

Peter Visited Cornelius

BIBLE PASSAGE: Acts 10

MAIN POINT: The Holy Spirit told Peter to preach to Cornelius, a Gentile.

KEY PASSAGE: Philippians 2:13

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What does the Holy Spirit do? The Holy Spirit helps Christians follow Jesus.

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Acts 10

Cornelius was a man who lived in Caesarea (SESS uh REE uh). He was an officer in the Roman army, and he and everyone in his house worshiped God. Cornelius helped other people, and he always prayed to God. One afternoon, Cornelius saw a vision of an angel of God coming to him. The angel said, "Cornelius!"

Cornelius was afraid. He looked at the angel and said, "What is it?"

The angel said, "God has heard your prayers, and He has seen how you help others." Then the angel instructed Cornelius to send for a man named Peter, who was in the city of Joppa. When the angel left, Cornelius sent two of his servants and one soldier to Joppa.

The next day, as the servants and soldier were nearing the city, Peter went up on the roof of the house to pray. He was hungry, but while he was waiting for the meal, Peter saw a vision. In this vision, Peter saw something like a large sheet coming down from heaven. In the sheet were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and birds. Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat!"

"No, Lord!" Peter said. "I have never eaten anything that is not clean or not used for food."

Again, a voice said to him, "God has made these clean. Do not call them unfit to eat." This happened three times, and then the whole thing was taken up into heaven. Peter tried to understand what the vision meant.

Then the men Cornelius had sent arrived at the gate. They explained that Cornelius had seen a vision, and an angel instructed him to send for Peter. So the next day,

Peter went with the men to Caesarea.

When Peter got to Cornelius's house, he began to speak. Peter explained that God does not consider some people to be better than others. God had sent good news to the Israelites—Jesus is Lord of all. "Everyone who believes in Jesus will have their sins forgiven," Peter said.

While Peter said this, the Holy Spirit came down on those who heard the message—not just the Jewish people, but the Gentiles, or non-Jews, too. The Jewish believers were amazed.

Cornelius, his friends, and his relatives were baptized in the name of Jesus, and Peter stayed with them for a few days.

Christ Connection: 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.