this vision was not really about food, but that God was telling him to preach about Jesus to all kinds of people even if they were different from him.

Then Cornelius' three friends arrived at Peter's house. The Holy Spirit told Peter to go with the men because He had sent them. When Peter arrived in Caesarea at Cornelius home, he preached about Jesus dying on the cross to wash away their sins and then His rising from the dead and making a place in heaven for everyone who believed in Jesus. Peter (Jewish) was obeying God by teaching about Jesus for the first time to people that were not like him (Gentiles).



Listen to Learn

Peter Escapes
Acts 12:1-18

Spring • Lesson 12

Introduction

Knock on a door or wall. **When a friend comes to your house and knocks on your door, what do you usually do?** Volunteers answer. **Listen to hear what happened when a man knocked on the door of his friend's house.** (Hold Bible open to Acts 12 as you tell the story.)



Trouble in Jerusalem

After Jesus died and rose again, more and more people believed that Jesus is God's Son. But that made some people in Jerusalem very unhappy. They wanted to stop Jesus' friends from telling others about Jesus. Soon Jesus' friends were being put in jail, even though they had done nothing wrong.

One day Jesus' friend Peter was put in jail, because he kept teaching people about Jesus. Peter's friends were very sad, so they started praying. They prayed that God would help Peter.

Escape From Jail

One night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers in the jail. He had chains around his arms and legs. Suddenly, Peter's jail cell was bright with light. God had sent an angel to help Peter!

The angel woke Peter. "Quick—get up!" the angel said.

Peter looked down. His chains had fallen off! The angel told him to get dressed. Peter quickly put on his clothes and shoes and followed the angel. The guards were asleep, so they didn't stop Peter and the angel!

When the big iron gate to the city opened up, Peter must have thought he was dreaming! Suddenly, the angel was gone. Peter said, "God sent an angel to rescue me!"

Friends in a House

Peter went right to his friend's house where many of his friends were. He couldn't wait to tell them that God had helped him!

Peter knocked at the door. A servant girl named Rhoda came to answer the knock. Before she opened the door, she asked, "Who is it?"

"It's ME!" said Peter. Rhoda was so excited, she left Peter outside and ran right back to tell the people who were praying.

"Peter is at the door!" she shouted. Everyone looked up at her in surprise. They thought Rhoda had made a mistake. They were sure that Peter was still in jail.

All this time Peter was still knocking at the door! Finally his friends opened the door. They were so happy to see Peter! Peter told them all about the angel, the guards who didn't stop him, the gate that opened—everything!

Peter's friends were amazed. They were so happy that Peter was free from jail.

Conclusion

God had been with Peter, even in jail. God showed His love in a wonderful way! God promises to be with you, too. The Bible says, "God is with you wherever you go." (Optional:

Review story by using pages 482-487 in *God's Story for Me* Bible storybook.)

Creative Bible Storytelling Idea

Before telling the story, tell children that whenever they hear words spoken by Peter, the angel or Rhoda, they are to echo the words. Then as you tell the Bible story, signal to children (hold hand to ear) when to repeat the words.





“Prayer has great power”

(adapted from James 5:16b).