

STORY

Cornelius and Peter - Acts 10

TEACHER PRAYER

Lord Jesus, since Your love is too deep, broad, high, and wide to be detoured by such trivialities as a person's age, sex, race, or position in life, help me to show your wider, broader, higher and deeper love for all peoples. Use me as You used Peter wherever and however I may serve You by serving others. Amen.

OUTER AIM

A veteran Roman army officer is brought to know Jesus as his Savior.

INNER AIM

God's love for souls is wide enough and deep enough to seek out an officer in the military and bring him to salvation in Jesus. (see Eph. 3:18-19)

BACKGROUND AND VOCABULARY

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol.2, pp. 520-530)

It has always been God's desire to save all souls all over the world through all history. But if the Jerusalem Christians did not get moving into other cities and then to other countries, such souls would not learn of their salvation. So God had to give Peter and other disciples the thrill of discovering that gentile souls could also be saved through Jesus. Then each convert could become a witness to Jesus in his own life situations, and so on and on...until today when even you and I are among the gentiles blessed with the Savior.

v.1

- ▶ *Caesarea* - The Roman capital of Palestine, named after Caesar Augustus, located on the Mediterranean seacoast about fifty miles NW of Jerusalem.
- ▶ a *centurion* is a Roman army commander of about 100 troopers.
- ▶ the *Italian Regiment* - these men were native Italians, not conscripted from a province.

v.2

- ▶ Although Cornelius was sincere, pious, and dedicated to the LORD Jehovah, he was still lacking what Peter could bring him--the revelation that the Savior had already arrived in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.
- ▶ Both Cornelius and Peter, the main characters in this story, needed to learn the scope of God's love for one and all.

v. 3-6

- ▶ Cornelius' prayers were reminders to God of His promises that included Gentiles in the width-depth-height of His love for sinners.
- ▶ The angel made mention of these prayers to reassure Cornelius that he had been on the right track in his spiritual quest.
- ▶ God's next step was to enlist a Christian to come to his rescue.

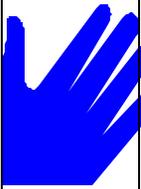
v. 7-8

These details are rehearsed also in vv. 30-33.

- ▶ Since Joppa (modern Jaffa) lay about thirty miles south of Caesarea, and they had set out soon after 3:00 pm, they did not arrive at Joppa until early afternoon the next day.

v. 9-16

- ▶ Here the scene shifts to God's working to correct Peter's (natural and Jewish) misconception that God's mercies did not include Gentiles.
- ▶ That's why He put the disciples into training to enlarge their perception of His love.



- ▶ They were going to learn how far from Jerusalem God would go to save a soul--how deep down into the dregs of society He would reach to salvage a soul--how wide afield into the pagan wilderness His love would range.
- ▶ To get Peter's cooperation in reaching out to gentiles, God needed to make Peter's heart convinced about the scope of His redeeming love.
- ▶ That was the purpose of the vision of the critters in the sheet being lowered from heaven (God's throne) and the heavenly voice directing him to share in whatever God declared OK.

v.14

- ▶ Even in the trance, Peter's response came from an inbred "kosher" conscience.
- ▶ The term *common* indicates that it did not qualify for sacrificing, and *unclean* that it was unfit for human consumption at any level, being outlawed in Leviticus 11.
- ▶ The whole "kosher" arrangement was a constant reminder that God had His fingers on Jewish everyday life (their stomachs, vessels, water supply, clothing, farming and hunting activities, business dealings, social customs, etc.), and that He was in control of how He wanted people to worship Him.
- ▶ Yet Peter did not readily surrender to the heavenly insistence (in triplicate!) that God can revoke His own Levitical restrictions as He sees fit.
- ▶ Peter had to learn that when God declares He "has cleansed" something (to erase its unsuitability), no human has the right to still disapprove.
- ▶ After all, it is God who makes the rules for humans, not vice versa.

v. 17-18

- ▶ Since Peter had no stomach for nonkosher foods, he was confused as to whether he dared go against God's ancient regulations delivered through Moses.
- ▶ In the midst of his mental disarray, the delegation arrived from Cornelius.

v. 20ff.

- ▶ Peter's concern over the puzzling vision was "put on hold" while the Spirit directed Peter to attend to the visitor--with assurances that they had been sent by God to locate Peter, and that Peter could go along, free of conscience pangs about being in the company of gentiles.

v. 21

- ▶ Though Peter gave them a less-than-warm welcome when he saw the Roman soldier, he invited them to declare the purpose of their call.

v. 22

- ▶ They presented their cause to Peter, humbly petitioning him to speak whatever he wished.

v. 23

- ▶ It was by now too late in the day to set out on a ten-hour walk; moreover, by now God's directives and Peter's love for souls had put aside his narrow Jewishness about inviting "unclean" persons to share his friend's roof, his table, and his linens.
- ▶ The next day, in the right God-pleasing frame of mind, Peter set forth for Caesarea, accompanied by Christian friends.
- ▶ They were soon to get a new revelation of how God looked at gentiles, and that would redirect them in their mission to preach the Savior to all folks.

v. 24-33 *Peter meets Cornelius*

v. 24

- ▶ In the fourth day of this new chapter in Cornelius' life, he eagerly awaited the return of his servants with Simon Peter; he was prepared to greet them with a house full of relatives and close friends who shared his devotion to Jehovah, the Covenant God.

v. 25

Cornelius' prostrate welcome was corrected by a kindly but firm hand, as Peter permitted no popish adoration.

v. 27-28

- ▶ Peter, who had to overcome generations of Jewishness, had learned the lesson of the trance/vision, and he opened his heart as he explained this to the group.

v. 29

- ▶ Since God had not as yet spelled out what Peter should do when he met with these gentiles, Peter was obliged to ask what they had in mind.

v. 30-33

- ▶ So Cornelius rehearsed it (cf. vv.3-7) and invited Peter to deliver whatever it was that God had on His mind for Peter to tell them.

vv. 34-43

- ▶ *Peter's sermon to Cornelius'* household clearly reveals that he had come to learn God's love was broad and long enough to cross over the ethnic barrier between Jew and Gentile.
- ▶ Peter traced the length of God's love, which reached from Judea through Galilee (v. 37) to all points beyond; that "whoever (with no ethnic limitations) believes in Him will receive remission of sins."
- ▶ The Christian message always includes these historical events, with emphasis on the truth that Jesus of Nazareth (an unlikely person from an unlikely place) was indeed the "anointed" agent of God the Father (v. 38), who survived death in his resurrection (v. 40) and will function as Judge over humanity, to grant remission of sins to whoever believes in Him.

v. 44-48

- ▶ *The Holy Spirit comes* to the gentiles also in this "Epiphany of the Gentiles".
- ▶ This should dispel any doubt lingering in the minds of anyone past, present, or future that God's love was broad/deep/long enough to bring gentiles into His family, for here Jesus' promise to bestow His Spirit upon His people (Acts 1:5) was again honored as the "Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the Word."
- ▶ In other words, they were converted then and there from their Old Testament faith in the coming Messiah, as the Spirit brought them the assurance that Jesus was already Savior, and not for Jews only, but for them also.

v. 45-46

- ▶ This was a new and marvelous discovery for the Jewish-background Christians, who up to now had not fully realized that their Jewish "Jesus" was also the gentile "Savior."

v. 46

- ▶ Their "tongue-speaking" should not be interpreted as an unearthly lingo, for at such an emotional moment as this they simply broke forth into their mother tongues (Italian and other Mediterranean dialects of the Indo-European family of languages), all of which were "foreign" to the Hebrews, of course.
- ▶ This whole subject of "tongue-speaking" (as it happened also on the first Christian Pentecost--Acts 2:4-11) has been largely misunderstood and misrepresented by Pentecostals as heavenly languages unknown to this earth.
- ▶ Scripture gives us to understand that "speaking in tongues" means they spoke in languages or dialects foreign to the Palestinian Jew.
- ▶ The miracle of the "tongue-speaking" at the first Pentecost lies in this that in that instance God also broke the language barrier (a barrier to the Gospel ever since Babel) by enabling Hebrews to speak in foreign languages. But they were **human, earthly languages**, after all.
- ▶ And that's what happened here. As in their mother tongues these people of Cornelius' household glorified

God for reaching out beyond Jewry to salvage even them.

- ▶ (Years later in the Corinth congregation its polyglot members needed to be corrected from their misuse of “tongue-speaking,” for they disturbed the worship service with personal messages blurted out in their mother tongue in the enthusiasm of the moment. See I Cor. 14)

v. 47

- ▶ Now then, since God had given them His five-star approval rating, who dared deny them acceptance into the earthly fellowship?
- ▶ So they were received into full membership in the company of saints via baptism, during which they also affirmed their faith in Jesus. Hallelujah!!

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for saving Cornelius and his friends and relatives. Thank You for a love that sees past all the things that sometimes keep us from caring whether someone knows about You, their Savior, or not. Lord, we know that no one is saved without faith in You. Help us to love more so that we do care about the salvation of others and do share the truth about You. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Teacher should present story by directly telling the story rather than reading it.

APPLICATIONS

1. Our approach to the neighbor or stranger (even “God-fearing, church-going, decent people”) avoids chastising them for what they may be lacking in their lives. Since we do not know if a person lacks the One Thing Needful, we find a way to present Jesus in a spirit of warmth, confident that our sharing the Scriptures and the Savior with them is a privilege entrusted to us by our God. Then we let the dialogue develop from there one step at a time.
2. We also do well to ferret out of our hearts any residual prejudice against others (Jews, Mexicans, Hmong, Negroes, Poles, etc.). A bad attitude about Jews, Catholics, and “Polacks” (ala Archie Bunker, the clown-prince of Bigotry) could short-circuit an opening for the Spirit’s working, making us unsuitable for His use. “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (I Jn.2:6) “We should love one another.” (I Jn.3:11) Note: We learn from Scripture (John 5:23; 6:53-58; 8:24; 11:25; 14:6, etc.) that God does not value false religions, those not founded on Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life--and no amount of devotion and piety can compensate for the loss of the Savior.
3. We can see that our social or cultural inhibitions hamper God’s ministry of the gospel. The privileged responsibility (calling) of the Christian in this world is to respond to any request “as in the presence of God to speak all the things commanded us by God” as the occasion warrants (10:33). One-on-one is how we usually begin; sometimes a small group gathered in a private home asks for pastoral service: This is how many of our CLC congregations first assembled.
4. This military person in a foreign land did not give up his worship of Jehovah, but influenced his whole household to join him in God’s kingdom. Cornelius serves as a “good conduct” example for anyone in the military.

5. God is indeed “impartial” (v.34), not prejudiced against any individual, race, or nationality. We in the CLC share that view, not resting on our family’s bloodline, or our grandpa’s status as a founding father in the CLC or some other status symbol of Lutheran patriotism. We realize that God looks on our heart for the right attitude (“whoever fears Him”) and in our lives for the right effects (“and works righteousness”) when He has a special assignment lined up for us. Whereas angels make announcements and give directions, God entrusts missionary and pastoral care as the Spirit’s work through the agency of fellow mortals. Isn’t that an amazing privilege for us?

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

I Thess. 5:17 - Pray without ceasing.

I Tim. 2:3-4 - God our Savior...desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Middle any of the above and...

Isaiah 43:1 - Thus says the LORD, who created you...”Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.”

Eph. 2:13 - But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been made near by the blood of Christ.

1 John 1:7 - The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Upper any of the above and...

I Thess. 2:13 - When you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.

II Peter 3:9 - The Lord ... is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

HYMN CHOICES

“Salvation Unto Us has Come” TLH # 377

“By Grace I’m Saved, Grace Free and Boundless” TLH # 373

“Come, Holy Spirit, Come” TLH # 225

“Savior Sprinkle Many Nations” TLH #510

PETER AND CORNELIUS

(Additional Teacher Notes)

A. Preparation

Have you ever been to the library? Have you ever tried to count how many books there are on the shelves at the library? What if you read every book that was there. You would learn a lot, wouldn't you? But there are more books in the world. What if you read all of those too? What if you learned *everything* that there was to learn in the whole world. What do you think would be the most important thing? The most important thing of all is to learn about Jesus, isn't it? It doesn't matter if we know everything else in the whole world, if we don't know and trust that Jesus died for us and took away our sins, nothing else matters. Today we are going to learn about a man named Cornelius. The Lord told Peter to tell Cornelius the good news about what Jesus did for him.

OUTER AIM Cornelius learns that Jesus is his Savior

B. Presentation

C. Penetration

Because God had once told the nation of Israel that the promised Savior would be born from their descendants, many Jews of Jesus' day thought that only Jews would receive the blessings of God and be saved. Cornelius was not a Jew, and yet God sent Peter to preach the good news to him. The Lord taught Peter that Christ died for *all* and not just for one particular race of people.

Sample Question Sequence

- Who was Cornelius?
- What did God tell Cornelius to do?
- What dream did Peter have?
- Why might Peter have been hesitant to visit Cornelius?
- How did the dream teach Peter that God wanted everyone to hear about Jesus?
- What did Peter say to Cornelius when the two of them met?
- Whom does God want to hear His word about the Savior?

INNER AIM The good news about Jesus is for everybody

D. Application

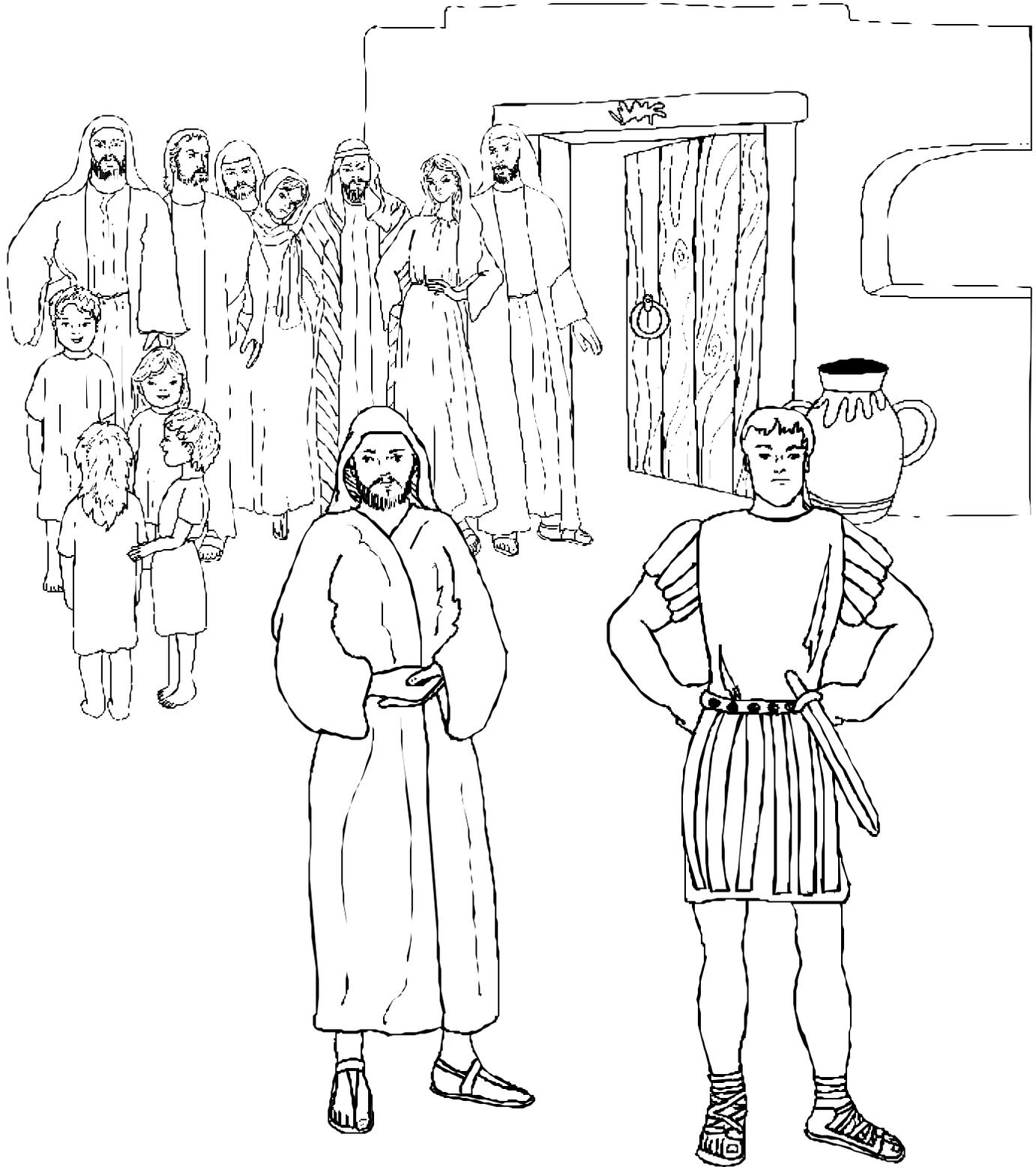
Since the good news of the forgiveness of sins is meant for everyone, that means it is meant for us and we can take comfort in it. It also means we can share it with others because it is meant for them too.

E. Drill and Review

See worksheets

Cornelius and Peter

Acts 10



The Story

Cornelius was a Roman soldier who lived in Caesarea. He believed in God and prayed to Him all the time, but he did not know about Jesus. God wanted him to know about Jesus, his Savior. God sent an angel to Cornelius. The angel said, "Cornelius!"

Cornelius was afraid and said, "What is it?"

The angel said, "God has heard your prayers. Send some men to Joppa to get Simon Peter. He will tell you what to do."

Cornelius sent three men to Joppa to get Peter. While these men were going to Joppa, God gave Peter a vision. He saw a large sheet with all kinds of animals in it. God said, "Peter, kill and eat."

Peter said, "No, Lord, I have never eaten any of these animals. They are not clean."

God said, "When God has cleaned them, don't call them unclean." This happened three times.

Peter was not sure what God wanted him to learn. Just then, the three men from Cornelius arrived. God said, "Go with these men. I have sent them."

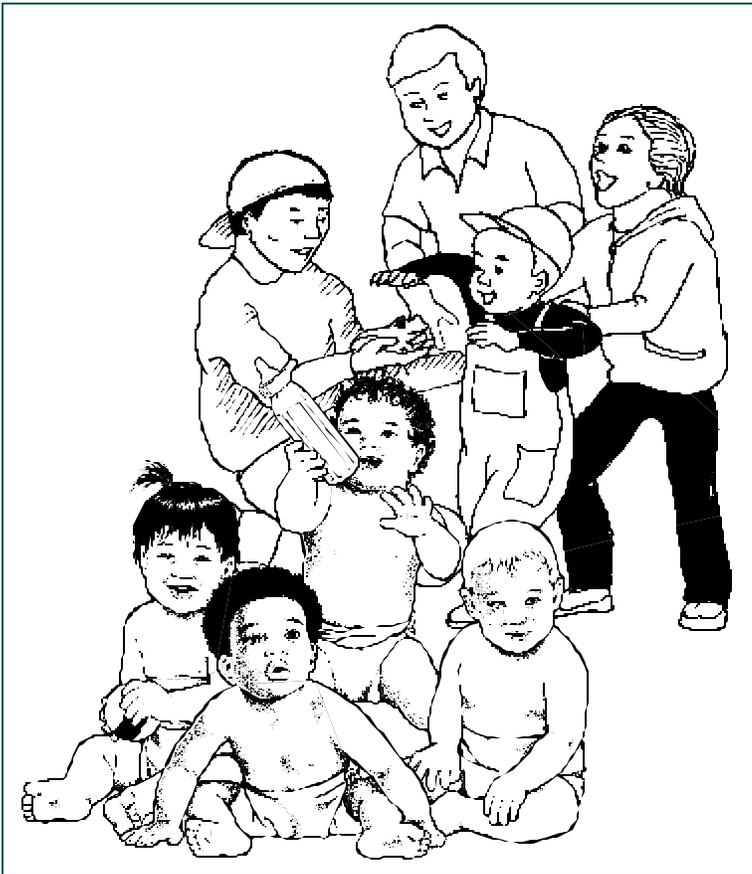
It was too late to leave that day. The next day Peter went with the three men to Cornelius. Peter heard Cornelius's story. Peter said, "Now I know what God wanted me to learn. God sent Jesus for everyone. Everyone who believes in Him will be saved, even if they are not Jews."

Then Peter told Cornelius and everyone in his house about Jesus. He told them how Jesus lived and died to save people from their sins. He told them how Jesus rose from the dead. He told them that Jesus had told the disciples to preach the forgiveness of sins to all people.

The Holy Spirit came to everyone there who heard God's Word. Cornelius and everyone in his house believed in Jesus. Peter baptized all of them.

Review

1. Who said, "Go with these men. I have sent them?"
2. Who said, "Send men to Joppa to get Simon Peter?"
3. Who said, "God sent Jesus for everyone?"
4. Who came to the people who heard God's Word?
5. Who preached God's Word?

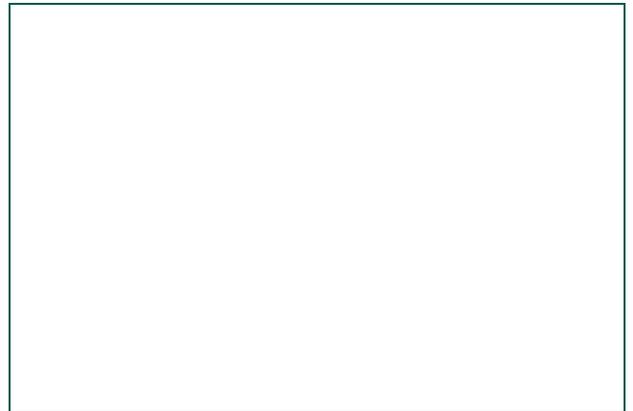


Which of the children in the picture above would God our Savior want to be saved? Color them.

Passages

God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved.

1 Timothy 2:3-4



Draw a picture of yourself. God wants you to be saved, too.

Talking to Jesus

Dear Jesus, Thank You for saving me. Thank You for sending people to me to talk about You. Amen.

Cornelius and Peter

Acts 10



The Story

Cornelius was a Roman soldier who lived in Caesarea. He believed in God, prayed all the time, and gave money to the poor, but he did not know about Jesus.

One day he saw a vision where an angel from God came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

Cornelius was afraid and said, "What is it, Lord?"

The angel said, "Your prayers are answered. Send some men to Joppa to get Simon Peter who is staying with Simon the tanner. He will tell you what you must do."

Cornelius sent three men to Joppa. At noon the next day they were close to Joppa. Peter was up on the roof waiting for lunch and praying. He saw a vision. In the vision there was a sheet with many different kinds of animals. They were animals Jews did not eat. A voice said, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat."

Peter said, "No, Lord, I have never eaten these unclean animals." This happened three times. Peter wondered what this vision meant. As he was thinking about it, the men from Cornelius

came to the gate of Simon the tanner's house and asked for Peter. God told Peter they were there and that he should go with them because God had sent them. Peter went to them, and they told him about Cornelius's vision. The next day Peter and six other men went with them to Cornelius's house.

Cornelius had called all his relatives and friends to come. Peter said to them, "You know that it is against Jewish law for a Jew to keep company with people from other nations who are not Jews. But God has shown me that I should not call any man unclean. That is why I came. Why did you send for me?"

Cornelius told him about the angel he had seen and what the angel had said. Peter said, "I see now that God does not choose one person over another. He sent Jesus Christ to be Lord over all people. We heard Jesus preach. We saw Him do good things. We saw Him die. We saw Him after God raised Him from the dead. He told us to preach. He told us that whoever believes in Him will have the

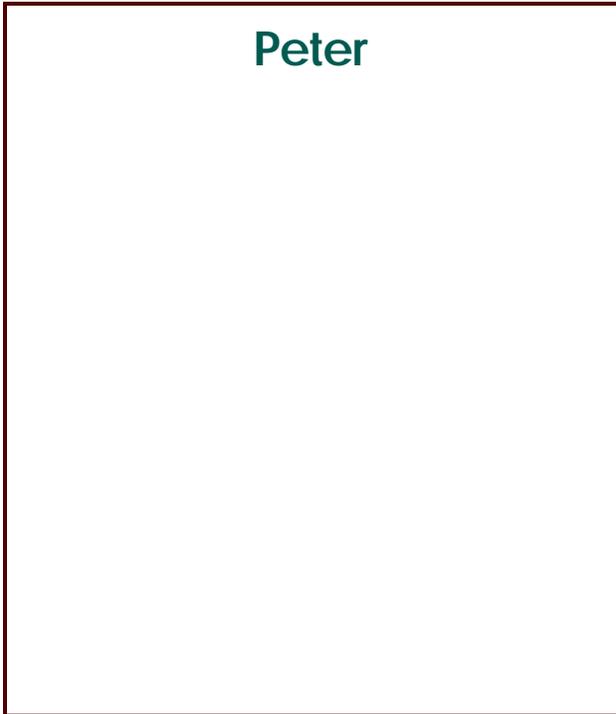
forgiveness of sins.

As Peter said these words the Holy Spirit came to the people there. They believed

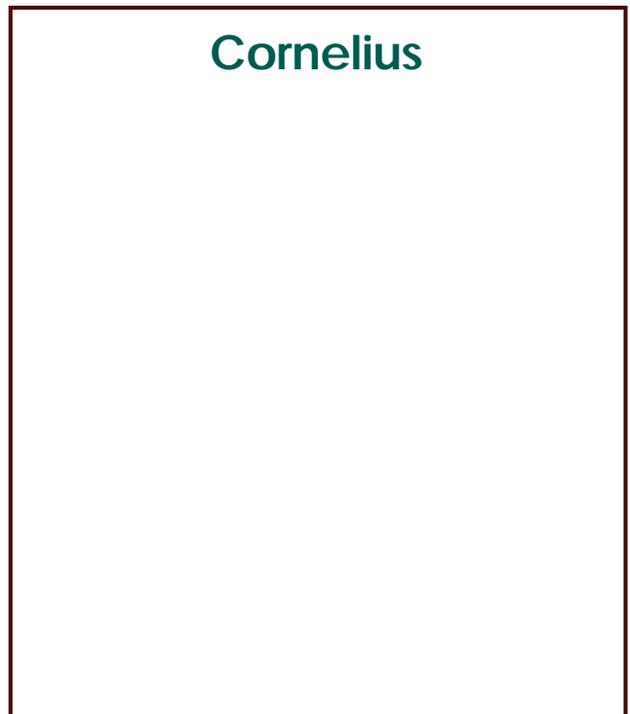
and praised God. The people were baptized. They asked Peter to stay a few more days to tell them more about Jesus.

Review - Cut out or write the words or phrases below and glue them under the name of the person they describe.

Peter



Cornelius



, Soldier

, learned about Jesus

, preacher

, Roman

, taught about Jesus

, saw an angel

, Jew

, saw a sheet with animals

Passage

God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved
and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:3-4

Hymn - TLH# 373 v. 1, 2

By grace I'm saved, grace free and
boundless;
My soul, believe and doubt it not.
Why stagger at this word of promise?
Hath Scripture ever falsehood taught?
Nay; then this word must true remain:
By grace thou, too, shalt heaven obtain.

By grace! None dare lay claim to
merit;
Our works and conduct have no
worth.
God in His love sent our Redeemer,
Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth;
His death did for our sins atone,
And we are saved by grace alone.

Talking to Jesus

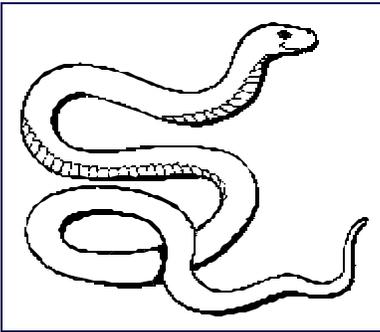
Before reading this prayer, think of a person who does not believe in Jesus and write his or her name in the blank.

Dear God,

You made sure that Cornelius learned about Jesus so he could go to heaven. You made sure that I learned about Jesus so I can go to heaven. _____ doesn't seem to believe in Jesus yet. If I can help tell _____ about Jesus, show me how. Thank you for saving me. Amen.

Cornelius and Peter

Acts 10



Which of these would you buy to eat?

How do you usually think of the item on the right?



Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, thank you for bringing me to know that Jesus is my Savior. We know that everyone needs to know about Jesus as his or her Savior to be saved. Help us to be ready to share the good news of salvation with people who do not know about Jesus. Bring us together with people who are ready to learn about Jesus. Keep us from selfish pride that would keep us from sharing the gospel with certain people. Father, You love us. Help us love others. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Acts 10

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, {2} a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. {3} About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

{4} And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. {5} Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.

{6} He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do." {7} And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. {8} So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

{9} The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. {10} Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance {11} and saw heaven opened and an object like a



great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. {12} In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. {13} And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

{14} But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

{15} And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." {16} This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

{17} Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. {18} And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

{19} While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. {20} "Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

{21} Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" {22} And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

{23} Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from

Joppa accompanied him. {24} And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. {25} As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. {26} But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."

{27} And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. {28} Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. {29} "Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?"

{30} So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, {31} and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. {32} Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.' {33} So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."

{34} Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. {35} But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. {36} The word which God sent to the children of Israel,

preaching peace through Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all; {37} that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: {38} how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

{39} And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. {40} Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, {41} "not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. {42} And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it

is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. {43} "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

{44} While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. {45} And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. {46} For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, {47} "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" {48} And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

What the Story Tells Us

1. Cornelius was a _____ who believed in the _____ of the _____ but did not know that _____ is the _____.
(Jesus, Roman, God, Messiah, centurion, Jews)
2. Peter was a _____ of _____ who believed that _____ came only for _____. (Jews, Jesus, disciple, Jesus)
3. God showed Peter that _____ is for everyone by sending him a vision of a _____ filled with _____ normally considered _____ by the _____. (animals, Jesus, sheet, Jews, unclean)
4. God told Peter to eat the _____. When Peter said, " _____," because they were _____, God told him to not call something _____ when God had _____ it.
(animals, cleaned, no, unclean, unclean)

5. Peter went with the men from Cornelius and preached _____ to Cornelius, his relatives and friends. They _____ in _____ and were _____. (*believed, baptized, Jesus, Jesus*)

Outer Aim

God brought Cornelius, a Roman army officer, to faith in Jesus his Savior.

What God Tells Us

In his dream Peter was told, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." God tells us in 1 John 1:7, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Whom has God cleansed?

By whom does God cleanse?

Passages

Ephesians 2:13 - "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

What is a person's relationship with God without Jesus?

Isaiah 43:1 - "Thus says the LORD, who created you ... 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine.'"

To whom is God speaking?

1 Timothy 2:3-4 - "God our Savior ... desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Whom does "all men" include?

Inner Aim

God's love for souls is wide enough and deep enough to seek out everyone no matter who or where they are.

Hymn - Which stanzas of Hymn #373 emphasize these truths?

1. God gives us heaven.
2. Jesus saves sinners.
3. We are not saved by praying and giving money to the poor.
4. Everyone is a sinner.
5. Satan does not want us to believe our sins are forgiven.

Your Turn - Discuss the following.

- ▶ Suppose some children in your school are cruel to another child because she can't speak English very well, dresses very differently, and brings strange foods for lunch. What do you do?
- ▶ Suppose a boy in your neighborhood who doesn't take a bath very often and who sometimes curses wants to come to church with you. What do you do?
- ▶ Suppose at your house you have devotion every night after your evening meal. You have a new friend who does not know about Jesus. What do you do?

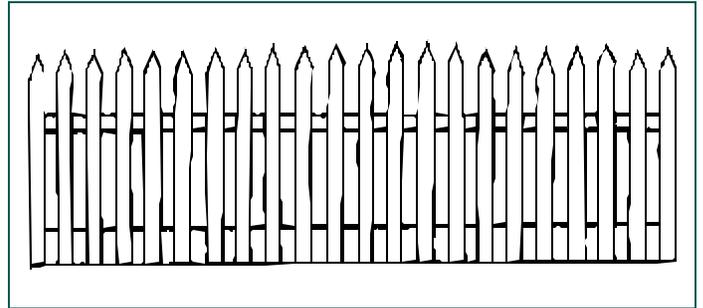
Prayer

Write a prayer about someone you know who does not know that Jesus is the Savior.

Cornelius and Peter

Acts 10

Why do people build fences?
What is done with a fence when it is no longer
necessary?



Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, in Your great love for us You have given us faith through the Holy Spirit in Your Son, Jesus Christ. As we study Your Word today show us any barriers we have in our lives that keep us from sharing the truth about Jesus with other people. Help us to take down these barriers. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Acts 10

There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, {2} a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. {3} About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

{4} And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?"

So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. {5} "Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. {6} "He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do." {7} And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household

servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. {8} So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

{9} The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. {10} Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance {11} and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. {12} In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. {13} And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

{14} But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."



{15} And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." {16} This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

{17} Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate. {18} And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

{19} While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. {20} "Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

{21} Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" {22} And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

{23} Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him. {24} And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. {25} As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. {26} But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."

{27} And as he talked with him, he

went in and found many who had come together. {28} Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean. {29} "Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?" {30} So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, {31} "and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God. {32} 'Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.' {33} "So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."

{34} Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. {35} "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. {36} "The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all; {37} "that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: {38} "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

{39} "And we are witnesses of all

things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. {40} "Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, {41} "not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. {42} "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead. {43} "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins." {44} While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy

Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. {45} And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. {46} For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, {47} "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" {48} And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Recalling Details - Mark each statement (T) true or (F) false.

_____ 1. Cornelius believed in Jehovah, the God of the Jews.

_____ 2. Cornelius was told to send for Simon Peter by an angel.

_____ 3. Peter was eager to eat meat from the animals in the sheet.

_____ 4. God told Peter to go with the men sent from Cornelius.

_____ 5. Cornelius wanted all his friends and relatives to hear Peter.

_____ 6. Peter never figured out what the vision meant.

_____ 7. Peter told Cornelius and the other people there about himself.

_____ 8. Cornelius and the other people who heard about Jesus received the Holy Spirit and believed.

_____ 9. Cornelius and the other people who believed did not want to be baptized.

Outer Aim - God wanted Peter to tell Cornelius and the others about Jesus their Savior, so they could be saved.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the Jewish attitude toward Gentiles?

2. How did God show Peter this was not the attitude God wanted him to have?

3. How do we sometimes show a bad attitude about other people?

4. What can be done about that?

Inner Aim - God's love is for all people. He wants His believers to show and tell the love of Jesus Christ to everyone.

Passages

1 Timothy 2:3-4 - "God our _____ ... desires _____ men to be _____ and to come to the knowledge of the _____. (*all, Savior, truth, saved*)

2 Peter 3:9 - " The Lord ... is _____ toward us, not willing that _____ should _____ but that _____ should come to _____. (*all, repentance, any, perish, longsuffering*)

Ephesians 2:13 - "But now in Christ _____ you who once were _____ off have been made _____ by the _____ of _____. (*Jesus, near, Christ, blood, far*)

1 Thessalonians 2:13 - " When you _____ the word of _____ which you heard from us, you _____ it not as the word of _____, but as it is in truth, the _____ of God. (*received, men, God, welcomed*)

Hymn - How does each of the following hymn stanzas fit this lesson?

Hymn #377, stanza 1

Hymn #225, stanza 5

Hymn #373, stanza 3

Hymn #510, stanza 3

Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for saving Cornelius and his friends and relatives. Thank You for a love that sees past all the things that sometimes keep us from caring whether someone knows about You, their Savior, or not. Lord, we know that no one is saved without faith in You. Help us to love more so that we do care about the salvation of others and do share the truth about You. Amen.